



1 AND 2 PETER

BECOMING MORE HOLY

CA. AD 61 TO 68

Author

Both 1 and 2 Peter begin by introducing the author as “an apostle of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1). His birth name was “Simon/Symeon” (Greek/Hebrew spelling, Acts 15:14), the same as one of the twelve sons of Jacob. During Jesus’ ministry, at the most sacred times, He often separated Peter, James, and John from the other apostles (i.e., raising Jairus’ daughter, on the mount of Transfiguration, in Gethsemane, etc.). Paul has referred to him as one of the “pillars” of the church. Peter led the Jerusalem Council and is known as the leader of the Twelve Apostles.

The Greek texts of both Epistles are vastly different. This may be due to different scribes. Peter thanks Silas for either translating, compiling, or editing his first letter: “With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you” (1 Peter 5:12). We are not told who helped him with the second letter. Both are both finished in elegant Greek, yet, they have very different writing styles, vocabulary, themes, and organization.

Peter very well may have authorized both, but as an Aramaic speaking fisherman from Galilee, we assume that a well-educated, native Greek speaker finalized the letter.

SILAS

The name “Silas/Silvanus” is mentioned 34 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 (Acts 15:22, 26, 32). Paul asked Silas to join him on his second apostolic mission when Mark joined Barnabas (Acts 15:36–18:5). Silas also became Paul’s scribe (1 and 2 Thessalonians 1:1).

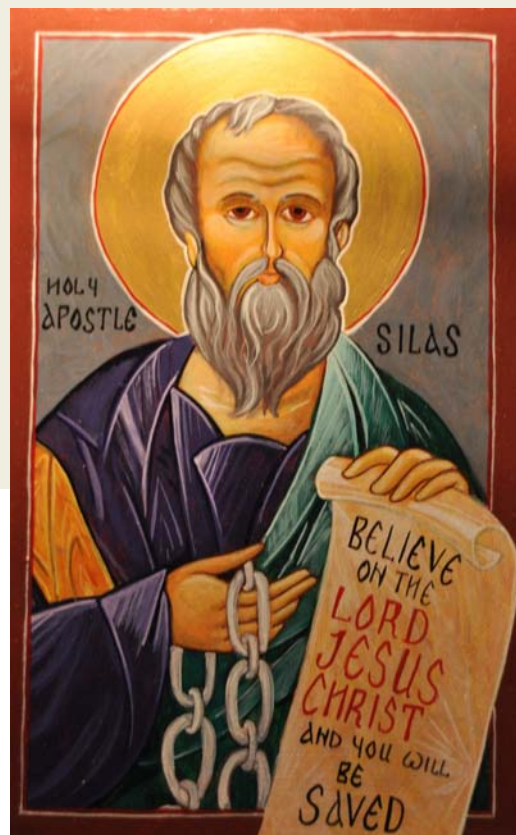
The first letter has no evidence of Hebrew or Aramaic nuances. The author of 1 Peter also knew his scriptures and included at least fourteen Old Testament citations in the first letter.¹ In contrast, 2 Peter only sights Proverbs once, and an apocryphal work of 1 Enoch. In 2 Peter 3:1, he refers to it as “this second epistle.” Also, 2 Peter is a farewell discourse and follows that literary format.²

The author references being in Rome with a code name: “the church that is at Babylon . . . saluteth you” (1 Peter 5:13). “Babylon” referred to Rome in the book of Revelation, which may apply here (Revelations 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). History tells us that Caesar Nero imprisoned Peter before he crucified him. (Peter requested to be crucified upside down, as he did not feel worthy to die as the Lord had.) Nero’s reign allows us to date both Epistles 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 who were suffering persecution. It repeats themes of:

1. Trials and Suffering Can Develop Greater Faith and Holiness
2. The Old Testament Prophecies about Jesus
3. Follow the Savior’s Example Even in Persecution
4. Christian Code of Conduct (Families, masters, etc.)



Icon of the Apostle Silas by Ted via Flickr.

OUTLINE [SIDEBAR]

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1 PETER 1

Greetings to Israelites

1 Peter 1:1–2

1 Peter 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 added by Peter’s scribe Silas (who was also Paul’s scribe (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1). Peter introduces as mentioned above. The audience is referred to as “strangers” (KJV), “pilgrims” (NKJV), or “exiles” (BSB) which referred to Christians living outside the land of Israel in the Diaspora—specifically, five specific areas in Asia Minor (or modern-day Turkey).³ As Christians, they were exiles in this world, seeking to return to their heavenly home. Figuratively, they must re-walk the path of the Children of Israel in their search for their Promised Land. This title 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 both:

- Jewish-converts who had settled in Asia Minor after generations of scattering—either from the Assyrian or Babylonian captivities (between 730 BC and 600 BC).⁴
- Gentile-converts who are now adopted into the family of Abraham as new chosen exiles.

1 Peter 1:2 “chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ . . .” (BSB) In the Restoration, we refer to the “elect” (KJV) or “chosen” (BSB) as predestined



to be saved in the Calvinistic sense.⁵ We understand that God has omniscient foreknowledge, but He still allows for individual choice or agency, so that we can choose to be chosen. The Lord taught the Prophet Joseph that many were called premortal, and those who make and keep their covenant with God will become His chosen people. Those who are chosen, do not set their hearts “upon things of this world” nor “exercise unrighteous dominion” (D&C 121:34–42; Abraham 3:22–4).

Peter goes on to acknowledge the Spirit and Savior’s roles in anyone becoming chosen as God’s elect. The Spirit’s cleansing and the Savior’s blood work together to redeem us. As we obey Jesus, the sanctifying power of God’s Spirit draws us to Him through His grace. The Spirit acts as an enabling agent to implement the cleansing of the atonement.

“Sprinkling by His blood” (BSB) The symbol of sprinkling the blood comes from ancient Israel Temple worship. The sacrificial animal’s blood was sprinkled on the altar and veil to represent the atoning power of Redemption (Exodus 24:6, Leviticus 1:5; 3:2, 8, 13, etc.). The blood foreshadowed the Great Redeemer’s obedient sacrifice. Understanding this allows us to see the unity between obedience and sacrifice.

“Grace unto you and peace be yours” (BSB) The greeting closes with the formal Greco-Judaic.

A Hymn of Praise for God’s Lively Hope

1 Peter 1:3–12

1 Peter 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” Note how often the New Testament describes a unity of work between the three separate members of the Godhead. This prayer or hymn begins by praising God for His gift of life through our physical birth, and spiritual life through a “new birth” (NIV). Peter describes being born again as a “living hope” (KJV). This hope stems from understanding Jesus’ atonement, resurrection, immortality and Eternal Life (NIV). When Christians exercise their faith, they are born again, and then receive the gift of hope. As disciples hold onto, and internalize that hope—their faith in the Savior—it can penetrate all aspects of their lives. When hope is living, it grows to fill disciples with love for God and charity toward others.

1 Peter 1:4 “To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you” Prophets foretell that God’s inheritance far surpasses all mortal inheritance. With His omniscient, God has “reserved” an “incorruptible” inheritance for the saints.

1 Peter 1:5 “who through faith are shielded by God’s power for the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time” (BSB) If disciples exercise faith, God can protect and guard them. This is similar to Paul’s shield of

faith and the armor of God (Ephesians 6:11–13; 1 Thessalonians 5:8). As another example, this verse speaks of the early saints’ expectation that Jesus’ Second Coming was imminent.

1 Peter 1:6 “now for a season . . . ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations” The “season,” includes most of mortality. The KJV, “temptation/*peirasmos*” is also used as “a trial, probation, testing, being tried . . . calamity, affliction.”⁶ All who live long enough will experience hardships, grief, and pain. Yet, Christians believe that God is aware of their trials and they fulfill a purpose in life. As we read of the lament and subsequent joy in the Psalm of Nephi: “O wretched man that I am! Yea, my heart sorroweth because of my flesh; my soul grieveth because of mine iniquities” (2 Nephi 4:17). Even in times of calamities and temptations, Nephi (and Peter) finds cause to “greatly rejoice” (KJV) by pondering on the gift of our Savior: “Rejoice, O my heart . . . O Lord, wilt thou encircle me around in the robe of thy righteousness!” (2 Nephi 4:28, 33).

