



“We Have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ”

1 & 2 Peter; 1, 2, & 3 John; Jude

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1 Peter

Peter was, of course, written by the chief apostle, Simon Peter, son of Jonah. The date of the letter is not known but was probably written in the early 60s, sent from Rome to Saints in northern Asia Minor. It could be that Peter knew some of these folks from the day of Pentecost as many of the same cities mentioned in Acts 2 are in this region, but the lack of names shows it was addressed broadly to the region. Tradition has it that Peter was crucified in Rome in late 67 or early 68 CE, about the same time Paul was killed by beheading.

Because of the refined Greek writing (different from 2 Peter) and the lack of anything that might be considered autobiographical (e.g., details about Christ’s life), some scholars believe 1 Peter was written by someone else. Contrary to the internal evidence, however, early tradition assigns the letter to Peter. The question is impossible to settle without more information. It could be that it was written by someone else in Peter’s behalf, with or without his knowledge.¹

Joseph Smith stated: “Peter penned the most sublime language of any of the apostles.”² Other prophets have said similar things about the value of Peter’s writings, including Spencer W. Kimball, Joseph F. Smith, and David O. McKay.³ Indeed, Peter’s short letters touch on all three of the missions of the church, to proclaim the gospel, perfect the saints, and redeem the dead.

Outline:

1. Opening Address (1:1-2)
2. Salvation and Sanctification (1:3 – 2:10)
 - a. The test of faith (1:3-12)
 - b. You shall be holy (1:13-25)
 - c. A royal priesthood (2:1-10)
3. Appropriate Behavior in a Pagan World (2:11 – 3:12)
4. Christian Suffering (3:13 – 5:10)
5. Closing (5:11-14)

Opening Address – 1 Peter 1:1-2

1:1 to the strangers scattered. Peter wrote to five large areas in what is today western and northern Turkey. “Strangers” means ‘foreigners’ or ‘refugees,’ referring to the scattered nature of Israel, Jews and Christians included.

1:2 sprinkling the blood of Jesus Christ. This had reference to the Mosaic sacrificial system where blood was sprinkled on various altars and instruments to purify them, symbolic of the sacrifice of Jesus cleansing us in an equivalent way.

Salvation and Sanctification – 1 Peter 1:3 – 2:10

The test of faith – 1 Peter 1:3-12

1:3 begotten us again. A rebirth theme that Peter used several times in this letter. See also verse 23.

¹ Wayment, *The New Testament*, 1 Peter, Author.

² *Teachings*, 301.

³ Monte S. Nyman, “The Sublime Epistles of Peter,” in Millet, *Acts to Revelation*, 226.

1:3 **unto a lively hope.** A ‘living hope,’ one which is alive and growing. This hope comes because of Jesus’ resurrection.

1:4 **an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled.** The eternal inheritance of Peter’s audience is not something that can perish or be defiled by anything on earth, for it is “reserved in heaven.”

1:6 **manifold temptations.** ‘Many trials.’

1:7 **the trial of your faith.** As our faith is tested or tried, like gold in a hot flame, it is purified and strengthened, resulting in “praise and honour and glory” at Jesus’ appearing.

1:8 **Whom having not seen, ye love.** Or, “You have not seen him, but you love him” (TW). They don’t love him because they haven’t seen him, as the KJV language might be read, but they love in spite of having not seen him.

1:9 **JST** “Receiving the ~~end~~ **object** of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.”

The KJV word choice might imply that faith ends with our salvation, but the JST make salvation the object or focus of our faith. This is a valid rendition of the Greek intent, as reflected in this other translation: “and you are sure of the goal of your faith, that is, the salvation of your souls” (NJB).

1:10 **Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently.** Peter likewise taught on the Day of Pentecost that “God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer” (Acts 3:18). Jacob also wrote that “all the holy prophets which were before us” knew of Christ (Jacob 4:4).

1:11 **the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.** “His crown of thorns came first and then his crown of glory.”⁴ Likewise, we experience suffering before the reward (Alma 7:5; D&C 58:4; 121:7-8).

1:12 **not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister.** No one can minister to themselves; that requires us to reach out to others and selflessly do things for their benefit. That is part of the test of our faith—will we be selfless?

You shall be holy – 1 Peter 1:13-25

1:13 **gird up the loins of your mind.** A marvelous metaphor from an often-read phrase, ‘Gird up your loins’ (e.g., 2 Kings 4:29; Jeremiah 1:17). To ‘gird up your loins’ meant to get ready for work, action, or running, by pulling up your tunic and tying it around the waist so as to be able to freely move. Likewise the author says to prepare our minds for work, action, and service.

1:15 **be ye holy in all manner of conversation.** “Holy” is *hagios*, ‘to be set apart’ or ‘consecrated.’ “Conversation” everywhere in 1 Peter (and in almost every case in the Bible) is ‘behavior’ or as the JST puts it in almost every verse “conduct.”

1:16 **Be ye holy, for I am holy.** This was a quote from a portion of Leviticus 11:44-45 (see also Leviticus 19:2; 20:7). It is similar to Matthew 5:48 and 3 Nephi 12:48.

1:17 **pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.** “Fear” is *phobos* which means ‘fear’ or ‘terror.’ Sometimes we call this ‘reverence’ and it is a doctrinally correct concept to feel reverence for God. But ‘reverence’ doesn’t truly match the sense of the word in Greek, or the equivalent term in Hebrew in the Old Testament. The prophets counsel us to fear God, not because he is capricious or random like some many other ancient gods conceived by men after their own image, but because there are eternal laws and he is bound by those laws to execute justice on sin. If we don’t submit ourselves to him, receive forgiveness of our sins through the sacrifice of his Son, and transform ourselves to new creatures by the Spirit, such judgment will of necessity fall against us. Being in literal terror of that outcome, we fear God and are thus motivated to conform our lives to his will.

⁴ S. Kent Brown, “Whither the Early Church?,” in Millet, *Acts to Revelation*, 278.

1:19 **a lamb without blemish and without spot.** Our wealth or our actions alone cannot save us (v. 18), but only Christ's atoning blood, who was ordained from before the creation of the world (v. 20), prefigured by the sacrificial lambs of the Old Testament, and was revealed through prophets and apostles to all people.

