



St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church

Heliopolis, Egypt



Commentary on The 1st Epistle of Peter



*In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
the One and Only God,
Amen.*

An exegetical study of the Holy Bible

"commentaries on the New Testament"

The First Epistle of St. Peter

*prepared and published by priests and servants of
St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church
Heliopolis, Egypt*

*Translated by George Ishack, Ottawa, Canada, 2025
All biblical quotations are taken from the New King James version of the Holy Bible*

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*His Holiness Pope Tawadros II
118th Pope of Alexandria
and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark*

Prelude

1. The author:

a- This epistle was authored by St. Peter, one of the Lord's twelve disciples. Initially, his name was "Simon" which is derived from the Hebrew word meaning "to hear, to listen." Christ gave him the name of "Peter" or "Cephas," meaning "a rock." His father's name was "Jonah" or "John." He was Andrew's brother. Christ called Peter, initially a fisherman, to follow Him, at the outset of Christ's ministry - he left his boat and nets, and followed Christ. He was followed by his brother Andrew. Both hailed from the town of Bethsaida. Peter was married, and was characterized by courage and impulsiveness. He was the oldest disciple.

- Peter, and Zebedee's sons James and John, were alone with Christ on special occasions: the transfiguration, raising Jairus' daughter, and Christ's last moments in Gethsemane prior to His arrest.

- Peter denied Christ during the latter's trial; but, after Christ's resurrection, Christ appeared to him, encouraged him, and restored his stature as an apostle.

- Following Peter's sermon on Pentecost, 3000 souls believed and were baptized.

- He evangelized in Jerusalem, Antioch, and Asia Minor; along with John and James the Lord's brother, he is considered one of the Church's pillars.

- He went to Rome towards the end of the year 67, and was martyred, crucified upside down, at the hands of emperor Nero.

2. The epistle's intended audience:

This is the second catholic - hence, universal - epistle. Although it mentions, at the outset, Jewish converts dispersed to several countries because of persecutions in Jerusalem and Judea, it is also aimed at Christians, throughout the world, experiencing persecutions.

3. Timing of the epistle - where it was written:

Written around the year 65, the epistle mentions that it was written from Babylon, which usually refers to Rome. Some people allege that Peter resided in a place called "Babylon," in Egypt and that, during that period, he authored his epistles; such allegations, though, remain unfounded.

4. The epistle's purpose:

The epistle comforts Christians, encouraging them to endure hardships, it urges believers to follow Christ's example Who suffered for us, and it addresses personal relationships within the congregation and among family members.

5. The epistle's features:

- Being of Jewish origin, St. Peter's epistle refers to the Old Testament.
- The epistle bears similarities with St. Paul's epistles.
- Several details of Christ's life are mentioned, since Peter was an eye witness.
- Despite Peter's limited knowledge of Greek, the epistle is eloquently written in Greek, given the help of Peter's two disciples Sylvanus and Mark, who were proficient in that language.

6. The epistle's sections:

- a- Deliverance amidst suffering, through hope in the risen Christ (Ch. 1)
- b- Our relationship with Christ, and its effect on our lives (Ch. 2)
- c- Christian relationships within the family (Ch. 3)
- d- Hardships and holiness (Ch. 4)
- e- Relationships within the Church (Ch. 5)



*"Interpretation of the holy Bible - the New Testament"
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An exegetical study of
The First Epistle of St. Peter

Chapter 1

Salvation

1. **Apostolic greetings - verses 1 & 2:**

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied." (1 Peter 1:1 & 2)

Verse 1:

"Pilgrims" - This refers to Jewish converts throughout the world, and believers, in general, anywhere in the world, since their home is heaven.

"Dispersion" - This refers to Jewish converts who had been estranged in various parts of the world due to persecutions in Judea.

"Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" - Those were countries in Asia Minor - today's Turkey.

St. Peter's epistle is addressed to Jewish converts and all believers dispersed throughout Asia Minor, and other parts of the world.

Verse 2:

"...the foreknowledge of God the Father..." - God the Father, because of His infinite love, knows all those who would believe on Him.

"...sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience..." - The Holy Spirit sanctifies believers, and consecrates their hearts so that they may obey God's commandments.

"...sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ..." - The blood of Jesus Christ saves believers from their sins, and grants them the heavenly kingdom. The expression ***"sprinkling of the blood"*** is taken from Mosaic law, which stipulated sprinkling of animal blood, symbolizing the blood of Christ, our Redeemer.

St. Peter sends the love of the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Who works through, and in, believers, granting them grace and peace.

+ St. Peter offered encouragement, through hope that God's work would gladden believers' hearts, drawing them to full submission to Him.

2. The joy of salvation - verses 3 - 8:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory;" (1 Peter 1:3 - 8)

Verse 3:

Peter blesses God the Father Who, through His endless mercies, offered us rebirth through baptism. Man, born of the flesh, was under the death sentence; however, those born of the Spirit are God's children, and heirs with Christ, hoping for eternal life, promised through our Lord's resurrection.

Verse 4:

This spiritual inheritance has the following features:

- It is everlasting.
- It cannot be defiled by sins abandoned through repentance during life on earth.
- It is preserved in heaven - God keeps it for us, and awaits us in heaven, after completion of our earthly struggle.

+ Let us joyfully adhere to our faith and hope, unperturbed by current, temporal, hardships.