1 Peter 1:7 “the trial of your faith . . . more precious than of gold . . . tried with fire” Peter explores how a “trial of faith” can lead to deeper faith. Whether our trials come from normal mortal challenges, or God’s tailor-made trials, Peter sees them “of greater worth than gold” (NIV). Gold will perish but the purified soul is immortal. Like the refining of metal, God will purify the saints through burning fire. Peter hopes our trials lead us to praise God more. If during trials, we humbly turn to God, our faith can become a sustaining and purifying power. Like Peter’s audience, we too can look at trials as a means to become more holy.

1 Peter 1:8 “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” (BSB) The goal of his audience is to be able to believe and someday see their Salvation (which also can mean to see the Lord). Through faith, *all* may rejoice in the hope of salvation and God’s love. Each disciples’ prayer can realign our daily goals to build our faith in, and see life through the lens of Salvation. Peter’s writes from the perspective of one who has seen, as a special eye-witness, of the resurrected Lord (1 Peter 5:1).

The Witness of the Prophets

1 Peter 1:10–12

1 Peter 1:10–11 “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” (BSB) Ancient prophets across the world sought to understand the timing of the Messiah’s redemption. By the time of the Herod’s Temple, the Jews had combed through their holy scriptures for predictions of the Messiah. They collected and studied them.⁷ Early Christians also looked for ancient prophecies of the Messiah and used them to show how Jesus fulfilled all (Revelation 10:7). These prophecies piece together Israelite history with Jesus’ ministry.⁸

1 Peter 1:12 “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” (BSB) The prophecies were not for the ancients as much as they were for the generation in which they were fulfilled. Prophecies of the Lord’s coming in scripture are also studied by heavenly angles. Even during His life, Jesus did not know the timing of His Second Coming, as He said, “no man knoweth the hour neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father” (Mark 13:32). The same truth is taught in the Book of Mormon; it was written for those people near the time of it coming to pass so that they might recognize the fulfillment of the prophecies as a witness of their truth (Mormon 3:17–20; Moroni 1:4; Book of Mormon Title Page).

A New Chosen Israelite Identity: Become Holy

1 Peter 1:13–25

1 Peter 1:13 “gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end” The KJV, “gird up,” was used in the military or athletics: “To gird one’s loin” involved the pulling up and tightening together of the long wide outer garment so that it would not cause the wearer to stumble in the line of march or a race. According to tradition, Passover was to be celebrated in like fashion to show they were ready for imminent departure. We now say, “Pull up your sleeves and get to work!”

The phrase, “gird up,” also means to “prepare your minds for action” (NASB). Peter calls Christians to strap in our thoughts and minds so that we are prepared for future trials. We do this with “soberness/*néphó*.” Literally this means “to abstain from wine,” but it also meant: “calm (vigilant), circumspect.”⁹ If we can truly trust the Lord in all situations, we can remain calm and collected.” The next phrase also has expanded meanings in Greek for “end.” The KJV, “hope to the end for the grace,” is also translated as “set your hope completely” (CSB), and “set your hope perfectly” (ASV). There is much room for personal effort as we strive to keep our hope fully focused on the Lord.

“**at the revelation of Jesus Christ,**” The last phrase in this verse has led some Christians to define revelation not as the Spirit’s work, but as Jesus’ coming. Because of this, I prefer the NIV, “when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.” As recipients of the modern revelation, we often have unique definitions of biblical phrases. This is because the Lord gave Joseph Smith fuller definitions of many of the words that we find in the Bible. We share the KJV vocabulary with many Christians, but we identify it with a nuanced definition that other Christians do not.¹⁰ This is also true of the word “revelation.” Stemming from ideas from this verse, some Christians limit the



Israelites eating the first Passover, with loins girded. Illustration from the 1728 *Figures de la Bible*; illustrated by Gerard Hoet (1648–1733). Image via Wikimedia Commons.

definition of “revelation” to Jesus’ coming. Others see the word revelation synonymous with Jesus. But, thanks to the Restoration, the word “revelation” holds a broader meaning including all the workings of the Spirit.

1 Peter 1:14–15 “As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But . . . ‘Be holy, because I am holy’” (NIV). Peter cites Leviticus 11:44, 45; 19:2.¹¹ This was instruction for the priests’ temple work. In this dispensation, the Elders in Zion received a similar charge: “Lift up their voice and declare my word with loud voices, without wrath or doubting, lifting up holy hands upon them. For I am able to make you holy, and your sins are forgiven you” (D&C 60:7). The Lord’s people have been asked to follow His example of holiness since the beginning. Our efforts to obey God’s commandments, repent daily, and follow the Spirit’s guidance, will allow the cleansing of the atonement to sanctify us disciples into becoming “saints.”

A “saint/*hagios*” is one who is “sacred, holy, set apart by (or for) God.”¹² To move forward spiritually, we must be *obedient children* of God. God called His holy ones, because they did “holy works” (NIV) “conduct” (RSV) “conversation” (KJV). The Greek word encourages disciples to actively follow with diligence and good works. Holiness belongs to God, so we become sanctified or holy through Him as we live holy lives.

1 Peter 1:17–19 “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” (NIV) Peter calls us to always be cognizant that a judgement is coming. Our Judge is impartial, and He has prepared a Redeemer, but we still are to live in humble, “reverent fear.” The word “fear/*phobos*” is defined as “panic flight, the causing of fear, terror,” but can also be used for “reverence” and “respect.”¹³ I think of it as respectful humble meekness.

The ancient Israelite ordinance of animal sacrifice (which Moses 6:5–8 teaches began with Adam and Eve), symbolized the “great and last Sacrifice . . . yea infinite and eternal” (Alma 34:14). Also, Isaiah 53:7, looked forward to an incorruptible sacrifice. Peter accredits the Savior’s sacred blood, the life line for mortality, with the redeeming power. Paul also attached this Christian application of the temple’s law of sacrifice (1 Corinthians 5:7, Hebrews 9:14).

1 Peter 1:20 “was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you” Our Savior was chosen in our pre-mortal existence. There is very little in the Bible on this, hence it is not believed by other Christians (i.e. John 1:1–3). However, the Lord restored far more on the doctrine of premortal life. In a sermon in Nauvoo the Prophet Joseph Smith 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.”¹⁴ These pre-mortal hints are rare in the Bible. The LDS footnote clarifies the difference between *foreordained* and *foreknown*. As mentioned earlier, the KJV translators believed in foreordination under their Augustine and Calvinistic roots.

1 Peter 1:21–23 “Believe in God . . . that your faith and hope might be 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” (NIV) These verses teach us about the three most important gifts of the Spirit: faith, hope, and charity. God gives these gifts as fruits of our belief and obedience. Disciples can know they are born again when we have a pure heart filled with genuine love. Once purified, saints are to exercise Christ-like love towards our fellowmen. We are to love *fervently*. This is also described in more detail as a “baptism of fire” (3 Nephi 31:13–21). Being born again also becomes our Christian baptismal imagery.

1 Peter 1:24–25 “All people are like grass, and . . . the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever” (NIV) Peter quotes Isaiah 40:6–8. Earlier, Jesus used similar ideas in His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 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 Peter 2:1–2 “Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation” (BSB) Peter uses another metaphor to teach the same principle of rebirth—from the “word-as-seed” to the “word-as-milk” (NASB). He writes more boldly this time, with an “imperative force . . . ‘abandoning,’ ‘renouncing,’ or ‘ridding oneself’” of wickedness.¹⁵ Peter calls on committed disciples to abandon all negative attitudes towards others. The CEV translates them as “Stop being hateful! Quit trying to fool people . . . Don’t be jealous or say cruel things about others.” The KJV “malice” is also translated: wrongdoing, wickedness, and deceit (BBE, ASV, NIV). The phrase, “evil speaking” as “all the ways there are of speaking against people” (CJB).

