

in order that you may be cured. Very powerfully productive is the prayer of a righteous man. Elijah was a man who was suffering like us, and with a prayer he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and no rain fell upon the land for the space of three years and six months. And he earnestly

prayed again; when the sky gave rain and the land yielded its produce.

My brethren, if any of you should stray from the truth, and one can turn him back; let him know that he who turns a sinner from his wandering way will save that soul from death, and prevent a multitude of sins.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PETER.

General Greeting.

1 **P**ETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the chosen strangers of the Dispersion, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the predetermination of a Father God, for a purification of spirit through obedience and a sprinkling of blood of Jesus Christ: May blessing and peace be abundant to you!

The Ministry of the Prophets.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!—Who, with His boundless pity, has caused us to be born again into a living hope—by means of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from among the dead—of an inheritance incorruptible, and spotless, and unfading, guarded in the heavens for you, by the power of God,—you who look out through faith to a salvation ready to be revealed at the end of time.

6 On which account you should be exceedingly glad; although now, if need be, for a short space of time you are grieved by numerous trials: so that the testing of your faith, far more precious than gold which perishes, although tested by fire, may be found in approval, rectification, and honour and distinction at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

8 Whom having not seen you love; upon Whom although not yet having looked, you believe, and rejoice with unspeakable and anticipating delight, looking out for the object of your faith—salvation of souls. Concerning which salvation, the prophets, prophesying of this gift to you, diligently searched as to Whom, or what period of time, the

Spirit of Christ within them pointed, when He testified beforehand the sufferings surrounding the Messiah, and the glories after them; to whom it was revealed that not for themselves, but for you, they were messengers of things, which are now proclaimed to you, by those who evangelize you by a Holy Spirit sent from heaven, into which the angels desired to examine.

Incitement to Holiness of Life.

Therefore, girding up the loins of your understanding, perfectly sober, hope for the gift that is to be presented to you at the revealing of Jesus Christ. As children of obedience, not conforming yourselves to your lusts, as you formerly did in your ignorance; but rather as your Commander is holy, you also should become holy in all your conduct. Because it is written, **BECOME HOLY, FOR I MYSELF AM HOLY.**¹ If then you are commanded by a Father, Who without flattery judges according to the work of each, conduct yourselves for the time of your service in reverence. Knowing that you were not redeemed from the slavery of your ancestral follies by means of corruptible silver or gold; but by means of the precious blood of Christ, like of an unblemished and spotless lamb; provided, indeed, before the foundation of the world, but manifested at the extremity of the ages for the sake of you, who through Him are believers in God, Who raised Him from the dead and

¹ Lev. xi. 44.

invested Him with rectification, so that your faith and hope might be in God.

Reasons for a Holy Life.

22 Having purified your lives by your obedience to the truth, with sincere brotherly affection love one another earnestly from the heart; having been regenerated, not from a corruptible source, but from an incorruptible, by means of a message from a living and enduring God. For

24 ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS,
AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE
FLOWER OF GRASS;
THE GRASS WITHERS,
AND THE FLOWER FADES;
25 BUT THE PURPOSE OF THE LORD
ENDURES FOR EVER.¹

And this purpose is that which has been proclaimed to you as good news.

2 Consequently, abandoning all vice, and deceit, and pretence, and envy, and all slandering, crave like newborn babes the rational, unadulterated milk, so that by it you may be growing up to salvation; if you have tasted that the Lord is good; to Whom coming—a living Stone, rejected indeed by men, but approved, distinguished in the presence of God—yourselves also should be built up like living stones into a spiritual house, into a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Because it is said in Scripture:

LOOK! I WILL PLACE IN ZION A
CHOSEN STONE,—
A PRECIOUS ANGLE-POINT.
AND WHOEVER TRUSTS ON IT
SHALL NEVER BE ASHAMED.²

7 For those of you, therefore, who trust, He is the Distinguished; but to the unbelieving,

A STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS
REJECTED,—
THAT HAS BECOME THE HIGHEST
ANGLE-POINT.³

8 and,

A STONE OF STUMBLING,
AND A ROCK OF OFFENCE;⁴
Being careless, they stumble at the message for which they were intended.