Verse 5:

God keeps us in the Faith, and protects us against Satan's wiles, to enable us to complete our struggle, and to acquire salvation on the great day of judgment.

Verse 6:

This salvation gladdens our hearts, despite all the temporal hardships and persecutions that will be experienced during life on earth. However, our joy and peace should not waver, as we await perfection in heaven, where all sorrows will be obliterated.

Verse 7:

Faith is likened unto gold, which glitters after purification in the fire. Thus, hardships which are likened unto fire, strengthen our faith, purifying it from all weaknesses and sinful impurities. On judgment day, God will praise such faith, through which He would usher us into the heavenly glories.

Verse 8:

During our earthly life we believe on Christ, and we love Him; thus, we endure hardships for His sake, and fellowshiping with Him gladdens our hearts. Although we cannot see him physically, we sense His work through, and in, us. Our ensuing unutterable joy is merely a prelude to the joy awaiting us in heaven.

3. The prophets' goal is salvation - verses 9 - 12:

"receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls. Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ Who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things which angels desire to look into." (1 Peter 1:9 - 12)

Verse 9:

The apostle points out to believers that their aim in believing on Christ is the acquisition of eternal salvation in the kingdom of heaven. This is a continuum of salvation we acquire on earth - hence, his expression "receiving." This achieved in church through the holy sacraments.

Verse 10:

Old Testament prophets desired, and foretold, the salvation that Christ fulfilled on the Cross, and which we acquire through the holy sacraments.

Verse 11:

"...the Spirit of Christ who was in them..." - This refers to the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit revealed Christ's life, Passion, and resurrection, to Old Testament prophets; however, they did not know the precise timing of that salvation. The greatness of this salvation was such that even Daniel, to whom the time was revealed, failed to understand its meaning. Examples of prophecies concerning Christ's Passion, resurrection and ascension are found in Isaiah 53, Isaiah 38:11, Daniel 9:27 and Psalm 16:8 - 11.

Verse 12:

Prophets appreciated the fact that their prophecies would materialize at some future point, and that they would not witness the salvation foretold. However, we enjoy those prophecies, transferred to us via the apostles, and we have acquired this salvation. Likewise, angels desired to witness that salvation, about which they had heard. Put differently, whereas prophets served salvation by foretelling it, we acquired it in the New Testament through Christ's redemption.

+ *May our sole aim be deliverance from sin, and enjoyment of fellowship with Christ. May there be no hindrance posed by other goals. Let us be reminded, daily, of this goal, overcoming all impediments.*

4. Our obligations towards salvation - verses 13 - 17:

"Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober [maintain spiritual awareness], and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ [judgment day]; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;" (1 Peter 1:13 - 17)

Verse 13:

"Therefore..." - This refers to salvation's significance and glories.

"...gird up the loins of your mind..." - This means "Steer your thoughts away from all evil, and adhere to Christ's words, persevering in your struggle towards the kingdom.

"...the grace that is to be brought to you..." - This refers to the perfect salvation to be acquired in the kingdom of heaven.

The apostle enumerates our obligations with respect to that salvation as follows:

a- The mind's readiness:

We should prepare our thoughts, and sharpen our senses and abilities, for the spiritual struggle.

b- Hope:

Let not this life's temporal hardships perturb us. Rather, we should, in steadfast hope, rely on God's grace, which will grant us salvation in His kingdom, and compensate us for this life's trials.

Verse 14:

c- Repentance:

Being God's children, believers should obey His commandments, and repent of all their antecedent wicked desires that had pervaded their lives when they were away from the Faith, unaware of this salvation.

Verses 15 & 16:

d- Holiness:

We should sanctify our hearts and consecrate them to God, through good conduct, likening ourselves unto our Lord Christ, as indicated in Leviticus 11:44.

Verse 17:

e- Conduct in the fear of God:

Our God is our compassionate Father Who redeemed us, through His love, on the Cross; He is also the just Judge Who judges us for our sins. Being cognizant of God's Divine justice compels us to fear Him, and to sense our estrangement in this perishing world, thus leading us to abandon our sins, respect His presence among us, and please Him in every way.

+ *The fear of God shields us from all sins. We must always remember that we will face the just Judge - this prompts us to repent, to distance ourselves from all defilement, and to lead a holy lifestyle.*

5. Salvation's greatness - verses 18 - 25:

"knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers [your Jewish fathers], but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth

through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, But the word of the Lord endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you. (1 Peter 1:18 - 25)

Verses 18 & 19:

"...your aimless conduct..." - This refers to their old, ungodly, lifestyle. Although it seemed upright, it did not qualify them to await Christ.

"...as of a lamb without blemish and without spot..." - According to Mosaic law, the sacrifice consisted of an unblemished lamb; it symbolized Christ Who was slaughtered for us on the Cross.

St. Peter accentuates salvation's greatness, acquired through the Church, and by which they were liberated from the bondage of sin and from their old ungodly lifestyle. That was not achieved by gold, silver, or any material payments - rather, by the precious priceless blood of Christ symbolized, in the Old Testament, by the blood of animal sacrifices.

Verse 20:

That salvation was in God's eternal consideration, before the world's creation. God foreknew that man would sin and would need redemption - God was prepared for this through His love. Old Testament law symbolized and foretold this salvation, fulfilled in the fullness of time, by the blood of Christ, saving all who believed on Him.

