

# Introduction to 1 Peter

## Authorship

The authorship of this letter is disputed, there being three main theories. The first and traditional theory is that Peter, the chief of the apostles, wrote the letter directly himself. Most modern scholars believe the work to be pseudonymous, written by someone else (perhaps someone from a Petrine group) and attributed to Peter. A kind of compromise view, which is perhaps a minority position but still accepted by numerous scholars, is the amanuensis theory, the idea that a scribe or secretary wrote the text for Peter.

The main points in favor of the theory of direct authorship are the fact that the author identifies himself as Peter in 1:1, certain ideas and imagery are consistent with what we read of Peter in the Gospels and in Acts, the letter seems to reflect an early stage in Christian thought, Peter was associated with and died in Rome, the likely place of the letter's composition, and post-New Testament tradition as early as Irenaeus in AD 180 accepted the letter as having been written by Peter.

Against direct authorship by Peter are the following points, among others: (a) The Greek style of the letter is among the best of the New Testament, after that of Hebrews and Luke-Acts. It seems strange that the uneducated Galilean fisherman should write in Attic Greek with a style superior to that of the educated Paul (and also quite different from that of 2 Peter). (b) The author consistently cites the Old Testament in the LXX version, rather than in Hebrew or his native Aramaic. (c) There is no historical evidence that Peter served a mission to the locations to which the letter was sent in Asia Minor. (d) The designation "co-elder" from 5:1 is nowhere else attributed to Peter and seems odd spoken of the chief of the apostles. (e) Some think the letter presupposes massive persecutions, a situation that would not obtain in Asia Minor until after Peter had already died. (f) Some detect numerous elements of Pauline style and theology in the letter, and think it unlikely that Peter would have borrowed so heavily from Paul.

Many of these objections to Petrine authorship can be overcome. For instance, the persecutions referenced in the letter need not be official government persecutions. Further, the similarity to Paul may be explained by positing that both authors relied on preexisting traditions. Use of the Greek version of the Old Testament would not be unusual, given that his audience primarily spoke Greek. If Peter were writing shortly after the death of Paul, his addressing a letter to these churches would make sense as a missive from the leader of the church to shore up the faith of those now facing trials. The most intractable of these difficulties is the fine Greek style of the letter.

The amanuensis theory is an attempt to address this problem. In 5:12 the author states "I have written to you through Silvanus," which may suggest that Silvanus was an amanuensis (a secretary or scribe), and which could account for the elevated Greek style of the letter. The particular idiom in this passage is attested as referring to an amanuensis, but it more naturally refers to a courier, the one who *delivered* the letter, not the one who *wrote* it. Of course, it may be that Silvanus fulfilled both roles, or it may be that Peter used an amanuensis other than Silvanus (such as Luke) without identifying him.

The identity of the author therefore remains uncertain. If it should be that the letter was not written by Peter directly but rather attributed to him, that would not be at all unusual for the time period. We know of various other pseudepigraphal works attributed to Peter, including the *Gospel of Peter*, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, a letter from Peter to James appended to the *Clementine Homilies*, and the *Preaching of Peter*. In antiquity pseudonymous authorship was a widely accepted literary convention.

Even if Peter did not directly write the words contained in this letter, he may well stand in the background as its author, either by writing through an amanuensis or by inspiring a disciple or student to convey his own message under his name to some of the churches of Asia.

### **Manuscript History**

The earliest manuscript dates to the late third or early fourth century. The earliest manuscript is:

P72, or P. Bodmer VII+VIII, housed at Cologne, contains portions of three New Testament books. The portions of 1 Peter that have been preserved are 1 Peter 1:1-5:14, and is thus complete. This manuscript has been dated paleographically to the late third or early fourth century AD.

Many other Greek manuscripts have survived, but all date later than the time of Constantine.

### **Canon**

1 Peter is not mentioned in the Muratorian Canon, although it may have been on a part of the manuscript that is no longer extant. Nevertheless, it was included among the *homologoumena* (acknowledged writings) by both Origen and Eusebius, and its attestation among early Christian writings was both early and widespread, beginning with 1 Clement.

### **Setting**

In 5:13 the author sends greetings from the church in "Babylon." This is almost certainly a symbolic expression for Rome. It was addressed to churches in Asia Minor, in the following geographic districts: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia (meaning the Roman province of that name) and Bithynia. If Peter was the writer, either directly or through an amanuensis, then the letter was probably written in or about AD 64, perhaps shortly after Paul's death. If the letter was written pseudonymously, then it should be dated somewhat later, perhaps between AD 70 and the early 90s. The main purpose of the letter was to shore up the faith of the Saints in certain districts of Asia Minor in the face of persecutions.

### **Outline**

- I. Salutation (1:1-2)
- II. Believers become Holy People
  - A. Praise to God for his Mercy (1:3-12)
  - B. A Call to Holy Living (1:13-25)
  - C. Becoming a Holy Nation (2:1-10)
- III. Live Honorably as Servants of God
  - A. In the Civil Realm (2:11-17)
  - B. Household Servants (2:18-25)
  - C. Wives and Husbands (3:1-12)
- IV. Doing What is Right Despite Persecution
  - A. Innocent Suffering (3:13-17)
  - B. Christ Suffered, Too (3:18-22)
  - C. Obedience to God's Will (4:1-11)
  - D. Suffering as a Christian (4:12-19)
- V. Tending the Flock of God (5:1-11)
- VI. Final Greetings (5:12-14)

### **Further Readings**

#### *Non-LDS Sources*

Elliott, John H. *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. New York: Doubleday, 2000.

Hornik, Heidi J. and Mikeal C. Parsons. "The Harrowing of Hell." *Bible Review* 19/3 (June 2003): 18-26, 50.

#### *LDS Sources*

Anderson, Richard Lloyd. "Peter's Letters: Progression for the Living and the Dead." *Ensign* 21 (Oct. 1991): 6-10.

McKinlay, Daniel B. "Temple Imagery in the Epistles of Peter." In *Temples of the Ancient World*, ed. by Donald W. Parry, 492-514. Salt Lake City: Deseret and FARMS, 1994.

Thomas, M. Catherine. "Visions of Christ in the Spirit World and the Dead Redeemed." *The New Testament and the Latter-day Saints*, Sidney B. Sperry Symposium, 269-317. Orem, Utah: Randall Book, 1987.

# The First Epistle General of Peter

## Chapter 1

### *Salutation*

<sup>1</sup> PETER,<sup>1</sup> an apostle<sup>2</sup> of Jesus Christ, to the strangers<sup>3</sup> scattered<sup>4</sup> throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia,<sup>5</sup> and Bithynia,<sup>6</sup> <sup>2</sup> Elect<sup>7</sup> according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto<sup>8</sup> obedience and sprinkling<sup>9</sup> of the blood of Jesus Christ:<sup>10</sup> Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.<sup>11</sup>

### *A Living Hope*

<sup>3</sup> Blessed *be*<sup>12</sup> the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again<sup>13</sup> unto a lively<sup>14</sup> hope by<sup>15</sup> the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> To an inheritance incorruptible,<sup>16</sup> and undefiled, and that

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<sup>1</sup> IE From Peter. Πέτρος *Petros* is the GR translation of the Aramaic nickname Kepha, which means "stone." Peter's actual name was Shimeon Bar-Yonah, or Simon, son of Jonah.

<sup>2</sup> IE one who has been sent. An apostle is an emissary who represents the authority of the sender.

<sup>3</sup> OR resident aliens, exiles.

<sup>4</sup> διασπορᾶς *diasporas* of the Diaspora. The word refers to the scattering (the way seed is scattered by broadcasting) or dispersion of a people, and eventually became the technical term for the scattering of the Jews outside of the Holy Land.