Peter’s general list of five sins to “put off,” also invites Christlike attributes for the saints to put on. The spiritual milk, is only figurative, but the metaphor is clear. As a newborn hungers for milk, so Christians who are born again should hunger for the word of God. Jesus taught disciples to “hunger and thirst after righteousness” (Matthew 5:6). Once they have “tasted” or felt the love of the Lord, they know the “Lord is gracious” (Psalm 34:18).

The Chosen People and Stone

1 Peter 2:4–10

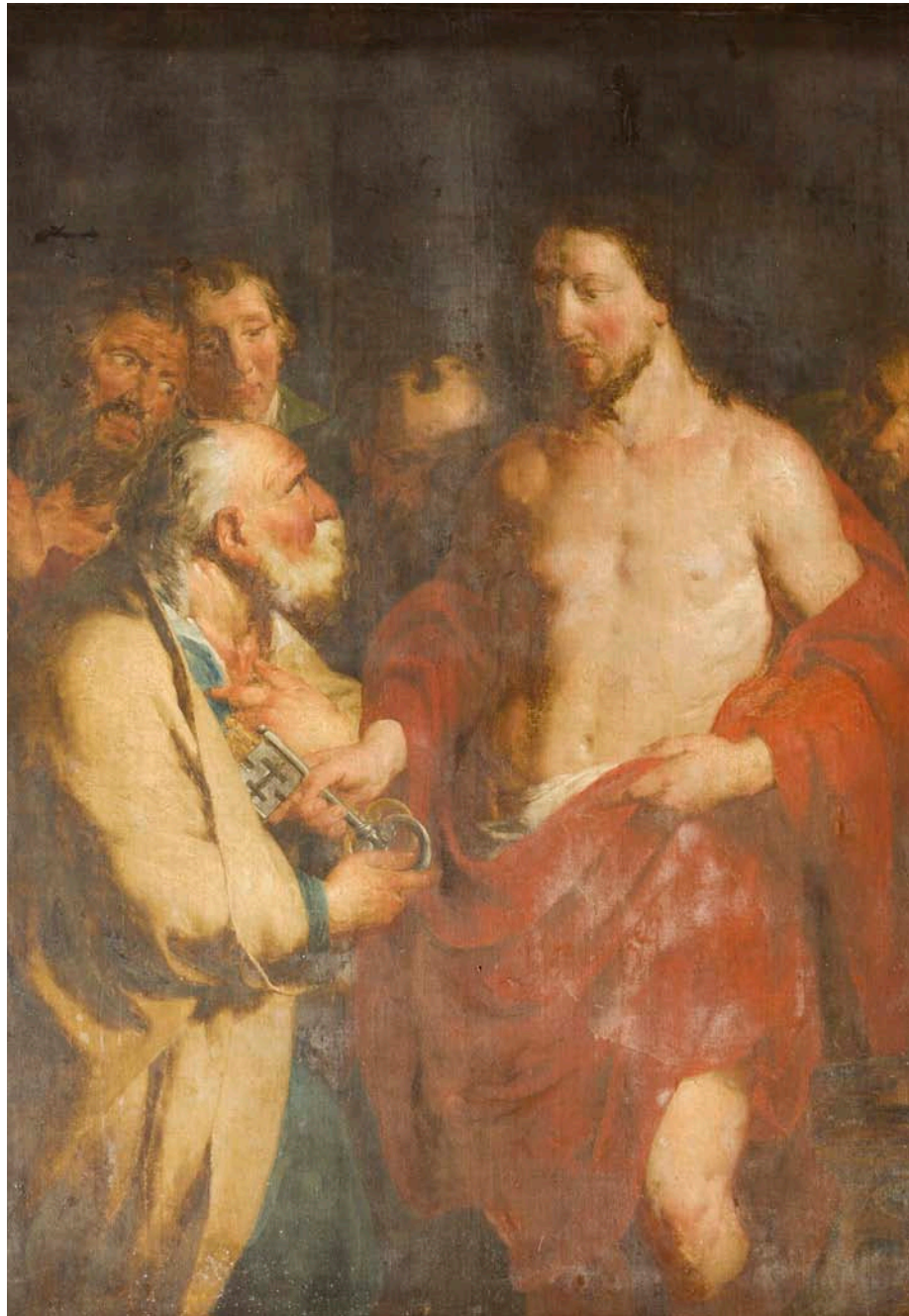
1 Peter 2:4 “As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him” (NIV) Any time we read the word stone or rock here, think of what it meant to *Peter*—as the Lord nicknamed him “Rock[y]/*Petros*.” Later Jesus said to him, “Thou art Peter/Stone and upon this rock [referring to revelation] I will build my church . . .” Rocks cover most of the ground in Palestine. There are so many that on their

graves they pile rocks instead of flowers.

In addition to the landscape, “Christ is the living stone, the bedrock and chief cornerstone of the Saints’ faith.”¹⁶ Isaiah 28:16 foreshadowed the Messiah as our “stone,” as 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 (Exodus 28:30). These two stones also symbolize the omniscience of God.

1 Peter 2:5 “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” (NIV) Peter refers to all devoted disciples as living stones used to build a spiritual house or temple. Similarly, to the woman at the well, Jesus taught of “living water” available to all believers (John 4). Peter invites all of God’s disciples to become workers or servants on His “spiritual house to be a holy priesthood.” In this sense, those who help build God’s Kingdom each work together under God’s power, or priesthood. This includes all disciples who serve with God’s power and direction. This is the same sense that President Russell M. Nelson referred to:

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,



Christ handing the keys to St. Peter by Pieter Jozef Verhaghen, 1802.
Image via Wikimedia Commons.

along with a gift of knowledge to know how to draw upon that power.¹⁷

In the way we build the Kingdom, the priesthood includes both priests and priestesses. God accepts our spiritual sacrifices, especially during the sacrament as we commit our service to Him and place the offerings of our service that week on the figurative altar.

1 Peter 2:6–8 “they stumble because they are disobedient” (NASB) In the next three verses, Peter cites three Old Testament scriptures that use rock symbolism from the NIV:

QUOTING ISAIAH 28:16

I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame

QUOTING PSALM 118:22

The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

QUOTING ISAIAH 8:14

A stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.

1 Peter 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 [sic] light” Ancient Israel received this same title “a peculiar people” five times in the Old Testament and twice in the New Testament. “Peculiar” also is used for, “valued property” or special treasure or jewels.¹⁸ God asked the Israelites to become a “holy nation” in Exodus 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 (Genesis 17:7–19). Christ’s church always has His power through the priesthood. His power may be accessed by those who exercise faith, kindness, longsuffering, humility, patience, love, etc. (D&C 121:236–46).

1 Peter 2:10 “Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have” (NIV) Early Christians came from many ethnic backgrounds and were not unified until baptism. Whether they were born as Israelites or converted to the covenant, all are in the new family with the new name, Christians, seeking Christ. When they chose to enter God’s covenant, they became His people, exiles and foreigners to the world, but people of God. For thousands of years before, God’s people and priesthood were chosen by their lineage. But, through the mercy of Jesus, all will have the opportunity in this life or the next to receive the message of salvation.

The Christian and Unbelievers

1 Peter 2:11-12

1 Peter 2:11-12 “I urge you . . . 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” (NIV) Peter tenderly refers to the group of covenant makers as “foreigners and exiles,” which used to be used just for Israelites, but now is for all disciples (BSB). As a new people they join together to fight against “the natural man.” Peter pleads for them to practice self-control to master their natural appetites and temptations. By so doing their lives will be a witness to those who do not believe, and over time instead of persecuting and slandering them, they will soften and aid in the building up of the church of God. It sounds as if Peter also thought Jesus’ coming was soon, but this may be a euphemism.