Verse 21:

"....through Him believe in God..." - Your faith in God will be edified through the redeeming Christ.

Christ's redemption, fulfilling all prophecies, edifies the Jews' faith and aspiration for eternity, especially following their knowledge that He rose from the dead and ascended to heaven.

Verse 22:

Having been offered this salvation, it behooves us to obey Christ's commandments - hence the truth - aided by the Holy Spirit. Our hearts will then be expunged from all sins, and we will be able to love one another sincerely.

Verse 23:

Believers must remember that they had been reborn, from Christ the Word, through the Sacrament of Baptism; this contrasts with a person's initial biological birth, which does not eliminate sin, and which exposes a person to eternal torment. The second birth - the rebirth - prepares a person for acquiring perfect salvation in eternity. The biological birth is likened unto a plant that eventually dies and decays; but the second birth is a spiritual plant preparing us for the kingdom of heaven.

Verse 24:

Man's life on earth is likened unto grass, which lasts a few months and eventually withers and dies. Man's life, likewise, with all its glamour, ends in death, akin to beautiful flowers which wither and die, regardless of the extent of any earthly glory.

Verse 25:

The gospel, which was preached to them, is the gospel of Christ, the Word, Who grants us everlasting life in the kingdom of heaven.

+ *The grace of our knowledge of Christ, plus everything we receive through the Church, should motivate us to care for our prayers and repentance; we will then enjoy salvation's blessings throughout our lives on earth, pending perfection in heaven.*



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Chapter 2

Christ is the Cornerstone - Features of His Children

1. Christ is the Cornerstone - verses 1 - 10:

"Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness [evangelizing] into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy." (1 Peter 2:1 - 10)

Verse 1:

We become God's children through baptism and, throughout our new life, we should, through repentance, rid ourselves from all sins, such as, ***"all malice*** [dishonesty], ***all deceit*** [trickery], ***hypocrisy*** [false pretense], ***envy*** [desiring failure for others], ***and all evil speaking*** [anger and verbal abuse]."

Verse 2:

"...the pure milk of the word..." - This refers to all spiritual food such as communion, the word of God and all other spiritual practices.

Believers, reborn through baptism, are likened unto infants desiring to feed on the untainted milk provided by the mother Church. Put differently, they crave the holy sacraments, the holy Bible, prayers, sermons, and all other spiritual activities, all of which foster spiritual growth.

Verses 3 & 4:

"...if indeed you have..." - This expression is meant to confirm, rather than to pose a question or to raise doubts.

The apostle is cheering up believers, who have savoured the milk of the mother Church, and who have enjoyed fellowshiping with our compassionate Lord through prayers, worship and the holy sacraments, telling them that they would see Christ, a living cornerstone, on which their lives would be anchored. Christ is thus the foundation for a spiritual framework.

The chief priests rejected Christ and had Him killed, relying on the grandeur of their temple, and their religious rites - which symbolized Christ. Our Lord Christ was the Father's only begotten Son, sent to redeem mankind - He was the perfect Human, Whose example we must follow.

Christ was symbolized in the holy Bible by:

- the rock which yielded water to the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 17:6),
- the stone cut out of the mountain without hands mentioned by Daniel (Daniel 2:45), and
- the stone set up by Samuel (1 Samuel 7:12).

+ *We should not be perturbed if people reject, abusively, what we say, as long as we adhere to God's commandments. We should seek God's help, while maintaining our faith steadfastly and meekly, remaining confident that God will, eventually, reveal our righteousness.*

Verse 5:

Since Christ was likened unto a living stone, Whom we approach through faith and ardent worship, St. Peter demands that we be:

- living stones, steadfast in the Faith in Christ, and living through His life, and
- a spiritual abode, where we all become members in one body - the Church - comprising all the saints in heaven, who make up the "Church Triumphant," and all who continue their struggle on earth, making up the "Church Militant." One abode for all.

The life of each believer becomes a spiritual abode, indwelt by God, in which God works through His Holy Spirit, offering righteous worship and good deeds.

"....a holy priesthood..." - Each believer offers body and life as a sacrifice of love for God, through prayers, lauds and good deeds. This is the generic priesthood. In exclusive priesthood, church priests lead, in offering the holy sacraments before God.

"....spiritual sacrifices..." - Examples include humility, repentance, selflessness, piety, labour in service, and thanksgiving at all times.

"...through Jesus Christ..." - All toil, throughout our life, hinges on the salvation that Christ our Redeemer grants us.

Verse 6:

Through His prophets (see Isaiah 28:16), God proclaimed that Christ, the Saviour of the world, would come from the Jews. He is likened unto the cornerstone which links two perpendicular walls. He is the building's foundation, chosen by God, to redeem mankind. He is **"precious"** because He is the only begotten Son of God - salvation is granted to whoever believes on Him. Believers' lifestyle is in, and with, Christ - this imparts to them triumph over Satan and eventual eternal life in the kingdom of heaven.

Verse 7:

All believers on Christ, whose lifestyle is shrouded in that Faith, will be awarded unutterable honour and glory in heaven. Those who reject that Faith, will discover, on the last day, that Christ was the foundation of salvation, and that rejection leads to eternal perdition. Christ made that declaration in Luke 20:17.

