BIBLE CONNECTIONS WITH JOSEPH

1 Peter 5:7 (read in 5:1–11)

A companion study from the set Bible Verses for Anxiety, Through the Six Steps · Bible Connections with Joseph

> This study walks 1 Peter 5:7 (read in 5:1–11) through the six steps: 1 Read It — the passage and what's around it · 2 Cross Over — who wrote it, to whom, and what was happening · 3 Stand in Their World — hear it the way they heard it · 4 Verify It — hold it up against the fullness of Scripture · 5 Come Back — put what you found into today's language · 6 Carry It Home — what it asks of you, and how it points to Jesus.
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> If it's heavy, pray about it and talk to someone you trust (or the friend who gave you this sheet). If you don't have anyone yet, a local church is a good place to ask.
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> Keep your own Bible open; this page sends you into the passage rather than printing it. It quotes the Christian Standard Bible (CSB); where you see LORD in capital letters, that is how the CSB prints God's personal name. A reference like 4:6 means chapter 4, verse 6; 'v.' means verse.

1 · Read It — the passage and what's around it

Verse 7 is the line people know: "casting all your cares on him, because he cares about you." It is the second half of a thought that verse 6 begins. Verse 6 tells you to humble yourself under God's mighty hand; verse 7 tells you what that looks like when you are carrying cares, and why you can do it. Bibles punctuate the two verses differently: the CSB runs them together as one sentence, with "casting" picking up where verse 6 leaves off, and some translations start a new sentence at verse 7. Either way the meaning ties them together, so read verses 6 and 7 as one thought. That thought is the line this whole page follows: humbled under God's mighty hand, you hand Him your cares, because He cares about you. Everything else in 5:1–11 either leads up to it or carries it forward.

Read 1 Peter 5:1–11 in one sitting. It moves in four parts. Peter speaks first to the church's elders, the leaders who shepherded and taught each congregation (vv. 1–4). He calls the church God's flock and tells the elders to shepherd it willingly and eagerly, without greed, and without lording it over the people in their care, leading them by their own example. Their reward comes when the Chief Shepherd, Jesus, appears (v. 4). So the passage begins with humility at the top: the leaders serve a flock that belongs to God, under a Shepherd greater than they are. Then Peter turns to those who are younger, and then to everyone: "All of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble" (v. 5). That last line is a proverb, quoted from Proverbs 3:34. Verse 6 hangs on "therefore," so it leans on verse 5: because God gives grace to the humble, humble yourselves "under the mighty hand of God," so that He may lift you up ("exalt you") "at the proper time." The humility that began toward one another now goes under God, and verse 7, the casting of your cares, belongs to that same thought.

"The mighty hand of God" can sound like a hand pushing you down. In the Old Testament it is the hand that rescued Israel: when Moses reminds the people how God brought them out of slavery in Egypt, he says again and again that God did it with a strong hand (Exodus 13:9; Deuteronomy 9:26; 26:8), the picture behind Peter's words. Two more things about that hand are worth seeing. The hand stands for God's power over everything these readers were facing, the hard things included, so nothing that touched them was outside His reach. And the hand strong enough to bring the proud low is the same hand that lifts the humble up and holds them steady. So humbling yourself under that hand means trusting His power and His

timing instead of forcing your own way out: the fixing is His, and you are not left to solve it all yourself. That is why casting your cares belongs in the same thought. You can leave the timing with Him because you can leave the weight with Him, and you can leave the weight with Him because He cares about you.

Verses 8 and 9 follow straight on: “Be sober-minded, be alert.” Your adversary (your opponent, the one who stands against you), the devil, “is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour.” You resist him “firm in the faith,” knowing that believers throughout the world are going through the same kind of sufferings. Then verse 10 tells you who carries the outcome: “The God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, strengthen, and support you after you have suffered a little while.” And Peter ends in praise: “To him be dominion forever. Amen” (v. 11). Dominion means rule and power; Amen means “so be it.”

The whole passage puts everything in its right place: the leaders under the Chief Shepherd, all of you under God’s mighty hand, your cares on Him, your guard up against the enemy, and the outcome with God.