The Christian Example and Government

1 Peter 2:13-15

1 Peter 2:13-15 “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” (NIV) This counsel is

especially meaningful when we remember that while Peter dictated this letter, he was unjustly incarcerated for his religious faith. Nero was a violent murderous leader. And yet, Peter asks Christians to submit to their leaders. How much more do modern Christians need to obey the laws of the land, pay taxes, etc. The eleventh Article of Faith teaches the same thing. By so doing, the good lives of believers can be in a better position to mediate laws and exemplify Christian living. However, this does not mean that Christians should not speak up on matters of God’s laws and defend truth.



Bust of Nero at the Capitoline Museum, Rome. Photo by cjh1452000 via Wikimedia Commons.

The Servant and His Master

1 Peter 2:18–20

1 Peter 2:16–17 “Live as God’s slaves. Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor” (NIV) Many translations use the phrase “servants of God,” because of the voluntary nature of conversion. Yet, the word can mean either slave or servant, or “bondservant” (NKJV). If we are following Christ’s example as the suffering servant, then servitude becomes our way of life. As in a servant-master relationship, each morning and evening disciples ask their Master, God, how they can serve Him that day. As the Savior did, they can seek for opportunities to magnify their service by loving one another and respecting God.

1 Peter 2:18 “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” (BSB) Consistent with Paul’s advice previously, household servants or slaves are counseled to be good to their masters, whether or not they are treated kindly. This observation that Christianity does not condemn slavery is startling to some. As discussed previously, their servitude was more like the feudal system; slaves only served for a set amount of years, and they were often paid.¹⁹ The message that Jesus taught was not to stop servitude, but rather to teach all how to serve. Jesus was a Master who served.

1 Peter 2:19–20 “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” (BLB). Peter’s audience was facing all sorts of persecutions. The example of being “buffeted,” meaning “struck with fists” was a real concern for them. Peter is suffering at that moment for his beliefs, and will be crucified soon. Yet, he asks those believers who are likewise persecuted to not react with violence. He encourages them to live God’s laws and commit their souls with confidence into the hand of their loving Father and Judge (also see D&C 54:10). He describes suffering for God as a grace.

Christ’s Example of Suffering

1 Peter 2:21–25

1 Peter 2:21–25 “To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example” (NIV) These verses describe details of our Savior’s passion which fulfilled prophecy starting with Jesus’ sinless nature (2:22) and His scourging or stripes (2:24).²⁰ “Stripes” in Greek means bruises or bloody welts from whipping or scouring. Peter echoes several verses from Isaiah 53 to show Jesus’ suffering (compare with Matthew 26:57–68; Mark 14:53–65; John 18:19–24). We must endure trials in order to receive salvation. Just as Jesus first wore “a crown of thorns before the crown of glory.”²¹

The following parallels help to see the fulfillment of this part of Isaiah’s “suffering servant” passage.

1 PETER 2 (KJV)

v. 21 because Christ also suffered for us . . .

v. 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile

v. 23 When he was reviled, reviled not again,
when he suffered, he threatened not
but committed *himself* to him that judgeth
righteously.

v. 24 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.

v. 25 For ye were as sheep going astray;
but are now returned unto the Shepherd

ISAIAH 53 (KJV)

v. 4 He hath borne our griefs, and carried our
sorrows

v. 9 He had done no violence, neither *was any*
deceit in his mouth.

v. 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet
he opened not his mouth

v. 5 He *was* wounded for our transgressions,
he was bruised for our iniquities
the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him
and with his stripes we are healed.

v. 5 All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned



1 PETER 3

Wives and Husbands

1 Peter 3:1-6

1 Peter 3:1 “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” (NTR²²). Previously, Peter taught Christians how to act toward the government, slaves, masters, and now, he turns to married couples. Remember that the word “*hupotasso*” translated as, “defer” (NTR), “submit” (NIV) or “subjection” (KJV) and was initially a military word used to describe the troops lining up behind the leader. But, in a non-military setting the word was used as “a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden.”²³ I assume that is how Peter meant for it to be used here. He also uses the same word in the previous chapter “submit yourself to every ordinance” (1 Peter 2:13 also 2:18); and again in 5:5, “...submit yourselves unto the elder.” It’s one of Peter’s favorite words to express the idea of humbly cooperating.

Peter specifically addresses women who had converted to Christianity, but their 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, the “conduct” (JST) of their believing wives. The woman’s example is a great missionary tool in the home and the world.

1 Peter 3:3-4 “*Let your adorning be not be that outward adorning . . . But let it be the hidden . . . meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price*” (JST *italics*). Peter asks women to work toward an imperishable character rather than acquiring beauty through elaborate hairstyles, jewels, or “*apparel/grand robes*.” The KJV, “meek/*praeōs*” also refers to “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.”²⁴ These traits help us find unity with God, the “hidden man.”²⁵



Bust of a Roman woman, ca. 80 CE. Raised hairstyles, made by mixing stranger and own hair, were very common during the Flavian dynasty (Vespasian, Titus, Domitian: 69–96 CE) at the court and outside. The pointed nose and double chin indicate a realistic design of the portrait, which points out the republican time and comes in contradiction with the idealization of the early empire art. Photo by Bibi Saint-Pol via Wikimedia Commons.

1 Peter 3:5–6 “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” (NTR) Sarah and Abraham were a model couple of unity. The quote from Genesis 18:12 (LXX), is slightly different: “After I am waxed old . . . my lord also.” In this dispensation, the Lord taught that we may become Abraham’s seed through making and keeping sacred covenants (D&C 132:30–37).

The last two phrases turn Peter’s message to encourage women to strive for unified relationships with confidence, love, and joy. Other translations are helpful in understanding: “not afraid with amazement” (KJV) as either “let nothing terrify you” (RSV) or 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 a wife.²⁶ Christian wives may have also worried about being taken before Jewish authorities for violating religious law. Peter’s counsel is the opposite of a chauvinistic society. He tells the women to not be intimidated or fearful, but to perform her duties toward her family and society without fear.

1 Peter 3:7 “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” (NTR) 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 “truth/knowledge/*gnosis*” or understanding. The “delicate element” (AB) or “vessel/*skueos*” (KJV), has a metaphorical meaning: “a person of quality, a chosen instrument; equipment or apparatus.” (For a broad usage across the New Testament see Mark 11:16; Luke 8:16; Acts 9:15; 10:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:4; 2 Timothy 2:21.) Within the context of the next phrase, Peter speaks of mutual respect within marriage with the eternal hope of being co-heirs together in the grace of God, or Eternal Life. This is a regular topic by living prophets.²⁷

Peter’s perspective is very different from the ancient patriarchal culture where women were in 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 later.”²⁸

“Do this so your prayers are not hindered *by any discord*” (NTR) Husbands will not be able to communicate with God if they are not communicating with respect to their wives. Our spousal relationships are key to the harmony we feel before God in prayer. We have to treat each other well if we want God’s help. I think there is an extra measure of power in united prayers whether offered in a marriage or in a group.

Christian Conduct in Review: Suffering While Doing Good

1 Peter 3:8–12

1 Peter 3:8–9 Finally, all of you, be . . . because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing” (NIV) To inherit God’s eternal blessings requires becoming like Him. In Peter’s list of Christlike attributes he focuses on behavior that fosters unity and love:

- Like-minded
- Sympathetic
- Love one another
- Compassionate
- Humble
- Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult
- Repay evil with blessing

Thus, in Christian homes, churches, and communities we can learn to become more like our Savior.

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

Persecution

1 Peter 3:13–18

1 Peter 3:13–14 “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*” (NTR) but we have power to withstand them through the Spirit, commandments, and help from fellow saints.

1 PETER 5

1 Peter 5:10–11 “God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast” (NIV) Those who endure have a great potential for reward. The Greek implies that the suffering and conquering saints will be rewarded with an association with the Savior, as they will be like Him.²⁹ 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!”³⁰ This is why we want to give Him Glory and trust his Dominion forever.

Final Greetings

1 Peter 5:12-14

1 Peter 5:12 “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” (NIV) Peter’s postscript introduces “*my scribe* Silvanus” (NTR). He was also probably the executive assistant and delivery man. It sounds as if “I have written to you . . .” may have been Silas’ short addition of exhortation to testify that he knows what Peter said is true.