Verse 8:

"A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense." In Isaiah 8:14, Isaiah made this prophecy concerning Christ. Thus, Christ will shock all harbouring carnal desires, depriving them of their wicked objectives, and will be an offense to the proud Jews, who wanted Him to liberate them from the Romans, plus an offense to Gentiles who desired to see Him great on earth, rather than crucified and, apparently, weak.

"...being disobedient to the word..." - This refers to those who reject the Faith, and disobey God's commandments.

"....to which they also were appointed..." - Eternally, God knew that they would reject the Faith, and incur eternal perdition, although those Jews were supposed to be God's chosen, and the first to believe on Him.

The apostle emphasizes that the gospel of Christ will be against unbelievers' carnal, earthly, desires. He will condemn them on the last day, and cast them into eternal fire, due to their rebellion against Him.

Verse 9:

After having addressed those who reject the Faith, St. Peter labels believers as follows:

- **"a chosen generation"** - Put differently, all who believe on Christ the Saviour constitute a chosen nation; in olden times, God had promised the Jews to be His chosen nation, if they obeyed Him. However, they would not be His people if they rejected Him (see Exodus 19:6).
- **"a royal priesthood"** - This is because their Chief is Christ, the King of kings.
- **"a holy nation"** - Believers become one holy Church in Christ.
- **"His own special people"** - Christ purchased us with His blood so we can live for Him.

Verse 10:

St. Peter addresses those Jews who were not God's chosen because of their sins, as well as all ungodly Gentiles. When they all believed, Jews and Gentiles alike, they became God's Christian people. Their persistence in wickedness deprived them of God's mercy. However, through faith and repentance, they acquired God's mercy and salvation through the holy sacraments; furthermore, unlimited glories and mercies await them in heaven.

2. Christians' attributes - verses 11 - 17:

"Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation. Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men-- as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king." (1 Peter 2:11 - 17)

Verse 11:

St. Peter describes believers' attributes:

a- **"abstain from fleshly lusts"** - Being sojourners in this world, believers should feel that heaven is their homeland, and that life on earth is temporal. They are also akin to guests in a hotel, or guests in someone's house - their hearts are yearning to go to their abode, which is the kingdom of heaven. This requires them to distance themselves from all carnal desires and sources of evil.

Verse 12:

b- **"having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles"** - Believers are required to conduct themselves in love and honesty throughout all their dealings with others, regardless of their wickedness.

c- **"that when they speak against you as evildoers"** - Believers will experience persecutions and false allegations from non-believers; however, they should endure and persevere in their exemplary conduct.

d- **"glorify God in the day of visitation"** - When non-believers believe, on the day God reaches out to them, they will glorify Him because of the believers' antecedent tolerance and good conduct.

St. Peter calls on believers to conduct themselves favourably with non-believers, regardless of their false allegations. Such endurance will induce non-believers to glorify God, once they believe.

Verses 13 & 14:

e- **"submit yourselves to every ordinance"** - The apostle declares that all leaders in this world occupy their posts with God's permission; this includes kings, governors and all their helpers. Believers are required to submit to them and to obey all the rules of the state. Such submission is for God's sake, Who permitted them to occupy those positions. God allowed their existence to punish wrong-doers and reward doers of good deeds. Thus, a believer is required to be a good citizen, respecting all government's laws.

Verse 15:

f- **"...by doing good..."** - Believers are children of our philanthropic God. They should focus on doing good deeds at all times and with everyone. Through their love they vanquish evil. Thus, non-believers will have no cause for aggressing them.

Verse 16:

g- **"...liberty..."** - True liberty for believers means liberating themselves from sin, by exemplary conduct. Non-believers hide behind fake freedom to justify their sins. True liberty is consistent with God's commandments and is not exercised at the expense of others' discomfort.

Verse 17:

h- **"Love the brotherhood"** - We should consider all humans to be our brethren; thus we should love them and cater to their needs.

i- **"Fear God"** - By sensing the presence of our just, omnipotent, omniscient, God, we reject sin, and we submit to our country's laws, represented by its ruler - and we respect him.

+ *Our relationship with, and our love for, God are demonstrated in our love for others, our forgiveness when they err, and our quest to help them. We should examine ourselves and repent, upon identifying shortcomings in our service.*

3. Instructions for slaves and labourers - verses 18 - 25:

"Servants [all hired hands], be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth"; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls." (1 Peter 2:18 - 25)

Verse 18:

When faced with the problem of slaves or servants, Christianity did not seek to incite them against their masters, rather, it attempted to change their hearts such that they would love, and live harmoniously with, their employers. In some cases, slaves were liberated by their masters. The apostle thus asks all servants to submit, in love, to their employers, regardless of the employers' treatment, this is because "...love is as strong as death..." (Song of Solomon 8:6) and, whoever lives in love, is capable of living peaceably and of transforming those around him.

+ *Humbly offer your love and respect to all around you; be confident that love and humility are more powerful than others' pride and harshness. Rest assured that your prayers will grant you favour in their view; you will then win them over or, at least, you will live peaceably with them.*

Verse 19:

God will reward richly, through solace and glories in heaven, those enduring suffering without erring, especially if such suffering involved oppression. Such endurance will be counted as a virtue, worthy of rewards.

