



THE GOSPEL OF FAITH

LETTERS TO STRENGTHEN
AND
ENCOURAGE BELIEVERS





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“**N**one has ascended to heaven but he who came down from heaven, *that is*, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, **even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.** For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is the gift of God, not of works*, lest anyone should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

John 3, 13 - 19 & Ephesians 2, 8 - 10



H E B R E W S

A letter written in the first century, in particular to Jewish believers. Its (human) authorship remains uncertain. The believers' faith in the new covenant of grace through the finished work of the Messiah Jesus Christ was resulting in a growing persecution - and pressure to return to the old (imperfect) covenant of mosaic law (which could not save because no one was able to perfectly keep the law). But Christ, the Son of God, is a perfect and eternal High Priest seated at the right hand of God and able to give believers direct access to the Father. Through the forgiveness from sin that he alone has been able to provide by his sacrificial atoning death, the letter encourages perseverance in trials, and exhorts and warns against falling away from the faith.





1

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, **has in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds;** who being the brightness of *his* glory and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

And to which of the angels did he ever say: "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? And again: "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son"? But when he again brings the firstborn [the pre-eminent one] into the world, he says: "Let all the angels of God worship him." And of the angels he says: "Who makes his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire."





But to the Son *he says*: "Your throne, O God, *is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of your kingdom.* You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness more than your companions."

And: "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak you will fold them up, and they will be changed. *But you are the same, and your years will not fail.*"

But to which of the angels has he ever said: "Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool"? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?





2
Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *him*, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will?

For he has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. But one testified in a certain place, saying: "What is man that you are mindful of him, or the son of man that you take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honour, and set him over the works of your hands.





Tou have put all things in subjection under his feet." For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that he, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. **For it was fitting for him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.**

For both he who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified *are* all of one, for which reason he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: "I will declare your name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to you." And again: "I will put my trust in him." And again: "Here am I and the children whom God has given me."





Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared in the same, that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

For indeed he does not give aid to angels, but he does give aid to the seed of Abraham. **Therefore, in all things he had to be made like *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.** For in that he himself has suffered, being tempted, he is able to aid those who are tempted.

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to him who appointed him, as Moses also *was faithful* in all his house.



Aor this one has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who built the house has more honour than the house. For every house is built by someone, but he who built all things *is* God. And Moses indeed *was* faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken *afterward*, but **Christ as a Son over his own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.**

Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tested me, tried me, and saw my works forty years. Therefore I was angry with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in *their* heart, and they have not known my ways.' So I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest.'"





Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Nor we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, while it is said: "Today, if you will hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, *was it* not all who came out of Egypt, *led* by Moses?

Now with whom was he angry forty years? *Was it* not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who did not obey? **So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.**





Therefore, since a promise remains of entering his rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; **but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.**

For we who have believed do enter that rest, as he has said: "So I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest,'" although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he has spoken in a certain place of the seventh *day* in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works"; and again in this *place*: "They shall not enter my rest." Since therefore it remains that some *must* enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, again he designates a certain day, saying in David, "Today," after such a long time, as it has been said: "Today, if you will hear his voice, do not harden your hearts."





For if Joshua had given them rest, then he would not afterward have spoken of another day. Where remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered his rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from his.

Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from his sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of him to whom we *must give* account.

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession.





For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathise with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are, yet* without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer *sacrifices* for sins.

5

And no man takes this honour to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron *was*. So also Christ did not glorify himself to become High Priest, but *it was* he who said to him: "You are my Son, today I have begotten you."





As *he* also says in another *place*: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek"; who, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to him who was able to save him from death, and was heard because of his godly fear, though he was a Son, *yet* he learned obedience by the things which he suffered.

And having been perfected, **he became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey him**, called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek," of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

Aor though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.





Nor everyone who partakes *only* of milk *is* unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.



Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to perfection, **not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God**, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgement. And this we will do if God permits. For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *him* to an open shame.

6





And for the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briars, *it is* rejected and near to being cursed, whose end *is* to be burned. But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. For God *is* not unjust to forget your work and labour of love which you have shown toward his name, *in that* you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, **but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.** For when God made a promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no one greater, he swore by himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you."





And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation *is* for them an end of all dispute.

Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it *is* impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before *us*.

This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the *Presence* behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, *even Jesus*, having become **High Priest forever** according to the order of Melchizedek.





For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated "king of righteousness," and then also king of Salem, meaning "king of peace," without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

7

Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils. And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham; but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.





Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better. Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he *receives them*, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need *was there* that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron?