1 Peter 5:13 “The church in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, as does my son Mark” (BSB) The verse actually begins not with “church,” but the singular pronoun “she.”³¹ In the Book of Revelation, “she” became a code word for the church, and “Babylon” for Rome (Revelation 17:5–18; 12:7 JST)

Peter refers to Mark, as “my son,” which speaks of the close relationship they had as disciple and mentor. Mark was not a blood son, as history assumes it is the same “John Mark,” from Acts 12:12, 25. He was the son of a wealthy Jerusalem woman named Mary who opened her home as a House Church for Christians. Mark was also the Apostle Barabbas’ 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; see Mark’s Gospel background). In addition to his tender ministering to Peter, we read of his help with other church leaders across the Empire (Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11).

1 Peter 5:14 “Greet each other with an expression of sincere Christian affection. Peace be with all of you who are in Christ Jesus. Amen” (NTR) Peter’s closing is similar to Paul’s, “greet ye one another with a kiss of charity” (KJV; also 1 Thessalonians 5:26; 2 Corinthians 13:12). This was a common custom at the time, but was often altered for rank and station. In Christianity though, all were treated equality, as it remains in some peoples of Latin decent (i.e. French *bisous*).³² Peace is the sign of the Spirit and it should follow members of the Church who enjoy its companionship (D&C 6:23).

2 PETER

Introduction: Themes

Each point of the Epistle fits into different aspects a farewell sermon. Chapter 1 is a personal guidebook for all those seeking their exaltation or calling and election. After Peter’s beautiful motivation of temple promises, he turns in chapter 2 to a stern warning of Satan’s efforts to influence them through false teachers, which will lead to an apostasy. The letter ends with chapter 3 focusing on the Savior’s Second Coming.

Outline or 2 Peter

- 1:1–11 Seeking Your Calling and Election
- 1:12–15 Prophecy and Scripture
- 1:16–18 Jesus’ Transfiguration
- 1:19–21 More Sure Word Of Prophecy
- 2:1–22 False Teachers And Their Destruction
- 3:1–7 Christ’s Return and Judgement
- 3:8–13 The Second Coming: Day of the Lord
- 3:14–18 Peter’s Concluding Farewell

Farewell Sermons

Second Peter is a farewell address. Moses’ last sermon became the precedent and a literature form developed that we find scattered across scripture (Deuteronomy 31–33).³³ This Epistle contains 19 of the 20 standard points found in farewell sermons.³⁴ It begins with the prophet’s summons, and includes warnings, blessings, covenant renewals, what will happen after his departure, and his imminent death. For Peter, that includes warning against false teachers who will unsettle the church.

We find farewell addresses in the New Testament from Jesus at His Last Supper (John 12–17) and from Peter in his address here. Also, Paul offers a farewell sermon while visiting the Ephesians (Acts 20:17–38) and in written form in 2 Timothy. In the Book of Mormon, Lehi gave his children blessings and a farewell address (2 Nephi 1–4:12). King Benjamin’s farewell sermon also follows Moses’ pattern (Mosiah 2–5). This formal type of a farewell is often called a “testament” rather than an Epistle.

2 PETER 1

Seeking your Calling and Election

2 Peter 1:1–11

2 Peter 1:1 “a servant and an apostle of Jesus” Peter introduces himself and his authority as a “special witness” (D&C 107:23). He was a “servant/*doulos*/slave” and an “*apostolos*” (from *apo* and *stellō*, “send out”). Peter’s use of these two titles together is significant. It helps us 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.”³⁵

“to those who have obtained the same precious faith” (NTC) The audience is different for this letter than the first (which was to an area of saints in Asia minor). This is for those who have already “obtained” something special “in the righteousness of our God.” John Welch sees the audience as a more exclusive group of committed saints.

2 Peter 1:3 “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” (NTC)

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 to enter into the presence of God. This intimate knowledge is to “all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (KJV). I think he is talking of Temple promises mentioned also in verse 10. God calls us through or by His glory and virtue to serve Him.

2 Peter 1:4 “God has given us the most expansive and honorable promises, so that through these things you might share in the divine nature” (NTC) Every time the New Testament mentions, “Divine Nature” (Capitalization added), it always refers to Jesus as our Savior and God (Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; 1 Corinthians 2:10). We receive it only because we join Him. Peter includes a condition to our receiving His Nature: “having fled from the degeneration that is in the world because of covetousness” (NTC) Once we can do that, then His precious promises allow us to partake in God’s Divine Nature.

2 Peter 1:5–7 “For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith . . .” (BSB) For the purpose of escaping evil desires, Peter calls on disciples to strive (hourly if not constantly) to build our faith with all seven virtues. In these virtues, Peter admonishes us to go beyond our love of God and work on our relationship with



Saint Raphael Catholic Church (Springfield, Ohio) - stained glass, Jesus calms the storm, detail. Photo by Nheyob via Wikimedia Commons.

our fellowman. After faith—which really represents our relationship to God—the rest of the list deals with our relationship to others. I’ll include several translations for a broader feel of Peter’s list.

1. **Virtue** (KJV), goodness (NIV), moral excellence (WEB), worthiness (YLT), full virtue (NTC)
2. **Knowledge** (KJV), spiritual knowledge (NTC), in Greek, “*gnosis*/knowing, doctrine, wisdom”
3. **Temperance** (KJV), self-control (NIV)
4. **Patience** (KJV), perseverance (NIV) endurance (YLT), tenacious endurance (NTC)
5. **Godliness** (KJV), piety (YLT), consecration (NTC), in Greek “*usebeia*/devotion/holiness”
6. **Kindness** (KJV), mutual affection (NIV), concern for others (CEV)
7. **Charity** (KJV), love (NIV), the love of Christ (NTC)

I think there is significance to this order. We often refer to virtue as the law of chastity; yet in the Greek it has a broader meaning. These verses make up the law of the Gospel, and end with charity, which is the foundation of the law of consecration.

2 Peter 1:8 “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” (BSB) By developing these virtues, we “sharpen our spiritual-saw.” As we develop these qualities in our service to others (which is serving God vicariously), we can 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 or service to our fellowmen.

2 Peter 1:9 “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” (NTC) As disciples, if we do not work on becoming more Christlike, we are shortsighted in our eternal perspective. For the entire history of the earth, God’s gracious atoning gift has been available. We can progress and repent and become holier each day. If we do not move forward, then we are sliding backwards.

2 Peter 1:10–11 “do everything necessary to insure your calling and election” (NTC) 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.³⁶ Other Christian interpretations range from either something associated with Calvinism’s predestination, or that we must have fruits of our faith to attain salvation, but not as the Prophet Joseph restored.³⁷

The Prophet Joseph received revelations where he learned that “calling and election” was a special title and 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 election & calling & election was made shure 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 . . .³⁸

According to D&C 131:1–5, there are other titles that share the same meaning—to 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 one has received the saving ordinances of baptism, confirmation, washings, anointings, endowment, and a sealing, they should also prepare for their calling and election. In the first summer of 1839, a few months after leaving Liberty Jail, the prophet’s scribe, Willard Richard, recorded Joseph’s sermon in Nauvoo (when it was still called “Commerce”):

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. then the man will find his calling & Election made sure.³⁹

Even though most qualified saints will receive this sealing ordinance after their death, modern prophets of God still administer it in our day. This ordinance is administered by prophets in the Holy of Holies to worthy couples.⁴⁰

2 Peter 1:11 “In this rich and abundant way, entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be added upon you” (NTC) Peter encourages his audience to seek for this “entrance.” It is the fulfillment of the Mosaic Tabernacle, as Aaron the high priest led “the way” through sacrifice, washing, anointing, clothing, prayer, receiving the cleansing of the Redeemer, and finally back to the Tree of Life (menorah) to enter into the presence of the Lord without his sins. In Abraham 3:26 we find the same phrase, used for those “who keep their first estate, shall be added upon.” In this context, the phrase must be used for the second estate or mortality too.

