

The Second LETTER of PETER (to the Gentiles)¹

LAST GENERATION VERSION

Translation & Notes by Tim Warner, 11/2015

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Chapter 1

Greeting

Simeon² Peter, slave and Emissary of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained³ an equally valuable Faith with us⁴ in the justice of our God and of the Savior Jesus Christ:⁵
2 Grace to you, and may peace be multiplied in the full-knowledge of God and of Jesus our Master.

How Gentile Believers may secure their Place among the Elect Seed

3 Thus has been given to us all of His divine power⁶ – that which leads to life and devotedness⁷ – through the full-knowledge of One who invited us through glory and virtue, 4 through which have been given to us the great and valuable promises,⁸ so that through these you may become participants of the divine nature,⁹ having fled from the corruption in the world in lust. 5 Yet for this same thing also, using all diligence, in your trust supply virtue, and in virtue [supply] knowledge, 6 and in knowledge [supply] self-control, and in self-control [supply] endurance, and in endurance [supply] devoutness, 7 and in devoutness [supply] brotherly affection, and in brotherly affection [supply] love. 8 For in your owning of these things and increasing, they cause you not to be stalled or unfruitful unto the full-knowledge of our Master Jesus Christ. 9 For the

¹ Written from Rome in AD 66-67, shortly after Paul's execution. (See note on 2 Pet. 3:15).

² This is the Hebrew spelling of his name which is found only here and in Acts 15:14.

³ The Greek word literally means to receive a designated portion by the lot. The "lot" was the device used by Joshua to divide the Promised Land among the twelve tribes of Israel (Num. 33:54; Josh. 23:4).

⁴ "Us" refers to Peter and his Israelite brothers who were addressed in his first letter (1 Pet. 1:1, cf. Acts 3:25-26; Acts 26:17-18). Since the Faith of the Jewish believers was in the hope of the resurrection to the permanent inheritance of the Land (1 Pet. 1:3-5), the same inheritance is promised to the Gentiles who have taken hold of the Abrahamic Covenant through Jesus Christ (Rom. 4:13-16).

⁵ Most modern translations follow Granville Sharp's first rule here, making "God" and "Savior" (who is Jesus Christ) the same person. However, the next verse distinguishes between "God" and "Jesus Christ" making it difficult to justify equating them here. See note on Jude 1:4 for why Sharp's rule is not sound.

⁶ All of the divine power that Jesus Himself possessed has been given to us. This is mistranslated in many versions, making the divine power the subject of the verb instead of the direct object as in the Greek.

⁷ The divine power that Jesus possessed given to us is limited to what pertains to a walk of devotion and to 'life' (immortality) through the resurrection.

⁸ The promises of the Abrahamic Covenant (Heb. 6:11-19; Heb. 11:8-9,13,17,39)

⁹ Participation in the divine nature means a life of holiness (Heb. 12:10,14)

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one in whom these things are not present is blind, closing his eyes, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins. 10 Through this, rather brothers, be quick to make your invitation and election¹⁰ secure. For [by] doing these things, you should certainly not stumble at any time. 11 For thus the entrance into the age-enduring Kingdom of our Master and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly supplied to you.

Peter's Purpose in Writing to the Gentiles

12 Therefore, I will not be negligent to constantly remind you about these things, even though you have perceived and have stood firm in the present Truth. 13 Yet, I consider it appropriate,¹¹ for as long as I am in this – the tent,¹² to awaken you by reminding, 14 having observed that the laying aside of my tent is impending, just as our Master Jesus Christ made plain to me.¹³ 15 And I will be diligent also for you to always have the reminder of these things¹⁴ after my exit. 16 For [it was] not from following cleverly fabricated myths¹⁵ that we¹⁶ made known to you the power and arrival¹⁷ of our Master Jesus Christ, but having become eyewitnesses of the magnificence of that One! 17 For receiving from God the Father the honor and glory of the voice carried to Him (that which is beneath the Most-Excellent Glory), “This is My beloved Son, for Whom I delighted.”¹⁸ 18 And we heard this voice carried out of heaven, being together with Him

¹⁰ Rom. 11:28

¹¹ Since Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, had recently been executed, Peter did not consider it inappropriate to directly address the Gentile congregations, even though he had agreed formerly to confine his work to the Jews (Gal. 2:9).