1:22 **love one another with a pure heart.** Once we feel the redeeming love of Christ purifying us, removing sin from our lives, we must reach out and love others in a similar way.

1:23 **Being born again.** Paul talked about being adopted into God's family (Romans 8:15-23). Here, the same concept is portrayed using the metaphor that Jesus taught and that John later included in his gospel—that we must be "born again." Both concepts teach the same doctrine, that we must become new people, breaking from our past and reworking our lives into new patterns.

1:23 **by the word of God.** The author was not referring alone to the scriptures here (though they were the principle means of bringing this to us, especially today) but the actual words spoken by God, the eternal truths laid down in the pre-existence and manifest through the Word (again, as John will use the term in his gospel), the Son of God. See also verse 25.

1:24 **all flesh is as grass.** Grass is transitory; after good rainfall, it will flourish, but in any dry spell, it will wither. So, too, are our bodies.

A royal priesthood – 1 Peter 2:1-10

2:1 **all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies.** "Malice" is evil thinking; "guile" is deceit; "evil speaking" means slander or lies

2:2 **As newborn babes.** The author continued the theme of rebirth, likening our desired behavior to dependent babies who desire to drink the word of God like an infant does pure mother's milk. Milk here represents true teachings that the saints "have tasted" (v. 3), whereas in Paul's writings (1 Corinthians 3:2, Hebrews 5:12-13) he used the metaphor more as 'the basics.'⁵

2:4 **a living stone.** Or, 'Come to Christ, a living stone, truly rejected by men but chosen by and precious to God' (AT). Peter, whose name given to him by Jesus means 'rock,' is careful to point out that Jesus is the living rock, the sure foundation.

2:5 **as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house.** We are likewise living stones built on top of Christ the foundation, thereby making up a temple—not a physical temple but a spiritual one. We thus all become a holy priesthood—not just the Levites—ready and worthy to make spiritual sacrifices—not lambs on the altar but our own wills and lives—acceptable to God. A marvelous metaphor using Old Testament practices to represent the change we must all experience.

2:6-8 Peter chained together three scriptures (Isaiah 28:16; Psalm 118:22; and Isaiah 8:14) to teach a single concept—Jesus is the foundation of this spiritual temple he has mentioned. He was rejected ("disallowed") by the Jews but chosen by God as the living cornerstone. But to those who rejected him, he is still a stone in the road over which they trip, an offense, because they are disobedient to his word, and so their fate is appointed (going back to 1:2 where the believers are foreordained to blessings). Compare Romans 9:32-33 and Matthew 21:42-44.

2:6-8 **JST** "Unto you therefore ~~who which~~ believe, *he is precious*; but unto them ~~who are which he~~ disobedient, **who stumble at the word, through disobedience, whereunto they were appointed, a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense. For** the stone which the builders disallowed, ~~the same is become made~~ the head of the corner, ~~And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."~~

⁵ Arnold, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds*, 4:132.

Notice that verse 8 is essentially inserted in the middle of verse 7, changing the order of the scriptural quotations to be Isaiah 28:16; 8:14; Psalm 118:22. This allows the verses to fully develop the opposition before declaring that Jesus, though rejected, became the chief cornerstone.

2:9 **a chosen generation**. Invoking the language of Exodus 19:5-6, Deuteronomy 7:6, and Isaiah 43:20-21, the author said the saints were ‘a nation hand-picked’ by God, selected from among the world.

2:9 **a royal priesthood**. A body of priests, clean and worthy to enter into the temple, royal because they belong to the king. Said Elder McConkie:

Whenever the Lord has a people on earth he offers to make them a nation of kings and priests—not a congregation of lay members with a priest or a minister at the head—but a whole Church in which every man is his own minister, in which every man stands as a king in his own right, reigning over his own family-kingdom. The priesthood which makes a man a king and a priest is thus a royal priesthood.⁶

2:9 **an holy nation**. A multitude of men and women set apart for service to God.

2:9 **A peculiar people**. *Laos eis peritōiēs* in Greek, ‘*am segulla* in Hebrew, meaning ‘special treasure’ or ‘valued property.’⁷ We belong to God and he treats us like a personal treasure. See D&C 60:4.

2:10 **in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God**. Gentile converts were not part of a group before they were converted but are now reborn into God’s family. Peter has thoroughly applied Old Testament covenant imagery to all church members.

Appropriate Behavior in a Pagan World – 1 Peter 2:11 – 3:7

Peter gave several examples of good behavior, targeted at specific groups in the church, then summarized it for everyone in the following section.

- 2:13-15 – Submit to government authorities.
- 2:18-20 – Slaves submit to their masters.
- 3:1-6 – Wives submit to their husbands.
- 3:7 – Husbands give honor to their wives.

Accept authority – 1 Peter 2:11-17

2:13-14 **to the king, as supreme, Or unto governors**. In the difficult times of the church in Peter’s day, submission to civil authorities was a way to show that Christians were not trouble-makers, rebels, or revolutionaries. See Article of Faith 12.

2:15 **with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance**. People said all kinds of false things about early Christians, just as some do about Latter-day Saints today. Peter’s counsel to let them see your good works to silence such criticism very much applies today. We do good in the world just for the sake of doing good, but we recognize that it makes a powerful impact on impressions and attitudes about the Church.

2:17 **Love the brotherhood**. Or, “love the family of God” (TW). So we call each other “brother” and “sister” today, as one big family of God.

Counsel about servants – 1 Peter 2:18-25

2:18 **Servants, be subject to your masters**. Slaves were to be subject to their masters, whether the masters were kind or evil (vv. 19-20). Christians were not social subversives, advocating the overthrow of societal norms, but focused on changing society from the inside out, one soul at a time.

⁶ McConkie, *DNTC*, 3:294.

⁷ Ogden and Skinner, *Acts to Revelation*, 280.

2:21-25 In the middle of the behavior verses, the author bore a marvelous testimony of Christ, of his life, death, and resurrection. He pulled images from several verses in Isaiah 53 (in the verse order 9, 7, 12, 5, 6) and finally from Ezekiel 34:11-16 where Jesus is the shepherd and overseer of our eternal welfare.