9 But you are A SELECT RACE, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR ACTION;⁵ so that you may display the virtues of Him Who

called you out of darkness into His wonderful light; who once were NOT A PEOPLE, but are now A PEOPLE OF GOD; who WERE UNPITIED, but have NOW SECURED COMPASSION.¹

I implore you, friends, as lodgers and travellers, to refrain from sensual desires, which war against the soul; keeping the course of your life bright among the heathen; so that although they slander you as profligate, they may, attracted by your brilliant conduct, praise God whilst witnessing it.

The Duties of Citizenship.

Be subject to every human institution for the sake of the Lord: whether to a king, as supreme; or to governors, as sent by him for the punishment of criminals, and for the approval of the well-conducted. Because this is the intention of God, to check by means of well-doing the senselessness of ignorant men. As free men, however, though not using your freedom as a pretext for vice, but like servants of God. Honour all; love the brotherhood; reverence God; honour the king.

The Duty of Servants.

Domestics should obey their masters with all respect; not only the benevolent and considerate, but also even the perverse. For this is pleasing, if through a consciousness of God, any one endures pain, suffering it unjustly. For what honour is it, if when you do wrong, and are punished, you bear it patiently? If, however, when you do right, and yet suffer, you bear it patiently, this brings honour to God.

Christ the Example of the Believer.

For you were chosen for this purpose: and Christ also suffered for you, leaving a pattern for you, in order that you might follow in His footsteps: Who PRACTISED NO SIN; NEITHER WAS THERE DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; Who, when insulted, insulted not in return; while suffering, He never threatened, but surrendered Himself to the righteous Judge; Who Himself carried our sins in His own body upon the tree, so that, abandoning those sins, we might live for righteousness; BY WHOSE WOUNDS YOU WERE HEALED. FOR 25

¹ Isa. xl. 6—8.

² Isa. xxviii. 16.

³ Psa. cxviii. 22.

⁴ Isa. viii. 14.

⁵ Exod. xix. 5, 6.

¹ Hos. i. 9, 10.

you were then LIKE WANDERING SHEEP;¹ but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

Matrimonial Department.

- 8 Wives should likewise be obedient to their own husbands ; so that should any be careless about the Message, they may, apart from the Message, be gained by the conduct of their wives ;
 2 observing your blameless conduct
 3 with esteem -you, whose adornment should not be merely the external, such as plaited hair, the wearing of golden trinkets, or decoration in
 4 putting on of dress ; but rather the unseen woman of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a kind and gentle spirit, which is very precious
 5 in the sight of God. Because formerly this was the way in which the holy women, who hoped in God, adorned themselves, being obedient to their
 6 own husbands ; as Sarah, for instance, obeyed Abraham, calling him master ; whose daughters you may now become by well-doing, and by not being frightened by any passionate emotion.
 7 In the same way, the husbands should live sensibly with them, assigning honour to their feminine nature, as to a weaker vessel, but as equal inheritors of the gift of life ; so that your prayers may not be hindered.

Exhortation to Godliness.

- 8 Finally, let there be unanimity of mind : be sympathetic, friendly, compassionate, gentle ; not returning wrong for wrong, nor abuse for abuse ; but, on the contrary, speaking pleasantly ; because your object in being called was that you may inherit
 10 blessing : for,
 WHOEVER DESIRES TO ENJOY LIFE,
 AND SEE PLEASANT TIMES,
 LET HIM RESTRAIN HIS TONGUE
 FROM ANNOYANCE,
 AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING
 DECEIT ;
 11 AND LET HIM TURN ASIDE FROM
 VICE, AND DO GOOD ;
 LET HIM SEARCH FOR PEACE, AND
 FOLLOW IT.
 12 FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE
 UPON THE RIGHTEOUS,
 AND HIS EARS ATTENTIVE TO
 THEIR PRAYER ;

¹ Isa. lili. 5-9.

BUT THE LORD IS OPPOSED TO THE DOERS OF EVIL.¹

And who will injure you, if you¹³ become zealous for beneficence ? If¹⁴ you suffer, however, for the sake of righteousness, you are happy ; and
 DREAD NOT THEIR TERROR, NEI-
 THER BE TROUBLED ;
 BUT LOVE THE LORD CHRIST IN¹⁵
 YOUR HEARTS.²

Ready at all times to give a defence to all who assail you concerning the reason of the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and respect ; having a clear conscience, so that¹⁶ those wantonly insulting you, although they libel, may be ashamed by your blameless conduct in Christ. For, if the will of God so decides, it¹⁷ is better to suffer for right-doing than for wrong-doing. Because even Christ¹⁸ once suffered for sinners, the Just for the unjust, so that He might bring you to God ; having been physically put to death, but spiritually living ; in that¹⁹ condition He also went and preached to the spirits under guard who²⁰ were formerly apathetic, when the patience of God was waiting in the time of Noah, while an ark was in preparation, in which a few, that is to say, eight lives, were saved through water. And you are now saved by²¹ a corresponding baptism ; not only by a removal of bodily uncleanness ; but, on the contrary, the acquisition of a pure conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is at the right²² hand of God, having proceeded into heaven, subjecting to Him angels, governments, and powers.