<sup>5</sup> Not the whole of Asia as we think of it today; this is a Roman geographic designation (see the following note).

<sup>6</sup> Roman geographic designations for areas in Asia Minor (what is now Turkey). Only Galatia and Asia are known to have been preached to by Paul, so it is uncertain how Christianity first came to some of these regions.

<sup>7</sup> OR chosen.

<sup>8</sup> IE leading to. The preposition expresses result, not cause, as some take it.

<sup>9</sup> A metaphor from the sprinkling of the blood of sacrifice; cf. Exo. 24:7-8.

<sup>10</sup> So the elect are chosen (a) in accordance with the foreknowledge of God, (b) through the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit, (c) which leads them to be obedient, and (d) receive the atoning effects of the blood of Christ.

<sup>11</sup> IE to you. The verb "multiplied" is never used like this in Paul's letters.

<sup>12</sup> The verb is not explicitly stated (thus ENG "be" is in italics); it is possible that it should be taken as an indicative, "blessed *is* the God."

<sup>13</sup> A vivid metaphor of new birth and spiritual regeneration.

<sup>14</sup> OR living.

<sup>15</sup> OR through, the resurrection of Christ being the reason for this living hope.

<sup>16</sup> OR imperishable.

fadeth not away,<sup>17</sup> reserved<sup>18</sup> in heaven<sup>19</sup> for you,<sup>5</sup> Who<sup>20</sup> are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.<sup>6</sup> Wherein<sup>21</sup> ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season,<sup>22</sup> if need be, ye are in heaviness<sup>23</sup> through manifold temptations:<sup>24</sup> <sup>7</sup> That the trial<sup>25</sup> of your faith, being<sup>26</sup> much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire,<sup>27</sup> might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing<sup>28</sup> of Jesus Christ:<sup>8</sup> Whom having not seen,<sup>29</sup> ye love; in whom, though now<sup>30</sup> ye see *him* not, yet believing,<sup>31</sup> ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:<sup>9</sup> Receiving the end<sup>32</sup> of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Of which salvation the prophets<sup>34</sup> have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you:<sup>35</sup> <sup>11</sup> Searching<sup>36</sup> what, or what manner of time<sup>37</sup> the Spirit of Christ<sup>38</sup> which was in them did signify,<sup>39</sup> when it testified

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<sup>17</sup> IE unfading.

<sup>18</sup> τετηρημένην *tetērēmenēn* kept, guarded.

<sup>19</sup> ἐν οὐρανοῖς *en ouranois*. The GR expression is lit. plural ("in heavens"), reflecting the Jewish and Hellenistic belief in a plurality of heavens.

<sup>20</sup> The antecedent is the preceding "you."

<sup>21</sup> The precise antecedent is intentionally uncertain; render "consequently."

<sup>22</sup> OR a little while, a brief time.

<sup>23</sup> OR caused grief, distressed.

<sup>24</sup> OR various trials.

<sup>25</sup> δοκίμιον *dokimion* proof, tested nature, from which its genuineness can be inferred.

<sup>26</sup> "Being" here refers back to "your faith," not to "trial."

<sup>27</sup> The KJV does not handle the contrast between the perishable nature of gold and its value in a refined state well here. Better is RSV: "more precious than gold which though perishable is tested by fire."

<sup>28</sup> ἀποκαλύψει *apokalupsei* lit. revelation, but in this letter the word refers to the parousia, the appearance of Christ at his second coming in the end of the age.

<sup>29</sup> The addressees of this letter were not eyewitnesses of Christ, living in a different place and being at least a generation removed from the mortal ministry of the Savior.

<sup>30</sup> The implication is that their not seeing him is temporary; the day will come when they will indeed see him.

<sup>31</sup> They believe without seeing; IE they have faith.

<sup>32</sup> Not termination, but goal, object, outcome, consummation. JST "object" is correct.

<sup>33</sup> OR your lives. IE not the soul as an entity apart from the body, but the whole being; "yourselves as living persons."

<sup>34</sup> IE the OT prophets.

<sup>35</sup> Although the prophets usually acted in the role of *forthtellers*, speaking the word and will of God to his people, the author here speaks of their occasional role as *foretellers*, speaking of the eventual coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh.

<sup>36</sup> In the sense of studying, investigating, researching.

<sup>37</sup> IE under what circumstances and at what time.

<sup>38</sup> This expression is consistent with the LDS understanding that the Jehovah (Yahweh) of the OT was the preexistent Christ.

<sup>39</sup> OR declare.

beforehand<sup>40</sup> the sufferings<sup>41</sup> of<sup>42</sup> Christ, and the glory that should follow. <sup>12</sup> Unto whom<sup>43</sup> it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us<sup>44</sup> they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost<sup>45</sup> sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.<sup>46</sup>

### *A Call to Holy Living*

<sup>13</sup> Wherefore gird up the loins<sup>47</sup> of your mind, be sober,<sup>48</sup> and hope to the end<sup>49</sup> for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation<sup>50</sup> of Jesus Christ; <sup>14</sup> As obedient children,<sup>51</sup> not fashioning<sup>52</sup> yourselves according to the former lusts<sup>53</sup> in your

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<sup>40</sup> προμαρτυρόμενον *promarturomenon* bore prior witness to, foretold. This verb occurs nowhere else in the LXX, NT or contemporary GR.

<sup>41</sup> Probably an allusion to the Suffering Servant song of Isa. 52:13-53:12.

<sup>42</sup> IE destined for.

<sup>43</sup> The antecedent is the prophets.

<sup>44</sup> Such messianic prophecies were not intended for the immediate audience of the prophets, but rather for those who would live in later times, much as we say that the BoM was really written for our day.

<sup>45</sup> OR Holy Spirit. Holy Ghost and Holy Spirit are synonymous terms (ENG "ghost" having been influenced by German *Geist* "spirit").

<sup>46</sup> παρακύψαι *parakupsai* to bend over (so as to see something better); thus, to gain a glimpse, to steal a peek. Both the prophets and the angels were very interested and sought to understand what God was doing for the redemption of his people, which is now openly preached to you through the Holy Ghost.

<sup>47</sup> ἀναζωσάμενοι τὰς ὀσφύας *anazōsamenoī tas osphuas* having girded up the loins. This expression refers to the common long, flowing robes that were customarily worn, and which hindered active movement. Therefore, to prepare for a race or work or some other strenuous activity, one would "gird up one's loins"; IE hike up the bottom part of the robe and stick it in one's belt to allow freedom of movement. The expression is metaphorical here for preparing one's mind for strenuous activity. A different way to say it that works in our culture would be something like "having rolled up the sleeves of your mind."

<sup>48</sup> OR be self-controlled; remain alert. The expression is metaphorical for spiritual sobriety, as opposed to spiritual drunkenness.

<sup>49</sup> τελείως *teleiōs* completely, fully.

<sup>50</sup> Here in the sense of "appearance"; the allusion could be to his mortal ministry, his second coming in glory, or both.

<sup>51</sup> The GR reflects a Semitic construction, and literally says "children of obedience." IE those characterized by obedience.

<sup>52</sup> μὴ συσχηματιζόμενοι *mē suschēmatizomenoi* do not allow yourselves to be shaped, molded (in accordance with a specific pattern). The participle with the negative has the force of an imperative.

