



*William Blake, Jacob's Dream, 1805, pen and ink and water color, 37x29.2 cm, British Museum, London. Image via Wikimedia Commons.*

# 1 AND 2 PETER

## BECOMING MORE HOLY (CA. AD 61–68)

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LYNNE HILTON WILSON

### **Author**

Both 1 and 2 Peter introduce the author as “an apostle of Jesus Christ” by his birth name, Simon in Greek, or Simeon in Hebrew. This was the name of the patriarch Jacob’s second son (Gen 29:33). The Lord gave this Apostle the name Cephas or Peter, meaning “rock,” and honored him as the leader of the Apostles. After the Resurrection we see that role continuing, including at the Jerusalem Council.<sup>1</sup> Paul also refers to him as one of the pillars of the church (Gal 2:9).

As a fisherman from Galilee, Peter most likely spoke Aramaic as his native language. Yet 1 and 2 Peter are both written in elegant Greek. We assume that a well-educated, native Greek speaker translated and polished each of these two letters. Because the letters each have very different writing styles, vocabulary, themes, and organization, it appears that the same person did not translate both. In the first letter, Peter thanks his scribe Silas: “With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you” (1 Pet 5:12). But we are not told who helped translate, compile, or edit the second epistle (see 2 Pet 3:1).

First Peter has no evidence of Hebrew or Aramaic nuances, but it has at least fourteen Old Testament citations.<sup>2</sup> In contrast, Peter's second epistle follows the literary style of a farewell discourse.<sup>3</sup> It cites Proverbs and an apocryphal work called 1 Enoch once each.

Historical records explain that Caesar Nero imprisoned Peter before he crucified him (Peter requested to be crucified upside down because he did not feel worthy to die as the Lord had). Nero's reign allows us to date both epistles to sometime before AD 68.

## Introduction to 1 Peter

First Peter is a guidebook on how to become more holy through trials. It connects enthusiastic exhortations with sensitive consolations for the Saints' suffering persecution. It develops the following themes:

- Trials and suffering can develop greater faith and holiness
- The Old Testament prophesies about Jesus
- Follow the Savior's example, even in persecution
- Christian code of conduct (for families, masters, and so on)

*Table 1. Outline of 1 Peter*

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## 1 Peter 1

### *Greetings to Israelites—1 Pet 1:1–2*

**1 Pet 1:1. “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout.”** The epistle opens in the same formal Greek format of most of Paul’s letters. This may have been because Peter and Paul shared the same scribe, Silas.<sup>4</sup> The audience are “strangers” (KJV), “pilgrims” (NKJV), or “exiles” (BSB), which has two possible meanings. This could refer to Christians living outside the land of Israel in the diaspora (specifically, in five areas in Asia Minor, or modern-day Turkey).<sup>5</sup> Or it could refer to the fact that because Christians sought to return to their heavenly home, they were strangers in this world. Figuratively, they try to walk the path of the Israelites in their search for an eternal promised land. Peter reminds his audience that all who make covenants are adopted into the family of Abraham and house of Israel. The audience was made up of:

- Jewish converts who had settled in Asia Minor after generations of being scattered—either by the Assyrian or Babylonian captivities (between 730 BC and 60 AD).<sup>6</sup>
- Gentile converts who are now adopted into the family of Abraham as new chosen exiles.

**1 Pet 1:2 (BSB). “according to the foreknowledge of God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ.”** Unlike Reformed or Calvinistic Christianity, we in the Restoration do not refer to the elect or chosen as predestined.<sup>7</sup> The Lord restored to the Prophet Joseph Smith that Christ’s atoning sacrifice covers all humanity—all may repent and all will be resurrected. God’s omniscient foreknowledge does not mean He disregards individual choice or agency. We believe that in our premortal life all were invited to serve Him, but only those who choose to make and keep their covenants and who do not set their hearts “upon things of this world” nor “exercise unrighteous dominion” will become His chosen people (D&C 121:34–42; Abr 3:22–4).

Peter mentions the need for both our obedience and the Spirit’s sanctification to receive redemption. The Spirit acts as an enabling agent to implement the cleansing of the Savior’s Atonement. As we turn to the Lord and obey Him, His grace allows forgiveness through the sanctifying power of His Spirit.

**1 Pet 1:2 (BSB). “sprinkling by His blood.”** In ancient Israelite temple worship, sacrificial animal blood was sprinkled on the altar and veil to represent the atoning power of redemption.<sup>8</sup> The blood foreshadowed the Great Redeemer’s sacrifice (Alm 34:14). Understanding this allows us to see the unity between obedience and sacrifice.

### *A hymn of praise for God’s lively hope—1 Pet 1:3–9*

**1 Pet 1:3. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus.”**

Again, the New Testament describes the three separate members of the Godhead working in unity. This prayer or hymn begins by praising God for His gift of life and “new birth” (NIV). Peter describes being



born again as a “living hope” (KJV). This hope stems Jesus’s Atonement, Resurrection, immortality, and eternal life (NIV). When Christians exercise faith and repentance, they receive the Spirit and are born again. As disciples hold onto and internalize this hope—or their faith in the Savior—it penetrates all aspects of their lives. When disciples live in hope, they are filled with love for God and charity toward others.

**1 Pet 1:4.** “*To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.*” God’s inheritance surpasses all mortal inheritance because it is incorruptible.

**1 Pet 1:5 (BSB).** “*who through faith are shielded by God’s power for the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*” If disciples exercise faith, God can protect and guard them (like Paul’s shield of faith or armor of God in Eph 6:11–13; 1 Ths 5:8). Again, the Lord’s Second Coming sounds imminent.

**1 Pet 1:6.** “*now for a season . . . ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.*” The season is mortality. The Greek behind the KJV “temptation” also means “a trial, probation, testing, being tried . . . calamity, affliction.”<sup>9</sup> All who live long enough will experience hardships, grief, and pain. Yet, Christians believe that God is aware of their trials and that those trials fulfill a purpose (see 2 Ne 4:17–33). Even in times of calamities and temptations, Peter finds cause to “greatly rejoice” (KJV).

**1 Pet 1:7.** “*the trial of your faith, . . . more precious than of gold . . . tried with fire.*” Peter explores how our trials can lead to deeper faith. Peter views normal mortal challenges and God’s tailor-made trials as being “of greater worth than gold” (NIV). Even gold will perish, but the purified soul is immortal. Like a metal refiner, God will purify the Saints through baptism by fire—the Spirit. Divine trials help us humble ourselves and come unto God. Trials have the potential to make humans holy.

**1 Pet 1:8–9 (BSB).** “*though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and rejoice with an inexpressible and glorious joy . . . you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*” The goal of our faith is salvation. *All* may rejoice in the hope of God’s love. Peter writes as one who has seen the resurrected Lord and encourages his audience to seek the same gift (1 Pet 5:1).

### *The witness of the prophets—1 Pet 1:10–12*

**1 Pet 1:10–11 (BSB).** “*Concerning this salvation, the prophets . . . searched and investigated carefully, trying to determine the time and . . . [of] the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.*” Since the time of Adam, humans have received prophecies of the Messiah’s redemption—but only a few knew of His timing (for example, 1 Ne 10:4). By the time of Herod’s temple, the Jews had combed through their scriptures for predictions of the long-awaited Messiah.<sup>10</sup> Early Christians also cited prophecies to show how Jesus was the Messiah (Rev 10:7). These early prophecies connect Israelite history with Jesus’s ministry.<sup>11</sup>

**1 Pet 1:12 (BSB).** “*It was revealed to them . . . [for] you . . . now announced by those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.*” The prophecies were not for the ancients as much as they were for the generation

in which they were fulfilled. Even during His life, Jesus did not know the timing of His Second Coming (Mk 13:32). We also read of these prophecies in modern revelation.<sup>12</sup>

### *A new chosen Israelite identity—1 Pet 1:13–2:3*

**1 Pet 1:13. “gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end.”** The phrase *gird one’s loins* was used in military and athletic spheres to refer to tightening the long, wide outer garment so that it would not cause one to stumble while marching or racing. This phrase is also translated, “Prepare your minds for action” (NASB). Peter calls Christians to focus our thoughts and minds so that we are prepared for future trials with “sobriety” (*néphó*). Literally this means “to abstain from wine,” but it also meant “calm (vigilant), circumspect.”<sup>13</sup> When we are calm, we can focus on the Lord and trust Him in all situations. The next phrase refers to making the personal effort to strive with “hope to the end for the grace,” or “set your hope completely” (CSB) and “set your hope perfectly” (ASV).