¹² ‘The tent’ was a metaphorical term coined by Paul for the temporary condition of mortality. This would be superseded in the resurrection by the condition of ‘immortality’ which Paul metaphorically referred to as “the building of God.” It was personified by Jesus in His resurrected state at the Father’s right hand (see: 2 Cor. 5:1-5).

¹³ John 21:18-19

¹⁴ Peter intended to make sure that copies of his last letter were copied, distributed, and preserved for the perilous times to come after his disease (ch. 2).

¹⁵ Both the Jewish mystics (Essenes) as well as the Gnostic teachers had fabricated all kinds of mythologies, blending biblical concepts with pagan ones, concerning gods and angels.

¹⁶ Peter used the plural ‘we’ in reference to Himself and John. Only Peter, James, and John were eyewitnesses to the Transfiguration (Mark 9:2). But James had been killed by Herod very early on (Acts 12:2), leaving only Peter and John as eyewitnesses.

¹⁷ The Greek term *παρουσία* in connection with Jesus always refers to His second coming in power and glory (Matt. 24:3,27,37,39; 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 2:19; 1 Thess. 3:13; 1 Thess. 4:15; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1,8; James 5:7-8; 2 Pet. 3:4; 1 John 2:28). In secular Greek literature, this term was used for the arrival of a king or dignitary in great pomp and celebration. By Peter’s choice of this well-known term, he made it quite clear that he was claiming to have been an eyewitness of Jesus’ second coming, as he explains in the following verses. Thus, what they witnessed on that mountain was a vision of the future (Matt. 17:9).

¹⁸ God’s delighting in His Son can easily be seen in the inheritance promised to Him (Psalm 2:7-9). The past tense of the verb ‘delighted’ implies a specific historic event, which is described in this Psalm, when the Father promised to the Son the inheritance of the earth on the day He was begotten.

in the holy mountain.¹⁹ 19 And we have the prophetic word verified,²⁰ to which you do well in heeding (like a lamp appearing in a dark place until the Day²¹ breaks and the light-wearing²² One²³ arises), 20 knowing this first in your hearts: that all prophecy of Scripture does not generate its own explanation.²⁴ 21 For prophecy was not brought at any time by the will of man, but being carried under the holy Breath, men of God spoke.

Chapter 2

The Destruction of False Teachers, and Preservation of the Righteous

Yet there also came false-prophets among the people, just as also there will be false-teachers among you, who will smuggle in destructive heresies, even disowning the One who purchased them,²⁵ bringing to themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow in their destructiveness, through whom the Way²⁶ of Truth will be slandered. 3 And with greed, with crafted words, they will peddle you, unto whom the ancient judgment is not idle, and their destruction²⁷ does not sleep.

4 For if God did not spare the sinning Messengers, but gave them up, incarcerating to bondage of doom, having been reserved for judgment,²⁸

5 and [if God] did not spare the first world, but preserved Noah – the eighth, a proclaimer of justice, having brought the flood to the world of the ungodly,

6 and [if God] condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, incinerating them with a catastrophe, having made them a demonstration for those intending to be ungodly,

7 and [if God] rescued the just [man] Lot, being harassed under the licentious behavior of the wicked 8 (for that just one living among them, in watching and hearing from day to day, was tormenting his just soul with [their] lawless acts);

9 then the Master has observed how to rescue the godly ones out of trials, but to preserve the unjust ones for the day of judgment, being punished, 10 specifically those

¹⁹ Mark 9:1-9

²⁰ Peter and John, the two living witnesses of this event, confirmed the prophetic Scriptures through their eyewitness testimony to the preview Jesus gave them of the coming Kingdom.

