

## 1 Peter

**1:1** Peter, an apostle of Jesus the Messiah, to the chosen temporary residents of the Diaspora of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,<sup>1</sup> **1:2** according to the foreknowledge of God the Father for the purpose of obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus the Messiah by means of the setting apart by the Spirit. May grace and shalom be multiplied to you.<sup>2</sup>

**1:3** Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, the One who has caused us to be born from above according to His great faithfulness for a hope that lives in view of the resurrection from the dead of Jesus the Messiah,<sup>3</sup> **1:4** i.e., for an indestructible, undefiled, and unfading inheritance, which has been kept in the heavens for you,<sup>4</sup> **1:5** who are being protected by the power of God through belief for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last season,<sup>5</sup> **1:6** in which you greatly rejoice, even though now, for a little while, if necessary, you have been made sad in the midst of various tests,<sup>6</sup> **1:7** so that the clear evidence of your belief, which is more honorable (πολυτιμότερον) than destructible gold that has even been authenticated through fire, may be found to result in praise, glory (δόξαν), and honor (τιμὴν) at the revealing of Jesus the Messiah.<sup>7</sup>

**1:8** Even though you have not seen him, you love him. And even though you do not see him now but believe in him, you rejoice greatly with joy that cannot be described in words and that has been glorified (δεδοξασμένη),<sup>8</sup> **1:9** because you will obtain the end goal of your belief, the salvation of your personal existences.<sup>9</sup>

**1:10** Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who prophesied concerning the grace toward you, searched and inquired diligently,<sup>10</sup> **1:11** searching out concerning whom or which season the Spirit of the Messiah within them was declaring, as He was bearing witness beforehand to the sufferings for the Messiah and the glories (δόξας) after these.<sup>11</sup> **1:12** It was revealed to them that they were acting as these things' agents, not for themselves, but for you, things which have been announced in the present time to you through those who proclaimed the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things at which *angeloi* (ἄγγελοι) desire eagerly to look closely.<sup>12</sup>

**1:13** Therefore, gird up the waists of your mind, remain under control, and fix your hope completely on the grace being brought to you at the revealing of Jesus the Messiah.<sup>13</sup> **1:14** As children of obedience, do not conform yourselves to the former strong desires which were dominant in the midst of your ignorance.<sup>14</sup> **1:15** Instead, according to the Holy One who called you, indeed, be holy yourselves in all your way of life,<sup>15</sup> **1:16** because it has been written,

You shall be holy, for I am holy <Leviticus 19:2>.<sup>16</sup>

**1:17** Plus, if you call Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct your way of life in fear during the time of your temporary stay,<sup>17</sup> **1:18** knowing that you were not redeemed with destructible things, with silver or gold, from your futile way of life handed down from your ancestors,<sup>18</sup> **1:19** but with honorable (τιμίῳ) blood of the Messiah, as that of a lamb, unblemished and spotless.<sup>19</sup> **1:20** On the one hand, he was foreknown before the foundation of the cosmos, and, on the other hand, he has been made to appear in the last of the times on account of you,<sup>20</sup> **1:21** who, in view of him, are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory (δόξαν), so that your belief and hope are in God.<sup>21</sup>

**1:22** Because, in obedience to the truth, you have purified your personal existences for an unhypocritical brotherly love, earnestly love one another from a clean heart,<sup>22</sup> **1:23** having been born from above, not from destructible seed, but indestructible, through the living and abiding message of God,<sup>23</sup> **1:24** because

All flesh is like grass,  
and all its glory (δόξα) is like the flower of grass.

The grass dries up, and the flower falls off,<sup>24</sup>

1:25 but the message of the Lord abides into the age <Isaiah 40:6-8>.

This is the message that was proclaimed as good news to you.<sup>25</sup>

2:1 Therefore, laying aside all evil (κακίαν)—all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and speaking against others—<sup>26</sup> 2:2 like newborn infants, earnestly desire the rational and truthful milk of the message, so that by it you may grow towards salvation.<sup>27</sup>

2:3 If you have tasted that the Lord is good,<sup>28</sup> 2:4 to whom you are devoted, a living stone, that, on the one hand, has been deemed unworthy by men, but, on the other hand, is chosen and honorable (ἐντιμον) to God,<sup>29</sup> 2:5 then you yourselves, as living stones, are being built as a spiritual house for the purpose of being a holy priesthood, in order to offer spiritual offerings that are acceptable to God in view of Jesus the Messiah,<sup>30</sup> 2:6 because it is contained in the scripture,

Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone—a chosen and honorable (ἐντιμον) cornerstone,  
And the one who believes in it shall not be put to shame. <Isaiah 28:16>.<sup>31</sup>

2:7 Therefore, the honor (τιμὴ) is for you who believe, but for the ones who do not believe,

The stone that the builders rejected,  
this became the cornerstone <Psalm 118:22>.<sup>32</sup>

2:8 And

A stone of stumbling and a rock that was a trap <Isaiah 8:14>.

They stumble because they disobey the message, to which also they were appointed.<sup>33</sup>

2:9 However, you are a chosen people <Isaiah 43:20>, a royal priesthood <Exodus 19:6>, a holy nation <Exodus 19:6>, a people for the purpose of possessing <cf. Exodus 19:5; Malachi 3:17>, so that you may proclaim the virtues of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light <cf. Isaiah 42:16>.<sup>34</sup> 2:10 Formerly, you were not the people, but now you are the people of God. You had not been shown mercy, but now you have been shown mercy <cf. Hosea 2:23>.<sup>35</sup>

2:11 Beloved, I exhort you as strangers and temporary residents <Genesis 23:4> to refrain from natural sinful desires which wage war against your very existences.<sup>36</sup> 2:12 Hold fast to your good (καλήν) way of life among the Gentiles, so that, because of that which they speak against you as evildoers (κακοποιῶν), i.e., because of your good deeds (ἐκ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων), after they have observed them, they may glorify (δοξάσωσιν) God in the day of visitation.<sup>37</sup>

2:13 Subordinate yourselves to every human authority system on account of the Lord, whether to a king who is in authority,<sup>38</sup> 2:14 or to governors as the ones sent by him for the purpose of meting out justice to evildoers (κακοποιῶν) and praise to those who do what is good (ἀγαθοποιῶν).<sup>39</sup> 2:15 For thus is the desire of God defined—by your doing what is good (ἀγαθοποιοῦντας) to silence the ignorance of foolish men.<sup>40</sup> 2:16 As free men, but not holding your freedom as a pretext for evil (τῆς κακίας), but as slaves of God,<sup>41</sup> 2:17 honor (τιμήσατε) all men, love the brothers, fear God, honor (τιμᾶτε) the king.<sup>42</sup>

2:18 Slaves, subordinate yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only with those who are good (τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς) and kind, but also with those who are unscrupulous.<sup>43</sup> 2:19 For this is grace, if, on account of an understanding of God, someone endures sorrows while suffering unjustly.<sup>44</sup> 2:20 For where is the glory (κλέος) if, when you do what is wrong (ἁμαρτάνοντες) and are punished for it, you endure? But, if, when you do what is good (ἀγαθοποιοῦντες) and suffer, you endure, this is grace from God.<sup>45</sup>

**2:21** You were called to this, because the Messiah suffered on your behalf, leaving you an example, so that you may follow in his footsteps.<sup>46</sup>

**2:22** He did no wrong, and no deceit was found in his mouth <Isaiah 53:9>.<sup>47</sup>

**2:23** While being insulted, he did not insult in return. While suffering, he uttered no threats, but he continued handing himself over to Him who judges rightly.<sup>48</sup> **2:24** He himself has offered up our sins by means of his body on the cross, so that we may die to sins and live for what is right. You were healed by his wounds,<sup>49</sup> **2:25** because you were wandering aimlessly like sheep, but now you have turned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your existences.<sup>50</sup>

**3:1** Likewise, wives, subordinate yourselves to your own husbands, so that, even if some are disobedient to the message, in view of the way of life of their wives, they may be gained without the message,<sup>51</sup> **3:2** as they observe your pure and respectful way of life.<sup>52</sup> **3:3** Let not your beauty products be the externalness of braided hair and wearing gold or the clothing that you put on.<sup>53</sup> **3:4** Rather, let it be the hidden person of the heart, by means of the imperishableness of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great value before God.<sup>54</sup>

**3:5** Thus also, in former times, the wives who were set apart and hoped in God decked themselves out by subordinating themselves to their own husbands,<sup>55</sup> **3:6** for example, when Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him, “Master.” You have become her children by doing what is good (ἀγαθοποιούσαι) and by not fearing anything that is terrifying.<sup>56</sup>

**3:7** Likewise, husbands, live together with your wives according to knowledge because she is a weaker vessel, while also granting her honor (τιμὴν) as a co-heir of the grace of life, in order to prevent your prayers from being hindered.<sup>57</sup>

**3:8** The bottom line is this—everyone be like-minded, compassionate, brotherly loving, tenderhearted, humble,<sup>58</sup> **3:9** paying back neither evil for evil (κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ) nor insult for insult, but, instead, asking God to grant special favor to them, because you were called to this, in order that you may inherit a special favor.<sup>59</sup>

**3:10** As for the one who desires to love life and to see good (ἀγαθὰς) days, let him stop his tongue from speaking evil (ἀπὸ κακοῦ) and his lips from speaking deceit.<sup>60</sup>

**3:11** Instead, let him turn away from evil (ἀπὸ κακοῦ) and let him do good (ποιησάτω ἀγαθόν). Let him seek shalom and pursuit it,<sup>61</sup>

**3:12** because the eyes of the Lord are on the upright, and His ears are toward their prayers. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil (ποιοῦντας κακά) <Psalm 34:12-16>.<sup>62</sup>

**3:13** Indeed, who is there to harm (ὁ κακώσων) you if you prove zealous for what is good (τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ)?<sup>63</sup> **3:14** Nevertheless, even if you suffer on account of righteousness, you are blessed.