◆ **Read verse 6 first, then verse 7 as the end of the same sentence. What does that make the casting a part of? What does verse 5 give as the reason to humble yourself? And in verse 10, who does the restoring?**

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2 · Cross Over — who wrote it, to whom, and what was happening

The apostle Peter (one of Jesus’ twelve disciples, sent out by Him to lead the early church) writes to believers scattered across a wide region of what is now Turkey (1:1), people for whom following Jesus carried a real social cost. In 5:1 he writes as a fellow elder, one of them, rather than as their superior: a witness of the sufferings of Christ who will also share in the glory still to be revealed. The humility he asks for in verse 5, he shows in verse 1.

Peter had also lived the words he passes on here. On the night Jesus was arrested, Jesus told him to stay awake and pray; Peter fell asleep, and hours later he denied knowing Jesus three times (Mark 14:37–38, 66–72). After Jesus rose from the dead, He told Peter three times to care for His sheep (John 21:15–17). So the man telling the elders to shepherd God’s flock, and telling everyone to stay alert, is passing on what Jesus Himself had taught him.

Read 1 Peter 4:12–16, then 5:9.

◆ **What were these readers living under? Find the line in chapter 4 that names it, and what 5:9 tells them about who else is going through it.**

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3 · Stand in Their World — hear it the way they heard it

“At the proper time” is the hardest phrase in the passage for an anxious person, and the honest one. Peter says it to people who had every reason to want God to lift them up (“exalt you,” v. 6) sooner. These readers

were already under pressure, and Peter had just told them harder things were coming (4:12). That is where their cares came from: what would happen to them, to their families, and to their church. Humbling themselves meant leaving the timing with God.

They would have heard "clothe yourselves with humility" (v. 5) as a picture. The Greek word suggests tying a garment on, like the apron a servant tied over his clothes to work. Humility was something you put on in order to serve one another.

They would have heard the roaring lion (v. 8) the same way. A lion roars to terrify its prey. For these readers the roar had a sound: ridicule, accusation, and pressure to let go of the name of Christ. What the enemy was after was their faith, which is why Peter tells them to resist him "firm in the faith" (v. 9). And they heard, in the same breath, that they were not the only ones: their fellow believers throughout the world were going through the same kind of sufferings. Peter named the enemy so they could stand against him, and he set him between two promises: God cares about you (v. 7), and God Himself will restore you (v. 10).

◆ **Write what "at the proper time" would have sounded like to someone ridiculed for the name of Christ that week. Then finish 1 Peter 4:14: what does Peter say rests on that person?**

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4 · Verify It — hold it up against the fullness of Scripture

The reading so far: humbling yourself under God's hand and casting your cares on Him belong to one sentence; you can hand Him your cares because He cares about you; the lifting comes on His timing; and while you wait, you stay alert and stand firm. Hold it up against the fullness of Scripture: a reading of one verse can't create a conflict with any other part of the Bible, and if it does, either the reading or your understanding of the other Scriptures needs adjusting.

Psalm 55:22 is the line Peter's words echo; read what the psalm says God does for the one who casts a burden on Him. James 4:6–10 quotes the same proverb Peter quotes at the end of 5:5, "God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble" (it goes back to Proverbs 3:34, worded differently there), and gives the same order: humble yourselves, and He will exalt you. James also puts submitting to God and resisting the devil side by side (4:7), the same pairing as 1 Peter 5:6–9. In Matthew 6:25–34 Jesus speaks to worry directly, calls His hearers "you of little faith," and gives them a reason to trust their Father.

One summary gives "he cares about you" its full weight. The Westminster Confession of Faith (a 1640s summary of Bible teaching used by Reformed churches; a tool, not an authority over the Bible) calls God's ongoing care and rule over everything He made His providence, and says of it: "after a most special manner, it taketh care of his church" (chapter 5, section 7). In plain words, God looks after His people with a particular care.

Three questions come up as you check. First, does handing God your cares mean you stop paying attention? Verse 8 answers in the next breath: "Be sober-minded, be alert." Your cares go to Him, and your mind stays clear to watch and to stand. Second, what if nothing has moved? Peter answers from inside the passage, in three phrases. "A little while" (v. 10): the waiting is real, and it is short when it is measured against the eternal glory God has called you to. "Himself" (v. 10): the restoring is God's own work, and He does it

personally. And the Chief Shepherd's appearing (v. 4): Peter promised the elders a crown of glory that will never fade when Jesus appears, and that same day is when the lifting verse 6 promises comes in full for all His people. The proper time may come in this life, and it will surely come then. Until then, He is with you in it: verse 7 says He cares about you while the cares are still on you, and Hebrews 13:5 gives His own promise, "I will never leave you or abandon you."