**1 Pet 1:13. “at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”** This phrase has led some Christians to define revelation as Jesus’s Second Coming. I prefer the NIV’s “when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.” The Lord’s revelation refers to receiving all divine knowledge. In the Restoration, we often have unique definitions of biblical phrases because the Lord expanded them line upon line within new revelations.<sup>14</sup>

**1 Pet 1:14–16 (NIV). “As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But . . . ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’”** Peter cites Lev 11:44, 45; 19:2, which contains God’s instructions for priests’ temple work. In this dispensation, the elders in Zion received a similar charge: “Lift up their voice and declare my word. . . . For I am able to make you holy, and your sins are forgiven you” (D&C 60:7). The Lord asks disciples to follow Him to become holy when we obey God’s commandments, repent daily, and follow the Spirit’s guidance. As disciples do so, they are cleansed through Christ’s Atonement.

A Saint (*hagios*) is one who is “sacred, holy, set apart by (or for) God.”<sup>15</sup> To move forward spiritually, Saints must obey God. They are called His holy ones because they did holy “works” (NIV), “conduct” (RSV), and “conversation” (KJV). The Greek word encourages disciples to actively follow God with diligence. Holiness belongs to God, so we become sanctified or holy through Him as we live holy lives.

**1 Pet 1:17–19 (NIV). “Since you call on a Father who judges . . . live . . . in reverent fear. For you . . . were redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish.”** Peter calls us to always be cognizant that judgment is coming. Our Judge is impartial, and He has prepared a Redeemer, but we still are to live in humble, “reverent fear.” The word *phobos*, “fear,” is defined as “panic flight, the causing of fear, terror” but can also be used for “reverence, respect, or humble meekness.”<sup>16</sup>

The ancient Israelite ordinance of animal sacrifice (which began with Adam and Eve) symbolized Jesus’s “great and last sacrifice; . . . yea, infinite and eternal” (Alm 34:14; Mose 6:5–8). Also, Isa 53:7 foresaw an incorruptible sacrifice. Peter acknowledges the redeeming power of the Savior’s sacred blood, the lifeline for mortality. Paul also attached this Christian application to the temple’s law of sacrifice (see 1 Cor 5:7; Heb 9:14).

**1 Pet 1:20.** “*was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.*” Our Savior was chosen in the premortal existence. The footnote in the Church’s official KJV clarifies the difference between *foreordained* and *foreknown*. As mentioned earlier, the KJV translators believed in predestination due to their Augustine and Calvinistic roots. The Bible has very few teachings on the first estate, hence this doctrine is not believed by other Christians. The Lord restored more on the doctrine of the premortal life to the Prophet Joseph Smith. In a sermon in Nauvoo, he taught: “At the first organization in heaven we were all present, and saw the Savior chosen and appointed and the plan of salvation made, and we sanctioned it.”<sup>17</sup>

**1 Pet 1:21–23 (NIV).** “*believe in God . . . so your faith and hope are in God. Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, . . . you have been born again, not of perishable seed.*” These verses teach us about the three most important gifts of the Spirit: faith, hope, and charity. Once purified, Saints are to exercise Christlike love toward all those around them. We are to love *fervently*. God gives these gifts as fruits of our belief and obedience. Disciples can know they are born again when they have a pure heart filled with genuine love. Being born again also becomes our Christian baptismal imagery. This is also described in more detail as a “baptism of fire” (3 Ne 31:13–21).

**1 Pet 1:24–25 (NIV).** “*All people are like grass, and . . . the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever.*” Peter quotes Isa 40:6–8. Jesus used similar ideas earlier in His Sermon on the Mount (Mt 6:30) and later in D&C 124:7. All the Old Testament quotes in this book are from the Greek Septuagint (not the Hebrew or Samaritan Bible, as we find in some of Acts).

## **1 Peter 2**

**1 Pet 2:1 (BSB).** “*Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander.*” Peter writes boldly with an “imperative force . . . ‘abandoning,’ ‘renouncing,’ or ‘ridding oneself’ of wickedness.”<sup>18</sup> Peter calls disciples to abandon all negative attitudes toward others. The CEV translates this as, “Stop being hateful! Quit trying to fool people. . . . Don’t be jealous or say cruel things about others.” The KJV’s “malice” is also translated “wrongdoing,” “wickedness,” and “deceit” (BBE, ASV, NIV); and the KJV’s “evil speaking” is “all the ways there are of speaking against people” (CJB). Peter encourages us to develop Christlike attributes, which are the opposite of the five sins elucidated here.

**1 Pet 2:2 (NASB).** “*and like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation.*” Peter uses another metaphor to teach the principle of rebirth—he talks about God’s word as mother’s milk.<sup>19</sup> The spiritual milk is only figurative, but the metaphor is clear. As a newborn craves milk, so Christians who are spiritually born again should hunger for the word of God. Jesus similarly taught His disciples to “hunger and thirst after righteousness” (Mt 5:6).

### *The chosen people and stone—1 Pet 2:4–10*

**1 Pet 2:4 (NIV).** “*As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him.*” Any time we read the word *stone* or *rock* in this passage, think of what it meant to Peter, whom the Lord nicknamed *Petros*, or “Rock.” Later in His ministry, Jesus said to Peter, “Thou art Peter [Stone], and upon this rock [revelation] I will build my church” (Mt 16:18). This is all very pertinent in Judea, where most of the ground is covered with rocks and very little topsoil.

In addition to the landscape, “Christ is the living stone, the bedrock and chief cornerstone of the Saints’ faith.”<sup>20</sup> Isa 28:16 foreshadowed the Messiah as our stone since the rock becomes our sure foundation. Those who receive the rejected stone receive their Messiah and King. Stones also reminded Israelites of the Urim and Thummim, which symbolize the omniscience of God (Ex 28:30).

**1 Pet 2:5 (NIV).** “*you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus.*” Peter refers to all devoted disciples as living stones that are part of a spiritual house or temple. Similarly, Jesus taught the woman at the well about the living water available to all believers (Jn 4). Peter invites all God’s disciples to work and build His “spiritual house to be a holy priesthood.” In this sense, Peter equates priesthood to service. All those who help build God’s kingdom work together under God’s power, or priesthood. This includes all disciples who serve with God’s power and direction—the same sense that President Russell M. Nelson used:

Every woman and every man who makes covenants with God and keeps those covenants, and who participates worthily in priesthood ordinances, has direct access to the power of God. Those who are endowed in the house of the Lord receive a gift of God’s priesthood power by virtue of their covenant, along with a gift of knowledge to know how to draw upon that power.<sup>21</sup>

In this way, both women and men are blessed through priesthood covenants and ordinances. They mutually build the kingdom, as suggested by Peter here. We offer sacrifices, especially during the sacrament, as we commit our service to Him and place the offerings of our service on the figurative altar.

**1 Pet 2:6–8 (NIV).** “*I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone . . . a rock that makes them fall.*” Within three verses, Peter cites three Old Testament scriptures that use rock symbolism:

1 Pet 2:6 NIV // Isa 28:16	1 Pet 2:7 NIV // Ps 118:22	1 Pet 2:8 NIV // Isa 8:14
I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame	The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.	A stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.

**1 Pet 2:9. “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; . . . [God] hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”** Ancient Israel received the title “a peculiar people” five times in the Old Testament. We find it as an appellation twice in the New Testament. *Peculiar* also means “valued property” or “special treasure or jewels.”<sup>22</sup> God asked the Israelites to become a holy nation in Ex 19:6. This is the goal of a Zion society. Peter added to the Old Testament phrase to describe the early Church as “royal priesthood.” Abraham learned that the priesthood is everlasting (Gen 17:7–19). Christ’s Church always has His priesthood power, which can be accessed by those who exercise faith, kindness, longsuffering, humility, patience, and love (D&C 121:236–46).

**1 Pet 2:10 (NIV). “Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have.”** Early Christians came from many ethnic backgrounds but became unified through baptism and honoring Christ. Whether they were born as Israelites or converted to the covenant, all were in the new family seeking to come closer to Christ. By so doing, they became foreigners to the world. Since Abraham, God’s people and priesthood were chosen by their lineage and righteousness. But through the mercy of Jesus, all will have the opportunity to receive the message of salvation.

#### *The Christian and unbelievers—1 Pet 2:11–12*

**1 Pet 2:11–12 (NIV). “I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires. . . . Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.”** Peter tenderly calls disciples “strangers and pilgrims” (KJV), a phrase from Lev 25:23. As a new people they join to fight against the natural man and woman. Peter pleads for them to practice self-control to master their natural appetites and temptations. If they succeed, their lives will witness goodness to nonbelievers and over time those who once persecuted them will soften and help to build the church of God. Peter’s reference to “the day of visitation” may be a euphemism for Peter’s hope that Christ will come soon or a reference just to a future time of repentance.

#### *The Christian example and government—1 Pet 2:13–15*

**1 Pet 2:13–15 (NIV). “Submit yourselves . . . to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority. . . . For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant.”** This counsel is especially meaningful when we remember that while Peter dictated this letter, he was unjustly incarcerated for his faith. Even though Nero was a violent leader, Peter asks Christians to submit to their Church and civic leaders. How much more do modern Christians need to obey the laws of the land? The eleventh article of faith teaches the same thing. By so doing,



believers can mediate laws and exemplify Christian living. But Christians should still speak to defend truth in a respectful way.