<sup>53</sup> OR cravings, passionate desires.

ignorance: <sup>15</sup> But as he which hath called you is holy, <sup>54</sup> so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; <sup>55</sup> <sup>16</sup> Because it is written, **Be ye holy; for I am holy.** <sup>56</sup>

<sup>17</sup> And if <sup>57</sup> ye call on <sup>58</sup> the Father, who without respect of persons <sup>59</sup> judgeth according to every man's work, <sup>60</sup> pass the time of your sojourning <sup>61</sup> *here* in fear: <sup>62</sup> <sup>18</sup> Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed <sup>63</sup> with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, <sup>64</sup> from your vain conversation <sup>65</sup> *received* by tradition from your fathers; <sup>66</sup> <sup>19</sup> But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: <sup>67</sup> <sup>20</sup> Who verily was foreordained <sup>68</sup> before the foundation of the world, <sup>69</sup> but was manifest <sup>70</sup> in these last times for you, <sup>21</sup> Who <sup>71</sup> by him <sup>72</sup> do believe in God, <sup>73</sup> that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

<sup>22</sup> Seeing ye have purified <sup>74</sup> your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, <sup>75</sup> *see that ye love one another with a pure heart* <sup>76</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> A circumlocution for God, the Holy One.

<sup>55</sup> A KJV archaism for conduct.

<sup>56</sup> Lev. 19:2.

<sup>57</sup> If (as you do); IE since.

<sup>58</sup> OR invoke (IE in prayer).

<sup>59</sup> IE impartially.

<sup>60</sup> That we will be judged according to our deeds is the most frequently stated and traditional position in biblical texts.

<sup>61</sup> παροικίας *paroikias* refers to time spent in a foreign country as a resident alien. Here the word might be metaphorical of our sojourn here in mortality.

<sup>62</sup> OR reverence.

<sup>63</sup> OR ransomed, bought back.

<sup>64</sup> Silver and gold stand in apposition to corruptible things, which they illustrate.

<sup>65</sup> OR empty way of life.

<sup>66</sup> πατροπαράδοτου *patroparadotou* handed down, inherited from the fathers.

<sup>67</sup> That a sacrificial lamb had to be without flaw is a commonplace in the Law of Moses; see for instance Lev. 9:3.

<sup>68</sup> προεγνωσμένου *proegnōsmenou* foreknown.

<sup>69</sup> A common expression for the furthest imaginable reaches of past time, alluding to the primordial period before the creation.

<sup>70</sup> OR revealed (in the incarnation).

<sup>71</sup> The antecedent is the plural "you" at the end of the previous v.

<sup>72</sup> IE Jesus.

<sup>73</sup> Specifically the Father.

<sup>74</sup> ἡγνικότες *hēgnikotes* normally refers to ceremonial purification; here the verb is being used metaphorically for moral purification.

<sup>75</sup> φιλαδελφίαν ἀνυπόκριτον *philadelphian anupokriton* sincere brotherly love. The first word is recognizable as the source of Philadelphia, the city of brotherly love (*phil* meaning love and *adelphos* meaning brother); the second word is recognizable as the source of ENG "hypocrite" with a negating alpha privative; IE "unhypocritical" brotherly love.

<sup>76</sup> Some mss. omit the adjective "pure," and some read "with a true heart," but the KJV probably reflects the correct reading here.

fervently.<sup>77</sup> <sup>23</sup> Being born again, not of corruptible<sup>78</sup> seed, but of incorruptible,<sup>79</sup> by the word of God, which liveth and abideth<sup>80</sup> for ever.

<sup>24</sup> **For all flesh is as grass,  
and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.<sup>81</sup>  
The grass withereth,  
and the flower thereof falleth away:  
<sup>25</sup> But the word of the Lord endureth for ever.<sup>82</sup>**

And this is the word<sup>83</sup> which by the gospel is preached unto you.

## Chapter 2

### *The Living Stone and the Holy Nation*

<sup>1</sup> WHEREFORE laying aside<sup>84</sup> all<sup>85</sup> malice,<sup>86</sup> and all guile,<sup>87</sup> and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,<sup>88</sup> <sup>2</sup> As newborn babes, desire the sincere<sup>89</sup> milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:<sup>90</sup> <sup>3</sup> If so be **ye have tasted<sup>91</sup> that the Lord is gracious.**<sup>92</sup> <sup>4</sup> To whom<sup>93</sup> coming,<sup>94</sup> *as unto* a living stone,<sup>95</sup> disallowed<sup>96</sup> indeed of men,

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<sup>77</sup> OR earnestly, wholeheartedly.

<sup>78</sup> OR perishable.

<sup>79</sup> OR imperishable.

<sup>80</sup> OR endures.

<sup>81</sup> Grass//flower of grass is an example of an augmented word pair, on the pattern A//BA.

<sup>82</sup> Isa. 40:6-8.

<sup>83</sup> The "word" could mean the Gospel, Jesus himself as God's Word (Logos), or God's word written, the scriptures.

<sup>84</sup> OR rid yourselves of; put off or away.

<sup>85</sup> IE every form of.

<sup>86</sup> OR wickedness, evil (more generally).

<sup>87</sup> IE deceit.

<sup>88</sup> In modern ENG idiom we would call this backbiting.

<sup>89</sup> ἄδολον *adolon* without guile (with alpha privative), so the opposite of "guile" from v. 1; IE unadulterated.

<sup>90</sup> The Textus Receptus on which the KJV is based mistakenly omits the words εἰς σωτηρίαν *eis sōtērian* into salvation. This was probably a copying error, as a scribe's eye slipped from the *eis* introducing this expression to the *ei* beginning the next v. The ms. support for the inclusion of the words is overwhelming. The image therefore is of the faithful "growing" into salvation, the way a well-fed newborn babe grows.

<sup>91</sup> Peter's image of a newborn baby drinking mother's milk naturally leads into this quotation from the Psalms. Salvation is here portrayed as something both tangible and sweet, which can actually be tasted.

<sup>92</sup> The quote is from Ps. 34:8 (loosely based on LXX). ENG "gracious" is χρηστός *chrēstos* good (esp. in the sense of "kind").

<sup>93</sup> The antecedent is "the Lord."



but chosen of God, *and* precious,<sup>5</sup> Ye also, as lively<sup>97</sup> stones,<sup>98</sup> are built up<sup>99</sup> a spiritual house,<sup>100</sup> an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices,<sup>101</sup> acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.<sup>6</sup> Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture,

**Behold, I lay in Sion<sup>102</sup> a chief corner stone,<sup>103</sup>  
elect,<sup>104</sup> precious:<sup>105</sup>  
and he that believeth on him<sup>106</sup> shall not be confounded.<sup>107</sup>**

<sup>7</sup> Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious:<sup>108</sup> but unto them which be disobedient,<sup>109</sup> **the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,**<sup>110</sup> <sup>8</sup> **And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence,**<sup>111</sup> *even to them* which stumble<sup>112</sup> at the word,<sup>113</sup> being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.<sup>114</sup> <sup>9</sup> But

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<sup>94</sup> The participle refers to the believers, the "ye" of v. 3.

<sup>95</sup> The living stone here is the Lord. The KJV, by adding the italicized words "as unto," has turned the metaphor of the passage into a simile. It was common in the OT to compare God to a stone.

<sup>96</sup> OR rejected. Cf. Acts 4:11.

<sup>97</sup> OR living.

<sup>98</sup> Here the imagery of living stones is extended to the believers; IE we may "grow" into salvation and become as God is, a concept of deification.

<sup>99</sup> IE the way a house is constructed.

<sup>100</sup> Possibly in the sense of a temple, a dwelling place for God.

<sup>101</sup> The expression "spiritual" sacrifices seems to distinguish such sacrifices from the literal blood sacrifices of the historic temple cult.

<sup>102</sup> IE Zion, via GR transliteration (which lacks a letter conforming to the z sound of HEB *zayin* and thus represents that letter with the s sound of GR *sigma*).

<sup>103</sup> A metaphor with messianic implications.

<sup>104</sup> The cornerstone is the most important stone in laying the foundation for a building, and therefore is always carefully chosen.

<sup>105</sup> OR honored.

<sup>106</sup> In its original context Isaiah probably conceived of the stone as the Davidic kingdom, but already in the LXX the words "on him" were added, giving the passage a messianic interpretation.