Verse 20:

On the other hand, enduring oppression will not be considered a virtue, if others' abuse is provoked by a person's faults. Rather than oppression, this is considered a natural human reaction. However, God considers great, all who persist in doing good, despite others' oppression, because God tells us to love our enemies and bless those who curse us (Matthe 5:44 - 48).

Verse 21:

The apostle confirms that Christianity calls for countering the world's abuse with love and enduring suffering; such was the example that Christ set for us when He endured suffering and died for us.

Verse 22:

St. Peter quotes from Isaiah 53:9, saying that Christ was all-holy and sinless - yet He set the example for us to endure suffering, even when oppressed.

Verse 23:

Our Lord Christ demonstrated His love by enduring suffering, by not resisting evil, and by not responding to evil with evil. Hence, He prayed for those who crucified, and abused, Him. He was the perfect example for us to follow, in submitting our lives to the just God, Who rewards each one according to their deeds.

Verse 24:

On the Cross, our Lord Christ bore the penalty of, and liberated us from, our sins. This enables us to live in righteousness, and to reject sin, which caused all that suffering to our Redeemer. Put differently, we acquired redemption and liberation from our sins through Christ endurance of suffering as mentioned in Isaiah 53:5.

Verse 25:

Because of sin, we strayed away from the truth, akin to lost sheep. However, belief on Christ rendered us members of His Church, with Him as its **"Shepherd and Overseer (Bishop)"**, shepherding it with His watchful eye and catering to all its needs.



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Chapter 3

Marital commandments

1. Instructions for wives - verses 1 - 6:

"Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word [rejecting the gospel of Christ], they, without a word [by love and good treatment], may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel-- rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror."
(1 Peter 3:1 - 6)

Verse 1:

The apostle asks wives to follow the man's leadership. A woman, by nature, tends to follow the man she trusts. A man, on the other hand, will naturally tend to lead his wife and care for her. Submission must be out of love, to attract even a pagan man's heart. During Christianity's dawn, when a pagan wife believed, her conduct in loving submission attracted her pagan husband; although she did not preach Christ's gospel to him, her changed conduct led him to discover that it was due to her belief on Christ.

Verse 2:

A woman's fear of God should motivate her to scrutinize her conduct - that should not be out of fear of her husband or any other person. Fear of humans is temporary and is bound to be exposed; but the fear of God is lasting, and imparts peace and power.

Verse 3:

The apostles urges them not to be overly preoccupied with appearances; he mentioned three aspects:

- a- paying too much attention to their hairstyle,
- b- adorning themselves excessively with jewelry, and
- c- wearing fashionable or, likely, offensive clothing.

The intent here is that women should be conservative, without being unduly preoccupied with appearances, as opposed to being first and foremost preoccupied with pleasing God.

Verse 4:

St. Peter points out to women the importance of taking care of the heart's internal purity, and of purging the heart from all unclean thoughts. A woman should be characterized by internal calm, demonstrated through meek dealings with others. God does not care about material appearance, rather, the most precious in His eyes are internal purity and spiritual virtues.

Verse 5:

The apostle calls on women to follow the example of the Old Testament female saints, who obeyed their husbands, nurtured their virtues and relied on God, rather than on their beauty and adornment.

Verse 6:

St. Peter gives the example of Sarah, Abraham's wife; she respected and obeyed him, addressing him as "**lord**," out of respect. If women sensed the motherhood of this saint, as Jewish men felt Abraham's fatherhood, then women should follow the example of Sarah in doing good and relying on God, rather than on physical adornment. As God had granted Sarah great beauty, He will give wives beauty and grace in their husbands' eyes.

+ *Women should rest assured that their love, heart's purity, and virtues, are more powerful than outward appearance, and will impart grace in God's, and people's, eyes.*

2. Instructions for husbands - verse 7:

"Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered."

(1 Peter 3:7)

Verse 7:

Husbands are instructed:

- a- to be wise "**understanding**" - husbands should appreciate, and take into consideration, the differences between women's and men's habits, and consistently act accordingly...

b- to be tender "**the weaker vessel**" - husbands should appreciate that, physically, women are not as strong as men.....consequently, they should not impose their will using verbal or physical abuse or threats...

c- to focus on eternity "**being heirs together of the grace of life**" - husbands should be aware that women, like men, are heirs of the kingdom of God - consequently, men should remember that the temporary life on earth is merely a means for preparation for eternity - resorting to violence or abuse will annul prayers and inner peace.

+ Husbands should deal with others according to others' habits, rather than according to their own. They should yield readily when differences exist, remembering that wives are co-heirs with them in the kingdom.

3. Instructions for the family - verses 8 - 17:

"Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. For "He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil." And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled." But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil." (1 Peter 3:8 - 17)

Verse 8:

The apostles requires the following from family members:

a- "**be of one mind**" - family members should understand, be compassionate, and be empathetic towards, each other, thus developing a unity of thought, avoiding all strife.

b- "**love**" - family members should love, one another.

Verse 9:

c- "**not returning evil for evil**" - a family member should not respond angrily to another member's remarks or actions - rather, tender words of love and blessing should be the norm, as befitting God's children.

Verse 10:

d- **"refrain his tongue from evil"** - the apostle accentuates the importance of refraining one's tongue from evil by quoting Psalm 34:12 - 14; a Christian's words are always kind, reflecting the love within him.