Counsel for wives and husbands – 1 Peter 3:1-7

3:1 **ye wives**. Women could influence their non-member or less-active husbands by their pure actions (“conversation” in the KJV), humility, and submissiveness showing respect, according to the custom of the day. The other verses in this section also follow conventions of the day, much like Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:1-16.

3:7 **husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge**. Husbands are to honor their wives, “being heirs together of the grace of life.” They are partners and equals, she being “the weaker vessel” only in recognition of her physical stature compared to his.

Christian Suffering – 1 Peter 3:8 – 5:11

Having provided specific counsel on various topics to specific audiences, the author now broadens the scope and applies those specifics to all, putting it in the context of suffering leading to perfection.

Suffering as a result of being righteous – 1 Peter 3:8-22

3:8 **be ye all of one mind**. Unity is a key theme in many New Testament writings, emphasized particularly in John’s gospel. Peter gives the secrets to unity: don’t speak evil of others; shun evil; do good; and seek peace (vv. 9-11).

3:12 **his ears are open unto their prayers**. The message that the Lord sees and hears the righteous but is “against them that do evil” comes from Psalm 34:12-16, along with other messages in verses 10-11.

3:14 **if ye suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye**. Using the language of the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:10-12), the righteous who suffer can find happiness with the Lord.

3:15 **be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope**. Being prepared to bear testimony of the reason we have hope in this life is a critical responsibility of members of the church. See Alma 38:10-12.

3:15 **JST** “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer **with meekness and fear** to every man that asketh ~~of~~ you a reason **for** ~~of~~ the hope that is in you ~~with meekness and fear~~.”

The answer we give of our faith should not be given with pride but with a humble attitude, showing the fear of the Lord.

3:18-20 **JST** “¹⁸ For Christ also ~~hath~~ once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, ~~that he might bring us to God~~, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, **that he might bring us to God**: ¹⁹ For ~~By~~ which **cause** also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; ²⁰ **Some of whom** ~~Which sometime~~ were disobedient **in the days of Noah, while, when once** the longsuffering of God waited ~~in the days of Noah~~, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.”

The author spoke of Jesus’ activities during the time his body lay in the tomb, a thought continued in 4:6. The JST change is that Jesus’ motivation for going to speak to the disobedient spirits in prison was the same one that caused him to give up his life—to “bring us to God.” See D&C 76:71-74; 138:5-11. The change also emphasizes that those Jesus visited *included* the disobedient in the days of Noah (Genesis 8:1) but not exclusively that group.

Many scholars believe that 3:18-19 is another early Christian hymn.⁸

⁸ Waymunt, *The New Testament*, 1 Peter 3:18-19 note.

3:21 **The like figure.** Baptism is a symbol of many things; Peter mentioned two here. First, as Noah and his family were saved as the earth was ‘baptized’ by the flood, so baptism is a saving ordinance for us (v. 20). Second, it is a type of the resurrection of Christ as he went down into the grave and came out in newness of life (v. 21).

Stewards of God’s Grace – 1 Peter 4:1-11

4:1-2 **JST** “¹ Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; ² For **you who have** ~~he that hath~~ suffered in the flesh **should** ~~hath~~ ceased from sin, that **you** ~~he~~ no longer ~~should live~~ the rest of **your** ~~his~~ time in the flesh **should live** to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.”

This change makes the command very personal—changing from “he” to “you.” We should cease from sin and live according to the will of God.

4:4 **they think it strange that ye run not with them.** New converts are expected to, in some cases, radically change the pattern of their lives (v. 3). Old friends will find these changes strange and will even think badly of them. This illustrates the critical nature of President Hinckley’s counsel that every new convert needs a friend in the church, both to mentor them through the changes in this new society and also to help them leave behind associations and behaviors that don’t align with their new covenants.

4:6 **For this cause was the gospel preached also them that are dead.** For which cause? See verse 5—that the quick (the living) and the dead might both be fairly judged. God’s plan is one of eternal equity and fairness.

4:8 **JST** “And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity **preventeth a** ~~shall cover the~~ multitude of sins.”

The author cited Proverbs 10:12, where the Hebrew *kāsāh* is used, meaning ‘cover’ or ‘conceal.’ Proverbs means that love for others covers over sins we might commit against them. The JST redefines the relationship between charity and sin, teaching that love prevents sins from happening in the first place. Love toward others causes us to behave kindly, patiently, and with an attitude of service.

Suffering – 1 Peter 4:12-19

4:12 **fiery trial.** This possibly alluded to the persecutions under Nero which began in 64 CE, around the time this letter may have been written. Nero literally burned Christians alive, tied to poles through the city, like streetlamps.

4:14 **he is glorified.** In Roman society of that time, the name of Jesus would have been on of reproach—he was convicted as a criminal and died the lowliest and most brutal death possible. But though others spoke evil about him, among the saints, he was glorified for his Atonement.

4:15 **as a Christian.** This is the only time this word is used in the NT outside of Acts 11:26 and 26:28.

4:17 **must begin at the house of God.** Compare D&C 112:25-26. The author states that God will first judge the righteous, which can be a good thing (they get their reward as a result). Then the wicked are judged and get their punishment.

4:18 **the righteous scarcely be saved.** Quotation from the LXX version of Proverbs 11:31 (different from the KJV).

A crown of glory – 1 Peter 5:1-11

5:1-4 Advice to church leaders who are to feed the flock, not do it for money, and be examples of righteous living. Perhaps the author had in mind one of Peter’s final encounters with Jesus (“feed my sheep”) as recorded in John 21. Jesus is the chief Shepherd (v. 4; compare Psalm 23 and John 10).

5:1 **The elders.** Though he could be referring to priesthood leaders, it appears from the context that he is using the word more as ‘the elderly,’ meaning the wise and experienced ones in the congregation. See verse 5 for the contrast with the younger ones.

5:5 **be clothed with humility.** The submission theme continued, showing how humility is finally repaid by God. Quotation from Proverbs 3:34.

5:6 **Humble yourselves therefore . . . that he may exalt you.** A gospel paradox is that those who are humble and submissive will eventually receive the highest honors and authority, which is backwards according to the world.

5:8 **your adversary the devil.** In Greek, the term is 'accuser,' similar to the Hebrew term transliterated 'satan.' He accuses us of all manner of sins, acting as prosecutor at our judgment, with Christ acting as our advocate, speaking in our behalf.