<sup>107</sup> Isa. 28:16. For "confounded," consider "put to shame."

<sup>108</sup> The ENG word order of the KJV is misleading ("believe" does not take an object here). Render "Therefore, the honor belongs to you who believe."

<sup>109</sup> ἀπιστοῦσιν *apistousin* do not believe. This is the same verb as used previously in the sentence, "believe," but with a negating *alpha* privative. The contrast expressed here is between those who believe and those who do not.

<sup>110</sup> Ps. 118:22. The expression "head of the corner" refers to a cornerstone, as in v. 6.

<sup>111</sup> Isa. 8:14.

<sup>112</sup> The author plays with the concept of "stumbling" from the Isa. passage he has just quoted.

<sup>113</sup> IE Jesus Christ or, possibly, the good news about Jesus Christ.

<sup>114</sup> IE the result of such disobedience was foreordained by God. Cf. D&C 130:20-21.

ye *are* a chosen generation,<sup>115</sup> a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people;<sup>116</sup> that ye should shew forth the praises of him<sup>117</sup> who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Which in time past *were* not a people,  
but *are* now the people of God:  
which had not obtained mercy,  
but now have obtained mercy.<sup>119</sup>

*Live as Servants of God*

<sup>11</sup> Dearly beloved, I<sup>120</sup> beseech *you*<sup>121</sup> as strangers and pilgrims,<sup>122</sup> abstain<sup>123</sup> from  
fleshly lusts,<sup>124</sup> which war<sup>125</sup> against the soul; <sup>12</sup> Having your conversation<sup>126</sup> honest

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<sup>115</sup> Isa. 43:20.

<sup>116</sup> λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν *laos eis peripoiēsin* a people for (his) possession; IE God's own people. ENG "peculiar" here is used in the older sense of that which belongs to something or someone (*peculium* is Latin for private property); it does not allude to a people that is strange, weird or distinctive, as it is commonly misunderstood. Cf. the idiom "that plant is peculiar to this region of the country." Peter's language here is influenced by Exo. 19:5-6, in which God calls the people his "peculiar treasure" (HEB *segullah*). This word is cognate with Akkadian *sikiltum*, and conveys the sense of valued property to which one has an exclusive right of possession. For instance, the seal of Abban of Alalakh designates the owner as the *sikiltum* of the god, his "servant" and "beloved." The expression alludes both to the value of the property and the fact that it belongs to the one who possesses it; as applied to people, it emphasizes their chosenness and covenant status with God. It may be such a concept that underlies the expression "a choice and a favored people of the Lord" in 2 Ne. 1:19.

<sup>117</sup> Exo. 19:5-6, 23:22 (LXX); Isa. 43:20-21; Mal. 3:17.

<sup>118</sup> For this darkness and light imagery, cf. especially Isa. 9:2.

<sup>119</sup> This v. consists of two anithetical couplets.

<sup>120</sup> The author here switches to direct, first-person discourse.

<sup>121</sup> The object of the verb is not expressed and must be implied, which is why this word is printed in italics, as it is not lit. present in the GR text.

<sup>122</sup> OR resident aliens and visiting strangers.

<sup>123</sup> OR keep away from.

<sup>124</sup> IE physical, bodily cravings.

<sup>125</sup> στρατεύονται *strateuontai*, which is related to such ENG words as "strategy," is normally a term used for waging warfare.

<sup>126</sup> OR conduct.

among the Gentiles:<sup>127</sup> that, whereas they speak against<sup>128</sup> you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Submit yourselves to every ordinance<sup>130</sup> of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king,<sup>131</sup> as supreme; <sup>14</sup> Or unto governors,<sup>132</sup> as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.<sup>133</sup> <sup>15</sup> For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.<sup>134</sup> <sup>16</sup> As free,<sup>135</sup> and not using *your* liberty for a cloke<sup>136</sup> of maliciousness,<sup>137</sup> but as the servants of God. <sup>17</sup> Honour all *men*. Love the brotherhood. Fear<sup>138</sup> God. Honour the king.<sup>139</sup>

### *The Example of Christ's Suffering*

<sup>18</sup> Servants,<sup>140</sup> *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear;<sup>141</sup> not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.<sup>142</sup> <sup>19</sup> For this *is* thankworthy,<sup>143</sup> if a man for conscience

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<sup>127</sup> ἔθνεσιν *ethnesin*, which is the source for such ENG words as "ethnic." The Christians here have adopted the Jewish practice of calling nonbelievers "Gentiles," much as early LDS adapted the same word as a description of those who do not believe.

<sup>128</sup> OR slander.

<sup>129</sup> Either the time when each Gentile is tested as to his individual faith, or possibly the allusion is to the appearance of Jesus Christ the second time in glory.

<sup>130</sup> κτίσει *ktisei* lit. creation; with the adjective "human," the word alludes to human institutions, such as governments. The sentiment of this section is similar to that expressed in D&C 134 about being subject to human governments.

<sup>131</sup> IE the Roman emperor.

<sup>132</sup> This word can refer either to the legates in charge of imperial provinces or to the proconsuls in charge of the senatorial provinces, such as those to whom this letter is addressed.

<sup>133</sup> IE territorial governors attempt to maintain public order both negatively by punishing the wicked and positively by praising those who do good.

<sup>134</sup> This wording suggests that the locals tended to view the Christians as up to no good and dangerous. By upright conduct, the people could change this perception of them.

<sup>135</sup> IE [do this/act righteously] as free persons. The command to act is not expressly stated; the passage is therefore elliptical.

<sup>136</sup> OR cover, pretext.

<sup>137</sup> OR wrongdoing.

<sup>138</sup> OR reverence.

<sup>139</sup> The AB points out that the chiasmic structure draws a distinction between the honor due to external, secular relations and those due to God and the Church. That is,

- A. Honor everyone (external relations)
  - B. love the brotherhood (internal relations)
  - B.' revere God (internal relations)
- A.' honor the emperor (external relations)

<sup>140</sup> IE household slaves.

toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.<sup>20</sup> For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted<sup>144</sup> for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God.<sup>145 21</sup> For even hereunto<sup>146</sup> were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:<sup>147</sup>

<sup>22</sup> **Who did no sin,  
neither was guile found in his mouth:**<sup>148</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Who, when he was reviled,<sup>149</sup> reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him<sup>150</sup> that judgeth righteously: <sup>24</sup> Who<sup>151</sup> his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree,<sup>152</sup> that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.<sup>153 25</sup> For ye were as sheep going astray;<sup>154</sup> but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop<sup>155</sup> of your souls.

## Chapter 3

### *Wives and Husbands*

<sup>1</sup> LIKEWISE,<sup>156</sup> ye wives,<sup>157</sup> *be* in subjection<sup>158</sup> to your own husbands; that, if any<sup>159</sup> obey not the word,<sup>160</sup> they also may without the word<sup>161</sup> be won<sup>162</sup> by the

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<sup>141</sup> OR reverence.

<sup>142</sup> σκολιῶς *skoliois* crooked, perverse, cruel.

<sup>143</sup> IE a credit (in God's sight).

<sup>144</sup> κολαφιζόμενοι *kolaphizomenoi* beaten up (with fists), much in the same way that Jesus was beaten prior to his crucifixion.

<sup>145</sup> The idea is that there is greater honor in enduring well hardships when you have done rightly and do not deserve them than when you have acted wickedly and the hardships therefore are a just recompense for your actions. The author then goes on to cite Jesus himself as an example.

<sup>146</sup> IE for this. That is, for doing well even in the face of trying circumstances.

<sup>147</sup> OR footsteps.

<sup>148</sup> Isa. 53:9. The mouth is cited as the source of speech.

<sup>149</sup> OR abused, insulted.