Do not fear what they fear, and do not succumb to inward turmoil.<sup>64</sup>

**3:15** Instead, set apart the Lord <Isaiah 8:12,13>,

the Messiah, in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you for a statement concerning the hope that is in you,<sup>65</sup> **3:16** yet with gentleness and fear, because you have a good (ἀγαθήν) understanding, so that, in that which you are spoken against, those who malign your good (ἀγαθὴν) way of life in the Messiah may be put to shame.<sup>66</sup>

**3:17** It is better, if the desire of God desires, to suffer for doing what is good (ἀγαθοποιούντας) rather than for doing what is evil (κακοποιούντας),<sup>67</sup> **3:18** because, indeed, the Messiah suffered once and for all on behalf of sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order that he lead us to God, on the one hand having been put to death with respect to his flesh, on the other hand having been made alive with respect to his spirit.<sup>68</sup>

**3:19** On the basis of this He also went and announced to the spirits in prison,<sup>69</sup> **3:20** who were disobedient back then when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were rescued in the midst of the water.<sup>70</sup>

**3:21** The copy, baptism, indeed now saves you, not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but the appeal to God from a good (ἀγαθῆς) understanding in view of the resurrection of Jesus the Messiah,<sup>71</sup> **3:22** who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, since angels (ἄγγέλων), authorities, and powers are becoming subordinate to him.<sup>72</sup>

**4:1** Therefore, because the Messiah suffered in his flesh, you also, arm yourselves with the same intent, because the person who suffers in the flesh has ceased from sin,<sup>73</sup> **4:2** in order to live out the remaining time in the flesh no longer on the basis of the strong desires of men, but on the basis of the desire of God.<sup>74</sup> **4:3** Sufficient time has gone by to accomplish the intent of the Gentiles, while you conducted yourselves in the grip of licentious pursuits, strong desires, consuming large quantities of wine, unrestrained feasting, drinking parties, and forbidden worship of idols.<sup>75</sup> **4:4** In this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excess of reckless immorality, and they verbally abuse you.<sup>76</sup> **4:5** They will give account to Him who is ready to judge those who will be the living and those who will be the dead.<sup>77</sup> **4:6** For this purpose, the good news has been proclaimed to those who will be the dead, in order that, on the one hand, they may be judged in their flesh as men, and, on the other hand, they may live in their spirit according to God.<sup>78</sup>

**4:7** The goal of all things has come near. Therefore, think rightly, and be sensible in your prayers.<sup>79</sup> **4:8** Above all, hold on to an earnest love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins <cf. Proverbs 10:12>.<sup>80</sup> **4:9** Be lovers of strangers towards one another without grumbling.<sup>81</sup> **4:10** Just as each one has received a gift for yourselves, serve (διακονοῦντες) with it as good (καλοὶ) managers of the diversified grace of God.<sup>82</sup> **4:11** If someone speaks (λάλει), let him serve with the instructions of God. If someone serves (διακονεῖ), let him serve out of the strength which God supplies, in order that God may be glorified (δοξάζηται) in all things through Jesus the Messiah, with respect to whom is the glory (ἡ δόξα) and power into the ages of the ages. Amen.<sup>83</sup>

**4:12** Beloved, do not be surprised at the painful experience among you that has occurred in order to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.<sup>84</sup> **4:13** Instead, to the degree that you are sharing in the sufferings of the Messiah, rejoice, so that also, at the revealing of his glory (τῆς δόξης), you may rejoice by exulting greatly.<sup>85</sup>

**4:14** If you are insulted because of the name of the Messiah, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory (τῆς δόξης) and of God rests upon you.<sup>86</sup> **4:15** Therefore, let not any of you suffer as a murderer, thief, evildoer (κακοποιὸς), or a meddler in other people's affairs.<sup>87</sup> **4:16** However, if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but instead let him glorify (δοξαζέτω) God because of this name,<sup>88</sup> **4:17** because the season exists in order for judgment to begin with the household of God, and if first with us, what is the end of those who disobey the good news of God?<sup>89</sup>

**4:18** Indeed, if the upright man is saved with difficulty, how will the godless and immoral man be made to shine <Proverbs 11:31>?<sup>90</sup>

**4:19** Consequently, indeed, let those who are suffering according to the desire of God entrust their personal existences as human beings, in the midst of doing what is good (ἐν ἀγαθοποιίᾳ), to their faithful Creator.<sup>91</sup>

**5:1** Therefore, I, a fellow elder, a witness of the sufferings of the Messiah, and one who will share in the future glory (δόξης) that is to be revealed, exhort the elders among you.<sup>92</sup> **5:2** Shepherd the sheep of God among you by caring for them, not grudgingly, but willingly according to God, and not out of self-aggrandizement, but freely,<sup>93</sup> **5:3** and not as if you have power over those allotted to you, but by being examples to the flock.<sup>94</sup> **5:4** The result will be that, when the Chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the unfading crown of glory (τῆς δόξης).<sup>95</sup>

**5:5** Likewise, younger men, subordinate yourselves to the elders.

And all of you clothe yourselves with humility towards one another, because

God is opposed to the proud,  
But He gives grace to the humble <Proverbs 3:34>.<sup>96</sup>

**5:6** Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that He will lift you up in the season,<sup>97</sup> **5:7** as you throw all your anxiety upon Him because He cares for you.<sup>98</sup>

**5:8** Stay under control, remain alert. Your enemy, the adversary, prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.<sup>99</sup> **5:9** Stand against him, strong in belief, knowing that the same kinds of sufferings are being fully experienced by your brothers in the world.<sup>100</sup> **5:10** And in the midst of your suffering a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you into His eternal glory (εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον αὐτοῦ δόξαν) in the Messiah Jesus, will Himself complete you, fix you firmly in place, make you strong, and establish you.<sup>101</sup> **5:11** To Him be the sovereignty into the ages. Amen.<sup>102</sup>

**5:12** Through Silvanus, the faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!<sup>103</sup> **5:13** She who is in Babylon, chosen with you, sends you greetings, as does Mark, my son.<sup>104</sup> **5:14** Greet one another with a kiss of love. Shalom to all of you who are in the Messiah.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Πέτρος ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκλεκτοῖς ἡ παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς Πόντου, Γαλατίας, Καππαδοκίας, Ἀσίας καὶ Βιθυνίας – Pinning down exactly what Peter means by certain terms in this letter is rather simple if he was writing to only Jews, because these terms are used in the OT to refer to God’s chosen people, the nation of Israel. However, if Peter is writing to communities of Christians, i.e., “churches” in various cities of Pontus, Galatia, etc. (modern day Turkey), which probably (?) contain a majority of Gentiles and a minority of Jewish believers (which seems highly likely based upon what the apostle Paul found to be the case in his travels and proclamation of the gospel in these areas), then interpreting this letter is not quite so straightforward. It would seem at first glance that Peter *is* writing to Jews—specifically because of the OT terminology. And it makes sense that he uses as much OT terminology as he does, even if he were to write to only Gentile Christians and apply it appropriately to them, because he is an apostle to the Jews and his home is in Jerusalem where the population is probably 99% Jewish (cf. Galatians 2:7-10). However, three clues may indicate that he is writing to both Gentiles and Jews in the Christian communities—