### *Servants and masters—1 Pet 2:18–20*

**1 Pet 2:16–17 (NIV).** *“live as God’s slaves. Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.”* Many translations use the phrase “servants of God” because of the voluntary nature of conversion. Yet, the Greek word can mean “slave, servant, or bondservant.” If we follow the example of Jesus, who was Isaiah’s Suffering Servant, then servitude to God becomes our Christian way of life. Disciples follow Jesus’s example when we submit to God as a servant to a master. Each morning and night and throughout the day, servants ask their Master how they can better serve Him. God asks His servants to love others as He does and to defend Him and His prophets.

**1 Pet 2:18 (BSB).** *“Servants, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but even to those who are unreasonable.”* Consistent with Paul’s previous advice, household servants or slaves are counseled to obey their masters, whether or not they are treated kindly. This observation that Christianity does not condemn slavery is startling to some. As discussed previously, servitude in the Greco-Roman world was more like a feudal system: most slaves served for a set number of years, and they were often paid.<sup>23</sup> The message that Jesus taught was not to stop servitude but rather to teach all how to serve. Jesus was the Master who served.

**1 Pet 2:19–20 (BLB).** *“if for sake of conscience toward God, anyone endures griefs, suffering unjustly . . . if you shall endure doing good and suffering, this is commendable before God.”* Peter’s audience was facing all sorts of persecutions. Being buffeted, or “struck with fists,” was a real concern for the persecuted Saints. Peter is suffering at that moment for his beliefs and will be crucified soon. Yet, he asks believers not to react with violence. He encourages them to live God’s laws and commit their souls with confidence into the hand of their loving Judge (D&C 54:10). He describes suffering for God as a grace.

### *Christ’s example of suffering—1 Pet 2:21–25*

**1 Pet 2:21 (NIV).** *“To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example.”* These verses describe details of our Savior’s Passion that fulfilled prophecy, starting with Jesus’s sinless nature and the scourging He endured (2:22, 24).<sup>24</sup> “Stripes” in Greek means “bruises or bloody welts from whipping or scourging.” Peter echoes several verses from Isa 53 to show Jesus’s suffering.<sup>25</sup> We must endure trials to receive salvation. Jesus first wore “a crown of thorns before the crown of glory.”<sup>26</sup>

The following parallels help illustrate the fulfillment of this part of Isaiah’s Suffering Servant passage.

1 Pet 2	Isa 53
“Because Christ also suffered for us” (verse 21)	“He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows” (verse 4)
“Who did no sin, neither was guile” (verse 22)	“He had done no violence, neither <i>was any</i> deceit in his mouth” (verse 9)
“When he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered, he threatened not but committed <i>himself</i> to him that judgeth righteously” (verse 23)	“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth” (verse 7)
“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness by whose stripes ye were healed” (verse 24)	“He <i>was</i> wounded for our transgressions, <i>he was</i> bruised for our iniquities the chastisement of our peace <i>was</i> upon him and with his stripes we are healed” (verse 5)
“For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd” (verse 25)	“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned” (verse 5)

## 1 Peter 3

*Wives and husbands—1 Pet 3:1–7*

**1 Pet 3:1 (BYUNR).** “*Likewise, wives, defer to your own husbands, so that if they disobey the word they may be attracted back by the conduct of the wives, without a word.*” In this epistle Peter previously taught how to act toward the government, slaves, and masters. Now he turns to married couples. As mentioned with Paul’s writings, the Greek word *hupotasso*—translated as “subjection” (KJV), “defer” (NTR), or “submit” (NIV)—was initially a military word used to describe the troops lining up behind the leader. But in a nonmilitary setting the word meant “a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden.”<sup>27</sup> Peter used it for humbly cooperating, too: “Submit yourself to every ordinance” and “Submit yourselves unto the elder” (1 Pet 2:13, 18; 5:5).

Here, Peter specifically addresses women who had converted to Christianity but whose husbands had not. Peter hoped that the unbelieving husbands would be softened toward the gospel message by not only the “conversation” (KJV, but more so by the “conduct” (JST) of their believing wives. Women’s Christian examples are a great missionary tool in their homes and the world.

**1 Pet 3:3–4 (JST).** “**Let your ~~Whose~~ adorning ~~let it not be~~ not that outward adorning . . . But let it be the hidden . . . meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.**” Peter asks women to work toward developing a Christlike character rather than acquiring beauty through elaborate hairstyles, jewels, or apparel. The Greek *praeōs*, translated in the KJV as “meek,” also means “kind, gentle, serene, mild, or forgiving.” These are traits all Saints should adopt, according to the Prophet Joseph Smith: “We should cultivate a meek, quiet and peaceable spirit.”<sup>28</sup> These traits help us hear God’s inspiration.

**1 Pet 3:5–6 (BYUNR).** *“Women of covenant—those who hope in God—adorned themselves, supporting their husbands. Sarah was obedient to Abraham, calling him ‘Lord,’ and you have become her daughters, doing good works and not fearing, without any anxiety.”* In D&C 132:30–37, the Lord taught that all become Abraham’s seed through making and keeping covenants. The call not to fear or be anxious encourages women to strive for unified relationships in confidence, love, and joy. Other translations describe the KJV’s “not afraid with amazement” as “let nothing terrify you” (RSV) and “[do not] give way to fear or worry” (JB). At that time, many wives were fearful of their husbands. Divorce was a constant threat that hung over Judeo-Greco-Roman wives.<sup>29</sup> Christian wives may have worried about being taken before Jewish authorities for violating religious law. Peter’s counsel is not chauvinistic and makes a dramatic departure from the culture. He tells the women to not be intimidated or fearful but to perform their duties toward their families and society without fear.

**1 Pet 3:7 (BYUNR).** *“Likewise husbands, live together with your family according to revelation, awarding honor to your wife, respecting her delicate feminine body and recognizing that you and she will be joint heirs of the blessing of life.”* Peter calls husbands to likewise be considerate and respectful as they conduct their family life. They are to follow the teachings of God “according to revelation” or *gnosis*, “truth, knowledge, or understanding.” The word *skueos*, “delicate element” (AB) or “vessel” (KJV), has a metaphorical meaning: “a person of quality, a chosen instrument; equipment or apparatus.”<sup>30</sup> Within the context of the next phrase, Peter speaks of mutual respect in marriage with the eternal hope of being coheirs together in the grace of God—eternal life. This is a regular topic addressed by living prophets.<sup>31</sup>

Peter presents a radical change from the culture in which women occupied the same social class as slaves. They were considered “by nature inferior to males (and husbands) physically, intellectually, and morally, and were therefore consigned by nature to the authority, tutelage, and protection of the latter.”<sup>32</sup>

**1 Pet 3:7 (BYUNR).** *“Do this so your prayers are not hindered by any discord.”* God will not answer a husband’s prayers if he does not respect his wife. Our spousal relationships are key to the harmony we feel before God in prayer. We must treat each other well if we want God’s help. There is an extra measure of divine power in united prayers, whether offered by a companionship or group.

### *Christian conduct in review: Suffering while doing good—1 Pet 3:8–12*

**1 Pet 3:8–9 (NIV).** *“Finally, all of you, be . . . because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.”* Inheriting God’s eternal blessings requires becoming like Him. Peter focuses on fostering love through:

- being like-minded
- showing sympathy
- loving one another

- being compassionate
- being humble
- not repaying evil with evil or insult with insult
- repaying evil with blessing

Christian homes, churches, and communities are to help each other become more like our Savior.

**1 Pet 3:10–12 (NIV).** “*Whoever would love life . . . must keep their tongue from evil . . . the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.*” These virtues were also part of the Old Testament scriptures that Peter knew and loved. In the next three verses Peter cites Ps 34:12–16.

### *Persecution—1 Pet 3:13–18*

**1 Pet 3:13–14 (BYUNR).** “*And who can really harm you if you are zealous for the good? But if you even suffer on account of righteousness, you will be blessed.*” By following the Spirit, obeying God’s commandments, and receiving help, disciples receive God’s power to withstand trials and persecutions.

## **1 Peter 4**

### *Listening and loving for God—1 Pet 4:1–6*

**1 Pet 4:1 (JST).** “*for he ~~you that hath~~ who have suffered in the flesh ~~hath ceased~~ should cease from sin.*” Peter and Paul taught similar ideas on gaining the mind of Christ and arming ourselves spiritually (1 Cor 2:16; Eph 5:13–17). It becomes a continual process of aligning our thinking with Christ’s. The JST clarification at the end of this verse is very different doctrinally from the KJV. Suffering does not take away sin or stop us from sinning. Peter asks disciples to leave sin, not to join Christ’s sufferings.