Since then the Messiah suffered in⁴ the body, arm yourselves also with a similar intention, because he who has suffered physically casts off sins ;² so that his remaining time in the body he no more lives for human lusts, but for a Divine purpose. For to have³ been practising in the past time the wishes of the heathen is sufficient ; proceeding in excesses, lusts, love of drinking, revellings, drunkenness, and lawless idolatries—in which⁴ excess of profligacy they, while reviling you, wonder that you do not join them ; but they must render⁵ an account to Him Who is ready to judge the living and dead. For this⁶

¹ Psa. xxxiv. 12-16.

² Isa. viii. 12.

reason the good news was preached also to the dead; so that they might certainly be judged with men physically, but might live spiritually with God.

7 But the completion of all approaches. Therefore be prudent, and 8 watchful in prayer. Above all else, having earnest affection among yourselves; because LOVE HIDES A MULTITUDE OF SINS.¹ Be friendly to 9 one another, without grumbling. Let every one, according to the gift which he has received, employ it for the good of others, as faithful stewards of 10 the manifold gift of God. If any one can speak, let it be of the thoughts of God; if any one can minister, let it be with the power which God has bestowed; so that in all God may be honoured through Jesus Christ, Whose is the rectification and the dominion throughout the eternal ages. Amen.

The Fiery Trial.

12 Do not be astonished, friends, that a fiery trial has come upon you, as though an unexpected affair had surprised you; but rather rejoice that you are sharers in the sufferings of the Messiah; so that at the unveiling of His rectification, you may rejoice 13 with exultation. If you are abused for the sake of the name of Christ, you are happy! because that which is the Majesty, and that which is the Spirit of God, has rested upon you. 14 But let none of you be convicted as a murderer, as a thief, as a profligate, or as a libeller; but if as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but thank God for 15 that name. Because the right place to begin the judgment is at the house of God; and if first at us, what will be the end of those disobedient to the 16 good news of God? And if the righteous are to be saved with difficulty, where can the impious and sinful 17 appear? So then, let those who suffer according to the will of God, while practising what is good, confide their souls to a Reliable Builder.

Peter's Exhortation to the Shepherds.

5 I therefore entreat you old men, as an old man, and a witness of the

¹ Prov. x. 12.

sufferings of Christ, and also a participator of the majesty which is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God 2 among which you are exercising the oversight, not unwillingly, but willingly; not for the sake of sordid gain, but from good disposition; not as 3 domineering over the charge entrusted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock. And when the 4 Chief Shepherd makes His appearance, you shall be rewarded with the unfading crown of honour.

In the same way, let the young be 5 submissive to the old. And be all bound together with gentle-mindedness; because

GOD RESISTS THE HAUGHTY,
BUT ENDOWS THE GENTLE WITH
A GIFT.¹

Humble yourselves therefore under 6 the powerful hand of God, so that in due time He will exalt you; casting 7 all your anxiety upon Him, because He Himself cares for you.

Be temperate; be on the alert. 8 Your adversary, the Devil, roams about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Take a firm 9 stand against him by the faith, knowing that the same sufferings and discipline have perfected your brethren.

And the God of all blessing, Who 10 has called you to His eternal majesty in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself perfect, establish, strengthen you. To Him 11 the dominion throughout the eternal ages. Amen.

The Conclusion.

Through Silvanus, who is, I consider, your faithful brother, I have 12 briefly written, exhorting and testifying that this is a true gift from God, in which you stand.

Those in Babylon chosen with you, 13 salute you; as well as Mark my son. Embrace one another with a kiss of 14 affection. Peace be with all those of you in Christ.

(This Epistle was probably written from Babylon about 64 or 65 A.D.)

¹ Prov. iii. 34.