<sup>150</sup> IE God the Father.

<sup>151</sup> As with the "who" beginning the previous two vv., the antecedent is Jesus Christ.

<sup>152</sup> The cross by which Jesus was crucified is meant. The author uses the word "tree" to allude to Dt. 21:22-23.

<sup>153</sup> Alluding to Isa. 53:5.

<sup>154</sup> Alluding to Isa. 53:6.

<sup>155</sup> ἐπίσκοπον *episkopon* lit. overseer (one watching over). The allusion here is not to the priesthood office of a Bishop, but to Jesus as the one who shepherds us and watches over our very lives. Render "guardian."

<sup>156</sup> An adverb used to indicate a topic similar to the foregoing discussion.

<sup>157</sup> Note that the author addresses the wives directly.

conversation<sup>163</sup> of the<sup>164</sup> wives; <sup>2</sup> While they<sup>165</sup> behold<sup>166</sup> your chaste conversation<sup>167</sup> coupled with fear.<sup>168</sup> <sup>3</sup> Whose adorning let it not be<sup>169</sup> that outward *adorning* of plaiting<sup>170</sup> the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;<sup>171</sup> <sup>4</sup> But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart,<sup>172</sup> in that which is not corruptible,<sup>173</sup> *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit,<sup>174</sup> which is in the sight of God of great price.<sup>175</sup> <sup>5</sup> For after this manner<sup>176</sup> in the old time<sup>177</sup> the holy women<sup>178</sup> also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection<sup>179</sup> unto their own husbands: <sup>6</sup> Even as Sara obeyed

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<sup>158</sup> In ancient patriarchal societies, both Greco-Roman and Israelite, wives were viewed as being subordinate to their husbands in the household economy. The author here expresses these cultural norms of the time.

<sup>159</sup> IE husbands.

<sup>160</sup> IE disbelieve in Jesus Christ. The author here alludes to marriages between believing wives and nonbelieving husbands.

<sup>161</sup> OR without a word [there is no definite article in the expression in GR]. IE silently, without even so much as a word from their wives.

<sup>162</sup> Won over or gained as believers; IE converted to the Church.

<sup>163</sup> A KJV archaism; the JST correctly renders "conduct," both here and elsewhere in the book.

<sup>164</sup> OR their.

<sup>165</sup> IE the husbands.

<sup>166</sup> OR see.

<sup>167</sup> OR conduct.

<sup>168</sup> OR reverence.

<sup>169</sup> The antecedent to "whose" is the wives. The KJV is an overliteral representation of the GR here, and is awkward. The sense would be better conveyed with a direct imperative: "Do not adorn yourselves with...."

<sup>170</sup> OR braiding.

<sup>171</sup> There is of course nothing wrong with putting on clothing; here the context demands that *fine* clothing is meant. Such warnings against the ostentatious display of symbols of wealth and social status are a commonplace in the scriptures.

<sup>172</sup> This expression is unique in the NT, and could easily be misunderstood. Better would be "inner person of the heart"; IE one's inner character. The genitive is epexegetic; IE the inner person *is* the heart.

<sup>173</sup> OR perishable.

<sup>174</sup> In contrast with plaited hair, gold and fine apparel.

<sup>175</sup> πολυτελής *poluteles* very precious.

<sup>176</sup> IE exhibiting a strong inner character rather than with the adornments of outer beauty and privilege.

<sup>177</sup> IE long ago.

<sup>178</sup> OR holy wives, as the same word in GR is used for both women and wives. The expression "holy wives" is elsewhere unattested in the NT, but the example of Sarah suggests the kind of women the author had in mind by this allusion.

<sup>179</sup> The same verb used in v. 1.

Abraham, calling him lord.<sup>180</sup> whose daughters ye are,<sup>181</sup> as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.<sup>182</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Likewise, ye husbands,<sup>183</sup> dwell with *them*<sup>184</sup> according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife,<sup>185</sup> as unto the weaker vessel,<sup>186</sup> and as being heirs together<sup>187</sup> of the grace of life; that your<sup>188</sup> prayers be not hindered.

### *Suffering for Righteousness' Sake*

<sup>8</sup> Finally, *be ye*<sup>189</sup> all<sup>190</sup> of one mind,<sup>191</sup> having compassion one of another,<sup>192</sup> love as brethren,<sup>193</sup> *be* pitiful,<sup>194</sup> *be* courteous.<sup>195</sup> <sup>9</sup> Not rendering evil for evil,<sup>196</sup> or railing<sup>197</sup> for railing; but contrariwise<sup>198</sup> blessing,<sup>199</sup> knowing that ye are thereunto<sup>200</sup> called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

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<sup>180</sup> Used here as a term of respect.

<sup>181</sup> Christian wives are the descendants, and therefore daughters, of Sarah, whether literally or figuratively.

<sup>182</sup> OR of any terror. This last clause is an allusion to Prov. 3:25.

<sup>183</sup> The author here turns from addressing the wives to addressing the husbands.

<sup>184</sup> Although not expressly stated (which explains why the word "them" is in italics), "your wives" is to be understood.

<sup>185</sup> The GR word underlying "unto the wife" belongs with what follows rather than with what precedes; IE "as to the weaker vessel, the *feminine* one."

<sup>186</sup> This expression reflects the cultural assumption of the time that the female sex was the weaker gender. The word "vessel" refers to a utensil used for cooking.

<sup>187</sup> συγκληρονόμοις *sunklēronomois* joint heirs, co-heirs. A husband and wife inherit eternal life together.

<sup>188</sup> The pronoun is plural, and refers to the prayers of both husbands and their wives, as well as their common prayers together.

<sup>189</sup> The GR lacks a main verb, which must be supplied. This is why "be ye" is in italics.

<sup>190</sup> The author turns from addressing specific audiences to a more inclusive form of address.

<sup>191</sup> ὁμόφρονες *homophrones* of like mind. The term underscores the need for unity and consensus in the community.

<sup>192</sup> συμπαθεῖς *sumpatheis* lit. feeling with; IE compassionate. This GR word is the source of ENG "sympathy."

<sup>193</sup> φιλάδελφοι *philadelphoi* having brotherly affection, loving of brothers (and sisters). Cf. Philadelphia, the "City of Brotherly Love."

<sup>194</sup> εὐσπλαγχοι *eusplanchnoi* tender hearted.

<sup>195</sup> ταπεινόφρονες *tapeinophrones* humble minded.

<sup>196</sup> The allusion here is to the OT *lex talionis*, or law of retaliation, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

<sup>197</sup> OR insult.

<sup>198</sup> IE but on the contrary.

<sup>199</sup> IE one should return a blessing for evil or an insult; the idea is similar to the Savior's admonition to turn the other cheek.

<sup>200</sup> For this purpose, IE to bless others, even in the face of hostility or persecution.

<sup>10</sup> For he that will love life,  
and see good days,  
let him refrain<sup>201</sup> his tongue from evil,  
and his lips that they speak no guile:<sup>202</sup>  
<sup>11</sup> Let him eschew<sup>203</sup> evil, and do good;  
let him seek peace, and ensue<sup>204</sup> it.  
<sup>12</sup> For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous,  
and his ears *are open* unto their prayers:  
but the face<sup>205</sup> of the Lord *is* against them that do evil.<sup>206</sup>

<sup>13</sup> And who *is* he that will harm you,<sup>207</sup> if ye be followers of<sup>208</sup> that which is good?  
<sup>14</sup> But and<sup>209</sup> if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy<sup>210</sup> *are ye*: and **be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled**,<sup>211</sup> <sup>15</sup> But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer<sup>212</sup> to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.<sup>213</sup> <sup>16</sup> Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of<sup>214</sup> you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation<sup>215</sup> in Christ. <sup>17</sup> For *it is* better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing,<sup>216</sup> than for evil doing.<sup>217</sup> <sup>18</sup> For Christ also<sup>218</sup> hath once<sup>219</sup> suffered<sup>220</sup> for<sup>221</sup> sins,

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<sup>201</sup> OR stop.