1) One clue is the fact that Silvanus is his secretary, who is doing the actual writing. If this is the Silvanus who is also known as Silas in the NT, then this is the man who was a faithful traveling companion of the apostle Paul. Silas was his Aramaic and Jewish name and Silvanus was his more Roman and Greek name as attested by Paul’s use of the latter in his letters to Gentile Christians in Corinth and Thessalonica (2 Corinthians 1:19; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1). Therefore, it makes more sense to conclude that Peter, like Paul to the Ephesians, is writing to Gentiles and Jews who speak Greek in these various areas of Pontus, Galatia, etc. In other words, it is reasonable to assume that all the Christian communities outside of the land of Israel contained a mixture of Gentile believers and Jewish believers, with perhaps the former making up the majority. And this then would be the case in the areas of Pontus, Galatia, etc. where Peter sends this letter. Otherwise, if he were writing to only Jewish believers, maybe he would have used the Jewish name Silas to identify his secretary, Silvanus. In addition, if the writing of this letter takes place after many, if not all, of Paul’s major missionary journeys before his release from custody in Rome around A.D. 63, then perhaps Silvanus, who obviously happens to be in the same location as Peter, suggests to Peter as a prominent apostle to the Jews to write a letter to the churches of mixed ethnic believers who came to faith by means of Paul and who live in the areas listed in v. 1. This could have happened when Paul was in prison in Caesarea Maritima for two years, and Silas would have spent a lot of time in Jerusalem (see below). Such a letter from Peter would add just that much more encouragement for these scattered churches of Christians in the areas which Peter is calling the Diaspora, a Jewish term to refer to Jews who were driven from the land of Israel and scattered into foreign countries during the Assyrian and Babylonian destructions of the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah respectively in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. Thus, Peter’s purpose is to encourage these Christians to persevere in belief in the Jewish Messiah and create greater solidarity between these distant Christians communities and the believers in Jerusalem and Israel. However, Peter, a resident of Jerusalem, is so used to using OT language in his discussions with Jews, particularly Christian Jews, that he uses this same terminology in this letter to mixed communities of believers in these foreign places. Indeed, as probably acknowledged by Silvanus to Peter, Paul and his associates more than likely would have taught these Christians the very OT theology to which Peter is referring. Therefore, Peter could know that the OT language of this letter would not be confusing or unfamiliar to any of his readers, Jews or Gentiles. Plus, the Jewish believers in the Christian gatherings could help remind the Gentile Christians of how this terminology applies to them—assuming the Jewish Christians are on the same page as Peter and Paul, which hopefully they are.

2) The second clue that may indicate that Peter is writing to a mixed group of Christians is that he comments in 4:3 on the past lifestyle of his readers that included drunkenness and idol worship. Maybe Jews who were strict adherents of their current day Judaism were as immoral in their behavior as pagan Gentiles (and even joined them in this?)—even worshipping idols (at least metaphorically with their erroneous Judaism). Certainly, John has no problem in the last verse of his letter 1 John encouraging his readers to avoid “idols,” by which he means the false Judaism of Diotrefes. Therefore, Peter is exhorting both Gentile Christians of strict idol worship and Jewish Christians of false obedience to the Mosaic Covenant to live authentic moral lives according to the gospel of Jesus the Messiah.

3) The third clue that indicates that Peter is writing to both Gentile and Jewish Christians is his reference to “she who is in Babylon” in 5:13. It is possible that Peter is in Rome and refers to the Christian community with the feminine pronoun. But he also may be in Jerusalem and refers to it as a place of immoral rebellion against God like the ancient city of Babylon, because the Jews for the most part are still rejecting Jesus as their Messiah and holding to an erroneous understanding of the Mosaic Covenant, that it and not Jesus as the crucified Messiah is the center of their relationship with God. Thus, the mainly Jewish church in Jerusalem is a kind woman in the midst of an immoral community like ancient Babylon with whom the Gentile Christians in the various places of Asia can consider their brothers and sisters in Christ. In addition, Peter desires to encourage them in the same manner as Paul had who first introduced many of them to the gospel, which then spread out of Galatia first and then Asia to the other regions named.

Therefore, I am assuming that Peter is writing to a group of mixed ethnic Christians and who they can discern together how he is using the various OT terminology that he does. If this really is the case, interpreting the OT language that Peter uses becomes quite interesting.

**ἐκλεκτοῖς** = to those whom God chose before He brought the creation into existence to be people whom He would rescue from His eternal condemnation by changing their inwardness to that of belief in Him so that Jesus would advocate on their behalf at the end of the present realm when he returns.



**Deuteronomy 14:2** “For you are a holy people (שְׁׁרָרָה עַם) (λαὸς ἅγιος) to Yahweh your God, and Yahweh has chosen you (יָרָא יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ) (σὲ ἐξελέξατο κύριος ὁ θεός) to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.”

**Ephesians 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world (καθὼς ἐξελέξατο ἡμᾶς ‘ἐν αὐτῷ’ πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου), that we would be holy and blameless before Him.

**Romans 8:28** And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 29 For those whom He foreknew (ὅτι οὗς προέγνω), He also predestined (καὶ προώρισεν) to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30 and these whom He predestined, He also called (καὶ ἐκάλεσεν = summoned through the message of the gospel in conjunction with the inward work of the Spirit of God); and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

**παρεπίδημος** = temporary resident, visitor, i.e., one whose home is not where he currently is. This word is used in the LXX to translate עֲרֵבִי in Genesis 23:4 where Abraham refers to his status on the land of Canaan where he has been living and where his wife Sarah just died. He says that he is a stranger (עֲרֵבִי) (παρόικος) and a sojourner, i.e., temporary resident alien (עֲרֵבִי) (παρεπίδημος), even though God had promised the land to him and his descendants, the Jews. Therefore, Abraham is speaking of his not fully owning the land as the future “great nation” of his physical descendants will when God fulfills His promise of Genesis 12 to them.

**Genesis 23:1** Now Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; these were the years of the life of Sarah. 2 Sarah died in Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan; and Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. 3 Then Abraham rose from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of Heth, saying, 4 “I am a stranger and a sojourner among you (עֲרֵבִי עֲרֵבִי אֲנִי אֶרְבֵּי אֲנִי) (παρόικος καὶ παρεπίδημος ἐγὼ εἰμι μεθ’ ὑμῶν); give me a burial site among you that I may bury my dead out of my sight.” Sojourn = temporary stay.

**Psalms 39:12** “Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry; do not be silent at my tears; for I am a stranger with You (עֲרֵבִי עֲרֵבִי אֲנִי) (παρόικος ἐγὼ εἰμι παρὰ σοὶ), a sojourner like all my fathers (עֲרֵבִי עֲרֵבִי אֲנִי) (παρεπίδημος καθὼς πάντες οἱ πατέρες μου).” In Psalm 39, David is commenting on his transient existence as a human being on the land of Israel, and he says that he is a stranger with God (עֲרֵבִי עֲרֵבִי אֲנִי) (παρόικος ἐγὼ εἰμι παρὰ σοὶ), i.e., a stranger and foreigner on the land because of his association with God. Thus, he is speaking like Abraham, that although he lives on the land of Israel, it is not during the time when God has fulfilled His promise of the “great nation” of physical descendants of Abraham on the land. But his transient existence is also with respect to eternal life, which I assume David assumed as part of what it will be for him to participate in the promise whenever God fulfills it through the Davidic Covenant. (cf. Leviticus 25:23, “The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me (עֲרֵבִי עֲרֵבִי אֲנִי) (διότι προσήλυτοι (from προσ and ἔρχομαι, literally one who comes to something from the outside, a proselyte) καὶ παρόικοι ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐναντίον μου).”) David says also that he is a sojourner like his fathers (עֲרֵבִי עֲרֵבִי אֲנִי) (παρεπίδημος καθὼς πάντες οἱ πατέρες μου), i.e., a man who is living like a temporary resident and foreigner among others (Jews!) who refuse to recognize his God, just as his forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, lived in the land of Canaan with people (Gentiles!) who worshiped the forces of nature. His permanent residence is in a different country. Here the different country is first the restored Kingdom of Israel as the fulfillment of God’s promise in Genesis 12 to Abraham. But David probably also had a sense that the different country would be the new earth of the eternal Kingdom of God after the Messianic Kingdom of Israel in the present age. Also επιδημεω = to stay in a place as a stranger, a temporary resident, or a visitor.

**Acts 2:10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome (καὶ οἱ ἐπιδημοῦντες Ῥωμαῖοι), both Jews and proselytes.

**Acts 17:21** (Now all the Athenians and the strangers visiting there (καὶ οἱ ἐπιδημοῦντες ἑξένοι) used to spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new.)

**Hebrews 11:13** All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and temporary residents on the earth (land) (ὅτι ξένοι καὶ παρεπίδημοί εἰσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς).

**1 Peter 2:11** Beloved, I urge you as aliens and temporary residents (ὡς παρόικους καὶ παρεπίδημους) to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul (αἵτινες στρατεύονται κατὰ τῆς ψυχῆς).