Third, should the roaring lion in verse 8 frighten you? Peter names the enemy so you can stand against him, and the rest of Scripture puts him in his place. James gives the same command with a promise attached: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). John tells believers that the One who is in them is greater than the one who is in the world (1 John 4:4). The weakest believer who holds on to Christ can stand against him, and Peter holds out a sure hope to keep the heart steady: the crown of glory that will never fade when the Chief Shepherd appears (v. 4), and God Himself restoring you after a little while (v. 10). The lion is real, and the people he roars at belong to a God who is greater.

If what you find in these passages changes the reading, go with what you find. A good commentary (a book that explains the Bible passage by passage), or a pastor you trust, can help you weigh it.

◆ **Does the reading square with all of Scripture? Write what each of these passages adds, and anything that changes how you read 1 Peter 5:5–10.**

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5 · Come Back — put what you found into today's language

Start with the word. The word Peter uses for "cares" in verse 7 suggests anxious, distracting care, the kind that pulls your mind in pieces. The second "cares," in "he cares about you," is a different and gentler word: it suggests that what concerns you concerns Him.

The casting goes with the humbling: it's part of the same sentence. You get low under His hand and hand Him your cares together. And waiting in humility means waiting on someone who cares about you, which is the reason Peter gives in the same breath. So if you've been casting your cares on Him and waiting on His timing, and nothing has moved yet, that doesn't mean you're doing it wrong. It means you're in verse 6: under God's mighty hand, waiting for Him to lift you up "at the proper time."

What does standing firm against that enemy look like in an ordinary week? Start with who he is. The devil is the enemy of God and of God's people; the word Peter uses for "adversary" was used for an opponent in a court case, and "devil" means accuser or slanderer. What he is after is your trust in God, and pressure, ridicule and fear are the roar he uses to pull you away from it. Resisting him "firm in the faith" (v. 9) is ordinary and close to home. You keep handing your cares to God in prayer, which is the casting of verse 7 again. The enemy would like to use heavy cares to pull believers away from God, which is why Peter puts casting them on God right before resisting him; handing them over is already part of standing. You keep going back to what God has said in His Word. And you stay close to His people. The enemy presses hardest when he can make a believer feel cut off from the rest of the church, which is why Peter reminds you that believers throughout the world are going through the same kind of sufferings. You resist in company, and you lean on God's strength rather than your own.

Then verses 8 to 10, in today's words: with your cares on Him, keep your head clear and your guard up; when the pressure comes, hold on to what you believe; you're not the only one going through it; and the outcome is God's. He will Himself restore, establish, strengthen, and support you. The last word, "support," translates a Greek word that suggests setting a building on its foundation. "Suffered a little while" is hard to hear, but we all walk through times of trials and pain, and God is walking with you through them: He cares about you now, in the middle of it (v. 7), and after a little while He will Himself restore you (v. 10).

And go back to verses 1 to 4 once more. God gives His flock shepherds. If what you're carrying is heavy, take it to the Lord, and talk to someone you trust: a pastor, a teacher, a mentor.

◆ **Put verses 6–7 into one sentence of your own words. Then: what have you been casting that hasn't moved? Write it down, and next to it write the reason verse 7 gives.**

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6 · Carry It Home — what it asks of you, and how it points to Jesus

Step six asks two questions, and they belong together: what this passage asks of you this week, and how it points you to Jesus. The second is the one the whole letter keeps coming back to. For it, look at the places in this passage where Peter names Christ: the sufferings of Christ he witnessed (v. 1); the Chief Shepherd who will appear (v. 4), the Shepherd over every shepherd, whose flock you are; and the God of all grace who "called you to his eternal glory in Christ" (v. 10). Then read Philippians 2:8–9 beside verse 6: Jesus humbled Himself, and God exalted Him. It is the same pattern verse 6 gives you, humbled first and lifted up by God at the proper time.

◆ **What does this passage ask of you — what will you cast on Him, what will you leave to His timing, and where do you need to stay alert? And how does this point you to Jesus?**

> This study is one of eight in Bible Verses for Anxiety, Through the Six Steps. The full set: bibleconnectionswithjoseph.com/companions/anxiety-verses/

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