Final Greetings – 1 Peter 5:12-14

5:12 **Silvanus.** This is Silas, a faithful church member from early days, a companion of Paul during his second journey, and in Rome with Peter toward the end of his life.

5:13 **Babylon.** An apt symbol for Rome.

5:13 **Marcus, my son.** Or, John Mark, the author of one of the gospels and a close companion to Peter.

2 Peter

Written just before he died, Peter appears to have written this letter as his farewell. It has the marks of a traditional farewell speech, a final testament recorded to convey the most important thoughts of the author. The letter conveyed the promise of eternal life but also warnings of false teachers and apostasy in the present day and in the years to come. It was possibly written about 67-68 CE, just before Peter's death at Nero's hand, where (according to Christian tradition) he was crucified upside down. The other possibility is that it was written from records or memories of Peter's final teachings and counsel, which could place it later, such as during the persecutions of Domitian (died 18 September 96 CE) who killed and persecuted many Christians.⁹

Outline

1. Greetings (1:1-2)
2. The Virtues of a Christian Life (1:3-11)
3. Peter's Eyewitness Testimony (1:12-21)
4. False Prophets and Teachers (2:1-22)
5. The Coming of the Lord (3:1-13)
6. Concluding Exhortation (3:14-18)

Greetings – 2 Peter 1:1-2

1:1 **obtained like precious faith with us.** Or, "have received a faith as precious as ours" (NIV). Faith is obtained by effort, to be sure, but it is also a gift from God, "through the righteousness of God."

1:1 **God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.** The Greek in verse 1 says "our God and Savior Jesus Christ" (TW), meaning that Jesus is God. In verse 2, it is different, with that construction clearly separating it into two different beings.

1:2 **the knowledge of God.** You cannot live truth until you understand truth. A correct knowledge of God is thus essential to following his commandments.

The Virtues of a Christian Life – 2 Peter 1:3-11

1:3 **called us to glory and virtue.** Or, "called us by His own glory and excellence" (NASB; NIV). It is by or through God's glory and his virtue/excellence/goodness that we are called to "life and godliness."

⁹ Wayment, *The New Testament*, 2 Peter, Author.

1:4 **partakers of the divine nature**. Latter-day Saints see this as a critical doctrine, raised by Peter immediately in his letter. We are given the knowledge of God's nature, that we might be "partakers" (Greek *koinōnos*, meaning a partner or someone who shares with another) of his "material and spiritual existence"¹⁰ as we escape the lusts of the world.

1:9 **forgotten that he was purged from his old sins**. After listing a group of virtues, such as faith, temperance, and patience (vv. 5-7; compare D&C 4:5-6; 107:30-31), Peter taught that without these things, a person could forget the Atonement and the forgiveness previously received from past repentance. People who sin do indeed tend to forget past forgiveness and either think that God cannot forgive them again or deny that they need forgiveness at all!

1:10 **make your calling and election sure**. The verse kicks off a longer discussion that goes through verse 19, tying together "calling and election" and the "more sure word of prophecy." D&C 131:5 teaches that the latter phrase means "knowing that he is sealed up unto eternal life, by revelation and the spirit of prophecy, through the power of the Holy Priesthood." After the admonition in this verse to make their calling and election sure, Peter recounted his own experience on the Mount of Transfiguration, which has been seen as an endowment and experience of being sealed up unto eternal life.¹¹

Peter's intended meaning may not match our modern doctrinal interpretation, however. "Calling" referred to heeding the words of the ministers of the Lord and "election" is reflected in the kind of life we live, with the virtues in verses 5-7 visible in our lives and having been cleansed from sin by baptism (v. 9). In other words, those who heard the missionaries, desired to join with the saints, and made covenants with God to bring them into that fold are those who make their calling and election certain.

While the two are not incongruous, the difference is that in the ancient context, Peter is directing them to begin their journey of discipleship earnestly, while we tend to think of this phrase as an end-goal of a lifetime of discipleship. In both cases, however, the result is the same: we are granted an entrance into the kingdom of God (v. 11).

Peter's Eyewitness Testimony – 2 Peter 1:12-21

1:12 **always in remembrance of these things**. It is Peter's role to bring covenantal knowledge and desire into the hearts of his hearers, to establish them in truth. This he will do as long as he is in his mortal body (v. 13).

1:14 **shortly I must put off this my tabernacle**. "Tabernacle" is a tent, a temporary dwelling place. Peter anticipated his death and exit from this temporary existence and wanted to be sure his testimony was recorded and shared. He additionally mentioned "after my decease" in verse 15, implying that his death was pending.

1:16 **cunningly devised fables**. The truths shared by the leaders and ministers of the church were not just clever stories told to amuse or even teach a principle. Rather, they were designed to make known "the power and coming" of Christ, based on eyewitness testimony.

1:18 **this voice which came from heaven we heard**. Peter could not leave this life without recording his personal testimony of the transfiguration (vv. 17-18) that he experienced with James and John; see Mark 9:2-8.

1:19 **JST** "We have also **therefore** a more sure **knowledge of the** word of prophecy; ~~whereunto~~ **to which word of prophecy** ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that **which** shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:"

Peter had a certain knowledge of his being sealed up unto eternal life, since he heard it from the voice of God the Father.

¹⁰ Wayment, *The New Testament*, 2 Peter 1:4 note.

¹¹ Bruce McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 109.

1:20 **JST** “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the ~~scripture~~ **scriptures** is **given** of any private ~~interpretation~~ **will of man.**”

“Interpretation” is Greek *epilysis*, meaning ‘loosening’ or ‘liberating.’ This is the only place in the Bible where this word is used. Peter said that the meaning of scripture cannot be ‘freed up’ by a man, but only by the power of the Spirit (the same power by which it was given, in v. 21). The JST strengthens the case for that argument, saying that the individual will of man cannot drive a scriptural prophecy. This also harmonizes the language of verse 20 with that of verse 21.

False Prophets and Teachers – 2 Peter 2:1-22

Some of this section can also be found in Jude 1:9-12. Scholars generally believe Jude was written first and so 2 Peter is copying or at least following that lead, but it’s not possible to be certain.

2:1 **JST** “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in ~~damnable~~ **abominable** heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”

The word “damnable” in the KJV means destruction, ruin, or perishing. The heresies of the false teachers bring ruin, making them abominable (compare 1 Peter 4:3, where “abominable” there means ‘contrary to law’).