**διασπορά** – This word is used in the LXX to translate both מַחֲרָה (=terror, horror) and מַחֲרָה (=scatter, allow oneself to be led astray). In the latter case the singular form of the word translates the singular Hebrew, both as collective nouns, as in **Deuteronomy 30:4**, which says, “If your outcasts [scattered ones] (מַחֲרָה) (ἡ διασπορά σου) are at the ends of the earth, from there Yahweh your God will gather you (מַחֲרָה) (συνάξει σε), and from there He will bring you back (מַחֲרָה) (λήμψεται σε).” Also, **Nehemiah 1:9** says, “but if you return to Me (מַחֲרָה) (ἐὰν ἐπιστρέψῃτε πρὸς με) and keep My commandments and do them, though those of you who have been scattered (מַחֲרָה) (ἡ διασπορά ὑμῶν)

were in the most remote part of the heavens, I will gather them (קָבַץ־נִי) (συνάξω αὐτούς) from there and will bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.”

**John 7:35** The Jews then said to one another, “Where does this man intend to go that we will not find Him? He is not intending to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks (εἰς τὴν διασποράν τῶν Ἑλλήνων), and teach the Greeks, is he.

**James 1:1** James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad [literally “in the Diaspora”] (ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ): Greetings.

Certainly, there were Jews who were scattered from the land of Israel during the Assyrian exile around 700 B.C. and whose descendants were now living in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia which are all in modern day Turkey. But it makes more sense in the light of the clues in this letter that Peter is addressing a mixed group of Gentile and Jewish Christians who are living in these areas as resident aliens, because they are eventually going to participate in the millennial kingdom of the land of Israel and then permanently in the eternal Kingdom of God. Thus, they are like Abraham and David who saw themselves in a similar light while they were on earth and even living on the land of Israel. In other words, all Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, can consider themselves as temporary residents, foreigners, and even scattered, regardless of where they live on earth. This earth as it is right now is not their permanent “home,” and they have not been “gathered” into first the Messianic Kingdom of Israel on the land of Israel and then the eternal Kingdom of God on the new earth. We remember what John says, “The world [system] is passing away” (1 John 2:17).

And maybe Peter cannot help himself but call followers of his God in northern Turkey (where Jews had scattered after the Assyrian captivity) those “of the Diaspora/dispersion,” which includes Jews and Gentiles, because he is so used to the term in reference to his fellow Jews in that area. Plus, would it really make sense that Peter would write to only Jewish Christians in that part of the world, unless the letter looked like that of Hebrews, which it really does not? But the point that Jesus’ death becomes the basis for understanding all hardship of human beings in the world (death, disease, financial problems, relational problems, etc.) applies to both Jews (who must see it in contrast to the sacrifice of bulls and goats under the Mosaic Covenant (cf. Hebrews) and Gentiles (who must see it in contrast to their pagan idolatry and their false belief that they can control the gods and keep their lives safe).

<sup>2</sup> [ἐκλεκτοῖς] κατὰ πρόγνωσιν θεοῦ πατὴρ ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος εἰς ὑπακοὴν καὶ ῥαντισμὸν αἵματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη πληθυνθεῖη – God formulated the entire story of human history prior to Genesis 1:1, and He picked and chose which people whom He would set apart from unbelievers and the rest of the world by inwardly changing them by His Spirit to become authentic believers in Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. The purpose of God’s inner work in people is their proper obedience to Him, even though they are still sinful, and, using Old Testament language of sprinkling with blood, eternal forgiveness that comes through the blood which Jesus shed on the cross and thereby understanding the meaning of his death as a propitiatory offering to God that qualifies him to be their advocate at the judgment. Thus, Peter states that his Christian readers are such people.

And Peter prays of sorts to God that He will continue to be gracious in the greatest way in terms of the quantity which God gives them, so that they persevere in their belief and obtain His eternal forgiveness. And that God grant them eternal shalom, which will be the outcome of their belief and holiness.

**ἁγιασμῷ** (ἁγιασμός) = a setting apart inwardly (sanctification) to a belief in Jesus and his death as the means for eternal forgiveness and life, along with a commitment to moral purity that manifests itself in outward actions of morality and goodness as different from the commitments of unbelievers.

**Exodus 15:17** “You will bring them and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, the place, O LORD, which You have made for Your dwelling, the sanctuary (מִקְדָּשׁ) (ἁγίασμα), O Lord, which Your hands have established.

**Exodus 13:2** “Sanctify to Me every firstborn (כָּל־בְּכֹרֹתַי) (ἁγιάσον μοι πᾶν πρωτότοκον), the first offspring of every womb among the sons of Israel, both of man and beast; it belongs to Me.”

**Romans 6:19** I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification (εἰς ἁγιασμόν).

**Romans 6:22** But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit (ἔχετε τὸν καρπὸν ὑμῶν), resulting in sanctification (εἰς ἁγιασμόν), and the outcome, eternal life (τὸ δὲ τέλος ζωὴν αἰώνιον).

**ὑπακοήν** = obedience, i.e., doing what God says. Listening to His voice, which we hear through the Bible by studying it and understanding it as well as possible, and then in the various circumstances of life acting on the knowledge we gain from our study.

**Genesis 22:18** “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice (קָבַץ־נִי) (ἁνθ’ ὃν ὑπήκουσας τῆς ἐμῆς φωνῆς).”

**Exodus 19:5** ‘Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice (קָבַץ־נִי) (ἐὰν ἀκοῇ ἀκούσητε τῆς ἐμῆς φωνῆς) and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.”

**Hebrews 5:7** In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. 8 Although He was a [the] Son, He learned



obedience from the things which He suffered (καίπερ ὢν υἱός, ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν). <sup>9</sup> And having been made perfect [reached his goal], He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, <sup>10</sup> being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

ῥαντισμὸν = sprinkling, which, along with the words “with the blood of Jesus the Messiah,” refers to complete forgiveness of sins by God that comes through Jesus’ appeal to God for mercy when he returns on behalf of those who have believed in him.

**Exodus 24:3** Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of Yahweh and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said, “All the words which Yahweh has spoken we will do!” <sup>4</sup> Moses wrote down all the words of Yahweh. Then he arose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain with twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>5</sup> He sent young men of the sons of Israel, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as peace offerings to Yahweh. <sup>6</sup> Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and the other half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. <sup>7</sup> Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, “All that Yahweh has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!” <sup>8</sup> So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant, which Yahweh has made with you in accordance with all these words.

**Numbers 19:9** ‘Now a man who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer and deposit them outside the camp in a clean place, and the congregation of the sons of Israel shall keep it as water to remove impurity (הַמִּשְׁכָּה לְמַיִם נִדְּחִים) (εις διατήρησιν ὕδωρ ῥαντισμοῦ); it is purification from sin (סִלְּוּת מִחַטָּאת) (ἁγνισμὰ ἐστίν).

**Psalm 51:7** Purify [Sprinkle] me with hyssop (כִּסְּפִי בְּחִסְפִּי) (ῥαντίεῖς με ὑσσώπῳ), and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

**Hebrews 9:15** For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. <sup>16</sup> For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. <sup>17</sup> For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. <sup>18</sup> Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood. <sup>19</sup> For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled (ἐρράντισεν) both the book itself and all the people, <sup>20</sup> saying, “THIS IS THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT WHICH GOD COMMANDED YOU.” <sup>21</sup> And in the same way he sprinkled (ἐρράντισεν) both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. <sup>22</sup> And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

<sup>3</sup> Εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ κατὰ ὅτὸ πολὺ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος, ἀναγεννήσας ἡμᾶς εἰς ἐλπίδα ᾧ ὡσαν δι’ ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκ νεκρῶν – Peter extols God, who is the source of the Messiah’s sonship, that makes him not only the ruler of all creation within the creation, but also the instrument of moral depraved human beings’ obtaining God’s eternal mercy at the final judgment, a role for which Jesus qualified by his death and of which God approved by raising him from the dead. All of this was based upon God’s faithfulness to His promises to Abraham and to Israel, which gives both Jews and Gentiles who are inwardly changed by God a sense of the certainty of their eventual entrance into eternal life through the fact that Jesus himself as the Messiah was raised from the dead and is now eternally alive, never to die again. Thus, Jesus as an eternal, living being is the “hope that lives,” i.e., the very person through whom Peter’s readers can have an expectation that they will live eternally also, all of which will certainly come true—of an existence of *living* in the permanent and eternal Kingdom of God where death will never be a possibility.

**Deuteronomy 7:9** “Know therefore that Yahweh your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness (רַחֲמֵי) (ἔλεος) to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments.