Prophecy and Scripture: The Basis of True Knowledge

2 Peter 1:12–15

2 Peter 12:12–15 “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” (NTC)

Peter plans to testify in remembrance until his death. The image of our bodies as a “tent” or “tabernacle” (KJV) is also used by Paul when he calls them our “temple” (1 Corinthians 6:9). As Peter and our sacrament covenant reinforces, we need to be reminded to always remember the sacrifice of our Lord. During Jesus ministry, he also hinted to Peter that he would die before His Second Coming (John 21:8). This appears to be another witness to Peter about the end of his life.



The Transfiguration by Lodovico Carracci, 1594. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

Jesus' Transfiguration

2 Peter 1:16-18

2 Peter 1:16 “we were endowed as eyewitnesses of his divine grandeur” (NTC) Peter wants to make absolutely sure that no one thinks the gospel is mere fables. He testifies that he was an eyewitness of Christ’s glorified state.

2 Peter 1:17-18 “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” (NTC) As evidence to the validity of his message, as well as his focus of motivating the saints to seek their calling and election, Peter chooses to share a very sacred experience. He, James and John were eyewitnesses of the Savior’s majesty on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:5; also, D&C 63:20-21). The Father’s introduction of His Son included Messianic titles that were known from Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 5:1; 42:1. This is another verse for understanding the separate nature of the Godhead.

More Sure Word Of Prophecy

2 Peter 1:19-21

2 Peter 1:19 “We have also a more sure word of prophecy” Peter continues to teach more about his sure witness as an eyewitness of the glorified Lord (verse 16). Peter introduces another special phrase, “a more sure word of prophecy,” which is not mentioned again in the Bible. This is the subject and verse that Joseph Smith referred to when he said: “Peter penned the most sublime language of any of the apostles.” Joseph defined it for the saints in Nauvoo according to his scribe’s record:

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.⁴¹

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

Joseph Smith also tied the “more sure word of prophecy” with the Second Comforter.⁴² Even though we do not hear these phrases often in General Conferences, Joseph Smith used them repeatedly.

Now wherein could they have a more sure word of prophecy than to hear the voice of God saying this is my beloved son &c. Now for the secret and grand key. Though they might hear the voice of God, <& 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.⁴³

Peter and Joseph shared very sacred information with the saints, both just a few years from their martyrdoms.

2 Peter 1:20 “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is *given of any private will of man*” (JST) Peter hopes to defend prophecy as the word of God and not his *own* words. The JST change from “private interpretation” to “private will of man” more clearly confirms that prophecy is God’s words not man’s “whim.”⁴⁴ The KJV “private/*idios*” is used 113 times in the New Testament. But only here is it translated “private.” 77 times it is translated “his own” (i.e. his own servants, his own country, his own sheep John 10:34). As the NIV reads: “no prophecy of Scripture comes from one’s own interpretation.” Other religions interpret this to mean that those who are properly qualified, called by God, and prompted by the Spirit must interpret scripture.

What did Peter mean by scripture? Most of the time scripture is mentioned in the New Testament it refers to the writings later compiled into the Old Testament. Yet neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament were closed cannon in Peter’s life time. So if Peter understand that scripture was the word of God, then he may have known his letter would be among new scripture. The pious group of Jews known as Essenes “believed in the principle that prophesy was from God (1QS 8.16; 6QD 2.12).”⁴⁵

2 Peter 1:21 “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” (NTC) 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. Peter's words, "moved upon by the Holy Ghost," became a phrase repeated in revelations given in the restoration (Moses 6:8; D&C 68:3–4; 121:43).

1 PETER 2

False Teachers and Their Destruction

2 Peter 2:1–22

2 Peter 2:1 “There also came false prophets among the people of Israel, just as false teachers will intrude among you” (NTC) To be a biblical “false prophet” was a serious offense. They were compared to Sodom and even stoned (Deuteronomy 13:5; Jeremiah 23:14). In the New Testament a false prophet did not exclusively mean a fallen apostle. Rather a prophet was used for anyone speaking under inspiration (“For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” Revelation 19:10). A false prophet lied about speaking under divine authority (or was deceived by Satan).

Peter taught his audience how to identify false teachers, they: create factions in the group (2:1b), deny that Jesus as their redeemer (2:1b), entangle with brutalities (4:3), defame Christianity, are covetous (2:3a), and exploit Christians as merchandise (2:3b). Previously, Jesus warned of false teachers too (Matthew 7:15; 24:11, 24; 1 John 4:1). Twice the KJV refers to “damnable” (2 Peter 2:1, 3), but the JST changes it to, “abominable heresies.” The Greek word works for either: “*apōleias*/destruction/ eternal ruin.”

2 Peter 2:2 “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” (NTC) Peter prophesies that the false leaders will have many followers. The “*way of truth*” (or Christianity) will fall into “disrepute” (NIV) or “maligned: (NASB) because of it. The apostasy was foretold, and must of the world is still affected by it.

2 Peter 2:3 “In their greed they will take your money in exchange for their phony ideas” (NTC) The false leaders’ motivation is money. Their greedy covetousness beguiles them to make false statements which in turn entice followers. This is referred to as “priestcraft” in the Book of Mormon (Alma 12:1, 16). A judgment of “damnation/ *destruction*” (KJV/JST) is in store for those false leaders.

Judgment and Punishment

2 Peter 2:4–22

2 Peter 2:4–9 “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” (NTC) This section is one very long “If . . . then . . .” sentence.

Peter begins with “If” followed by examples of how God handled the wicked in the past. His five-verse-long-sentence then ends with God’s punishment of the wicked.

- **“sinful angels, but deposited them in chains in the underworld of darkness”** (2:4, NTC) The first example refers to the premortal existence where one-third of the hosts of heaven rebelled and followed Satan to an eternity without a body into “hell” (D&C 29:36; Rev 12:4). Those who do not believe in a premortal life see this as a discussion from the apocryphal book of 1 Enoch, interpretation of Genesis 6:1–4.⁴⁶
- **“did not spare the people of the first dispensation, but protected only Noah”** (2:5, NTC) Only seven other people followed the prophet onto the ark and were saved. Noah became a type of Christ (as are all the prophets according to Hosea 12:10). Noah exemplifies hope to Peter’s audience of righteous saints looking to their prophet in a world of wickedness. The number “seven” (NTC) was used to mean complete or whole. The KJV uses “eight” which echoes the age of baptism for the earliest Christian baptism, the covenant number for the day of circumcision, and the day of the Christian Sabbath.
- **“the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah . . . turned them to ashes”** (2:6–8, NTC) Peter next references 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 city (sadly his wife did not make the journey either). The word “*overthrow/catasstophe*” in the Old Testament (LXX) always refers to Sodom and Gomorrah. The traditional location of the two wicked cities is at the southern end of the Dead Sea, in one of the deepest cracks in the earth’s surface.

Like Lot, we too live in the midst of wickedness, but many have become immune to the “false teachers” surrounding us. The Book of Mormon teaches that “the wicked remain as though there had been no redemption made, except it be the loosing of the bands of death” at the judgment when they are resurrected (Alma 11:41). It also describes “he has all power to save every man that believeth on his name and bringeth forth fruit meet for repentance” (Alma 12:15)

- **“then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly from temptation, and how to hold the unrighteous to be punished in the judgment day”** (2:9, NTC) Finally, the long sentence transitions to the main point: God will deliver his children (“the godly”). Like Noah and Lot, we can be delivered. The wicked, though, will be reserved for the judgment day and second resurrection, after the millennium.

2 Peter 2:10 “He will punish those who . . . despise leadership . . . are not afraid to blaspheme against the dignitaries” (NTC) These next four verses apply directly to the false teachers/deceivers of the early church.

Peter defines them as worried about human interests of “the flesh.” Their self-centered behaviors and egoistical thoughts refuse to submit to God’s will. The KJV, “government,” refers to anyone with “dominion or power” with politics or the church. Rebellion often includes criticism of authorities and leaders. When you hear criticism realize it signals the spirits of apostasy (3 Nephi 11:29).

2 Peter 2:11 “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” (NTC) According to the apocryphal book of 1 Enoch, even angels do not criticize or the fallen angels (10:1–16; 12:3–13:3).