<sup>202</sup> IE deceitful speech.

<sup>203</sup> OR turn away from.

<sup>204</sup> OR pursue.

<sup>205</sup> In these three parallel clauses, the first two, eyes//ears, reflect the Lord's watchful care over the righteous, but the last, characterized by "face," reflects the Lord's judgment of the wicked. All three parallel terms, eyes//ears//face, show God's observation of human actions.

<sup>206</sup> Ps. 34:12-16. In HEB this Psalm is an acrostic, with each v. beginning with the letters of the HEB alphabet in succession; the acrostic form does not survive the translation into either GR or ENG

<sup>207</sup> The question is rhetorical.

<sup>208</sup> ζηλωταὶ *zēlōtai* zealous for. IE not merely followers, but ardent for, enthusiastic towards.

<sup>209</sup> OR even.

<sup>210</sup> OR blessed.

<sup>211</sup> Isa. 8:12.

<sup>212</sup> ἀπολογία *apologian* reply, defense; (rational) explanation. This v. is widely seen as warrant for the practice of *apologetics*, which has to do with defending the faith from attack. In the immediate context, however, the expression need not refer to a defense against an actual attack, but simply to a willingness to respond to anyone who should ask with a reply as to the grounds of one's belief.

<sup>213</sup> OR reverence. This v. contains allusions to Isa. 8:13.

<sup>214</sup> OR disparage, slander.

<sup>215</sup> OR conduct.

<sup>216</sup> ἀγαθοποιοῦντας *agathopoiousantas* as well doers.

the just for the unjust,<sup>222</sup> that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh,<sup>223</sup> but quickened<sup>224</sup> by the Spirit.<sup>225</sup> <sup>19</sup> By which<sup>226</sup> also he went<sup>227</sup> and preached<sup>228</sup> unto the spirits in prison,<sup>229</sup> <sup>20</sup> Which<sup>230</sup> sometime<sup>231</sup> were disobedient, when once the longsuffering<sup>232</sup> of God waited<sup>233</sup> in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing,<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> ΚΑΚΟΠΟΛΟΥΝΤΑΣ *kakopoiontas* as evil doers.

<sup>218</sup> The word "also" here alludes back to the immediately preceding discussion of Christian suffering.

<sup>219</sup> IE once for all, by means of the atonement.

<sup>220</sup> Both in Gethsemane and on the cross, ultimately resulting in his death.

<sup>221</sup> IE in expiation of.

<sup>222</sup> δίκαιος ὑπὲρ ἀδίκων *dikaïos huper adikōn* a righteous one for unrighteous ones.

<sup>223</sup> The Docetists claimed that Jesus did not really die; he only "seemed" to (Docetist derives from the GR verb for "seem"). The author here proclaims that Jesus did in fact die a physical death.

<sup>224</sup> OR made alive.

<sup>225</sup> OR with respect to (his) spirit. The KJV capitalizes "Spirit," apparently on the view that the Holy Ghost or Spirit of God made Jesus alive. The parallelism with "in the flesh," however, suggests that this is a dative of respect qualifying the foregoing verb.

<sup>226</sup> The antecedent to the relative is "spirit"; it was in his spirit that Jesus descended to the underworld after his crucifixion and before his resurrection.

<sup>227</sup> This event is commonly referred to as the *descensus ad inferos* ("descent to those in the netherworld"), or in early ENG literature as the "Harrowing of Hell." (A harrow was a cultivator used in the soil, and the term apparently was meant as an expression of judgment, as in winnowing the wheat from the chaff.) Belief in the Descensus is reflected in the Apostles' Creed, and it was a popular theme both in early Christian literature and throughout the Middle Ages. It is generally still accepted in some measure by Catholics and the Orthodox, but Protestants tend to follow the lead of Calvin and Luther, each of whom viewed it as merely a fable. LDS accept the *Descensus*, as elaborated by Joseph F. Smith's Vision of the Redemption of the Dead in D&C 138. For more detail on this subject, see the works cited in the Introduction to this Letter. Cf. also 4:6.

<sup>228</sup> The most natural way to understand this is that salvation may be brought even to those who have died.

<sup>229</sup> IE the abode of the dead (Sheol or Hades).

<sup>230</sup> The antecedent is "spirits in prison." The JST changes "which" to "some of whom," presumably to recognize that at least Noah and his family were not disobedient. And in fact anciently Sheol and Hades were often perceived as the abode of *all* the dead, without distinction between the righteous and the wicked.

<sup>231</sup> OR at some time; IE once.

<sup>232</sup> μακροθυμία *makrothumia* patience. The word does not refer to people who were longsuffering, but to God's patient endurance of wickedness among the people.

<sup>233</sup> The verb apparently alludes to the restraint God showed in waiting to bring destruction upon the earth until the ark was prepared.

<sup>234</sup> OR being built.



wherein<sup>235</sup> few, that is, eight souls<sup>236</sup> were saved by water.<sup>237</sup> <sup>21</sup> The like figure<sup>238</sup> whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,)<sup>239</sup> by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: <sup>22</sup> Who<sup>240</sup> is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand<sup>241</sup> of God; angels and authorities and powers<sup>242</sup> being made subject unto him.

## Chapter 4

### *Good Stewards of God's Grace*

<sup>1</sup> FORASMUCH then<sup>243</sup> as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm<sup>244</sup> yourselves likewise<sup>245</sup> with the same mind:<sup>246</sup> for he<sup>247</sup> that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from<sup>248</sup> sin,<sup>249</sup> <sup>2</sup> That he<sup>250</sup> no longer should live the rest of *his* time<sup>251</sup> in the flesh

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<sup>235</sup> IE in the ark.

<sup>236</sup> The eight are Noah and his wife, their three sons, and their sons' wives.

<sup>237</sup> The preposition could be instrumental, as it is taken in the KJV, "they were saved by water," or it could be locative, "they were saved (while passing) through water." The passage probably means to take the preposition in an instrumental sense, as the KJV has it, so as to buttress the comparison with baptism in the following v.

<sup>238</sup> ἀντίτυπον *antitupon* antitype; corresponding to, realizing exactly. Noah being saved by water is a *type*, the *antitype* to which is us being saved by the waters of baptism.

<sup>239</sup> The thought is that baptism is not merely the cleansing of dirt from the body, as in a bath, but rather entails entering into a covenant relationship with God.

<sup>240</sup> IE Jesus Christ.

<sup>241</sup> Traditionally the position of honor.

<sup>242</sup> Authorities and powers designate classes of angelic beings or demonic powers; IE all of the spiritual powers (even his enemies) are subject to him.

<sup>243</sup> OR therefore.

<sup>244</sup> ὁπλίσασθε *hoplisasthe* arm yourselves, is the verbal equivalent of the "hoplite," a Greek word for an arms bearing soldier in the army. The martial metaphor here is quite vivid.

<sup>245</sup> Christ is presented as the pattern or example we should follow.

<sup>246</sup> IE thought, understanding, idea, frame of mind, outlook, perspective.

<sup>247</sup> The pronoun is generic and does not refer back to Christ; better would be "whoever."

<sup>248</sup> IE finished with.

<sup>249</sup> The KJV incorrectly gives the impression that the pronoun "he" in this clause refers back to Christ, and if Christ "hath ceased from sin," that suggests that Christ used to sin before such cessation. Therefore, the JST recasts the passage to avoid the implication of sin to Christ. In this general respect the JST is correct, for the passage does not intend to impute sin to Christ. The "he" of this clause does not take Jesus as its specific antecedent, but rather it stands generally and proverbially for any human who suffers for sin.