<sup>4</sup> εἰς κληρονομίαν ἄφθαρτον καὶ ἀμίαντον καὶ ἀμάραντον, τετηρημένην ἐν οὐρανοῖς, εἰς ἡμᾶς – Peter switches from the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural “us” to the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural “you” in order to comment more specifically on the difficulties that his readers are experiencing due to their belief in Jesus as the Messiah. The indestructible and eternal Kingdom of God will not experience any decay or degeneration as the current realm does. Perhaps it already exists now as a parallel universe to the one in which we live, or there is a definite plan for such a universe that God has guarded in His mind in order to bring it about in His own sweet time, first by bringing about the messianic kingdom on the land of Israel and this earth and then destroying the present universe and bringing a new one into existence (cf. 2 Peter 3 and Revelation 21). I think that the 2<sup>nd</sup> option is correct.

Thus, Peter’s readers can know that God’s goal is to reserve for them the kingdom, which currently exists in His mind and which He will eventually bring into actual existence. In this way, it awaits their entering into it, first after Jesus’ return and then after the final judgment.

<sup>5</sup> τοὺς ἐν ἰσχύει θεοῦ φρουρουμένους διὰ πίστεως εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐτοιμὴν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι ἐν καιρῷ ἐσχάτῳ – God uses His omnipotent ability to maintain the belief of those whom He has chosen to rescue from His eternal condemnation, and these people, along with their entrance into the eternal Kingdom of God, will be revealed at the end of the present realm when Jesus returns and establishes the restored Kingdom of Israel.

This is a “salvation” for Christians from God’s eternal destruction, and it is as though it is leaning over right on the edge of a precipice and about to fall off into reality. Or at least this is the way Peter wants his readers to think of it.

<sup>6</sup> ἐν ᾧ ἀγαλλιάσθε, ὀλίγον ἄρτι εἰ δέον ὅ[ἐστιν] ἡλπηθέντες ἐν ποικίλοις πειρασμοῖς – Peter presumes that his readers, with genuine biblical belief, understand the value of God’s promise of eternal mercy and life, so that it appropriately affects them by moving them to rejoice exceedingly and greatly at its prospects in the midst of enduring in the present realm the pain of temporary suffering and persecution due to their association with Jesus as the Messiah and that naturally saddens them at the same time because they are human. Nevertheless, the purpose of this temporary suffering is to test, evaluate, and authenticate their belief.

<sup>7</sup> ἵνα τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως πολυτιμότερον χρυσίου τοῦ ἀπολλυμένου διὰ πυρὸς δὲ δοκιμαζομένου, εὑρεθῇ εἰς ἔπαινον καὶ ὁδὸν καὶ τιμὴν ἐν ἀποκαλύψει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ – The permanent and enduring purpose of the testing of people’s belief is so that its authentication over the course of their lives will result in God’s expressing His admiration for the perseverance of their genuine belief (cf. Romans 2:5-10). He will applaud them and honor them with the glory of moral perfection for all of eternity in the Kingdom of God (cf. [Colossians 3:4](#) When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory).

Thus, Peter mentions the concept of glory 14x in this letter as that which Christians should pursue by doing what is good in their lives now and as their eternal destiny, and which non-Christians will not be able to avoid when God punishes them at the final judgment for their rebellion against Him.

Likewise, Peter refers to honor 9x as that which brings great respect and esteem to God (by fearing God) and Jesus and people.

This will all occur when Jesus is “revealed,” that includes not only his second coming and setting up the temporary Kingdom of Israel on earth but also and most especially his advocacy at the final judgment that results in eternal salvation for sinful human beings of genuine belief (cf. vs. 4,5,9). Peter compares the value of their belief’s being authenticated, which provides clear evidence of its genuineness, to the value of gold. The latter is certainly valuable in the present realm as the means to live a more comfortable life, physically speaking. However, its longevity will terminate with the destruction of the present realm, while the longevity of authentic, biblical belief is eternal. Thus, the clear evidence of the genuineness of belief even in the midst of suffering persecution in a world which is hostile to biblical truth is more valuable, because, through the perseverance of genuine biblical belief, acquiring permanent residence in the eternal Kingdom of God becomes a reality that is clearly more valuable than any amount of comfortable living in the present realm made possible by destructible gold and wealth. While most people place their faith in their ability to make money to acquire honor and praise and glory from their fellow human beings, Peter is encouraging his readers to place their faith in the unseen God who will not disappoint them. As risky as their venture looks, it truly will result in their receiving the desired outcome of eternal life with more glory, honor, and praise than they can imagine and which they will receive from God when Jesus returns.

<sup>8</sup> ὃν οὐκ ἴδόντες ἀπαῖτε, εἰς ὃν ἄρτι μὴ ὁρῶντες πιστεύοντες δὲ ἡγαλλιάσθε χαρὰ ἀνεκλαλήτῳ καὶ δεδοξασμένῳ – Peter acknowledges that his readers know of Jesus of Nazareth through only word of mouth, through the message which someone proclaimed to them—perhaps Paul and/or his close associates and then those who learned it from them. These believers of the Diaspora never actually saw Jesus in person while he was on earth. Nevertheless, because of their knowledge and understanding of him, they both love him and believe him to be the Jewish Messiah. This is making them rejoice greatly with a joy which cannot be expressed in human words. It is ineffable, because they are so struck with how wonderful this promise from God is.

Nothing and no one in the present realm is more satisfying to the core of our beings than the thought of God’s gracious promise of eternal mercy and life—even in the midst of the sadness of persecution or some other kind of earthly suffering. In addition, by using the present perfect passive participle “having been glorified,” Peter is saying that their joy is inextricably connected to their glory which they will receive when Jesus returns and they are transformed into immortal and morally perfect human beings like him. And their glory is as good as done, because this is how certain it is that God will follow through on His promise and grant eternal salvation and life to them (cf. vs. 4,5,9). In other words, they are marked for glory by their belief and joy in their salvation.

<sup>9</sup> κομιζόμενοι τὸ τέλος τῆς πίστεως [ὑμῶν] σωτηρίαν ψυχῶν – Peter explicitly says that their great joy is in the light of the certainty of their receiving God’s mercy and eternal life through Jesus’ intercession at the judgment. Thus he implies that God will faithfully complete the process of the perseverance of their belief in the present realm so that it results in their eternal salvation. These Christians will definitely obtain that for which they have believed in Jesus as the Messiah—eternal forgiveness, salvation, and life. This is the end and goal of having belief. It is not to obtain salvation so to speak in this life from the hardships and difficulties of this realm. It is to gain salvation from God’s eternal condemnation and the resultant destruction of one’s existence.

While the “soul” is often described as something within us that is separate from our bodies and spirits, I think the biblical authors are referring to a human being’s personal existence as an embodied creation by God who has designed each one of us according to His eternal plans and purposes. Thus, the “spirit” is God’s design which He developed in His mind when He conceived the entire story of the creation before He brought it into existence as described in Genesis 1 and 2. Our “souls” are our embodied existences which we live out God’s plan for us in this realm on the earth.

Therefore, “the salvation of [their] personal existences” is being delivered from destruction and nonexistence through the advocacy of Jesus at God’s judgment, i.e., at the end of this realm. These Christians will continue to exist, while non-Christians will not.

<sup>10</sup> περὶ ἧς σωτηρίας ἐξεζήτησαν καὶ ἐξηραύνησαν προφῆται οἱ περὶ τῆς εἰς ὑμᾶς χάριτος προφητεύσαντες – The OT prophets were very curious about the Messiah and the time of his appearance within human history that would result ultimately in God’s kindness and love being granted freely to people who heard about the Messiah and believed in him. And it certainly is reasonable to think that they hoped that it would be within their lifetimes so that they would be those who believed in him and experienced his glorious activity as the savior of Israel and advocate before God of sinners. Instead, after looking carefully at what they were communicating to the nation of Israel and at their own circumstances, they realized that the season of the Messiah with both his suffering and his glory would be much later and that it would be others who would either see him or believe in him through the message which would be proclaimed to them.

**Luke 10:23** Turning to the disciples, He said privately, “Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see, **24** for I say to you, that many prophets and kings wished to see the things which you see, and did not see them, and to hear the things which you hear, and did not hear them.”

<sup>11</sup> ἐραυνῶντες εἰς τίνα ἢ ποῖον καιρὸν ἔδηλου τὸ ἐν αὐτοῖς πνεῦμα Ὁριστοῦ προμαρτυρόμενον τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα καὶ τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας – Of course the OT prophets, who spoke of the Messiah through the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives (“the Spirit of the Messiah”), wanted to know as much as they could about him and his role along with the effects that would be marvelous for all involved, especially because his role involved great suffering in order to qualify to be the Messiah and the king of the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of God (τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα = “the sufferings for the purpose of his qualifying to be the Messiah), both of which would bring him great acclamation. Unlike the Jews in Israel during Jesus’ ministry who had gleaned from the OT only the idea of the Messiah’s destroying their enemies as their king, the prophets understood that there was an additional role for him, to suffer death in order to qualify for his being king and priest.