2 Peter 2:12–14 “these people, acting like natural-born irrational animals . . . They that count it pleasure to indulge themselves all the time” (NTC). The false teachers are like “natural brute beasts” (KJV) or in the words of King Benjamin, “a natural man and . . . enemy of God” (Mosiah 3:19). Another reference to “natural brute beasts” is found in an “Epistle of Barnabas” that also addresses false teachers.⁴⁷ The wicked do not fully understand what harm they cause because they are puppets for Satan. To overcome this we must put off “the natural man” through the atonement of Jesus Christ (Mosiah 3:19).

False leaders are hypocrites and “revel in their own deceptions” (NEB). Unfortunately, our dispensation has the same problem. Pornography addicts can be described as, “eyes full of adultery.” And their master has them “trained in greed” (NAS, RSV).

2 Peter 2:15–16 “Having abandoned the straight way, they wander, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor” (NTC) Peter includes more Old Testament accounts to illustrate false leaders. Numbers 22 and 31 tells the story of Balaam who enticed the Israelites to leave the Lord. He acted as a hired agent and received bribes from King Balak of Moab. The Lord saved his life by intervening with his donkey! The Lord spoke through his animal to set things right. Several other scriptures refer to this unusual story (Jude 1:11; Micah, 6:3; Deuteronomy 23:5).

2 Peter 2:17 “These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest” Peter uses the imagery of a deceptive dry well, or clouds that blow away as deceptive as false leaders. No water is found in the well, clouds, nor living water from the teacher. The deceivers have no saving sustenance. Only Christ has that, but they have rejected Him.

2 Peter 2:18–19 “They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves to depravity” (BSB) These smooth-talking educators’ prey on new converts and entice the saints with promises of false liberty. What a great irony that sin promises more freedom, yet it is promoted by the one who against free agency from the beginning. Satan’s promises of liberty will be rewarded with eternal imprisonment (or a lack of progression).

2 Peter 2:20–21 “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” (NIV) Those saints who succumb to the false teachers, loose their faith, and sin against God’s commandments are in worse shape than if they had never been baptized or known the Lord. Once we have committed or covenanted with God, we must be responsible.

2 Peter 2:22 “The dog has returned to his own vomit” (NTC) Peter quotes a well know Proverb 26:11. Jews held both dogs and swine as “unclean” animals. Peter uses the same image of uncleanness for false leaders.

2 PETER 3

Christ’s Return and Judgement

2 Peter 3:1–7

2 Peter 3:1–2 This now, beloved ones, 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*” (NTC) Peter points to the harmony between the “holy prophets” in scripture and the words of Jesus and the apostles. He wants the pure minded disciples to remember their messages of future false speakers who will ridicule the truth in the “last days” (which in the New Testament usually refers to their own time).

Remembering something in the ancient world was more than recalling a story. “In the Hebrew Bible, remembering often carries the meaning of acting in obedience to God’s commands. Remembering God and thereby prospering so as to be lifted up at the last day (as in 3 Nephi 15:1 and Alma 38:5) are contrasted with forgetting and then perishing, or being cut off from God’s presence (as at Alma 37:13 and 42:11). These opposites remind us of the grand law of opposition Lehi described in 2 Nephi 2.”⁴⁸

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

2 Peter 3:5–7 “The heavens and the earth . . . *were created by the word of God 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*” (JST *italicized*) Peter recounts the story of the creation, the flood, and foretells of the earth’s great cleansing by fire.



The Second Coming of Christ window at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Charleston, SC. Photo by Cadetgray via Wikimedia Commons.

Second Coming: The Day of the Lord

2 Peter 3:8–13

2 Peter 3:8–9 “*But, concerning the coming of the Lord, beloved, 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*” (JST *italicized*) Peter defends the Lord’s omniscient wisdom in directing the earth. The supposed, “delay” in the Second Coming, was actually an issue of perspective. Peter knew that there would be a long time before the Lord’s coming in glory. We assume the number 1,000 was used figuratively for a large number, but Peter may have understood it literally as time was described between heaven and earth in Abraham 3:4, “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 probably alluded to Psalm 90:4 “For a thousand years in thy sight *are but* as yesterday.” If he meant literally, we must ask, did Peter refer to a lunar calendar? Roman solar? The Julian or Gregorian Calendar?

As we look across different books of scripture, this is not a standard use of time. Alma 40:8 reads, “all is as one day with God, and time only is measured unto men.” Furthermore, Genesis and Moses did not use 1,000 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 (D&C 52:11; 84:97; 109: 59; also see Revelation 8:1 and D&C 88:95 on other timing). Rather than focus on whether the 1,000-year timing is literal or figurative—whether time is uniform to the Lord at all—we would do better to look at both the fulfillment of prophetic promises and our personal preparation. Peter will turn his focus there, too.

2 Peter 3:10–11 “**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 mountain shall melt, and pass away**” (JST *italicized*) When the Lord arrives, He will take most by surprise. But we are also promised “Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). Modern day revelation speaks much about the Lord’s Second Coming, including that those who pay their tithe will not be burned (D&C 64:23–25). And, not only will the earth burn, but the heavens will dissolve and a new earth will be formed for the celestial kingdom (D&C 29:23–28; 88:19). The JST continues in verse 11 to add that not only will the earth be filled with heat, but also “*corruptible works.*” The “nuances of Greek terms in this verse express Peter’s call to repentance in preparation for the second coming.”⁴⁹

2 Peter 3:12–13 “**Looking unto , and preparing for the day of the day of God, 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**” (JST *italicized*) The JST adds a focus on the saints’ preparation and endurance. They will see “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” These prophecies are elaborated on in modern scripture as well (i.e. 3 Nephi 26:3; Mormon 9:2; D&C 101:24–25; 121:11; 133:40–42; etc.).

Peter’s Concluding Farewell

2 Peter 3:14–18

2 Peter 3:14 “**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**” (NTC) As we await the Second Coming, we must diligently prepare ourselves by living closely to the Lord in order to receive his cleansing power—“without spot, and blameless”—to escape the power of the adversary (D&C 38:31).

2 Peter 3:15–16a “**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 in all his letters, speaking in them about such matters. Some parts of his letters are hard to understand**” (BSB) Peter points to Paul as a second witness of what he is teaching to be true. Peter’s acknowledgment of Paul’s several letters in the same sentence as other “*scriptures*” is a step towards realizing that the apostles’ Epistles were going to become as cherished as the Old Testament scriptures (3:16b).

It is also reassuring to hear Peter speak so kindly of Paul. Once in Galatians 2:12, Paul recorded a disagreement on a bad day. Biblical scholars often emphasize that conflict, yet we also have this verse and other positive statements that show a sweet brotherhood between Peter and Paul as members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (Acts 15:25; Galatians 1:18; 2:9; etc.)

JST rearranged the order so that it is clearer that Paul also taught that we should use the time before the Second Coming to repent and strive for salvation. The JST also adds three words, “the longsuffering *and waiting* of our Lord, *for* salvation” (JST *italicized*).

2 Peter 3:16b “Ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction” (NIV) Sometimes scriptures can be hard to understand if we do “not inquire of the Lord,” or are “stiff-necked” (1 Nephi 15:3; Enos 1:22). Sometimes though, it is the ancient symbols and language (2 Nephi 25:1). Worse than misunderstanding are false teachers who “twist” (NTC), “wrest” (KJV) or “distort” (BSB) the scriptures away from the plan and simple truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Book of Mormon warned against this too, “if ye will wrest them it shall be to your own destruction” (Alma 13:20).

2 Peter 3:17–18 “beloved, seeing ye know *before the things which are coming*, beware lest ye also, being led away . . . grow in grace, and the knowledge of our Lord . . .” (JST *italicized*) 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, full of grace, action. As long as we continue to meekly learn more about our Savior and apply what we learn, we will not be led astray. With this hopeful guideline, the letter closes without any personal greetings or scribes farewell.