<sup>250</sup> IE the Christian who, following Christ's pattern, has suffered physically and ceased from sin.

<sup>251</sup> IE the small amount of time remaining to the believer's mortal existence.

to the lusts of men,<sup>252</sup> but to the will of God.<sup>3</sup> For the time past<sup>253</sup> of *our* life may suffice<sup>254</sup> us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles,<sup>255</sup> when we walked<sup>256</sup> in lasciviousness,<sup>257</sup> lusts,<sup>258</sup> excess of wine,<sup>259</sup> revellings,<sup>260</sup> banquetings,<sup>261</sup> and abominable<sup>262</sup> idolatries.<sup>263</sup> <sup>4</sup> Wherein<sup>264</sup> they think it strange<sup>265</sup> that ye run<sup>266</sup> not with *them* to the same excess of riot,<sup>267</sup> speaking evil<sup>268</sup> of *you*.<sup>5</sup> Who<sup>269</sup> shall give<sup>270</sup> account to him<sup>271</sup> that is ready to judge the quick<sup>272</sup> and the dead.<sup>273</sup> <sup>6</sup> For for this cause<sup>274</sup> was the gospel preached<sup>275</sup> also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh,<sup>276</sup> but live according to God in the spirit.<sup>277</sup> <sup>7</sup> But the end of all things<sup>278</sup> is at hand:<sup>279</sup> be ye therefore sober,<sup>280</sup> and watch unto prayer.<sup>281</sup> <sup>8</sup> And above all things have

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<sup>252</sup> IE human desires.

<sup>253</sup> IE the time that has passed, meaning the portion of the believer's life prior to his conversion.

<sup>254</sup> IE be sufficient, enough.

<sup>255</sup> In contrast to the will of God; IE what the Gentiles want, as illustrated by the following catalog of six immoral behaviors.

<sup>256</sup> A common Semitic idiom for one's course of life and behavior.

<sup>257</sup> Wanton debauchery, unrestrained by law or moral codes of conduct.

<sup>258</sup> Including but not limited to sexual desire.

<sup>259</sup> IE drunkenness.

<sup>260</sup> κώμοις *kōmois* drunken orgies in honor of the god Dionysius, the god of wine.

<sup>261</sup> IE drinking parties.

<sup>262</sup> OR forbidden.

<sup>263</sup> Possibly alluding to oblations of wine offered to the Greek gods at these parties.

<sup>264</sup> OR in this situation.

<sup>265</sup> IE they (the Christian's Gentile friends) are surprised.

<sup>266</sup> In the sense of going out and about with for entertainment.

<sup>267</sup> OR outpouring of dissipation. The expression is metaphorical for a torrent or flood of immoral activity.

<sup>268</sup> βλασφημοῦντες *blasphēmōntes* malign, slander, vilify.

<sup>269</sup> The antecedent to the relative is the carousing Gentiles.

<sup>270</sup> OR have to render an.

<sup>271</sup> The identity of the judge is not given; presumably either God or Jesus was intended.

<sup>272</sup> OR living.

<sup>273</sup> IE all of humanity, who have lived, now live, or ever will live.

<sup>274</sup> The repetition of "for" in the KJV is awkward. The JST provides a more elegant rendering, "because of this."

<sup>275</sup> εὐηγγελίσθη *euēgelisthē*. The verb is an impersonal passive (the ENG subject "Gospel" is not separately stated in the GR but is simply implicit in the verb itself). The actor doing this preaching is not stated, but if the judge of the previous v. was meant to be Jesus, then he is probably meant as the one doing the preaching here. Cf. 3:18-20.

<sup>276</sup> Having lived their mortal lives without access to the Gospel.

<sup>277</sup> By accepting the postmortal preaching they received in the spirit world.

<sup>278</sup> IE the end of the age, given a cyclical conception of time.

<sup>279</sup> OR imminent. Early Christians generally believed that the second coming of the Savior in glory was close at hand..

fervent<sup>282</sup> charity among yourselves: for **charity shall cover<sup>283</sup> the multitude of sins.**<sup>284 9</sup> Use hospitality<sup>285</sup> one to another without grudging.<sup>286 10</sup> As every man hath received the gift,<sup>287</sup> *even so* minister<sup>288</sup> the same one to another, as good stewards<sup>289</sup> of the manifold<sup>290</sup> grace of God. <sup>11</sup> If any man speak,<sup>291</sup> *let him speak* as the oracles<sup>292</sup> of God; if any man minister,<sup>293</sup> *let him do it*<sup>294</sup> as of the ability which God giveth:<sup>295</sup> that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

### *Suffering as a Christian*

<sup>12</sup> Beloved, think it not strange<sup>296</sup> concerning the fiery trial<sup>297</sup> which is to try<sup>298</sup> you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: <sup>13</sup> But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are

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<sup>280</sup> Not as opposed to being drunken, but sober minded, of sound judgment, reasonable.

<sup>281</sup> IE be alert with a view to your prayers.

<sup>282</sup> OR eager.

<sup>283</sup> The ENG verb "cover" conveys the wrong impression, as though the sins are still present and simply being glossed over; accordingly, the JST renders "preventeth." The HEB verb rendered "cover" is *kaphar*, which is often rendered "to atone"; cf. Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. But atonement is not simply "covering" over sins and leaving them in place; rather, the sense is better appreciated by the ENG idiom "to cover a bet."

<sup>284</sup> Prov. 10:12.

<sup>285</sup> OR be hospitable. The GR φιλόξενοι *philoxenoi* derives from roots meaning "love" (*phil-*) and "stranger" (*xenos*).

<sup>286</sup> OR complaining. The GR γογγυσμοῦ *gongusmou* is onomatopoeic; "grumbling" would be a good rendering.

<sup>287</sup> χάρισμα *charisma* is the concrete manifestation of God's χάρις *charis* grace (which is the source of ENG "charity").

<sup>288</sup> OR serve.

<sup>289</sup> A steward was often a chief slave who regulated the affairs of the household.

<sup>290</sup> OR varied, diverse. God's grace to us is expressed in many different ways and forms.

<sup>291</sup> OR whoever speaks.

<sup>292</sup> λόγια *logia* lit. sayings, utterances, but when qualified by "of God," as here, the word has weighty import (KJV "oracles" is good), and refers to promises or other communications from God to his people.

<sup>293</sup> διακονεῖ *diakonei*. This verb is the source for ENG "deacon."

<sup>294</sup> The GR construction is elliptical in this sentence, which is why the words *let him speak* and *let him do it* are in italics.

<sup>295</sup> OR as from the strength that God supplies. The verb χορηγεῖ *chorēgei* originally referred to singing in a chorus, then came to mean supplying a chorus, and finally to furnishing or supplying anything in general.

<sup>296</sup> OR do not be surprised.

<sup>297</sup> IE trial by fire, both literally and metaphorically.

<sup>298</sup> In the sense of "test."

partakers of Christ's sufferings;<sup>299</sup> that, when his glory shall be revealed,<sup>300</sup> ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.<sup>14</sup> If ye be reproached<sup>301</sup> for the name of Christ, happy<sup>302</sup> *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.<sup>303</sup> on their<sup>304</sup> part he<sup>305</sup> is evil spoken of, but on your<sup>306</sup> part he is glorified.<sup>307 15</sup> But let none of you suffer<sup>308</sup> as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.<sup>309 16</sup> Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian,<sup>310</sup> let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.<sup>311 17</sup> For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God:<sup>312</sup> and if *it* first *begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?<sup>313</sup>

<sup>18</sup> **And if the righteous scarcely be saved,<sup>314</sup>  
where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?<sup>315</sup>**

<sup>19</sup> Wherefore<sup>316</sup> let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing,<sup>317</sup> as unto a faithful Creator.