2:3 **JST** “And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their ~~damnation~~ **destruction** slumbereth not.”

“Destruction” in the JST is a great translation of the Greek *apōleia*, translated “damnation” in the KJV.

2:4 **the angels that sinned**. Some see this as a reference to the “sons of God” in Genesis 6:1-4, but another potential meaning is that of the hosts of heaven from the pre-earth life who fell, following after Lucifer’s plan to steal glory from the Father.

2:4 **cast them down to hell**. “Hell” is not *sheol* or Hades as in other scriptures, but uniquely the domain of the dead, *tartaroō*, the Greek term for the area deeper than the underworld, reserved for the most wicked of all. This is the only NT scripture to use that term.

2:5 **Noah the eighth person**. Or, “Noah . . . and seven others” (NIV). Noah’s preaching of righteousness is not recorded in Genesis, but it is in the JST (JST Genesis 6:4-5).

2:9 **deliver the godly out of temptations**. Using the examples of Noah and Lot being spared from the flood and the destruction of Sodom (vv. 5-7), Peter declared that God can both save the righteous and bring judgment upon the wicked.

2:10 **speak evil of dignities**. The word “dignities” in the KJV is *doxa* in Greek, meaning radiance or brightness, glory or majesty. It is variously translated as “glorious ones” (NRSV; ESV), “celestial beings” (NIV; TW), or “glorious beings” (NAB). In other words, it is not worldly officials but heavenly beings of which they speak evil.

2:12 **natural brute beasts**. Peter declares that those who live “in the lust of uncleanness” (v. 10) and speak evil of heavenly things are like “irrational animals” (TW) who deserve to be destroyed and will “perish in their own corruption,” because unlike Noah and Lot, God will not save them from destruction.

2:13 **while they feast with you**. These evildoers are also hypocritical, coming to the sacrament table with the saints, even as they sin in their daily lives.

2:15 **following the way of Balaam**. The false teachers of this chapter are like Balaam, the pretended prophet of the Lord who agreed to curse Israel for a price but then was prevented doing so by the Lord, including taking the extraordinary action of having his donkey speak to reprimand him (Numbers 22).

2:17 **wells without water**. The false teachers are like wells that look as if they might offer precious water but are dry or clouds that promise rain but instead bring a storm. They are promised profound darkness for eternity.

2:19 **they promise them liberty . . . brought into bondage**. False teachers say all the right things, making bold and great promises. But in the end, their words only bring bondage or slavery. They are the great cheaters of mankind.

2:20 **escaped the pollutions of the world**. These false teachers are the worst kind, because they know the truth but chose to reject it. They had full knowledge of Christ and his saving power, but they are caught up in the “pollutions” (meaning, noxious vapors) of this mortal world, and are “overcome” by sin. Peter plainly stated that for such, their end is worse than if they had not known the truth. D&C 76:34-35 uses similar language.

2:21 **better for them**. Quotation from Proverbs 26:11, though verse 22 is from an unknown source. 3 Nephi 7:8 uses the language of these verses.

The Coming of the Lord – 2 Peter 3:1-13

There are a number of JST changes in this chapter, as Joseph Smith worked through it carefully. He was likely attuned to the content—the last days and the Second Coming—which drew him in more deeply than most other passages in the General Epistles.

3:1 **This second epistle**. It may be that Peter only wrote two letters to the church in his lifetime. It could also be that he was merely referring to two letters to the same audience written within a short time and that he wrote other letters that simply were not preserved.

3:3 **there shall come in the last day**. Speaking of the day at the end of the current era, Peter warned of great wickedness. He was trying to counter the argument that Jesus has not only delayed his coming but is not coming at all.

3:4 **JST “Denying the Lord Jesus Christ**, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as ~~they were~~ **are, and have continued as they are** from the beginning of the creation.”

Those who question the timing of his coming deny Jesus himself. They rationalize that he will not come because things are the same today as they have always been (which is not true).

3:5 **JST “For this they willingly are ignorant of, that ~~by the word of God the heavens were~~ of old **the heavens**, and the earth standing ~~out of~~ **in** the water and ~~in~~ **out of** the water, **were created by the word of God:**”**

The wicked are “willingly” ignorant of the fact that God created the world by his word, even Jesus Christ (compare John 1).

3:8 **JST “But **concerning the coming of the Lord**, beloved, ~~be~~ **I would not have you** ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”**

We speak of this scripture as relating to God’s “time” (if there can be such a thing to a being like the Father) versus man’s time. But the JST change indicates that it is in reference to the last days and the Second Coming, meaning our desire to count the days is impatient to God. “Behold, now it is called today, until the coming of the Son of Man. . . For after today cometh the burning—this is speaking after the manner of the Lord—for verily, I assay, tomorrow all the proud and they that do wickedly shall be as stubble” (D&C 64:23-24).¹²

3:10 **JST “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall **shake and the earth also shall tremble, and the mountains shall melt and** pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall ~~melt~~ **be filled** with fervent heat, the earth also **shall be filled**, and the **corruptible** works ~~that~~ **which** are therein shall be burned up.”**

¹² See also Abraham 3:4, which speaks of a day being like a thousand years, but in the context of comparing the revolution of Kolob to that of earth.

The earth will shake and tremble and mountains shall melt at his coming. But elements will not melt; rather they and the earth will be filled with heat so that corruption will be “burned up.”

3:11 **JST** “~~Seeing~~ If then ~~that~~ all these things shall be dissolved **destroyed**, what manner of persons ought ye to be in ~~all~~ holy ~~conversation~~ **conduct** and godliness,”

These mighty things of the earth will not just be “dissolved” (KJV, meaning loosed) but destroyed forever. Knowing that is the potential end of the wicked, that should motivate us to holy conduct (a perfect translation of the Greek).

3:12 **JST** “Looking **unto, and preparing** for ~~and hastening unto the coming of~~ the day of ~~God~~ **the coming of the Lord**, wherein **the corruptible things of** the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the ~~elements~~ **mountains** shall melt with fervent heat?”

When Jesus comes, corruption will go away and mountains—that block the progress of God’s work on earth—the melt.