Crushing God’s and Israel’s enemies and establishing the Kingdom of God both on the land of Israel and on the new earth was going to be glorious and magnificent. They also wanted to know exactly when the Messiah would carry out his whole role, perhaps wondering if it would be during their lifetimes. Apparently, God made it clear to them that their proclamation of the truth about the Messiah, which would eventually coincide with his existence in human history, was for a future generation of Jews (and, therefore, Gentiles) and not for them.

Or is Peter speaking of the sufferings that Christians would endure “for” the Messiah in order for them even to qualify for the glories that follow in the eternal kingdom of God? Seems more likely the former (?). But the syntax (τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα) is weird and different from the other two places where “suffering” and “Christ” appear in 1 Peter. **1 Peter 4:13** but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ (τοῖς τοῦ Ὁριστοῦ παθήμασιν), keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.

**1 Peter 5:1** Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ (τῶν τοῦ Ὁριστοῦ παθημάτων), and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed,

The sufferings of Jesus as the foundation for Christians’ experiencing similar difficulties in life is the major theme of this letter. Indeed, Peter uses the verb *πάσχω* eight times and the noun *πάθημα* four times in the letter. Here he provides the basis for Jesus’ sufferings and ours by extrapolation as God’s inerrant and authoritative statements in the OT before his crucifixion, etc. and then the apostles’ declaration of them afterwards. And, as he says in 4:1, it is vital that Christians arm themselves with the same intent/purpose, to suffer for being those who associate with Jesus as the Messiah and his sufferings with respect to sin, i.e., to bring sin to an end and to motivate Christians to adopt God’s definition of good vs. evil in opposition to the rest of the world who will remain hostile towards God and His obedient children, followers of Jesus the Messiah.

<sup>12</sup> οἷς ἀπεκαλύφθη ὅτι οὐχ ἑαυτοῖς ὑμῖν δὲ ῥηκόνουν αὐτά, ἃ νῦν ἀνηγγέλη ὑμῖν διὰ τῶν εὐαγγελισσαμένων ὑμᾶς ὅ[ἐν] πνεύματι ἁγίῳ ἀποσταλέντι ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ, εἰς ἃ ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἄγγελοι παρακύψαι – While theoretically the OT prophets could have been declaring that the sufferings of the Messiah would occur during their lifetimes, they realized somehow that these difficult experiences for him would occur later, even after they themselves had died.

In addition, just as no one can properly embrace the apostolic message of Jesus as the Messiah without the inner work of the Holy Spirit, so also no one can properly proclaim the message without the inner work of the Holy Spirit. And Peter is most likely referring to apostles and their apostolic co-workers who have engaged in this function of proclaiming the gospel, and in particular to the apostle Paul with Timothy and others who had been stationed in Ephesus for two to three years (cf. Acts 19:10 & 20:31). And the phrase “sent from heaven” may be referring to the Acts 2 experience of the apostles and disciples when God credentialed them to start proclaiming the message of Jesus as the Messiah. It would be this same Spirit of God who continued to work within the apostles and their co-workers to spread the message as God wanted.

Here *angeloi* refers to conventional angels, who, like the earthly human prophets, are fascinated by God’s project of revealing the Messiah and establishing an eternal kingdom of people who acquire by His grace and mercy their salvation from God’s condemnation. They, also like the prophets, are not privy to all the details but are looking forward to seeing them displayed in God’s timing. Therefore, they have seen Jesus’ 1<sup>st</sup> appearance, his sufferings, and are looking forward to his 2<sup>nd</sup> appearance, his glories (“the glories after these”). Indeed, they are anticipating eagerly his 2<sup>nd</sup> appearance, because they want to understand all that they can about what God is doing within the creation.

**Revelation 5:11** Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, **12** saying with a loud voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.”

Thus the OT prophets and the apostles become the basis for our belief in Jesus as the Messiah that will result in eternal life. We hold on to the past message and events in order to gain the future of the Kingdom of God.

<sup>13</sup> Διὸ ἀναζωσάμενοι τὰς ὁσφύας τῆς διανοίας ὑμῶν νήφοντες τελείως ἐλπίζατε ἐπὶ τὴν φερομένην ὑμῖν χάριν ἐν ἀποκαλύψει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ – Here we have the first real imperatives or commands in this letter.

Because his readers’ salvation has been both predicted by the OT prophets and declared by NT apostles and teachers, Peter encourages them to take this historical basis for the message and use it with all seriousness to prepare themselves for it when the time comes to receive it. Probably from personal experience, Peter knows that it takes great concerted effort by human beings to persevere in belief in the biblical message in the midst of extreme earthly hardships, especially because the payoff is not until a person enters the next and eternal realm. Thus, Peter exhorts his readers to do three things:

- 1) to apply all the mental effort that is necessary to remind themselves of the ideas of the gospel and embrace them in the midst of all the false ideas that circulate in their society,
- 2) to remain under the control of truth in their thinking and their actions and not allow any lie they encounter to grip their minds,
- 3) and to place their hope in the future in that which is more than anything this world offers, i.e., the gracious gift of salvation and eternal life from God.

To lose control of their thinking and actions would be to ingest Satan’s lies which would take them in the opposite direction from the biblical truth and what it exhorts believers to do (cf. 1 Peter 5:8ff.). Peter is saying to them, “Think, think, think, in order to do, do, do...” Everything they know about God and themselves from the Bible they should dwell on as much as possible in order to live out the gospel with every fiber of there being—“to be holy themselves in all their way of life” (1:15) and to “conduct their way of life in fear during the time of their temporary stay” (1:17), so that they “earnestly/ferently love one another from a clean/pure heart” (1:22) because “above, all, [they should] hold on to an earnest love for one another” (4:8) while they “share in the sufferings of the Messiah” (4:13) and “entrust their personal existences to a faithful Creator in the midst of doing what is right” (4:19).

Once again Peter mentions the return of Jesus, his revealing at the end of the present realm to inaugurate the Kingdom of God. This is when God’s grace will be most revealed also to Christians when God transforms them into immortal and morally perfect beings on the basis of Jesus’ advocacy.

<sup>14</sup> ὥς τέκνα ὑπακοῆς μὴ συσχηματιζόμενοι ταῖς πρότερον ἐν τῇ ἀγνοίᾳ ὑμῶν ἐπιθυμίαις – Vs. 14-16 describe in more detail what Peter means by being “self-controlled” in the previous verse. Because the recipients of this letter are the spiritual offspring of God and therefore oriented toward obeying Him by means of His inner work in their hearts (cf. 1:2), Peter exhorts them not to take the easy route in the midst of their suffering and return to the kind of lives that so naturally dominated them before they became Christians because of their sinfulness and that was due to their lack of understanding God’s purposes. Indeed, “ignorance” of unbelievers is their rejecting or ignoring ideas about God and the gospel to which they perhaps have been exposed and they are unwilling to learn about God such that they would worship Him for who He is and obey Him for what He says. Peter is saying that, regardless of how tempting a return to their previous behavior might be under the present difficult circumstances in order to avoid persecution, he wants them to continue moving forward in their obedience to God as they look forward to His eternal kingdom.

In 1:2, Peter had said that God had chosen them and set them apart by the inner work of His Spirit for the purpose of their becoming obedient to Him. This is not morally perfect obedience. But it is desiring to love God and people as best we can by God’s grace. It is taking His moral commandments seriously and applying them in our lives as much as we can, realizing that we still need God’s mercy and forgiveness through Jesus in order to obtain eternal life.

God has chosen us for obedience, and we should act as those who are chosen for such and never return to the kind of behavior we demonstrated before we became believers in Jesus as the crucified Messiah on our behalf.

**Ephesians 4:17** Therefore, I say this and bear witness in the Lord—that you no longer live as indeed the Gentiles live within the empty futility of their mind. **4:18** They have been darkened in their thinking, while being estranged from the life of God on account of the ignorance which exists within them because of the stubbornness of their heart. **4:19**

Because they have lost all feeling, they have delivered themselves over to unrestrained immoral behavior so as to gain every kind of impurity in the midst of their insatiable desires.

<sup>15</sup> ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸν καλέσαντα ὑμᾶς ἅγιον καὶ αὐτοὶ ἅγιοι ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ γενήθητε – Peter’s argument is that they should pursue being different and acting differently from the world which is in rebellion against God because God, who Himself is different from the world, is the One who has chosen them to become inwardly moved and to believe in the truth of Jesus as the Messiah and final Davidic king and pursue of lifestyle of moral and loving obedience to Him. In other words, holiness (both in thinking with truth and acting with love and morality) on the part of the people is the same as being obedient to God. Thus they demonstrate their adoption by God.

This is the first of six uses of ἀναστροφή in 1 Peter, each of which I have translated “way of life.” –

**1:15** Instead, according to the Holy One who called you, indeed, be holy yourselves in all your way of life

**1:18** knowing that you were not redeemed with destructible things, with silver or gold, from your futile way of life handed down from your ancestors,

**2:12** Hold fast to your good way of life among the Gentiles, so that, because of that which they speak against you as



evil doers, i.e., because of your good deeds, even though they have observed them, they may glorify God in the day of visitation.