²¹ “The Day” refers to the 1000 years of Christ’s reign (2 Pet. 3:8, cf. Rev. 20:4).

²² φωσφόρος – from φως (light) and φορεω (to wear). Many translations incorrectly have ‘morning star.’

²³ “His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them” (Mark 9:3).

²⁴ Peter implied here what Paul explicitly stated in 1 Cor. 1-2, that it is not possible to fully understand the prophetic Scriptures without guidance from the same holy Breath of God which guided the prophets when they wrote their prophecies. Without this guidance, the mind of man leaps to all kinds of heretical interpretations and flights of fantasy, which ultimately leads to their own destruction (cf. 2 Pet. 3:15-17).

²⁵ This statement disproves either Calvinism’s “limited atonement” or “perseverance of the saints.”

²⁶ Acts 9:2

²⁷ 1 Thess. 5:3; 2 Thess. 1:7-10

²⁸ Their judgment was announced by Christ after He was resurrected (cf. 1 Pet. 3:18-21).

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after the flesh, going in lust of defilement and scorning authority, audacious, arrogant, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries. 11 Wherever Messengers, being greater in strength and power, do not bring an accosting judgment against them beside the Master. 12 But these [men] – like irrational animals having been born for capture and destruction – speaking evil of what they know nothing about, shall be annihilated²⁹ in their own destruction, 13 receiving the wages of unjustness. [They] consider gratification [to be] luxurious living by day, [yet are] blemishes and flaws reveling in their delusions, while feasting together with you, 14 having eyes filled with adultery and unrestrained from sin, seducing unstable souls,³⁰ having a heart trained in greed, children of the curse, 15 having abandoned the straight path, they were led astray, following the path of Balaam [son] of Bosor, who loved the wages of injustice. 16 Yet, he was rebuked for his own opposition, a mute donkey speaking with a human voice opposed the insanity of the prophet.³¹ 17 These are dried up springs, clouds driven by a storm, for whom the doom of age-enduring darkness has been preserved. 18 For by speaking inflated words of vanity, they seduce (through the desires of the flesh, through immorality) those who had just fled from the ones living in deception, 19 promising them freedom, they are by nature slaves of destruction (since by whom anyone is overcome, to him he has been enslaved). 20 For if fleeing the defilements of the world in the full-knowledge of the Master and Savior Jesus Christ,³² yet being again entangled in these things, they are defeated, their last [condition] has become worse than the first. 21 For it was better for them not to have fully known the path of justice, rather than having fully known, to turn away out of the holy instruction having been given to them. 22 But the true proverb has happened to them – a dog turning back to its own vomit, and pig having been bathed to wallowing in mud.

Chapter 3

The Delay in Christ's Return is not Tardiness

This second letter I am now writing to you, brothers,³³ in which I am awakening your serious contemplation by recollection, 2 to be reminded of the declarations which have been spoken previously by the holy prophets³⁴ and the instruction³⁵ from us, the

²⁹ 1 Thess. 1:9

³⁰ 2 Pet. 1:10

³¹ Numbers 2:21-35

³² This statement shows that the false teachers were indeed originally Christians.

³³ That the second letter was addressed to Gentile Christians can be seen both in Peter's opening address, "to those who have obtained a Faith equal with us," and in his closing words, acknowledging Paul's letters written to the same recipients.