For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. **For he of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.**





And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. For he testifies: "*You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*" For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, **for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.**

And inasmuch as *he was not made priest* without an oath (for they have become priests without an oath, but he with an oath by him who said to him: "The LORD has sworn and will not relent, '*You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek*'"), **by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.**





Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But he, because he continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. **Therefore he is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.**

For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for the people's, for this he did once for all when he offered up himself.

For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, *appoints* the Son who has been perfected forever.





Now *this is* the main point of the things we are saying: *We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,* a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore *it is* necessary that this one also have something to offer. For if he were on earth, he would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For he said, "*See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.*"

But now he has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as *he is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.*





A or if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, he says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the **LORD**, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in my covenant, and I disregarded them, says the **LORD**.

A or this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the **LORD**: I will put my laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. None of them shall teach his neighbour, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the **LORD**,' for all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.





For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." In that he says, "A new *covenant*," he has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

When indeed, even the first *covenant* had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. For a tabernacle was prepared: the first *part*, in which *was* the lamp-stand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the *H*oliest of *A*ll, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which *were* the golden pot that had the manna, *A*aron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

9





Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. But into the second part the high priest *went* alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and *for* the people's sins *committed* in ignorance; the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing.

It *was* symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience-*concerned* only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation. **But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come,** with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.





Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood he entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Nor if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, **how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**

And for this reason he is the mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where there *is* a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.





Therefore not even the first *covenant* was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, "This *is* the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you." When likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry.

And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission. Therefore *it was* necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, *which are* copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;





not that he should offer himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another—he then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, he has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. **And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgement, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many.** To those who eagerly wait for him he will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshippers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year.*



Nor *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. Wherefore, when he came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you have prepared for me. In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin you had no pleasure. When I said, 'Behold, I have come—in the volume of the book it is written of me—to do your will, O God.'"

Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and *offerings* for sin you did not desire, nor had pleasure *in them*" (which are offered according to the law), then he said, "Behold, I have come to do your will, O God." He takes away the first that he may establish the second. **By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.** And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.





But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till his enemies are made his footstool. **For by one offering he has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.** But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after he had said before, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," *then he adds,* "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." Now where there is remission of these, *there is* no longer an offering for sin. Therefore, brethren, **having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, his flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God,** let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.





Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for he who promised *is* faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Nor if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgement, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on *the testimony of* two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?





For we know him who said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge his people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.

Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. **For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:** "For yet a little while, *and* he who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if *anyone* draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him."





But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

NOW faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a *good* testimony.

By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. **But without faith it is impossible to please him, for he who comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.**



By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as *in* a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born *as many* as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.





These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland.

And truly if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. **But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.**

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.





By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshipped, *leaning* on the top of his staff.

By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw *he was* a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, **esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt;** for he looked to the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.





By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry *land, whereas* the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also *of* David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again.





And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.

They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in dens and caves of the earth.*

And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, **God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.**





Herefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith,** who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Nor consider him who endured such hostility from sinners against himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. **You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.** And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the **LORD**, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by him; **for whom the LORD loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives.**"





If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected *us*, and we paid *them* respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened *us* as seemed *best* to them, but he for *our* profit, that *we* may be partakers of his holiness.

Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Wherefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.





Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there *be* any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears. For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard *it* begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. (For they could not endure what was commanded: "And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow.")





And so terrifying was the sight *that* Moses said, "I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.")

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, **to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant**, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel.

See that you do not refuse him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused him who spoke on earth, much more *shall we not escape* if we turn away from him who *speaks* from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now he has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven."





Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God *is* a consuming fire.



Let brotherly love continue. Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so *doing* some have unwittingly entertained angels. Remember the prisoners as if chained with them—those who are mistreated—since you yourselves are in the body also. Marriage *is* honourable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge. *Let your conduct be* without covetousness; *be content* with such things as you have. **For he himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."** So we may boldly say: "The **LORD** *is* my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

13





Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of *their* conduct. **Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines.** For *it is* good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.

We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. **Therefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered outside the gate.** Therefore let us go forth to him, outside the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore by him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to his name.





But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

Pray for us; for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honourably. But I especially urge *you* to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do his will, working in you what is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.





And I appeal to you, brethren, bear with the word of exhortation, for I have written to you in few words.

Rnow that *our* brother Timothy has been set free, with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly.

Greet all those who rule over you, and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you. Grace *be* with you all.

Amen.