**1 Pet 4:2 (NIV).** “*they do not live the rest of their earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.*” We need regular spiritual checkups to make sure we are not following the natural tendencies of the flesh. Saints examine themselves with daily repentance and with weekly sacramental covenants. Serving at the temple is another opportunity for spiritual examination. These experiences can become like sessions with a personal trainer or piano teacher and help us fine-tune our actions to build our spirits.

**1 Pet 4:3 (NIV).** “*For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do.*” Once new converts join the Church and commit themselves to becoming disciples of Jesus Christ, there is no place for lustfulness, gambling, and the like. While others may talk about Christians unkindly and judge our standards, Christians must not return unkindness or evil for evil.

**1 Pet 4:6.** “*for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead.*” Those who do not have a chance to understand the gospel in this life will have one in the next. Comparing 1 Pet 3:19



and 1 Cor 15:29 with D&C 138 gives a fuller picture of God's missionary plan after mortality. Peter and the Apostles probably learned of these doctrines during Jesus's forty-day ministry after His Resurrection (Act 1). The JST explains this even though D&C 138 was not revealed for eighty-three years.

### *Loving and serving for God—1 Pet 4:7–11*

**1 Pet 4:7. “watch unto prayer.”** Early Christians hoped that the Second Coming of the Lord would be soon. However, in his second epistle Peter assures the Saints it is at least a thousand years before the end of the world. By the end of their missions, Peter and Paul foresaw the Apostasy and Restoration before the Lord's return. When we follow the Lord's direction, we walk where He tells us to, not knowing the outcome or timing of His direction. The reality is that each one of us is not too far from our end and our judgment, so we need to be sober and prayerful and to watch. Peter now gives the counsel to watch, just as the Lord asked him in Gethsemane.

**1 Pet 4:8. “above all things have fervent charity . . . for charity shall cover the preventeth a multitude of sins”** Peter quotes Pro 10:12, with a significant JST truth that if we feel love, we can avoid sins. Charity keeps us from sinning and has the power to preserve us as we become more like God (Moro 10:21).

**1 Pet 4:9 (NIV). “Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.”** The first step of living with charity is just being kind or hospitable. In the ancient tradition of hospitality, guests were always welcomed and treated with the very best.

**1 Pet 4:10. “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another.”** Is Peter referring to the gift of the Holy Ghost? to a testimony? We all have been given many gifts from God, and these gifts should be used to serve Him in building up His kingdom. We have a responsibility to develop the gifts we have been given. This is a hard lesson to teach our children and to learn ourselves, but we cannot feel too selfish about these gifts and think we can choose where to use them and what we want to do with our lives. Peter admonishes the Saints to use their talents to minister to others.

**1 Pet 4:11 (NIV). “If anyone speaks, they should do so as one speaking the very words of God.”** When we speak, we are not to say what we want but are to be guided by inspiration from the Spirit. We are simply a medium through which the will and mind of God is revealed.

### *Finding joy in suffering for God—1 Pet 4:12–19*

**1 Pet 4:12 (NIV). “Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering.”** Even though Peter undoubtedly was suffering Roman persecution when he wrote this, history claims that there was no official general persecution of Christians in Asia Minor (where Peter's audience lived) until AD 95. Yet local persecutions regularly affected Christians (as seen in Acts). In our day, disciples must ask God not “Why me?” when trials come but “Why not me?” Part of the plan is to learn from our own experience, and the Spirit and fellow disciples help in that perfecting process.

**1 Pet 4:13. “But rejoice.”** Peter did this in Acts 5:41, but it is very hard to keep an eternal perspective while suffering.

**1 Pet 4:16. “suffer as a Christian.”** Peter is not talking about suffering because of sin. Some types of suffering can be good. For example, Israel is grateful that Joseph of old was sold into Egypt to save his people a couple of decades later. Joseph Smith’s suffering when he was confused about which church to join was a blessing to him and us. And most all, Christians are most grateful that our Savior suffered for *all* our sins.

**1 Pet 4:17. “judgment must begin at the house of God.”** God taught this doctrine also in D&C 112:25–26. God will purify the wicked in His Church before He purifies the rest of the world. He needs a pure kingdom and Zion society to receive Him.

**1 Pet 4:19 (NIV). “those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator.”** When we suffer from God’s hand, we need to meekly receive it within the perspective of our relationship to Him as our Creator and Redeemer. Peter charges the Saints to do good. Discipleship includes suffering to help us grow: “As Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same” (1 Pet 4:1; compare Heb 5:8).

## **1 Peter 5**

*Instructions to Elders and Youth—1 Pet 5:1-9*

**1 Pet 5:7. “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”** With humility we can approach God with our worries and needs to find help in carrying the burden or trials He has given us. He can also lift the burden of our sins as we repent.

*Final greetings—1 Pet 5:10–14*

**1 Pet 5:10. “after that ye have suffered a while, [God will] make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”** The valiant who endure suffering have a great potential for reward. The Greek implies that the reward will be an association with the Savior because they will be like Him. While referencing this verse, Elder Neal A. Maxwell encouraged, “Let us all take extra care to avoid both giving and taking offense. Let us be loving, kind, and forgiving—helping these friends to become, as Peter and Paul said, grounded, rooted, established, and settled!”<sup>33</sup>

**1 Pet 5:12 (NIV). “With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.”** Peter’s postscript introduces “my scribe Silvanus” (NTR). Silvanus was also probably the executive assistant and delivery man. “I have written to you” may have been Silvanus’s short exhortation to testify that he knows what Peter said is true. Silas (or Silvanus, his full name) is mentioned thirty-four times in the New Testament. He was introduced at the Jerusalem Council as a Jewish Christian

leader who accompanied Paul and Barnabas to Antioch to explain the changes made in Christianity from the law of Moses (Act 15:22, 26, 32). Paul asked Silas to join him on his second apostolic mission (Act 15:36–18:5).

**1 Pet 5:13. “The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.”** In Greek, the verse begins “she,” not “the church.”<sup>34</sup> In the book of Revelation, *she* became a codeword referring to the Church, and references to Babylon are meant to point to Rome.<sup>35</sup>

Silas or Peter refers to Mark as “my son,” indicating a close relationship, not bloodlines. Peter became a mentor for the young John Mark, who was the son of a wealthy Jerusalem woman named Mary who opened her home as a house-church for Christians (Act 12:12, 25). Mark was also the Apostle Barabbas’s nephew and companion on Paul’s first apostolic mission. He is traditionally known as the compiler and editor of the Gospel of Mark (which has early claims to have been dictated by Peter in prison as scribed by John Mark; see my background on the Gospel of Mark). In addition to his tender ministering to Peter, Mark served with other Church leaders across the empire (Col 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11).

**1 Pet 5:14 (BYUNR). “Greet each other with an expression of sincere Christian affection. Peace be with all of you who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.”** Peter’s closing is like Paul’s.<sup>36</sup> This greeting was a common custom at the time but was often altered for rank and station. In Christianity though, all were treated equally.<sup>37</sup> Peace is a sign of the Spirit and follow disciples who enjoy its companionship (D&C 6:23).

## Introduction to 2 Peter

### Themes

Each point of 2 Peter fits into different aspects a farewell sermon. Chapter 1 is a personal guidebook for all those seeking their exaltation or calling and election. After a beautiful explanation of temple promises, Peter turns in chapter 2 to a stern warning of Satan’s efforts to influence the Saints through false teachers, which will lead to apostasy. The last chapter focuses on the Savior’s Second Coming.

*Table 2. Overview of 2 Peter*

1:1–11	Seeking your calling and election
1:12–15	Prophecy and scripture: The basis of true knowledge
1:16–18	Jesus’s Transfiguration
1:19–21	More sure word of prophecy
2:1–22	False teachers and their destruction
3:1–7	Christ’s return and Judgment
3:8–13	Second Coming: The Day of the Lord
3:14–18	Peter’s concluding farewell

## *Farewell sermons*

Second Peter is similar to Moses's last sermon or farewell address in Deu 31–33 and other farewell sermons scattered across scripture.<sup>38</sup> This epistle contains nineteen of the twenty standard features found in farewell sermons.<sup>39</sup> It begins with the prophet's summons and includes warnings, blessings, covenant renewals, and what will happen after Peter's imminent death. He warns of an apostasy by false teachers.

## **2 Peter 1**

### *Seeking your calling and election—2 Pet 1:1–11*

**2 Pet 1:1. “a servant and an apostle of Jesus.”** Peter introduces himself as a *doulos*, “servant or slave,” of Jesus. He also includes his authority as an Apostle. In Greek, *apostolos* means “one sent,” but in the Restoration it means “special witness” (D&C 107:23). These two titles together are significant for Peter and help disciples understand our relationship to God:

In antiquity good slaves were proverbially loyal, especially when they were sent out specifically to accomplish something for their master. If ancient slaves excelled in serving their masters well, they could be freed, which in a gospel context might correspond to the freedom from spiritual death extended by Peter to all who follow the Lord Jesus Christ. Peter overtly and forthrightly declares, “I will not be negligent.”<sup>40</sup>

**2 Pet 1:1 (BYUNR).** “*to those who have obtained the same precious faith.*” This letter's audience is different from that of the first (which was addressed to a group of Saints in Asia Minor). This is for a specific group of committed Saints who have already obtained something special “in the righteousness of our God.”