Verses 11 & 12:

e- **"seek peace"** - Problems incited by Satan should be terminated through demonstrated love, good deeds, and refraining from abusive language - an air of calm should then prevail among all concerned. Christians should consistently seek, and strive for, peace, at all costs - God will then respond by blessings and favourable response to their petitions. Sacrificing and enduring abuse for the sake of peace, yields Divine blessings and fellowshiping with God. On the other hand, those who persist in evil, rebel against God, and merit Divine punishment.

Verses 13 & 14:

f- **"do not be afraid....nor be troubled..."** - God promises tranquility to peacemakers and doers of good deeds. He grants them inner peace, protects them from evil, and shields them against anything that could harm them spiritually and impede their souls' salvation. Thus, they should not fear cruel or unmindful people, and God will reward their endurance of suffering and wrongdoing with blessings on earth and in heaven.

Verse 15:

g- **"....sanctify the Lord God in your hearts..."** - God points out to His children the importance of consecrating their hearts to Him which, in turn, will result in their enjoyment of fellowshiping with Him. Consequently, when dealing with others, their faith and hope for eternity will become apparent, and their words will have a strong effect, attracting others towards repentance.

Verses 16 & 17:

h- **"....having a good conscience..."** - Maintaining a pure heart and a clear conscience leads to good deeds which, in turn, shame evil-doers before God, for treating you poorly. Consequently, your endurance of oppression pleases God, since whoever suffers the consequences of his errors will incur the natural outcome of his actions; but those who suffer abuse, having had a clear conscience and performed good deeds, will reap a Divine reward since, those trials would have been permitted by God, for the purpose of rewarding His children with unutterable blessings.

+ *Remain unperturbed, and rest assured, that suffering for the sake of peace is a typical trait of God's children; the blessings awaiting you for such endurance are countless - and you will be greater than perpetrators of such hardships. Pity abusers and pray for them.*

4. Christ the Saviour - verses 18 - 22:

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by Whom [God in Christ] also He went and preached to the spirits in prison [hades], who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him." (1 Peter 3:18 - 22)

Verse 18:

By enduring suffering for the sake of peace and doing good, God's children would be following Christ's example. Who, while innocent, suffered for sinners' sake, to save them from eternal perdition. Christ died, in the flesh, on the Cross, and rose on the third day, granting life to all who believe on Him. Through all physical and psychological suffering, Christians acquire a lifestyle fostering spiritual growth to all who endure. This is a calling to tolerate evil-doers, following Christ's example - the reward is Christ's promise for spiritual blessings on earth and in heaven. Consequently, we are drawn closer to God by enduring suffering. Christ died once on the Cross, so that we may die for His sake, endure pain, and enjoy the work of the Spirit within us.

Verses 19 & 20:

When Christ died on the Cross, His human spirit was separated from His body, but His Divinity remained united with both. Christ descended, with His Divinity united with His human spirit, into hades, in order to proclaim to all the Old Testament saints that redemption had been fulfilled, and that they would proceed to paradise with Him. Sts. Athanasius the Apostolic, and Cyril the Faith's Pillar interpret this verse, saying that the saints' spirits in hades were accompanied by some spirits of those who were present during Noah's flood, and who had repented after initially refusing to accompany Noah in his ark; put differently, God accepted their "late" repentance, and took them with Him to paradise. This demonstrates God's longsuffering and His care for each person's salvation, even if they believed at the very last moment, as did the penitent thief.

Verse 21:

God saved Noah, and all his companions, from the flood. Likewise, He saves us all from eternal perdition upon death to our sins through baptism.

Baptism is not merely "immersion in water" as some view it - rather, it is a rebirth, plus purging the heart from all sins, which we acquire through Christ's blessed redemption on the Cross.

Verse 22:

After His resurrection, Christ ascended and sat at God's right hand. Put differently, He regained the power and glory, that were His since eternity, and which He had temporarily given up to appear to us in the flesh, and endure suffering for our redemption. Angels, and all the heavenly powers and authorities, praise and serve Him, in His heavenly glory.

+ God seeks your salvation, regardless of the extent of your sinfulness. Remain fully confident in His love, and hasten to make up for lost time. He will forgive you completely, and your place in His heart will never change. He loves you since eternity, and He awaits your return to Him.



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Chapter 4

Suffering in the Lives of God's Children

1. **Suffering and judgment lead to repentance - verses 1 - 6:**

"Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles-- when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead [those who had believed on Christ prior to their death], that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."
(1 Peter 4:1 - 6)

Verse 1:

"...the same mind..." - This refers to enduring suffering.

Christians experience hardships, not only in controlling carnal desires, but also in enduring mockery of evil-doers who used to participate with them in satisfying those desires. St. Peter therefore encourages them by saying that Christ endured much suffering in order to redeem us. We should thus follow His example knowing that any suffering we endure enables us to refrain from sin - thus, suffering encourages us to repent.

Verse 2:

Feeling that life is limited, Christians are motivated towards repentance, plus abandonment of wicked desires, focusing more on obeying God's commandments and will.

Verse 3:

The apostle reminds us of our past years, which we wasted by indulging in sinful activities. Therefore, let us put all this behind us, and our remaining years in fellowshiping with God. Some of the sins in which Christians indulged, along with Gentiles, included:

"Lewdness"

This included promiscuity and prostitution.

"Lusts"

This included uncleanness and indulgence in foods and possessions.