3:13 **JST** “Nevertheless **if we shall endure, we shall be kept** according to his promise, **and we** look for **a new** heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

The great promise of the Second Coming is that the righteous will be preserved through all the days of tribulation, all the way until the time of the founding of a new heaven and earth.

Concluding Exhortation – 2 Peter 3:14-18

3:15 **JST** “And account ~~that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation~~; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you, **the longsuffering and waiting of our Lord for salvation**,”

Peter’s compliment to Paul, who was likely also in Rome at the same time, also waiting his own sentence in prison (did they see each other or just have disciples like Mark or Luke or Timothy carry messages between them?). See 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7.

3:16 **some things are hard to be understood**. Not a criticism of Paul as a writer but rather a statement that Paul tackled difficult doctrines that the “unlearned and unstable” struggle with, because they do not have the Spirit.

3:17 **led away with the error of the wicked**. Don’t be like this people, Peter warned, wrestling with the meaning of the scriptures and causing themselves to fall away from their own faithfulness.

3:18 **grow in grace**. Compare D&C 50:40 where the young church was told that it could not bear all things at that time but must “grown in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.” Righteous living yields greater knowledge and greater knowledge greater humility and obedience.

1 John

John’s letters were likely the last things written in the New Testament; most agree that Revelation and even the gospel of John were written before these three epistles. That means the letters could have been written in the 90s or even after the turn of the century. The author of 1 John is not named and in 2 and 3 John, is just called “the elder,” but they have traditionally been assigned to John and apostle and revelator. He was dealing with a group of people called the Docetists who, influenced by Greek philosophy that physical bodies were evil, didn’t believe that Christ really had a mortal body. It contains some of the same themes from the gospel of John: light and darkness, love, Word of God, etc. It has been noted that this letter is a commentary on John 17, explaining what it is to know God.

Outline

1. The Word of Life (1:1-10)

2. Light (2:1 – 3:10)
 - a. At atoning sacrifice (2:1-6)
 - b. I am writing a new commandment (2:7-17)
 - c. The antichrist is coming (2:18-27)
 - d. The children of God (2:28 – 3:10)
3. Love (3:11 – 5:12)
 - a. Believe in the name of his Son (3:11-24)
 - b. Test the spirits (4:1-6)
 - c. Love one another (4:7-21)
 - d. Born of God (5:1-12)
4. Concluding Remarks (5:13-21)

The Word of Life – 1 John 1:1-10

1:1 **JST** “Brethren, this is the testimony which we give of that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;”

The KJV starts abruptly, with an incomplete sounding phrase,¹³ which the JST changes to make the entire letter a testimony or witness of what John knew firsthand from his own sight, hearing, and touch.

1:1 **the Word of life**. Using the language of John 1, he referenced his personal knowledge (heard, seen, looked upon, and handled) of “the Word of life” or Jesus Christ.

1:4 **that your joy may be full**. The testimony of the last apostle brought joy to those who received his testimony.

1:5 **God is light**. John’s theology is very binary, a theme that comes out strongly in both his gospel and Revelation. God is full of light with “no darkness at all.”

1:6 **walk in darkness**. We deny the truth if we say that we are close to God but do not obey his commandments.

1:7 **walk in the light**. The opposite is to “walk in the light,” meaning to “have fellowship one with another” and to experience the cleansing power of the Atonement that makes us free from the effects of sin.

1:8 **we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves**. All people sin. To deny that fact is to deny the need for an Atonement, making us liars to ourselves and to God (also v. 10).

Light – 1 John 2:1 – 3:10

At atoning sacrifice – 1 John 2:1-6

2:1 **JST** “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. ~~And~~ **But** if any man sin **and repent**, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:”

Repentance is the key to invoking the Atonement on our own behalf after we sin. Without repentance, we must suffer the full consequences of our choices and behavior.

2:2 **he is the propitiation for our sins**. “Propitiation” is Greek *hilasmos*, or ‘a means of appeasing.’ It is typically related to a sacrifice given as an offering for sin.

2:3 **we know him, if we keep his commandments**. The manifestation of our knowledge of Jesus’ mission and role is our efforts to be true to his words. See Exodus 20:6; Deuteronomy 5:10; John 14:15, 21.

¹³ Verses 1-5 are a single, drawn-out sentence, which one translator described as “one of the most difficult sentences in the entire New Testament” (Wayment, *The New Testament*, 1 John 1:1-5 note).

I am writing a new commandment – 1 John 2:7-17

2:7 **JST** “Brethren, I write ~~no~~ **a new commandment** unto you, but ~~an old~~ **it is the same** commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.”

John could be referring to the Lord’s command in Exodus and Deuteronomy (see v. 3) that he now gave a “new commandment,” or just speaking generally of the eternal nature of gospel principles. Compare John 13:34.

2:8 **JST** “Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing **was of old ordained of God, and** is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.”

See commentary on verse 7.

2:9 **hateth his brother**. A specific manifestation of God’s light being in us is how we treat others. If we do not treat them kindly and with charity, we are “in darkness” and only deceiving ourselves.

2:10 **He that loveth his brother abideth in the light**. Combining the two themes of the letter, John taught that loving others brings light into our lives so that we do not stumble in the darkness.

2:13 **fathers . . . young men . . . little children**. In both verses 13 and 14, John speaks to fathers and young men, commending them for righteous behavior. The two verses are similar but not identical and the references to “little children” at the end of verse 13 don’t refer to small children but to all, using John’s language of referring to members of the church (compare v. 12).

2:15 **Love not the world**. Returning to his binary view, John advocates not loving the world and its “things.” The opposite is to love the Father.

The antichrist is coming – 1 John 2:18-27

2:18 **that antichrist shall come**. From the Greek *antichristos*, the word means just what it sounds like in English—someone opposed to or denying Christ (see v. 22). The word is only used in 1 and 2 John in all of scripture, though several Book of Mormon characters are often referred to as “anti-Christ,” including Sherem (Jacob 7:1-23), Nehor (Alma 1:2-16), and Korihor (Alma 30:6-60). In John’s work, the antichrists are former members of the church gone apostate (“they went out from us” in v. 19). In Joseph Smith’s day as in ours, some of the strongest opposition comes from former members who can leave the Church but just can’t leave it alone.