**2 Pet 1:3 (BYURNR).** “*His divine power has bestowed upon us all things that will lead us to eternal life and to the fulfillment of our duty to God, because of our true knowledge of him who has called us to his own glory.*” We refer to God's divine power as priesthood power. It is the priesthood covenants that give us knowledge of Him to pass by the angels and enter the presence of God. This intimate knowledge pertains to eternal life. Here and in verse 10, Peter may refer to teachings similar to those we learn in our temple covenants.

**2 Pet 1:4 (BYUNR).** “*God has given us the most expansive and honorable promises, so that through these things you might share in the divine nature.*” Every time the New Testament mentions divine nature, it always refers to Jesus as our Savior and God.<sup>41</sup> We receive part of His Divine Nature only when we join Him. In the next phrase, Peter includes a condition to our receiving His nature: “having fled from the degeneration that is in the world because of covetousness” (BYUNR). Once we can do that, His precious promises allow us to join in God's Divine Nature.



**2 Pet 1:5 (BSB).** *“For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith.”* To escape evil desires, Peter calls on disciples to strive (constantly) to build our faith and develop all seven virtues. The word *virtue* is often used to refer to the law of chastity, yet in Greek it has a broader meaning. The virtues are developed after our love of God. Peter encourages disciples to work on their relationships with others. Peter’s list includes a broad scope as seen in these several translations.

- virtue (KJV), goodness (NIV), moral excellence (WEB), worthiness (YLT), full virtue (BYUNR)
- knowledge (KJV), spiritual knowledge (BYUNR)
- temperance (KJV), self-control (BYUNR)
- patience (KJV), perseverance (NIV), endurance (YLT), tenacious endurance (BYUNR)
- godliness (KJV), piety (YLT), consecration (BYUNR)
- kindness (KJV), mutual affection (NIV), concern for others (CEV)
- charity (KJV), love (NIV), the love of Christ (BYUNR)

There is significance to this order. It starts with the law of the gospel and ends with charity, which is the foundation of the law of consecration.

**2 Pet 1:8 (BSB).** *“if you possess these qualities and continue to grow in them, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord.”* By developing these virtues, we sharpen our spiritual tools. As we develop these qualities in our service to others (which is serving God vicariously), we also develop a nature that will be able to be in the presence of the Divine Nature. God gives us the gift of faith and knowledge of His plan of salvation; then we must give to Him gifts of good fruits and service to others.

**2 Pet 1:9 (BYUNR).** *“If these things are not present in any person, that person is blind—myopic—forgetting the atoning of his sins from the foundation of the world.”* As disciples, if we do not work on becoming more Christlike, we are shortsighted in our eternal perspective. If we do not move forward, we are sliding backwards. For the entire history of the earth, God’s gracious atoning gift has been available for disciples to progress and repent and become holier each day.

**2 Pet 1:10–11 (BYUNR).** *“do everything necessary to insure your calling and election.”* The phrase “calling and election” has special meaning to Peter and in the Restoration. He includes it in his farewell discourse as a final admonition to the Saints. Much of the first chapter discusses principles that evidently relate to this ordinance. Joseph Smith taught that Paul knew “all the ordinances in the church,” and we have evidence that Peter did, too.<sup>42</sup> Other Christian interpretations range from something associated with Calvinism’s predestination or to the need that disciples have fruits of faith to attain salvation.<sup>43</sup>

The Prophet Joseph received revelations teaching that “calling and election” was a special title associated with an ordinance:

Though they might hear the voice of God & know that Jesus was the son of God this would be no evidence that their calling & election was made shure [*sic*] that they had part with Christ & was a Joint heir with him, they then would want that more sure word of prophecy that they were sealed in the heavens & had the promise of eternal live in the kingdom of God—then having this promise sealed unto them it was as an anchor to the soul sure & steadfast.<sup>44</sup>

According to D&C 131:1–5, other phrases share the same meaning—that of being sealed up to eternal life in the celestial kingdom (also D&C 132:19, 26, 49).

Joseph taught in public sermons in Nauvoo that after disciples have received the saving ordinances of baptism, confirmation, washings, anointings, endowment, and sealing, they should also prepare for their calling and election. In the summer of 1839, a few months after his release from Liberty Jail, the Prophet taught:

After a person hath faith in Christ, repents of his sins, & is Baptized for the remission of his sins & receives the Holy Ghost (by the laying on of hands) which is the first Comforter. then let him continue to humble himself before God, hungering & thirsting after Righteousness. & living by every word of God & the Lord will soon say unto him Son thou shalt be exalted, &c When the Lord has thoroughly [*sic*] proved him & finds that the man is determined to serve him at all hazard [*sic*]. then the man will find his calling & Election made sure.<sup>45</sup> (Scribal original spelling.)

Even though most qualified Saints will receive this sealing ordinance after their death, modern prophets of God still administer it in our day in the Holy of Holies to worthy couples.<sup>46</sup>

**2 Pet 1:11 (BYUNR).** *“In this rich and abundant way, entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be added upon you.”* Peter encourages his audience to seek for this entrance. It is the fulfillment of the ordinances of the Mosaic tabernacle, as the high priest led the way through sacrifice, washing, anointing, clothing, prayer, and receiving the cleansing of the Redeemer back to the tree of life (the menorah) to enter the presence of the Lord. In Abr 3:26 we find “added upon” used for those “who keep their first estate.” In Peter’s context, it refers to the second estate, or mortality.

*Prophecy and scripture: The basis of true knowledge—2 Pet 1:12–15*

**2 Pet 1:12–15 (BYUNR).** *“I think it is right, as long as I am in this ‘tent’ of flesh, to awaken you in convent remembrance, For I know that very soon I will set aside my ‘tent.’ Just as our Lord . . . has made plain to me.”* Peter hopes to testify until his death. The image of our bodies as a tent or tabernacle was also used by Paul (1 Cor 6:9). Peter reinforces that we need to always remember the sacrifice of our Lord. During His ministry, Jesus hinted that Peter would die before the Lord’s Second Coming (Jn 21:8). This appears to be another witness to Peter about the end of his life.

### *Jesus's Transfiguration—2 Pet 1:16–18*

**2 Pet 1:16 (BYUNR).** “*we were endowed as eyewitnesses of his divine grandeur.*” As a special witness, Peter makes sure that no one thinks the gospel is mere fables.

**2 Pet 1:17–18 (BYUNR).** “*For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when a voice enveloped him under the cloud . . . ‘This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased’ . . . we were with him up on the sacred mountain.*” Peter motivates the Saints to strive to receive their calling and election by sharing the sacred experience that he, James, and John had as eyewitnesses of the Savior’s majesty on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mt 17:5; see D&C 63:20–21). When God the Father introduced His Son, He included messianic titles from Ps 2:7 and Isa 5:1; 42:1. This is another description of a separate Godhead.

### *More sure word of prophecy—2 Pet 1:19–21*

**2 Pet 1:19.** “*We have also a more sure word of prophecy.*” Peter shares more on his sure testimony as an eyewitness of the glorified Lord. He introduces a unique phrase in the Bible: “A more sure word of prophecy.” This is what Joseph Smith referred to when he said, “Peter penned the most sublime language of any of the apostles.” Joseph defined it in a revelation (D&C 131:5) and for the Saints in Nauvoo:

He said the more sure word of prophecy meant, a mans knowing that he was sealed up unto eternal life by revelation & the spirit of prophecy, through the power of the Holy priesthood. He also showed that it was impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance. Paul had seen the third heavens and I more. Peter penned the most sublime language of any of the apostles.<sup>47</sup>

Over a decade before giving that sermon, Joseph changed the following phrase in his translation of the Bible: “We have *also therefore* a more sure *knowledge of the* word of prophecy; *whereunto to which word of prophesy* ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light *that which* shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts” (JST, 1 Pet 1:19). Even if the young Joseph did not know the full implications of that verse at the time, it rings of truth—the more sure word of prophecy is also great knowledge that comes through prophecy.

Joseph Smith also connected the more sure word of prophecy with the Second Comforter.<sup>48</sup>

Now wherein could they have a more sure word of prophecy than to hear the voice of God saying this is my beloved son etc. Now for the secret and grand key. Though they might hear the voice of God, and know that Jesus was the son of god this would be no evidence that their election and calling was made sure that they had part with Christ, and were joint heirs with him: they then would want that more sure word of prophecy, that they were sealed in the heavens and had the promise of eternal life in the kingdom of God, then having this promise sealed unto them, it was as an anchor to the Soul sure and steadfast.<sup>49</sup>

Peter and Joseph shared very sacred information with the Saints, both shortly before their martyrdoms.