JAMES

A letter written in the first century, in particular to scattered Jewish believers. Its (human) author is stated as being James, a servant of God and Christ (most likely the half-brother of Jesus who came to faith after Christ's resurrection). He became the leader of the Jerusalem church and was martyred for the faith. The emphasis of the letter is for his readers to stand faithfully on the word of God with uncompromising obedience - despite persecution and temptation. But spiritual 'fruitfulness' is the only true measure of genuine faith that James recognises. And this 'fruitfulness' must be practical, in fact he says: *'What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works?'* [Works that are the **'spiritual fruit'** of salvation by grace through faith].





ames, a bondservant of God and
of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the
twelve tribes which are scattered
abroad: Greetings.

1

My brethren, count it all joy when
you fall into various trials, **knowing**
that the testing of your faith
produces patience. But let patience have
its perfect work, that you may be perfect
and complete, lacking nothing.

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him
ask of God, who gives to all liberally
and without reproach, and it will be
given to him. **But let him ask in faith, with**
no doubting, for he who doubts is like a
wave of the sea driven and tossed by the
wind. For let not that man suppose that he
will receive anything from the Lord; *he is* a
double-minded man, unstable in all his
ways. Let the lowly brother glory in his
exaltation, but the rich in his humiliation,
because as a flower of the field he will pass
away.



Nor no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits. Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love him.

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. When, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. **Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.**





Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures. So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. **But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.**

Aor if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.





If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless. Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

My brethren, **do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality.** For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool," have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brethren: has God not chosen the poor of this world *to be* rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to those who love him?

2





But you have dishonoured the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called? If you really fulfil *the* royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself," you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all. For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. For judgement is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgement. What *does it* profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?





Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works [fruit], is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.

You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent *them* out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.





3

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgement. For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. *It is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.





With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring send forth fresh *water* and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh. Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.





Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires* for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

4

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? But he gives more grace. Therefore he says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.





Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will lift you up. Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Instead you *ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do *it*, to him it is sin.





Come now, *you* rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon *you*! Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. **You have heaped up treasure in the last days. Indeed the wages of the labourers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.** You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.

Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. **Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.**





Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end *intended* by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes," be "Yes," and *your* "No," "No," lest you fall into judgement. Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.





Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.









1 P E T E R

A letter written in the first century to Christian believers ('exiles') scattered by extreme persecution, having been falsely blamed by Nero for Rome's burning. Its (human) author was the apostle Peter. He wrote to strengthen the (mainly Gentile) church so as to teach them to live victoriously in the midst of escalating hostility - without losing hope, and while trusting in the Lord and in the promise of his second coming. Believers have a citizenship in heaven, which makes them strangers in a world system controlled by Satan. Christ is the example of one who maintained a life that could not be overcome by hostility and animosity against him. Peter emphasises that ultimate victory and glory may require a path of suffering.





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

Blessed *be* the God and Father of
our Lord Jesus Christ, who
according to his abundant mercy
has begotten us again to a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ
from the dead, to an inheritance
incorruptible and undefiled and that does
not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,
who are kept by the power of God through
faith for salvation ready to be revealed in
the last time.

In this you greatly rejoice, though
now for a little while, if need be, you
have been grieved by various trials,





that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, **may be found to praise, honour, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love.** Though now you do not see *him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of *your* souls.

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when he testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.





Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance; but as he who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. **He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through him believe in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.**





Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, **having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,** because "All flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, but the word of the **LORD** endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as new-born babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the **Lord** *is* gracious. Coming to him *as to* a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by **God** and precious, **you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**

2





Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on him will by no means be put to shame." Therefore, to you who believe, *he is* precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offence." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, **his own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;** who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Beloved, I beg *you* as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,





having your conduct honourable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by *your* good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and *for the* praise of those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.

Honour all *people*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. Servants, *be* submissive to *your* masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. For this *is* commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.





A or what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God.

A or to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow his steps: "Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth"; who, when he was reviled, did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but committed *himself* to him who judges righteously; who himself bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.

A or you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.





3

Wives, likewise, *be* submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct *accompanied* by fear. Do not let your adornment be *merely* outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on *fine* apparel—rather *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible *beauty* of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.

For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror. Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honour to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.





Finally, all *of you be* of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, *be* tender-hearted, *be* courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

For "He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. **For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers;** but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil."

And who *is* he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, *you are* blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."





But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defence to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

For *it is* better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while *the* ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God),





through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to him.

Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we *have spent* enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.

In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with *them* in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of *you*. They will give an account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.



For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are [spiritually] dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

If anyone speaks, *let him speak* as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, **that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.** Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;





but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, *blessed are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. **On their part he is blasphemed, but on your part he is glorified.** But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters.

Let if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time *has come* for judgement to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls *to him* in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.





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

Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon him, for he cares for you.





Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace, who called us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*.

To him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand. She who is in Babylon, elect together with *you*, [the church in Rome?] greets you; and *so does* Mark my son. Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus.

Amen.





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