2:19 **we have an unction from the Holy One**. “Unction” is anointing, referring to the gift of the Holy Ghost.

2:23 **JST** “Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: ~~(but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.~~”

The last phrase is wholly in italics in the KJV, acknowledging that it is in some manuscripts but not in others. In the early 1600s, they didn’t have enough or old enough manuscripts to make a decision, so they left the words in but put them in italics to indicate their suspicion that they might not belong. Joseph Smith deleted the entire phrase from his translation, as he often did with italicized words. Some scholars today argue that the phrase belongs because it is found in some of the older manuscripts of 1 John, but acceptance is not universal, so Joseph Smith’s deletion is a valid interpretation of the manuscript evidence.

2:25 **eternal life**. God has promised eternal life to those who walk in his ways, love others, and live in the light.

2:26 **them that seduce you**. Those who are against Christ try to convince others of the correctness of their positions. These passionate attempts to “seduce” others to their point of view can be alluring and tempting to those who lack a strong knowledge or who are struggling with their own sins and can thus be more easily lured away. John wrote to warn them of this possibility and to shore them up against it.

2:27 **ye need not that any man teach you**. The ultimate goal of any teacher, like John, is that the students become the teachers. In a gospel context, church leaders strive to have all members become self-sufficient spiritually, that the Holy Spirit might be everyone’s guide (Numbers 11:29; D&C 45:57).

The children of God – 1 John 2:28 – 3:10

2:28 **we may have confidence.** Knowing that Jesus' sacrifice is real and effective in our lives gives us confidence to stand before the Father and be judged, not because we are perfect but because Jesus is there with us to not only speak in our behalf but to apply his atoning blood for our benefit.

3:1 **we should be called the sons of God.** Though we are blatant sinners, through God's love (charity and grace) we are called to be his sons and daughters.

3:2 **it doth not yet appear what we shall be.** John was not certain nor are we today just what we will look and be like in the resurrection, except that we can be like Jesus, "for we shall see him as he is."

3:4 **sin is the transgression of the law.** Unlike Paul, when John speaks of "the law," he is not speaking of the Mosaic Law as found in the five books of Moses. With the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and the movement of the center of the church into the midst of the Gentile world, the controversy of the Jewish Christians imposition of Mosaic Law on Gentile converts has pretty much worked itself out. Rather, John speaks of the law of God, the commandments he gave to us through Jesus Christ.

3:5 **in him is no sin.** Jesus was and will be the only person to walk the earth as a sinless person, which qualified him to offer himself a sacrifice for our sins.

3:9 **JST** "Whosoever is born of God doth not ~~commit~~ **continue in sin**; for ~~his seed~~ **the Spirit of God** remaineth in him: and he cannot **continue in sin**, because he is born of God, **having received the holy spirit of promise.**"

Echoing the theme of 2 Peter 1-2, the JST teaches that those born of God will abandon sin because the Spirit will direct them in that pursuit, until they receive the assurance of their calling and election being made sure. Compare Alma 5:14.

Love – 1 John 3:11 – 5:12

Believe in the name of his Son – 1 John 3:11-24

3:13 **Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.** Becoming an early Christian typically meant, at best, persecution, or at worst, death. It could literally feel like everyone was against you. But we are not surprised by the acrimony brought against us—"for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matthew 5:12; D&C 127:4).

3:14 **from death to life, because we love the brethren.** John's message in this last section is about the power and the necessity of love. It is love of each other that takes us "from death to life," from judgment to eternal bliss.

3:15 **Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.** The other extreme position is that hate in our hearts for another person is equivalent to killing that person, in terms of its impact on our souls, just as lusting after a woman was equated with committing adultery by the Savior (Matthew 5:28).

3:16 **we ought to lay down our lives.** Just as Jesus laid down his life for each of us, the standard of love is that we would be willing to sacrifice even our own lives for others, if needed. Through such willingness "perceive we the love of God."

3:18 **in deed and in truth.** Love is not just words, John taught, but is manifest by our actions.

3:20 **God is greater than our heart.** We know within ourselves if we are living up to this standard of love, and God knows our hearts as well, so we cannot hide our nature from him.

3:23 **love one another.** As Jesus taught, one of the great commandments is to love each other (John 13:34-35).

3:24 **we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit.** The presence of the Holy Ghost in our lives is our testimony that we are living in accordance with God's will and are sufficiently loving.

Test the spirits – 1 John 4:1-6

4:2 **Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God.** Having raised the issue of the Spirit, John sought to explain the difference between a true confessor and a false one. One of the challenges to Christians in that day is the concept that Jesus did not come “in the flesh” but was something else, since flesh was considered sinful and undesirable in Greek philosophy. John declared that only those who can declare that Jesus came to earth with a body of flesh are of God.

4:3 **this is that spirit of antichrist.** Defining “antichrist” well, John declared that it is anyone who will not confess the truth about Christ.

Love one another – 1 John 4:7-21

4:7 **every one that loveth is born of God.** Love is also a manifestation or being “born of God” and becoming his eternal family and heirs.

4:8 **God is love.** In the end, one of the greatest things we can say about God is that he is the ultimate manifestation of love for the universe. His love is fully displayed by the sacrifice of his Son (vv. 9-10).

4:11 **we ought also to love one another.** As God loved us, so we should treat each other.

4:12 **JST** “No man hath seen God at any time, **except them who believe.** If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.”

This JST change makes verse 12 harmonize with other scriptures (e.g., Exodus 33:11; Isaiah 6:1) and with the Prophet’s own experience (Joseph Smith History 1:17; D&C 76:20-23). Because there is no punctuation in the Greek, John could also potentially be saying, ‘No one has ever seen God unless they first love each other.’

4:18 **There is no fear in love.** Loving another person drives away fear; we embrace that person in all their imperfections and attributes.

4:21 **he who loveth God love his brother also.** This commandment from Jesus is not captured precisely in any of the gospels, but summarizes encounters such as Matthew 22:37-39, where Jesus taught that the two great commandments were to love God and each other.

Born of God – 1 John 5:1-12

5:3 **his commandments are not grievous.** God asks that we keep his commandments to show our love, and John taught that those commandments are not heavy or burdensome.

5:4 **our faith.** As he will develop in Revelation, John taught that overcoming the world is our goal when we are born again of God, and that overcoming the world is achieved through our faith in Christ.