**2 Pet 1:20 (JST).** “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scriptures is given of any private interpretation will of man.” Peter, even more clearly with the JST changes, confirms that prophecy is God’s words, not man’s whim.<sup>50</sup> The Greek *idios*, which is used 113 times in the New Testament, is translated only here as “private.” Seventy-seven times it is translated “his own” (as in “his own servants,” “his own country,” “his own sheep”). Other religions interpret this to mean that those who are properly qualified, educated, called by God, or prompted by the Spirit must interpret scripture.

What did Peter mean by “scripture”? Most of the time, *scripture* in the New Testament refers to the sacred writings later compiled into the Old Testament. Yet neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament was closed canon in Peter’s lifetime. So, if Peter understood that scripture was the word of God, he may have known his letter would be among new scripture.

**2 Pet 1:21 (BYUNR).** “For prophecy has never come from the will of man, but men revealed prophecies from God as they were moved upon by the power of the Holy Ghost.” Prophecy did not come through caprices of private individuals but through the preaching of men prompted through revelation by God. If prophecies are used correctly, they contain sure proofs that God lives, and they testify of Christ. The pious group of Jews known as Essenes “believed in the principle that prophesy was from God (1QS 8.16; 6QD 2.12).”<sup>51</sup> The phrase “moved upon by the Holy Ghost” was repeated in revelations given in the Restoration.<sup>52</sup>

## 2 Peter 2

*False teachers and their destruction—2 Pet 2:1–22*

**2 Pet 2:1 (BYUNR).** “There also came false prophets among the people of Israel, just as false teachers will intrude among you.” To be a false prophet was a serious offense under the law of Moses. They were compared to the wicked of Sodom and were stoned (Deu 13:5; Jer 23:14). In the New Testament, a false prophet lied about speaking under divine authority or was deceived by Satan. In contrast, Rev 19:10 describes a prophet as one speaking under inspiration: “For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Peter identified false teachers as those who create factions, deny Jesus as their Redeemer, entangle with brutalities, defame Christianity, covet, and exploit Christians as merchandise (2 Pet 2:1, 3; 4:3). Jesus warned of false teachers, too.<sup>53</sup> Twice in this verse Peter uses the same Greek word *apōleias*, which the KJV translated as “damnable” and “destruction.” The JST changed the first to “abominable heresies.”

**2 Pet 2:2 (BYUNR).** “Many shall follow in the false and immoral ways of these teachers, and on account of those followers the way of truth will be blasphemed.” Peter prophesies that the false leaders will have many followers. The “way of truth” (or Christianity) will fall into “disrepute” (NIV) or become “maligned” (NASB) because of it. The Apostasy was foretold, but much of the world is still affected by it.



**2 Pet 2:3 (BYUNR).** *“In their greed they will take your money in exchange for their phony ideas.”* The false leaders are motivated by money. Their greedy covetousness beguiles them to make false statements to entice followers. This is referred to as priestcraft in the Book of Mormon (see Alm 12:1, 16). A judgment of “destruction” (JST) is in store for those false leaders.

#### *Judgment and punishment—2 Pet 2:4–22*

**2 Pet 2:4–9 (BYUNR).** *“For if God did not spare . . . then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly from temptation, and how to hold the unrighteous to be punished.”* This section is one long “if . . . then” sentence lasting five verses. Peter begins and ends with how God punishes the wicked.

**2 Pet 2:4 (BYUNR).** *“sinful angels, but deposited them in chains in the underworld of darkness.”* Peter’s first example refers to the premortal existence, when one-third (or a portion) of the hosts of heaven rebelled against God and followed Satan (D&C 29:36; Rev 12:4). Biblical students who do not believe in the premortal life interpret this as a discussion of Gen 6:1–4 from the apocryphal book of 1 Enoch.

**2 Pet 2:5 (BYUNR).** *“did not spare the people of the first dispensation, but protected only Noah.”* Noah and seven family members entered the ark and were saved. Noah became a type of the Savior (as do all the prophets according to Hos 12:10). Noah exemplifies hope to Peter’s audience of righteous Saints looking to their prophet in a world of wickedness.

**2 Pet 2:6–8 (BYUNR).** *“the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah . . . turned them to ashes.”* Peter next touches on the most wicked example of immoral sexual behavior in the Bible—Sodom and Gomorrah. Only Lot and his family were saved before God destroyed the cities (sadly his wife started the journey but looked back and so didn’t finish it). Like Lot, we live in a world of wickedness, and many have become immune to the false teachers surrounding us. The Lord has blessed us with modern scripture and living prophets to avoid the same catastrophe.

**2 Pet 2:9 (BYUNR).** *“then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly from temptation, and how to hold the unrighteous to be punished in the judgment day.”* Finally, the long sentence transitions to the main point: God will deliver “the godly.” Like Noah and Lot, all the righteous can be delivered. The wicked will be reserved for the Judgment Day and Second Resurrection, after the Millennium.

**2 Pet 2:10 (BYUNR).** *“He will punish those who . . . despise leadership . . . are not afraid to blaspheme against the dignitaries.”* These next four verses apply directly to the false teachers and deceivers of the early Church. Peter says they are worried about human interests of the flesh. Their self-centered behaviors and egotistical thoughts refuse to submit to God’s will. The KJV’s “government” refers to dominion and power in politics and the Church. Rebellion often includes criticism of authorities and leaders.

**2 Pet 2:11 (BYUNR).** *“Even angels, who are greater in power and authority, are not so daring as to bring such a blasphemous judgment against them before their Lord.”* According to the apocryphal book of 1 Enoch, even the Lord’s angels do not criticize the fallen angels.<sup>54</sup>

**2 Pet 2:12–14 (BYUNR).** *“these people, acting like natural-born irrational animals . . . They that count it pleasure to indulge themselves all the time.”* The Epistle of Barnabas also describes false teachers as brute beasts (chapter 115). The wicked do not fully understand what harm they cause as they are puppets for Satan. False leaders are hypocrites and “revel in their own deceptions” (2 Pet 2:13 NEB). Unfortunately, our dispensation has the same problem. Many have “eyes full of adultery” and are “trained in greed” (NAS, RSV). To overcome the natural man and woman, disciples must apply the Atonement of Jesus Christ (Mosi 3:19).

**2 Pet 2:15–16 (BYUNR).** *“Having abandoned the straight way, they wander, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor.”* Peter uses another Old Testament story to illustrate false leaders. Balaam became a double agent of King Balak of Moab and received bribes to entice the Israelites to leave the Lord (Num 22 and 31). The Lord saved his life by speaking through his donkey to set things right.<sup>55</sup>

**2 Pet 2:17.** *“These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest.”* Peter uses the imagery of a deceptively dry well or clouds that blow away without giving rain to describe the deception of false leaders. No living water is found in the well, clouds, or false teachers. The deceivers have no saving sustenance. Only Christ has that, but these teachers have rejected Him.

**2 Pet 2:19 (BSB).** *“They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves to depravity.”* These smooth-talking educators prey on new converts and entice the Saints with promises of false liberty. Ironically the one trying to destroy agency from the beginning, Satan, falsely promises more freedom through sin. His lure to sin will reward his captives with eternal imprisonment (or a lack of progression).

**2 Pet 2:21 (NIV).** *“It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command.”* Those Saints who succumb to the false teachers, lose their faith, and sin against God’s commandments are in worse shape than those who have never been baptized or known the Lord. Once we have committed or covenanted with God, we must be responsible. This first phrase is repeated in D&C 76:32; 121:22.

**2 Pet 2:22 (BYUNR).** *“The dog has returned to his own vomit.”* Peter quotes the well-known Pro 26:11 to describe the uncleanness of false leaders. Jews held both dogs and swine among the unclean animals.

## **2 Peter 3**

*Christ’s return and Judgement—2 Pet 3:1–7*

**2 Pet 3:1–2 (BYUNR).** *This now, beloved ones, this is the second letter . . . that you may remember the words which were foretold by the holy prophets, and . . . the Lord and Savior issued by your apostles.”* Peter points to the harmony between the ancient prophets, Jesus, and the Apostle’s words against future false teachers who will ridicule the truth in the last days (which the Epistles use to refer to their own time). In the ancient world, remembering was more than recalling. The Hebrew Bible includes the action of obedience in remembering God’s commands.<sup>56</sup>

**2 Pet 3:3–4 (JST).** “Knowing this first, that **in the last days** there shall come **in the last days** scoffers . . . **Denying the Lord Jesus Christ, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? . . . all things must continue as they were are, and have continued as they are from the beginning of the creation.**” When humans assume that the world will continue as it has, they deny their Savior and His Coming.