³⁴ Prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah to reign, specifically concerning the 'Day of the Lord'

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Emissaries of the Master and Savior, 3 knowing this first: that upon the endings of the days³⁶ scoffers³⁷ will come, walking according to their own desires 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His arrival?³⁸ For since the fathers fell asleep, everything continues like this from the original formation." 5 For they are willingly oblivious to this: that the heavens continued from antiquity, and the land out from water³⁹ and by water having been upheld⁴⁰ by the announcement⁴¹ of God, 6 through which [announcement] the existing order was destroyed. 7 And the present heavens and land, having been set aside by the same announcement,⁴² are reserved for fire until the Day of Justice and the destruction of ungodly men.⁴³ 8 Yet, do not miss this one thing: that one day with the Master is as a thousand years,⁴⁴ and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Master is not tardy concerning His promise,⁴⁵ as some define tardiness, but is patient towards us, not intending anyone to be destroyed, but to make room for repentance for everyone.

³⁵ The contrast between the declarations (plural) of the prophets and the instruction (singular) of the Apostles implies one specific teaching. What follows indicates recent oral instruction concerning the delay in Christ's return. See: Hebrews 4:1-11.

³⁶ The days leading up to the end of the present age

³⁷ The 'scoffers' are not atheists, but rather some of the 'false teachers among you' (2 Pet. 2:1). The denial of the physical return of Christ to reign as King upon the earth is one of the 'destructive heresies' which they would smuggle into Christianity, by perverting some of Paul's 'difficult scholarly' teachings to their own destruction (2 Pet. 3:15-16).

³⁸ See note for 1 Pet. 1:16.

³⁹ "Then God said, 'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear'; and it was so" (Gen. 1:9).

⁴⁰ The sense seems to be that the land was at one time supported by water, supported by underground oceans. Peter likely assumed this from the above statement and the fact that the flood waters came up from beneath the land as well as from the sky: "all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened" (Gen 7:11).

⁴¹ In Gen. 6:3 God announced to Noah that he was delaying mankind's judgment for 120 years. This announcement withheld the judgment of the flood for the predetermined time (while Noah prepared the ark), but also brought the judgment at the appointed time 120 years later.

⁴² The literal meaning of Peter's statement is that the very same announcement that God made to Noah (that judgment would come for man in 120 years) not only withheld God's judgment of the flood until the end of the specified time, but the same statement also indicates the time of the second destruction by fire. Genesis 6:3 has a dual meaning, predicting the first destruction by flood in 120 solar years, and the second destruction by fire in 120 Jubilee years (6000 years from creation). A Jubilee year occurs every 50th year (Lev. 25).

⁴³ Isa. 66:24; 2 Thess. 1:7-10

⁴⁴ This is a paraphrase of Psalm 90:4, which reads in the LXX, "because a thousand years in Your eyes are like the day, yesterday which passes by..." This statement was inferred from God's threat to Adam that "in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Gen. 2:17), because "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return." (Gen 3:19). Adam returned to dust in the same 'day' (millennium) that he ate the forbidden fruit at the age of 930 (Gen. 5:5). None of Adam's descendants' lives have exceeded "one day" (1000 years) in God's reckoning.

⁴⁵ See Hebrews 4:1-11 and accompanying notes.

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10 However, the Day of the Master will arrive like a thief in the night,⁴⁶ in which the heavens will pass by with a loud rushing sound, and the foundational things⁴⁷ will be broken up by burning,⁴⁸ and the land and the works in it will be uncovered.⁴⁹ 11 Since all of these things are being released,⁵⁰ what must you be in holy conduct and devotedness 12 [while] anticipating and urging on⁵¹ the arrival of the Day of God, through which the heavens being enflamed will be released and the foundational things broken up by burning?⁵²

⁴⁶ To illustrate how Christians are to watch for His coming, Jesus spoke the parable of the “thief in the night” (Matt. 24:42-44). In this parable, not knowing beforehand the time the thief would come meant that the homeowner suffered catastrophe. However, if the homeowner had known the time, he could have prevented the catastrophe. Consequently, Jesus commanded his followers to “become ready” since they were not ready at that time, not knowing the time. In 1 Thess. 5:1-5, Paul indicated that Christians who are awake and prepared will not be surprised by Christ’s coming. His coming is only “like a thief” for those ignorant of the truth.