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<sup>299</sup> The Christian who suffers for Christ's sake not only follows the Savior's example in enduring suffering, but he also shares in the Savior's own sufferings themselves.

<sup>300</sup> IE at his second coming.

<sup>301</sup> OR reviled, insulted.

<sup>302</sup> μακάριοι *makarioi* is the same word rendered "blessed" repeatedly in the Beatitudes of Mt. 5.

<sup>303</sup> An allusion to Isa. 11:2.

<sup>304</sup> IE the gainsayers'.

<sup>305</sup> IE Jesus.

<sup>306</sup> IE the Christians'.

<sup>307</sup> The wording from "on their part" through "glorified" at the end of the sentence is reflected in the Textus Receptus, but not in the early ms. evidence. It appears to be a gloss designed to explain the meaning of the previous passage.

<sup>308</sup> Although suffering as a Christian for Jesus' sake is virtuous, suffering for the wrong reasons is not.

<sup>309</sup> ἀλλοτριεπίσκοπος *allotriepiskopos* occurs only here in all of GR literature. From its roots the term appears to refer to one who meddles in the affairs of others.

<sup>310</sup> As opposed to for criminal or impious reasons. The term "Christian" (GR *Christianos*) is a Latin-influenced formation, with the (supposed) proper name *Christ* + *-ianos*, indicating one who is a "partisan of" Christ, much like such terms as Caesarian or Herodian.

<sup>311</sup> On (the ground of) this name (IE Christ).

<sup>312</sup> The author expects the righteous to suffer for the faith as a part of the coming end times.

<sup>313</sup> The question is rhetorical and the point *a fortiori*. If the judgment will begin with the righteous, how much worse will be the judgment for the unrighteous to be judged thereafter?

<sup>314</sup> IE even a righteous person is saved only with difficulty.

<sup>315</sup> LXX Prov. 11:31. IE if the righteous are scarcely saved, the case is all that more difficult for the impious and sinners.

## Chapter 5

### *Tending the Flock of God*

<sup>1</sup> THE elders<sup>318</sup> which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder,<sup>319</sup> and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker<sup>320</sup> of the glory that shall be revealed: <sup>2</sup> Feed<sup>321</sup> the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight<sup>322</sup> thereof, not by constraint,<sup>323</sup> but willingly; not for filthy lucre,<sup>324</sup> but of a ready mind;<sup>325</sup> <sup>3</sup> Neither as being lords over<sup>326</sup> God's heritage,<sup>327</sup> but being ensamples<sup>328</sup> to the flock. <sup>4</sup> And when the chief Shepherd<sup>329</sup> shall appear, ye shall receive a crown<sup>330</sup> of glory that fadeth not away.

<sup>5</sup> Likewise, ye younger,<sup>331</sup> submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed<sup>332</sup> with humility: for

**God resisteth the proud,  
and giveth grace to the humble.**<sup>333</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> OR consequently, drawing a logical conclusion from the foregoing argument.

<sup>317</sup> As opposed to the evil doing described above.

<sup>318</sup> πρεσβυτέρους *prebuterous* is a comparative adjective used substantively as a noun (lit. "older ones"). Although the term originally referred to age, since those who were older generally had the most wisdom, the word came to refer to leaders in general and finally to a priesthood office entailing leadership responsibilities. This multivalence of the term explains why we send out 19-year old "elders" to do missionary work.

<sup>319</sup> συμπρεσβύτερος *sumpresbuteros* co-elder. This term is unique in the GR language, being used only here. Although the author earlier identifies himself as an apostle, this term seems to suggest a sense of solidarity with the elders leading the local churches.

<sup>320</sup> The terms co-elder, witness and partaker all modify the "I" that is subject of the verb "exhort."

<sup>321</sup> ποιμάνετε *poimanate* lit. shepherd; IE lead the flock as a shepherd does.

<sup>322</sup> ἐπισκοποῦντες *episkopountes*. This participle derives from the verbal form of the noun translated "bishop" in the NT (lit. meaning "overseer"; one who watches over [the flock]).

<sup>323</sup> OR compulsion.

<sup>324</sup> Lit. shameful gain.

<sup>325</sup> IE eagerly, whole-heartedly.

<sup>326</sup> IE lording it over, domineering (in unrighteous dominion).

<sup>327</sup> τῶν κλήρων *tōn klērōn* those allotted [to you], meaning those under your stewardship. The KJV is a mistranslation here.

<sup>328</sup> OR examples.

<sup>329</sup> IE Jesus.

<sup>330</sup> στέφανον *stephanon* crown is the source for the ENG name "Stephen."

<sup>331</sup> This may refer either to those who are young in the faith (IE recent converts) or to young people generally.

<sup>332</sup> ἐγκομγώσασθε *enkomgōsasthe* lit. means to put or tie something on or around oneself, such as an apron. It is used here in a metaphoric sense.

<sup>6</sup> Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt<sup>334</sup> you in due time.<sup>335</sup> <sup>7</sup> Casting<sup>336</sup> all your care<sup>337</sup> upon him; for he careth for you.  
<sup>8</sup> Be sober,<sup>338</sup> be vigilant;<sup>339</sup> because your adversary<sup>340</sup> the devil, as a roaring lion,<sup>341</sup> walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.<sup>342</sup> <sup>9</sup> Whom<sup>343</sup> resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.<sup>344</sup> <sup>10</sup> But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while,<sup>345</sup> make you perfect,<sup>346</sup> stablish,<sup>347</sup> strengthen, settle you.<sup>11</sup> To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

### *Final Greetings*

<sup>12</sup> By<sup>348</sup> Silvanus,<sup>349</sup> a faithful brother<sup>350</sup> unto you, as I suppose,<sup>351</sup> I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.<sup>13</sup> The church that is at Babylon,<sup>352</sup> elected together with you,<sup>353</sup> saluteth you; and so doth

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<sup>333</sup> LXX Prov. 3:34.

<sup>334</sup> If we will humble (IE lower) ourselves, God will exalt us (IE lift us up).

<sup>335</sup> At the judgment and resurrection.

<sup>336</sup> Lit. throwing (as in throwing clothes onto an animal for riding).

<sup>337</sup> OR worry, anxiety.

<sup>338</sup> OR stay alert!

<sup>339</sup> OR be watchful!

<sup>340</sup> ἀντίδικος *antidikos* lit. an opponent in a lawsuit, the word came to mean an adversary more generally.

<sup>341</sup> A figure of great power and rapacity.

<sup>342</sup> IE from the "flock" of God's people.

<sup>343</sup> The antecedent is the devil.

<sup>344</sup> They are not alone; their Christian brothers and sisters elsewhere are experiencing the same sufferings.

<sup>345</sup> OR after you have suffered a little while. The suffering will be brief, and will be worth the reward.

<sup>346</sup> OR complete.

<sup>347</sup> A KJV archaism for establish.

<sup>348</sup> Probably meaning "[delivered] through [as a courier]," although conceivably meaning "written by [as a scribe]."

<sup>349</sup> This is presumed to be the same Silvanus and Silas (a shortened form of the name) mentioned elsewhere in Paul's letters and Acts. Since nothing else is said of him here, presumably the addressees of the letter knew who he was.

<sup>350</sup> These words refer back to Silvanus.

<sup>351</sup> OR believe.

<sup>352</sup> A cryptic reference to Rome (a few late miniscules actually change Babylon to Rome here), as the dominant world power opposed to the people of God.

<sup>353</sup> Lit. co-elect (IE chosen together with).

Marcus<sup>354</sup> my son.<sup>355</sup> <sup>14</sup> Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace *be* with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>354</sup> Presumably the John Mark associated with the second Gospel.

<sup>355</sup> Not in a literal sense.