Header Image: Jesus Walking on the Sea of Galilee with Peter by Paul Brill and Frederik van Valckenborch, 1590s. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

ENDNOTES

1. Each of the Old Testament citations are from the Greek translation (LXX). In 1 Peter they are all from Isaiah, Psalms Proverbs, and Leviticus.
2. 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; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2014), 317–35. This is discussed in more detail in the introduction to 2 Peter.
3. Footnote of *Berean Study Bible*, https://biblehub.com/bsb/1_peter/1.htm (accessed 11-2-19)
4. 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 removed the southern tribes in the sixth century BC.
5. The *Westminster Confession* 3.6 was the foundation of the Protestant believe on “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 Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2.362; 3.104; 3.475.
6. Strong’s, #3986, *peirasmos*, <https://biblehub.com/greek/3986.htm> (accessed 11-5-19)
7. Dead Sea Scrolls, 1 Qp Hab II, vii. We also see this in *The Psalms of Solomon*. <http://www.earlyjewishwritings.com/psalmssolomon.html> (accessed 11-5-19).
8. Margaret Barker, *Christmas*, 17.
9. Strong’s, #3525, *néphó*, <https://biblehub.com/greek/3525.htm> (accessed 11-5-19).
10. 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 prophesy, and baptism for the dead.
11. Also D&C 60:7, “Lift up their voice and declare my word with loud voices, without wrath or doubting, lifting up holy hands upon them. For I am able to make you holy, and your sins are forgiven you.”
12. Strong’s # 40, *hagios*, <https://biblehub.com/greek/40.htm> (accessed 11-5-19).
13. Strong’s #5401, *phobos*, <https://biblehub.com/greek/5401.htm> (accessed 11-5-19).
14. Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 60.
15. John Elliott, *The Anchor Bible: 1 Peter* (New Haven, CT: Yale Press, 2000), 395.
16. D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew Skinner, *Acts through Revelation*, (Chelsea, MI: Deseret Book, 1998), 280.
17. Russell M. Nelson, “Spiritual Treasures,” General Conference October 2019. “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”

18. Strong's, #5459, *segullah*, <https://biblehub.com/str/hebrew/5459.htm> (accessed 11-5-19).
19. Wilson, *Emancipation of New Testament Women*, chapter 8.
20. Deuteronomy 25:3. Romans and Jews whipped with long leather thongs with bones or rocks attached to the end which cut and tore the skin open. The Law of Moses wouldn't allow more than 40 stripes, so the Jews stopped at 39 (also see 2 Corinthians 11:24).
21. The quote is passed down through Christianity, and reworded by Elder James E. Faust, General Conference April 1991. I found references from 1656, but it appears older. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/1991/04/a-crown-of-thorns-a-crown-of-glory?lang=eng> (accessed 11-5-19).
22. John Welch's translation will be published as part of the BYU New Testament Commentary. The notes are from a draft.
23. The NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon, Strong's #5293; *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (TDNT), 8:39, 1156; <https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/hupotasso.html> (accessed 11-5-19).
24. Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 316.
25. John W. Welch, *BYU New Testament Commentary*, 1 Peter 3:4, changes this from the inner spirit to the love of a marital relationship: “but let your intimate adornment be the man of your heart in the eternal *bond* of kind and gentle spirituality, which is of great worth before the face of God.”
26. Wilson, *Emancipation of New Testament Women*, chp 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.
27. Elder M. Russell Ballard, *Ensign* (May 2012): 19. “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, then Elder Russell M. Nelson explained, that husbands and wives’ “stewardships, equally sacred and important, do not involve any false ideas about domination or subordination.” Russell M. Nelson “The Sacred Responsibilities of Parenthood,” *Ensign* (Mar 2006): 29-30. A third example from Elder L. Tom Perry, taught 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.” L. Tom Perry, “Fatherhood, an Eternal Calling,” *Ensign* (May 2004), 71.
28. Elliott, *Anchor Bible: 1 Peter*, 554. Aristotle said, “The freedom in regard to women is detrimental both in regard to the purpose of the *politeia* and in regard to the happiness of the state” (555).
29. *Ibid.*, 5:10.
30. Neal A. Maxwell, “A Brother Offended,” General Conference April, 1982.
31. Welch, *BYU New Testament Commentary: 1 and 2 Peter*, 1P5:13. “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 (Matthew 8: 14; Mark 1:29). Women in the Old Testament and in Revelation 12:1 also are symbolic of the church.

It is likely that “she” refers to the church which is ‘co-elect.’”

32. Ibid.; 1 Peter 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.)”
33. Welch, Schmidt, “2 Peter as a Farewell Text,” 317 “William Kurz is most helpful.[4] This scholar has analyzed twenty-two farewell speeches in the Bible and in classical Greek and Roman literature, identifying twenty elements.” <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/ministry-peter-chief-apostle/17-reading-2-peter-farewell-text> (accessed 11-7-19)
34. Ibid., Kurtz list of the 20 standard points from Farewell Addresses: 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. A theological review of history, 11. Revelation of future events. 12. Promises, 13. Appoints or refers to a successor, 14. Bewailing 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.
35. Welch, Schmidt, *BYU New Testament Commentary*, 2 Peter 1:1.
36. Ehat and Cook, *The 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 (i.e. 1 Peter 1:21-23; 3:19-21; 2 Peter 1:10, 19).
37. David Hubbard, ed., Richard J. Bauckham, *World Biblical Commentary: 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 who did not mention the phrase in their commentary on 2 Peter 1:10 (*The Anchor Bible*, *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, and *The New Interpreter’s Bible*).
38. “Discourse, 14 May 1843, as Reported by Wilford Woodruff,” p. [32], *The Joseph Smith Papers*, accessed November 8, 2019, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/discourse-14-may-1843-as-reported-by-wilford-woodruff/3>
39. Joseph Smith, “Discourse, between circa 26 June and circa 2 July 1839, as Reported by Willard Richards,” p. 19, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, accessed November 8, 2019, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/discourse-between-circa-26-june-and-circa-2-july-1839-as-reported-by-willard-richards/5>
40. Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (NYC, NY: Macmillan, 1992), 2. 651. Ehat and Cook, ed., *Words of Joseph Smith*, 4, 15, 17-20, 26, 205-206, 209, 284, 391, 403. “The Council of Fifty and Its Members, 1844-1945.” *BYU Studies* 20 (Winter 1980); Ehat “‘It Seems Like Heaven Began on Earth’: Joseph Smith and the Constitution of the Kingdom of God.” *BYU Studies* 20 (spring 1980). Hyrum. Andrus, *Doctrines of the Kingdom-Foundations of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ* (SLC, UT: Bookcraft, 1973) 352-401, 550-60. 2 Peter Holzapfel, *BYU Studies, 50th Anniversary*, orga-

nization of Council of Fifty 3/11/1844.

41. Joseph Smith, “Discourse, 17 May 1843–A, as Reported by William Clayton,” p. [16], *The Joseph Smith Papers*, accessed November 8, 2019, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/discourse-17-may-1843-a-as-reported-by-william-clayton/1>.
42. Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph*, 150-151. “After a man so devotes himself to righteousness that his calling and election is made sure, ‘then it will be his privilege to receive the other Comforter’ the Prophet says. ‘ 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 three heavens, and all the saints who held communion with the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn.”
43. Joseph Smith, “History, 1838–1856, volume D-1 [1 August 1842–1 July 1843],” p. 1549, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, accessed November 8, 2019, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-d-1-1-august-1842-1-july-1843/192>.
44. Welch, Schmidt, *BYU New Testament Commentary*, 2 Peter 1:20. “But first know this, that every prophecy in scripture did not come from any personal whim of man”
45. Ibid. 2P1:21.
46. [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Book_of_Enoch_\(Charles\)/Chapter_09](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Book_of_Enoch_(Charles)/Chapter_09) (accessed 11-9-19)
47. Barnabas Chapter 115
48. Louis Midgley “The Ways of Remembrance” in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon* edited by John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1991), 170.
49. Welch, Schmidt, *BYU New Testament Commentary*, 2 Peter 3:11.