"Drunkennes"

This included alcohol addiction and perseverance in drunkenness.

"Revelries"

This refers to Partying and merrymaking.

"Drinking parties"

This included rebellion against God's commandments.

"Abominable idolatries"

Idolatry also included all associated wicked practices.

Verse 4:

The wicked marvel at believers' repentance, renouncement of the evil lusts that they used to practise together, and renouncement of all forms of promiscuity. Such sentiments motivate evil-doers to abuse believers, accusing them of sins they had never committed.

Verse 5:

Attempting to edify believers on their path of repentance and renouncement of evil, the apostle asserts that Gentile evil-doers will be held accountable for all their wicked deeds on judgement day.

Verse 6:

"For this reason" - This refers to the awesome judgement day, when every person will be accountable to God for all their evil deeds.

"...that they might be judged according to men in the flesh..." - This refers to being judged, and persecuted unto death, by evil-doers.

"...live according to God in the spirit..." - This refers to life after death in paradise, followed by the kingdom of heaven.

In order to avoid condemnation on judgment day, the apostle preached everywhere, resulting in many believers who endured suffering, at non-believers' hands, unto martyrdom. That is the judgment of men, affecting solely the body. Those martyrs' spirits, though, will live with God in paradise.

+ *Rather than being perturbed upon experiencing suffering, let such suffering be a reminder of your sins, motivating you to repent, while knowing that life on earth is short; drawing closer to God is our priority.*

2. Virtues of penitents - verses 7 - 11:

"But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." Be hospitable

to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:7 - 11)

Verse 7:

We will experience a spiritual awakening upon remembering that our lives will end, leading us to accountability to God on judgment day; this is the "watchfulness" to which the apostle is referring. We should be prepared for eternity by prioritizing prayers, fellowshiping with God, and contemplating life in heaven.

Verse 8:

Our love for God is reflected in our prayer frequency; this, in turn, induces us to love others, leading us to serve them, ignoring their shortcomings.

Verse 9:

Loving others breeds a desire to be hospitable to strangers, which should not be considered as an onerous task, rather, as a joyous, loving, service we are rendering for Christ - akin to Abraham's hospitality to three strangers who turned out to be the Lord plus angels (see Genesis 18).

Verse 10:

Having the gift of preaching, or of rendering services to the needy, should not lead to pride or self-esteem; rather, it should be used to serve the Church, and considered as a gift from, and entrusted by, the grace of God.

Verse 11:

Given that God is the granter of all gifts, a preacher, rather than expressing personal opinions, should only preach the word of God and the Church's teachings. Servants should rely on prayers to acquire Divine strength; servants should glorify, and give thanks to, God, before and after rendering their services.

+ *Our love to others reflects God's love for us - love is the sole task for us in this world. We should cover people's shortcomings and help them to the extent possible, since our God-given gifts should be utilized to the maximum possible extent in helping others.*

3. Rewards for those experiencing hardships - verses 12 - 19:

"Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when

His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator." (1 Peter 4:12 - 19)

Verse 12:

The apostle soothes believers experiencing persecutions. Even if a given hardship significantly adversely affected a person's life, anguish should not set in, since this is expected from an evil world which persecutes God's children.

Verse 13:

St. Peter proclaims glad tidings, namely, as believers shared pain and suffering for Christ's sake, they will share His eternal glories; contemplating such glories imparts joy amidst hardships.

Verse 14:

St. Peter continues to encourage persecuted believers, saying that any abuse to which they may be exposed qualifies them for greater grace from the Holy Spirit, Who comforts them, makes them sense His presence with them, and prepares them for heavenly glories. Consequently, any blasphemous abuse from evil-doers is considered glory and blessings for the persecuted believers, since Christ is glorified through their endurance of such abuse for His sake.

Verse 15:

The apostle discourages believers against suffering caused by their own wrong-doings, since they must conduct themselves righteously, steering away from obvious sins such as stealing and murder, or any other activities punishable by prevailing laws. Believers should also stay away from lesser offences, such as meddling in other people's business, causing them to turn against Christians. Personal freedom for all must be respected indiscriminately. God rejects suffering incurred as a result of such misconduct, since it is not incurred for His sake.

Verse 16:

On the other hand, a believer suffering for being Christian and for following God's commandments, is Divinely supported and rewarded.

Verse 17:

The apostle encourages believers to adhere to a righteous lifestyle, rejecting all sins, while remembering Divine justice which punishes all evil-doers. God's chastisement of His Jewish people would start by their temple's destruction in Jerusalem, as foretold by Christ in Matthew 23:38. Thus, God started by chastising His own Jewish children for failing to believe on Christ; His punishment of wicked pagans, who reject the faith and persevere in their wickedness, will be even greater.

Verse 18:

St. Peter reminds believers of God's justice, which requires them to persevere in their struggle through His grace, in order to attain His salvation. The wicked and promiscuous shall have no place in the heavenly kingdom, rather, eternal perdition awaits them (see also Proverbs 11:31).

Verse 19:

The apostle concludes by encouraging believers suffering because of their faith. He calls on them to rely on our beneficent God, Who will never forget their love and endurance, and Who will reward them by heavenly glories.