**2 Pet 3:5–7 (JST).** “**the heavens, and the earth . . . were created by the word of God; Whereby And by the word of God, the world that then was, being overflowed with water perished; But . . . now, are kept in store by the same word, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment.**” Peter recounts the story of the Creation and the Flood and foretells of the earth’s great cleansing by fire.

### *Second Coming: The Day of the Lord—2 Pet 3:8–13*

**2 Pet 3:8–9 (JST).** “**But concerning the coming of the Lord, beloved, be I would not have you ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years. . . . The Lord is not slack concerning his promise and coming.**” Peter defends the Lord’s omniscient wisdom in directing the earth. The supposed delay in the timing of the Savior’s Second Coming was an issue of perspective. Peter knew that it would be a long time before the Lord came in glory. We assume the number one thousand was used figuratively for a large number, but Peter may have understood it like Abr 3:4 does: “One revolution was a day unto the Lord, after his manner of reckoning, it being one thousand years according to the time appointed.” More likely, Peter alluded to Ps 90:4: “For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday.” Even if he meant it literally, we do not know which calendar Peter referred to (lunar, Roman solar, Julian, and so forth).

The measurement of time is not standard across scripture or history. Alm 40:8 reads, “All is as one day with God, and time only is measured unto men.” Furthermore, Genesis and Moses did not give one thousand days for each day of Creation. Although we do not know the timing of the Lord’s coming, we do that He will cut His work short if the righteous are ready.<sup>57</sup> We do not need to focus on whether Peter’s thousand years is literal or figurative—we know that becoming holy and creating a Zion society will cut the calamities of the last days short and usher in the Lord’s Coming (Rev 19:7). Peter next turns his focus there.

**2 Pet 3:10 (JST).** “**But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall shake, and the earth also shall tremble, and the mountains shall melt, and pass away.**” When the Lord arrives, He will take most by surprise. But He promised, “Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amo 3:7). Modern revelation gives much information about the Lord’s Second Coming, including that those who pay tithing will not be burned and that not only will the earth burn but later the heavens will dissolve and a new earth will be formed for the celestial kingdom.<sup>58</sup> Second Peter 3:11 includes the nuance of Peter’s call to repentance before the day of fire.<sup>59</sup>

**2 Pet 3:12–13 (JST).** “Looking unto, and preparing for ~~and hasting unto~~ the day of the coming of the ~~day of God~~, Lord wherein the corruptible things of the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved . . . Nevertheless, if we shall endure, we shall be kept according to his promise.” The JST focuses on the Saints’ preparation and endurance. They will see “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (3:13). These prophecies are elaborated on in modern scripture as well.<sup>60</sup>

*Peter’s concluding farewell—2 Pet 3:14–18*

**2 Pet 3:14 (BYUNR).** “Beloved ones, seeing that you look forward to such things, be diligent that you may be found by him to be at peace, without spot, and blameless.” As we await the Second Coming, the Saints must diligently prepare themselves by staying close to the Lord to receive His cleansing power—“without spot, and blameless”—to escape the power of the adversary (D&C 38:31).

**2 Pet 3:15–16a (BSB).** “Consider also that our Lord’s patience brings salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom God gave him. He writes this way . . . hard to understand.” Peter points to Paul as a second witness of what he is teaching. This acknowledgement suggests that some epistles had become scripture (2 Pet 3:16). It is also reassuring to hear Peter speak so kindly of Paul since in Gal 2:12, Paul recorded a disagreement the two had on a bad day. Biblical scholars often emphasize that conflict, yet we also have this verse and others that show a kind brotherhood between Peter and Paul as fellow Apostles.<sup>61</sup>

The JST rearranged the order of this verse, making it clearer that Paul also taught that we should use the time before the Second Coming to repent and strive for salvation: “The longsuffering *and waiting* of our Lord *is, for* salvation.”

**2 Pet 3:16b (NIV).** “ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.” Sometimes scriptures can be hard to understand if we do “not inquire of the Lord” or are “stiff-necked” (1 Ne 15:3; Enos 1:22). Worse than misunderstanding is false teachers who deliberately “twist” (BYUNR), “wrest” (KJV) or “distort” (BSB) the scriptures away from the plain and simple truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ” (compare Alm 13:20).

**2 Pet 3:17–18 (JST).** “beloved, seeing ye know these things before *the things which are coming*, beware lest ye also, being led away . . . grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord.” The JST additions emphasize the opportunity and responsibility of having prophecy and revelation. Peter gives more than a final warning; he asks us to use this prophecy to guard against personal apostasy and remain steadfast. We can avoid falling away or being deceptively led away by growing in our knowledge of the gospel and in applying the gospel through charitable action. If the Saints continue to meekly become more like the Savior, they will not be led astray. With this hopeful guideline, the letter closes, omitting any personal greetings and a scribe’s farewell.



## Notes

- 1 See, for example, Act 1:15; 10:25; 15:7.
- 2 Each of the Old Testament citations is from the Greek Septuagint (LXX). In 1 Peter they are all from the books of Isaiah, Psalms, Proverbs, and Leviticus.
- 3 John W. Welch and Brent J. Schmidt, “Reading 2 Peter as a Farewell Text,” in *The Ministry of Peter, the Chief Apostle*, ed. Frank F. Judd Jr., Eric D. Huntsman, and Shon D. Hopkin (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2014), 317–335. This is discussed in more detail in my introduction to 2 Peter.
- 4 1 Ths 1:1; 2 Ths 1:1; 1 Pet 5:12.
- 5 1 Pet 1:1 BSB, footnote a, available online at [https://biblehub.com/bsb/1\\_peter/1.htm](https://biblehub.com/bsb/1_peter/1.htm).
- 6 The majority of Jews in the Roman Empire lived in the diaspora, not Judea. Ten percent of the Empire claimed Israelite lineage. The Assyrians displaced the northern tribes from the land of Israel in the eighth century BC, and Babylon displaced the southern tribes in the sixth century BC.
- 7 *Westminster Confession* 3.6 was the foundation of the Protestant belief of election that taught that God chooses to save only certain mortals: “As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, fore-ordained all the means thereunto.” Again in 12.1 and 3: “All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by his Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death . . . this effectual call is of God’s free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit.” Also see Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (New York, NY: Scriber, 1871), 2:362, 3:104 3:475.
- 8 Ex 24:6; Lev 1:5; 3:2, 8, 13.
- 9 “*Peirasmós*,” *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, online at <https://biblehub.com/greek/3986.htm>.
- 10 Dead Sea Scrolls, 1 Qp Hab II, vii. We also see this in The Psalms of Solomon.
- 11 Margaret Barker, *Christmas: The Original Story* (London, UK: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2008), 17.
- 12 See Morm 3:17–20; Moro 1:4; the title page of the Book of Mormon.
- 13 “*Néphós*,” *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, online at <https://biblehub.com/greek/3525.htm>.
- 14 For example: the Holy Spirit of Promise, the Gift of the Holy Ghost, calling and election, rest of the Lord, Godhead, the other Comforter, the Son of God, created in the image of God, the more sure word of prophecy, and baptism for the dead.
- 15 “*Hagios*,” *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, online at <https://biblehub.com/greek/40.htm>.
- 16 “*Phobos*,” *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, online at <https://biblehub.com/greek/5401.htm>.
- 17 Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980), 60.

18 John Elliott, *1 Peter* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 395.

19 The KJV's "word" is found in the Greek *Textus Receptus*, but the *United Bible Societies* and *Nestle-Aland*, which are the basis for the NIV and ESV, do not have "word."

20 D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, *Verse by Verse: The New Testament*, vol. 2 of 2, *Acts through Revelation* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1998), 280.

21 Russell M. Nelson, "Spiritual Treasures," October 2019 general conference, online at churchofjesuschrist.org. "The restoration of the priesthood is just as relevant to you as a woman as it is to any man. Because the Melchizedek Priesthood has been restored, both covenant-keeping women and men have access to 'all the spiritual blessings of the church.'"

22 "Segullah," *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, online at <https://biblehub.com/str/hebrew/5459.htm>.

23 Lynne Hilton Wilson, *Christ's Emancipation of New Testament Women* (Palo Alto, CA: Good Sound Publishing, 2015), chapter 8.

24 Deu 25:3. Romans and Jews whipped with long leather thongs with bones or rocks attached to the end that cut and tore the skin open. The law of Moses wouldn't allow more than forty stripes to be given, so the Jews stopped at thirty-nine (see also 2 Cor 11:24).

25 Compare Mt 26:57–68; Mk 14:53–65; Jn 18:19–24.

26 The quote is passed down through Christianity and reworded by Elder James E. Faust, "A Crown of Thorns, a Crown of Glory," April 1991 general conference, online at churchofjesuschrist.org. I found references to the quote from 1656, but it appears older.