5:7-8 These very Trinitarian-sounding verses do not exist in any original manuscripts. They appear to have been added as late as the sixteenth century to a handful of manuscripts, some of which were used by William Tyndale and then the KJV translators.

Concluding Remarks – 1 John 5:13-21

5:13 **JST** “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may **continue to** believe on the name of the Son of God.”

The JST emphasizes that believe is a continuing experience, not a one-time event.

5:18 **JST** “We know that whosoever is born of God ~~sinneth~~ **continueth not in sin**; but he that is begotten of God **and** keepeth himself, and that wicked one ~~toucheth~~ **overcometh** him not.”

If we are constant in our efforts to overcome sin and live by God’s commandments, Satan will not have power to overcome us.

2 John

Second and Third John are the shortest letters in the New Testament and each would have easily fit on a single sheet of papyrus or parchment. Unlike First John, they are addressed to specific people, not just the church at large, but the issues are similar—false teachers coming among the saints and love for each other. These are the only two New Testament books with no JST changes.

Opening Address – 2 John 1:1-3

1:1 **The elder.** The only title the author of 2 and 3 John uses. Though the identity is not known, tradition assigns both to John the apostle and revelator.

1:1 **unto the elect lady and her children.** We don't know the name of this woman but it appears to be a specific woman and her family.

Warning about the Deceivers – 2 John 1:4-11

1:5 **love one another.** John was consistent in his preaching of the necessity of love and that love of God is manifest by our obedience to his commandments (v. 6).

1:7 **many deceivers.** A deceiver was one who did not declare true doctrine of Christ—an antichrist.

1:8 **Look to yourselves.** Or, “Look out” (TW). The woman and her family are to take care that they don't lose what they have worked so hard to achieve.

1:10 **receive him not into your house.** Don't take preachers in who teach things contrary to the message of Christ.

Conclusion – 2 John 1:12-13

1:12 **paper and ink.** Or, ‘papyrus and ink,’ meaning normal letter-writing tools of the day.

1:12 **I trust to come unto you.** The author anticipated visiting this good family in the near future.

1:13 **thy elect sister.** Could be a literal sister or a reference to a sister in the church.

3 John

Opening Address – 3 John 1:1-4

1:1 **the wellbeloved Gaius.** This letter is addressed to a man named Gaius. We do not know anything else about this man.

1:4 **my children walk in truth.** It is tempting to see in these words a reference to John's own family, and that is possible. But given how often he referred to members of the church as ‘children,’ it is more likely that he was rejoicing in the faithfulness of the people about who the “brethren” (v. 3) reported.

Congratulations – 3 John 1:5-8

1:8 **We therefore ought to receive such.** Christian missionaries and preachers on the road deserved to be cared for by faithful members. This is the opposite of his counsel in 2 John to reject false teachers and not let them in the house (2 John 1:10).

Diotrephes – 3 John 1:9-12

1:9 **I wrote unto the church.** Referring to a letter of John now lost.

1:9 **Diotrephes**. This man apparently loved honor more than God and spoke out against many church members. He would not provide a place to stay or otherwise care for the teachers of truth.

1:10 **if I come, I will remember his deeds**. John anticipated a potential trip to see Gaius and the saints in his (unknown) town (see also v. 14) and promised to deal with Diotrephes when he came.

1:12 **Demetrius hath good report**. Probably the man that carried the letter to Gaius.

Conclusion – 3 John 1:13-15

1:13 **ink and pen**. Or, ink and reed, which is how one wrote on papyrus.

Jude

The author of Jude is James' and Jesus' younger brother. His position in the church is not known but he was of sufficient authority to write a letter of direction and have it be preserved. The purpose of his book was to confront apostasy. It is generally considered to have been written shortly or just before after 2 Peter (because Peter and Jude used many of the same phrases and examples), a time of intense persecution from the outside and falling away on the inside. Jude quotes two books considered apocryphal today, 1 Enoch and the Testament of Moses.

Opening Address – Jude 1:1-2

1:1 **JST** "Jude, the servant of **God, called of** Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them ~~that~~ **who** are sanctified ~~by~~ **God of** the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, ~~and called.~~"

The JST strengthens Jude's position—he was "called of Jesus Christ" to his position in the church.

Ungodly Have Entered among You – Jude 1:3-16

1:3 **earnestly content for the faith**. The Christians of that day were in a fight—at the peril of their lives in some cases. They were contending against outside forces who wanted to attack their faith and apostate forces from the inside who wanted to change their doctrine.

1:4 **certain men crept in unawares**. Or, "crept in unnoticed" (NASB). They came into the church with malintent.

1:6-7 Like Peter, Jude referenced both the fallen angels and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, in his case evidence of God's coming judgment on the apostates.

1:9 **Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil**. This account comes from an apocryphal source, known today as the Assumption or Testament of Moses.

1:11 **the error of Balaam**. Meaning, prophesying for money.

1:11 **the gainsaying of Core**. See Numbers 16.

1:14 **Enoch . . . prophesied of these**. Jude quoted from another apocryphal source, 1 Enoch, concerning his vision of ten thousand saints appearing with Christ.

A Christian Response to Dissension – Jude 1:17-25

1:18 **mockers in the last time**. Scoffers will be part of the last days, which we certainly see today.

1:21 **Keep yourselves in the love of God**. Like John, Jude taught that faithfulness and love were synonymous. He noted that having "compassion" can make a difference (v. 22).

1:23 **hating even the garment spotted by the flesh**. A defiled garment (symbolic of apostasy) should not be worn by faithful members.

1:24 **him that is able to keep you from falling**. Only by the grace of Christ and by the power of the Spirit are all of us kept from falling into sin and being lost from God.

Bibliography

Abbreviations:

- AT – Author’s translation
- BYU – BYU New Rendition
- CJB – Complete Jewish Bible
- ESV – English Standard Version
- JST – Joseph Smith Translation
- KJV – King James Version
- LXX – Septuagint (Greek Old Testament)
- NAB – New American Bible
- NASB – New American Standard Bible
- NIV – New International Version
- NJB – New Jerusalem Bible
- NLT – New Living Translation
- NRSV – New Revised Standard Version
- TNT – William Tyndale 1534 New Testament
- TW – Thomas Wayment translation

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