+ *We must accept hardships, experienced through no wrong-doing on our part; we must remain confident that God permitted them, and that He will recompense us for enduring them - we must remain focused on our eternal reward. Let us pray for those who abuse us, rather than responding with evil.*



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Chapter 5

Advice for Priests and the Youth

1. Advice for the shepherds - verses 1 - 4:

"The elders [bishops and priests] who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers [bishops, supervisors, administrators], not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away." (1 Peter 5:1 - 4)

Verse 1:

The apostle is advising bishops and priests, humbly addressing them as "fellow elders," since he was experiencing - just like them - persecution, and, also like them, he was awaiting the heavenly glories. He was an eye witness to Christ's Passion, crucifixion and resurrection, which he was preaching.

Verse 2:

St. Peter's instructions/advice to priests and bishops may be summed up as follows:

a- ***"Shepherd the flock of God"*** - Since their congregation is God's flock entrusted to them, they should shepherd God's flock faithfully.

b- ***"....willingly..."*** - They should be caring and watchful, when shepherding God's flock - this should not be discharged/considered as an onerous, compulsory, task, rather, they should carry it out lovingly towards each person.

c- ***"...not for dishonest gain but eagerly...."*** - They should not have any designs/hopes/plans for material gains/benefits, derived from their service. Their service should be executed eagerly, and purely for God's sake.

Verse 3:

d- **"....being examples to the flock..."** - The flock should follow their example both in words and deeds.

Verse 4:

The apostle exhorts them to maintain honesty throughout their service, in order to qualify for their due reward in eternity, upon appearance of the just Judge, Christ the Shepherd, Who would reward them with eternal heavenly crowns, unlike the perishing worldly glories.

+ *Diligently discharge your services to all around you, especially if you had responsibilities towards them, knowing that God greatly esteems your love and labour, and will reward you accordingly in heaven.*

2. Advice for the youth - verses 5 - 11:

"Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen."
(1 Peter 5:5 - 11)

Verse 5:

St. Peter gives the following instructions to the youth:

a- **"....submit yourselves to your elders....be submissive to one another...be clothed with humility....humble yourselves"** - They should not only be submissive to their elders, but also to one another. Since God grants grace to the humble, but resists the proud, they should also humble themselves.

Verse 6:

Submission to the elders and to one another is a demonstration of humility before God. A significant reward is, accordingly, awaiting them, namely, God's support and comfort in hardships; furthermore, He will raise them to heavenly glories on the last day, and compensate them for everything they had endured due to their humility.

Verse 7:

b- **"...casting all your care upon Him..."** - St. Peter exhorts believers to trust God's love and power; we should cast all our troubles and needs before Him - through His fatherhood, He will take care of us, satisfy all our needs, and solve our problems.

Verse 8:

c- **"Be sober, be vigilant....."** - The apostle calls for constant spiritual watchfulness and alertness, since Satan, our enemy, unceasingly attempts to seize any opportunity to trap us in sin. Satan's ferociousness is likened unto a lion's - but he cannot harm us as long as we adhere to God and remain spiritually vigilant.

Verse 9:

d- **"Resist him, steadfast in the faith..."** - St. Peter extols resistance to Satan, through all means of this spiritual struggle, adhering to our faith, regardless of our shortcomings or any sins we may have committed. Satan wages war on all mankind - but believers are characterized by God's supporting grace. Since our unbelieving brethren do try to avoid sinfulness, then how much more should we, believers, resist evil and vanquish it, given God's supporting power....?

Verses 10 & 11:

St. Peter urges believers to obey all the afore-mentioned commandments, reminding them of the heavenly glories promised by God, having endured suffering for His sake, throughout their spiritual struggle. St. Peter also promises that he would:

- a- make up for any of their shortcomings,
- b- edify them in the Faith,
- c- strengthen them in their struggle against Satan's wars, and
- d- enable them in all good deeds.

At that point, they would glorify God, Who has power and authority over all creatures, unto eternity.

+ *Rest assured that a great reward awaits you for all your toil and love for God's sake. God will also support you in obeying His commandments. Be constantly encouraged, regardless of your shortcomings, and regardless of Satan's wars - God loves you, and will perfect you through His grace, until you attain His heavenly glories.*

3. The epistle's conclusion - verses 12 - 14:

"By Silvanus [also known as Silas - see Acts 15:22], our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand. She

who is in Babylon [which usually refers to Rome], ***elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son. Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.***" (1 Peter 5:12 - 14)

Verse 12:

Silas had accompanied St. Paul in his second missionary journey (see Acts 15:40), he wrote both epistles to the Thessalonians (see 1 Thessalonians 1:1 and 2 Thessalonians 1:1), and, according to 2 Corinthians 1:19, he served with Timothy in Corinth. Silas accompanied St. Mark in Egypt, and wrote St. Peter's first epistle due to his proficiency in the Greek language. Peter referred to him as "our faithful brother" due to his commitment, and adequate assumption of responsibilities throughout the service.

The apostle says that he dictated his epistle to Silas due to the latter's proficiency in Greek - he also sent it through Silas, to edify all believers in God's grace through the instructions and advice given therein.

Verses 13 & 14:

St. Peter sends his greetings, as well as Mark's, and concludes his epistle by asking all believers to "***greet one another with a kiss of love,***" while praying for peace in Christ, for all.

+ *Offer, to everyone you encounter, words of peace and love; all tensions will thus dissipate, and they will see Christ in you.*