⁴⁷ The foundations of human civilization (cf. Gal. 4:3,9; Col. 2:8-20)

⁴⁸ Joel 2:1-11; Mal. 4:1-3

⁴⁹ Everything buried will be uncovered and disclosed (Mark 4:22). The oldest Greek and Syriac manuscripts have “uncovered,” but the Textus Receptus has “burned up.”

⁵⁰ Rom. 8:20-22

⁵¹ The concept of urging on the arrival of Christ was demonstrated by Paul in 1 Cor. 16:22 by his use of the Aramaic term, “maranatha” (meaning, “O Lord come!”). John’s closing words in Revelation indicate the same concept, “*Even so, come Lord Jesus!*”

⁵² This passage is incorrectly used by Amillennialists to support their Greek Platonic hope of ascending to heaven. They interpret Peter’s words as referring to the total annihilation of this creation. Yet, it is clear that Peter was referencing Isaiah 65-66 where the ‘new heavens and new land’ refer to the restoration of the land of Israel (Jerusalem), not its utter destruction. The ‘fire’ is a purging fire, not a consuming fire. Isaiah speaks of the land and even God’s own Temple being purged by fire. “*Do not be furious, O LORD, nor remember iniquity forever; Indeed, please look-- we all are Your people! Your holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. **Our holy and beautiful temple, where our fathers praised You, is burned up with fire; and all our pleasant things are laid waste.** Will You restrain Yourself because of these things, O LORD? Will You hold Your peace, and afflict us very severely?” (Isa 64:9-12). Yet, God’s judgment on His land and His people is not universal. Isaiah continues: “*Thus says the LORD: ‘As the new wine is found in the cluster, And one says, “Do not destroy it, For a blessing is in it,” So will I do for My servants’ sake, That I may not destroy them all. I will bring forth descendants from Jacob, And from Judah **an heir of My mountains; My elect shall inherit it, And My servants shall dwell there. Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the Valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down, for My people who have sought Me.** ... So that he who blesses himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; And he who swears in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; Because the former troubles are forgotten, And because they are hidden from My eyes. **For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;** And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, **I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing,** and her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying. ... They shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, and My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. ... The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, The lion shall eat straw like the ox, And dust shall be the serpent’s food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,”**

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13 Yet, we are looking for renewed heavens and renewed land, according to His promise,⁵³ in which justice resides.⁵⁴ 14 Through this, beloved, anticipating these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, unblemished and flawless. 15 And consider the patience of the Master to be deliverance, just as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom that was given⁵⁵ to him wrote to you, 16 as in all of his letters, speaking in them concerning these things, in which is⁵⁶ some difficult scholarly things, which the unlearned and unstable pervert, as also the rest of the Scriptures, toward their own destruction. 17 However you, beloved, knowing these things previously, be vigilant so that you may not fall away from your own stability, having been led astray by the wandering of the unsettled. 18 But grow in grace and knowledge of our Master and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and into the Day of the Age,⁵⁷ Amen.

Says the LORD." (Isa. 65:8-10,16-19,21-22,25). In the next chapter, Isaiah again mentions the "new heavens and new earth" as the restored land of Israel, after it is purged by fire and the sword of the Lord.

⁵³ Isa. 65:17-19; Isa. 66:22-23

⁵⁴ Isa. 42:4

⁵⁵ The use of the aorist tense instead of the perfect tense implies that Paul was already deceased.

⁵⁶ The singular verb "is" in reference to all of Paul's letters indicates that his works were viewed by Peter as a unit, a complete and authorized collection, implying that Paul was no longer writing. Also, very ancient copies show that the fourteen Letters of Paul were bound together in one large book.

⁵⁷ The 'Day of the Age' (singular) refers to the millennium of Christ's reign over the nations (cf. 2 Pet. 1:19; 2 Pet. 3:7,8,10,12).