**3:1** Likewise, wives, subordinate yourselves to your own husbands, so that, even if some are disobedient to the message, in view of the way of life of their wives, they may be gained without the message,

**3:2** as they observe your pure and respectful way of life.

**3:16** yet with gentleness and fear, because you have a good understanding, so that, in that which you are spoken against, those who malign your good way of life in the Messiah may be put to shame.

The inference that I think that we should draw from Peter's use of this word and his whole letter is that, as Christians, we are saved by how we live our lives, by what our fundamental desire is and the choices we make in accordance with this desire—the desire for forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life from God according to His great mercy and love through Jesus' death and the inward work of the Holy Spirit. This is our *modus operandi*, mode of operation, in life.

Cf. Isaiah 1:4 – “Alas, sinful nation, people weighed down with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned Yahweh, they have despised the Holy One of Israel (לֹאֲשֶׁר יִשְׂרָאֵל) (τὸν ἅγιον τοῦ Ἰσραηλ), they have turned away from Him.”

<sup>16</sup> ὁτι γέγραπται ὅτι ἅγιοι ἔσεσθε, ὅτι ἐγὼ ἅγιός εἰμι – Peter borrows an appropriate verse from the Mosaic Covenant to emphasize his point that those who have been inwardly changed by Yahweh should pursue a life that is like Yahweh's, i.e., that reflects moral perfection as much as possible and that is different from the world which is hostile to God and His truth and therefore dominated by evil and rebellious desires.

Cf. Leviticus 19:2, “Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘You shall be holy, for I Yahweh your God am holy (וְהָיִיתֶם קְדוֹת) (ἅγιοι ἔσεσθε, ὅτι ἐγὼ ἅγιός εἰμι).”

In the context, God is calling for the Jews to think and act differently from the surrounding nations of Egypt and the Canaanites.

cf. **Leviticus 18:3** ‘You shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you lived, nor are you to do what is done in the land of Canaan where I am bringing you; you shall not walk in their statutes (וְלֹא תִלְכוּ אַחֲרֵי חֻקֵּיהֶם).

Maybe קִרְבָּן (νομῖμοι) above is better translated as social and religious customs that are based on people's understanding of the nature of reality and their definition of good vs. evil.

cf. **Leviticus 18:30** ‘Thus you are to keep My charge, that you do not practice any of the abominable customs (וְלֹא תַעֲשׂוּ אֶת־חֻקֵּיהֶם) which have been practiced before you, so as not to defile yourselves with them; I am Yahweh your God.’

Notice in this verse also the word νομίμοι in the Septuagint since they apply to a people group, i.e., that which is socially required in order to be accepted within the group. God is requiring that the Jews not make up their own social customs and definitions of good vs. evil as the surrounding peoples have, but to adopt His instead that will be different. This would be their ἀναστροφή, their behavior and way of life. Thus, Peter uses Jewish OT language to encourage his Gentile and Jewish Christian readers to be morally different from the world of unbelievers, even though Peter must know that Gentiles are not required to live exactly like Jews under the Mosaic Covenant. They are free from any obligation to the Mosaic Covenant *per se* (cf. Romans and Galatians). But just as the nation of Israel is to be different from all other political and social gatherings of people, i.e., countries, so should each individual Christian, Jew or Gentile, be different *morally* from the way they were before they became Christians. And we all look forward to the time when the Jews under Jesus' rule in the millennial kingdom will authentically think, believe, and act differently from unbelieving Gentiles in the rest of the world.

<sup>17</sup> καὶ εἰ πατέρα ἑπικαλεῖσθε τὸν ἀπροσωπολήπτως κρίνοντα κατὰ τὸ ἐκάστου ἔργον, ἐν φόβῳ τὸν τῆς παροικίας ὑμῶν χρόνον ἀναστράφητε – Peter, in addition, comments that God is not a partial judge (ἀπροσωπολήπτως). As Paul says in Romans 2:1-11, those who persevere in doing good will obtain eternal life from God, while those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth will become subject to God's wrath, condemnation, and eternal destruction. And Peter is implying that every human being deserves God's condemnation and eternal punishment of destruction.

On this basis, Peter exhorts the recipients of this letter to tremble appropriately with an awe and reverence at the reality of their facing God at the final judgment and the possibility of either incurring His anger and justice, which would result from disparaging the death of the Messiah, the most “valuable” event in all of human history when Jesus qualified to be our high priest at the judgment, or obtaining God's salvation, which would result from embracing authentic belief in both God and Jesus as the crucified Messiah.

This is Peter's main point in this paragraph. If people ignore the significance of Jesus' death, God will condemn them eternally for their rebellious hearts and consequent actions, i.e., their “works” of living a life that does not take into account properly the death of the Messiah with its meaning. For the recipients of this letter, because they grasp what it means for God to be their Father, i.e., the One who has set them apart by the work of the Spirit and birthed them metaphorically into being persons of authentic, inward belief, then it is only right that they pursue a life of obedience to God commensurate with their internal change until they meet Him at the judgment when Jesus returns and then enter into the eternal Kingdom of God by means of Jesus' advocacy and God's gracious mercy.

The only other use of παροικία in the NT is by Paul in Acts 13:17 when speaking to Jews in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch, “The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their temporary stay in the land of Egypt (ἐν τῇ παροικίᾳ ἐν γῇ Αἰγύπτου), and with an uplifted arm He led them out from it.” Therefore, Peter

is implying that his readers' existence on earth is temporary, like that of the Israelites in Egypt. In addition, their existence in these foreign lands is temporary with respect to the earthly millennial kingdom on the land of Israel when Jesus returns to Jerusalem. In other words, their **παροιμία** is for both the Gentiles and the Jews and their temporary stay on this earth in regard to both the millennial kingdom and the new earth.

This is Peter's only use of the verb form of ἀναστροφή, ἀναστρέφω – to live, to conduct oneself in a particular way of life. Therefore, I have translated it "conduct your way of life."

<sup>18</sup> εἰδότες ὅτι οὐ φθαρτοῖς, ἀργυρίῳ ἢ χρυσίῳ, ἐλυτρώθητε ἐκ τῆς ματαίας ὑμῶν ἡ ἀναστροφῆς πατροπαραδότου – "redeemed" = to be delivered from a bad circumstance like slavery by means of paying the master for a person's freedom.

It sounds as though Peter is addressing Jewish believers who had learned from their forefathers and practiced the pharisaical/rabbinic manner of obeying and focusing on the Mosaic Covenant without being able to take into account the significance of Jesus as a propitiatory offering and priest who supersedes any animal propitiatory offerings. But if this is a mixed community of Christians, he is referring to Gentile believers who inherited the pagan idolatry of previous Gentiles, including their parents, and Jewish believers who inherited the faithless and erroneous Judaism of their parents and others.

Cf. Robert Louis Wilken's book *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* that presents the fact that Gentile pagans were critical of Christianity because it lacked a basis in traditions that had existed for generations. For the Romans, Christianity was only new and not established in past religious practices.

Also, while human beings are very familiar with obtaining things in the present realm through the exchange of materials like gold and silver as money, things that will not survive into the eternal realm because they will be destroyed along with the rest of the earth, Peter reminds his readers of the significance of their being able to obtain entrance into the Kingdom of God through God's mercy by "exchanging" the death of the Messiah Jesus for it. He qualified to be their advocate at the judgment, so that his death becomes the means for them to obtain eternal life. Therefore, he and his blood, so to speak, will not be destroyed at the end of the present realm, but he will remain permanently in existence into the eternal Kingdom of God. In other words, "destructible" here refers to lack of eternal longevity, because certainly Jesus' blood as an entity created by the transcendent story teller, God, could be destroyed like gold also. God could make Jesus' blood disappear from the story if this were His purpose. Therefore, the difference between gold and Jesus' blood is that the existence of the former ends at the destruction of the present realm, while the existence of the latter endures into eternity according to God's plans and purposes.

Cf. **Is. 46:6** "Those who lavish gold from the purse and weigh silver on the scale hire a goldsmith, and he makes it into a god; they bow down, indeed they worship it." Thus, Peter may be referring to the fact that at least his Gentile readers had to pay for their gods on whom they counted to "redeem" them from the difficulties of life. In addition, if Peter were writing to only Jews, it would make more sense for him to refer to destructible bulls and goats that were sacrificed according to the Mosaic Covenant and that became the tradition of the Jews.