27 "Hupotasso," *The New Testament Greek Lexicon – NAS*, Bible Study tools, <https://biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/hupotasso.html>.

28 "History, 1838–1856, volume E-1 [1 July 1843–30 April 1844]," p. 1681, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, <https://josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-e-1-1-july-1843-30-april-1844/51>.

29 Wilson, *Emancipation of New Testament Women*, chapter 6; Ben Sira, *Ecclesiasticus*, 25:26. Greco-Roman adults often divorced four or five times, but the numbers appear lower in the Jewish culture. Nonetheless, it was a constant threat for things as minor as burning toast, raising one's voice, or spinning in the doorway for more light.

30 For a broad usage of *skueos* across the New Testament, see Mk 11:16; Lk 8:16; Act 9:15; 10:11; 1 Ths 4:4; 2 Tim 2:21.

31 M. Russell Ballard, "This Is My Work and My Glory," April 2013 general conference. "Men and women have different but equally valued roles. Just as a woman cannot conceive a child without a man, so a man cannot fully exercise the power of the priesthood to establish an eternal family without a woman. . . . In other words, in the eternal perspective, *both the procreative power and the priesthood power are shared by husband and wife*. And as husband and wife, a man and a woman should strive to follow our Heavenly Father. The Christian virtues of love, humility, and patience should be their focus as they seek the blessings of the priesthood in their lives and

for their family.” Also, M. Russell Ballard, “The Sacred Responsibilities of Parenthood” (Brigham Young University devotional, August 19, 2003), [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu), explained that husbands’ and wives’ “stewardships, equally sacred and important, do not involve any false ideas about domination or subordination.” A third example is from L. Tom Perry, “Fatherhood, an Eternal Calling,” April 2004 general conference, and teaches that in marriage there is “not a president or a vice president. The couple works together eternally for the good of the family . . . They are on equal footing.” Both general conference talks can be found online at [churchofjesuschrist.org](http://churchofjesuschrist.org).

32 John Elliott, *1 Peter* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 554.

33 Neal A. Maxwell, “A Brother Offended,” April 1982 general conference, online at [churchofjesuschrist.org](http://churchofjesuschrist.org). See also Eph 3:17–18; Col 1:23; 2:7.

34 John W. Welch and Brent J. Schidt, *1 and 2 Peter* (Provo, UT: BYU Studies, forthcoming), 1 Pet 5:13. “The feminine singular pronoun *ē* could refer to the church, a thing of the feminine gender or a woman in general, possibly Peter’s wife because we know that Peter was married (Mt 8: 14; Mk 1:29). Women in the Old Testament and in Rev 12:1 also are symbolic of the church. It is likely that ‘she’ refers to the church which is ‘co-elect.’”

35 See Rev 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21; 12:7, especially in the JST.

36 1 Pet 5:14; compare 1 Ths 5:26; 2 Cor 13:12.

37 Welch and Schmidt, *1 and 2 Peter*, 1 Pet 5:13. “Peter’s instruction that all greet one another with a kiss provides evidence of the egalitarian ideal in the nascent church in contrast with the larger, ancient world. According to Herodotus, when Persians met each other in the streets, you would know if the persons meeting are of equal rank by the following token: if they are, instead of speaking, they kiss each other on the lips. In the case where one is a little inferior to the other, the kiss is given on the cheek; where the difference of rank is great, the inferior prostrates himself upon the ground (Herodotus *Histories* 1.134).”

38 We find farewell addresses in the New Testament from Jesus at His Last Supper (Jn 12–17) and from Paul in Act 20:17–38) and in 2 Timothy. In the Book of Mormon, Lehi gave his children blessings and a farewell address (2 Ne 1–4:12). King Benjamin’s farewell sermon also follows Moses’s pattern (Mosi 2–5). This formal type of a farewell is often called a testament rather than an epistle.

39 Welch and Schmidt, “Reading 2 Peter as a Farewell Text,” 317: “William Kurz is most helpful. This scholar has analyzed twenty-two farewell speeches in the Bible and in classical Greek and Roman literature, identifying twenty elements.” Kurz’s twenty standard points from farewell addresses are (1) summons, (2) invoking own mission as an example, (3) declaration of innocence and discharge of duty, (4) reference to impending death, (5) exhortations, (6) warnings and final injunctions, (7) blessings, (8) farewell gestures, (9) specific immediate tasks for successors, (10) theological review of history, (11) revelation of future events, (12) promises, (13) appoints or refers to a successor, (14) bemoaning the loss, (15) future degeneration is to come, (16) covenant renewal (sacrifices), (17) providing for those who will survive, (18) final consolations to the inner circle, (19) didactic speech, (20) facing death.

40 Welch and Schmidt, *1 and 2 Peter*, 2 Pet 1:1.

41 Act 17:29; Rom 1:20; 1 Cor 2:10.

42 Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 9–10, 42, 110, 210, 327–331. “Paul . . . knew . . . all the ordinances, and blessings were in the Church.” Peter refers to ordinances in his letters (see 1 Pet 1:21–23; 3:19–21; 2 Pet 1:10, 19).

43 Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude–2 Peter* (Waco, TX: World Books, 1983), 190. “‘Call and election’ . . . This passage does not mean that oral progress provides, the Christian with a subjective assurance of his election (the sense it was given by Luther and Calvin . . .), but that the ethical fruits of Christian faith are objectively necessary for the attainment of final salvation . . . Our author seems to emphasize man’s role in his salvation, the content should be remembered.” Interestingly, I also checked three other commentaries that did not mention the phrase in their commentary on 2 Pet 1:10 (*The Anchor Bible*, *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, and *The New Interpreter’s Bible*).

44 “Discourse, 14 May 1843, as Reported by Wilford Woodruff,” p. [32], The Joseph Smith Papers, <https://josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/discourse-14-may-1843-as-reported-by-wilford-woodruff/3>.

45 “Discourse, between circa 26 June and circa 2 July 1839, as Reported by Willard Richards,” p. 19, The Joseph Smith Papers, <https://josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/discourse-between-circa-26-june-and-circa-2-july-1839-as-reported-by-willard-richards/5>.

46 Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 4 vols. (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1992), 2:651; Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 4, 15, 17–20, 26, 205–206, 209, 284, 391, 403; Michael Quinn, “The Council of Fifty and Its Members, 1844–1945,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (1980); Andrew F. Ehat, “‘It Seems Like Heaven Began on Earth’: Joseph Smith and the Constitution of the Kingdom of God,” *BYU Studies* 20, no. 3 (1980). Hyrum Andrus, *Doctrines of the Kingdom-Foundations of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ* (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1973), 352–401, 550–560.

47 “Discourse, 17 May 1843–A, as Reported by William Clayton,” p. [16], The Joseph Smith Papers, <https://josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/discourse-17-may-1843-a-as-reported-by-william-clayton/1>.

48 “History, 1838–1856, volume C-1 [2 November 1838–31 July 1842] [addenda],” p. 9 [addenda], The Joseph Smith Papers, <https://josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-c-1-2-november-1838-31-july-1842/544>: When the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve him at all hazard, then it will be his privilege to receive the other Comforter. . . . Now what is this other Comforter? It is no more nor less than the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and this is the sum and substance of the whole matter, that when any man obtains this last Comforter he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him or appear unto him from time to time, and even he will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him and the lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and this is the state and place the ancient Saints arrived at when they had such glorious visions—Isaiah, Ezekiel, John upon the Isle of Patmos, St. Paul in the third heavens, and all the Saints who held communion with the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn.”

49 Joseph Smith, “History, 1838–1856, volume D-1 [1 August 1842–1 July 1843],” p. 1549, The Joseph Smith Papers, <https://josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-d-1-1-august-1842-1-july-1843/192>.

50 Welch and Schmidt, *1 and 2 Peter*, 2 Pet 1:20. “But first know this, that every prophecy in scripture did not come from any personal whim of man.”

51 Welch and Schmidt, *1 and 2 Peter*, 2 Pet 1:21.

52 See Mose 6:8; D&C 68:3–4; 121:43.

53 Mt 7:15; 24:11, 24; 1 Jn 4:1.

54 1 Enoch 10:1–16; 12:3–13:3.

55 Jdg 1:11; Mic, 6:3; Deu 23:5.

56 Louis Midgley “The Ways of Remembrance” in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, ed. John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1991), 170; see also Alm 37:13; 38:5; 42:11; 3 Ne 15:1.

57 See D&C 52:11; 84:97; 109: 59; see also Rev 8:1 and D&C 88:95.

58 D&C 29:23–28; 64:23–25; 88:19.

59 Welch and Schmidt, *1 and 2 Peter*, 2 Pet 3:11.

60 See, for example, 3 Ne 26:3; Morm 9:2; D&C 101:24–25; 121:11; 133:40–42.

61 Act 15:25; Gal 1:18; 2:9.