<sup>19</sup> ἀλλὰ τὴ τιμῇ αἵματι ὡς ἁμνοῦ ἁμώμου καὶ ἀπίλου Χριστοῦ – Jesus has rescued believers from being inwardly committed to a life of rebellion against God which by extrapolation results in being rescued from His condemnation (v. 17). The two must go together. A sinner cannot be saved from God's condemnation without also being moved by the Spirit of God and the message of salvation to live a morally appropriate life, even while remaining a sinner. This was Peter's point in 1:2. Thus, the only thing that saves us from eternal destruction is Jesus and his death by which he qualified to become our advocate and intercessor at the final judgment.

Another incentive for pursuing authentic obedience to God is that He has made available His eternal mercy through some other means besides even the most valuable yet mundane of earthly metals like silver and gold that Peter's readers either would long to own to make themselves wealthy or certainly use for acquiring the necessities of life. Human beings must take seriously the death of the Messiah, because God had planned it as part of His process of completing His project of bringing about the eternal Kingdom of God. Thus, Jesus' death (his "blood") becomes so much more valuable than gold and silver because it becomes the necessary step for Jesus' advocacy at the final judgment for acquiring the most valuable commodity available to human beings, God's mercy and entrance into the eternal Kingdom of God. Peter's likening Jesus to a lamb is most likely in reference to the Passover lamb and sin offering lamb of the Israelites in Exodus 12 and Leviticus 4:32 respectively. Thus, Jesus, who is unblemished and spotless as the morally perfect and obedient servant of God (even icon of God), becomes the offering to God by God for the only means to escape His eternal condemnation and to obtain His eternal mercy and forgiveness.

<sup>20</sup> προεγνωσμένου μὲν πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου φανερωθέντος δὲ ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν χρόνων δι' ὑμᾶς – God had planned all this regarding their salvation, including Jesus as their Messiah and Savior.

Peter states that God's actions for bringing the Messiah into existence and using him as the means to eternal mercy for sinful human beings was not an afterthought on His part. Indeed, the events that involve Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah are the very focal point of creation history, so that it can be said that the creation exists for the sake of Jesus of Nazareth. Thus, it has always been His eternal plan to introduce one human being into cosmic history who will serve as the king of the creation for the sake of those who believe God to have done this on behalf of their eternal destinies.

Thus, Peter can say that it has been, from a chronological standpoint, because of those who believe in Jesus *after* he had come into existence as the Messiah that God has done this. Consequently, it is belief in God's plan and this human being, Jesus of Nazareth, along with his role, that is required by God to avoid His condemnation. Such belief in the



historical Jesus does not exclude those who lived before Jesus and those who even live after him who have never heard of him from receiving God's mercy and eternal life. Peter just desires to emphasize the importance to his readers, especially because they have actually heard the NT message of Jesus' Messiahship, that Jesus' coming into existence was just as much for their sake as any other authentic believer's sake, whether Jew or Gentile. Also, by saying that Jesus was revealed and came into existence "in the last of the times," Peter shows that he views the first coming of Jesus to be at least the start of the end of the present realm leading up to the temporary and earthly Kingdom of Israel and the final judgment, along with the eternal earthly Kingdom of God (cf. Revelation 20-22; Hebrews 1:1,2). We now know in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that the last of the times and the last days have been going on for two millennia, a long time from a human standpoint but a short time from God's perspective (cf. 2 Peter 3).

If the traditional view of the trinity were true, why does Peter not say, "who existed as the second person of the trinity before the foundation of the cosmos," since this fact, according to the trinitarians, would be the most important fact for Peter's readers to embrace and believe? Instead, he says that God foreknew Jesus, which is the same as His foreknowing people of genuine belief as he said in 1:1-2.

<sup>21</sup> τοὺς δι' αὐτοῦ πιστοὺς εἰς θεὸν τὸν ἐγείραντα αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν καὶ δόξαν αὐτῷ δόντα, ὥστε τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν καὶ ἔλπιδα εἶναι εἰς θεόν – God's raising Jesus from the dead was a clear sign of His eternal intent and purposes that demand a response of acknowledgement and belief on the part of sinful human beings who live after him and are confronted with the historical news of his existence, whether Jews whose Messiah he is ethnically or Gentiles who follow the Jewish Messiah while living lives that are quite Gentile, because they are not obligated to the Mosaic Covenant. Thus, God is not to be trifled with as though He is someone who can be ignored.

And God has given Jesus "glory," starting with his resurrection with an immortal body, continuing with the destruction of Israel's enemies and restoring of the Kingdom of Israel when he returns, and finishing with the eternal kingdom on the new earth of Revelation 21.

In addition, this verse highlights the importance of a person's believe and worship of the transcendent God and Father of Jesus as the Son of God, thus indicating for us that the focus in modern Christianity on Jesus through the songs and prayers that are used with almost a complete ignoring of the Father is rather misguided.

ὥστε is followed by the accusative as the subject of the verb.

<sup>22</sup> Τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν ἡγνικότες ἐν τῇ ὑπακοῇ τῆς ἀληθείας ἢ εἰς φιλαδελφίαν ἀνυπόκριτον, ἐκ [καθαρᾶς] καρδίας ἁλλήλους ἀγαπήσατε ἐκτενῶς – ἀγνίζω in the LXX is used to translate various words, including שָׁרָה, נָחַם, אָהַב, all of which can refer to setting oneself aside both inwardly and outwardly for a fully committed life to God. Thus, the purification that the word also means is, in the final analysis, a making oneself dedicated and committed to following God's commandments. In this case, it is God's moral commandments, starting with loving one another as Christians. Love for one's fellow Christians is the bottom line for a person who has embraced the good news of Jesus as Messiah. This is what it means to be holy as a child of God (cf. 1 John). Peter will say in 4:8 that "above all," these Christians should love one another.

Peter says that his readers have made the choice to believe the truth of Jesus as the Messiah, thus inwardly dedicating themselves to obeying God according to the message of grace and mercy that comes through Jesus as the crucified Messiah who qualified to be king and priest for sinners. The result should be that they pursue obedience to God in the form of loving one another as Christians. It may seem superfluous and unnecessary for Peter to encourage Christians to love Christians, especially when it is non-Christians who, in this context, are persecuting them. But the recipients of this letter probably did not know each other well at all when God changed their hearts. They were strangers to each other and not naturally attracted to one another (cf. 1 Peter 4:9, Be lovers of strangers towards one another).

Plus, the inference we can draw from this letter and others is that pain and suffering from whatever the cause can turn a sinner towards finding some solution in the world that eliminates the pain, even if this solution is to abandon one's faith in biblical Christianity by, for example, adopting the world's understanding of reality and pursuits which follow from it or adopting a modified Christianity which turns God's grace into license to do whatever one wants, as long as it does not "hurt" anybody (cf. Jude 4).

In addition, we Christians have our own idiosyncrasies and issues that cause us to irritate each other. We need Jesus and the apostles to exhort us to demonstrate kindness, patience, and even forgiveness towards one another. Otherwise, our tendency will be to avoid each other and not express much love or caring for one another at all. We need to remember that we do not become morally perfect until Jesus returns. So we should count on other Christians' irritating and disappointing us so that we have the opportunity to exercise forgiveness, forbearance, and genuine love and care for each other.

Peter's words are not a surprise in the light of the second of the great commandments to "love one's neighbor" as the fulfillment of the Mosaic Covenant (cf. Romans 13). Now, though, the neighbor is one's fellow Christian, and love for him is primary. In no way does this diminish the importance of a Christian's loving non-Christians. Cf. 1 Peter 3:15 – Instead, set apart the Lord <Isaiah 8:12,13>, the Messiah, in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you for a statement concerning the hope that is in you, 3:16 yet with gentleness and fear, because you have a good understanding, so that, in the thing in which you are slandered, those who malign your good manner of life in the Messiah may be put to shame.

If the readers of Peter's letter were simply unbelieving Jews, the implication would be that, while pursuing obedience to God according to the Mosaic Covenant, they would most likely be doing so in a Pharisaical manner. As a result, their

love for their fellow Jews would just be an act whereby they were merely following a script by means of their sinfulness. This is how they would be hypocrites. However, the readers are believing Gentiles and Jews, who can and should genuinely demonstrate their love for the one true God by loving one another, because He has changed their hearts. This is how their love is not an act. It is unhypocritical.

This, of course, is also in line with the “greatest commandments” of the Mosaic Covenant, to love not only God but also one’s neighbor (cf. Deut 6:4; Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:35ff.). It is also in line with God’s call for the Jews to circumcise their hearts in Deuteronomy 10:16. Indeed, as Paul says in Romans 13:10, loving one’s neighbor is “the fulfillment of the Covenant.” In other words, it is impossible to love one’s fellow Christian genuinely without also loving God (and vice versa).

A “clean heart” is one that has been changed by God and is single-mindedly devoted to Him and His message of gracious salvation that a person comes by only by the inward work of the Spirit of God. Once the Spirit works, then we consciously make the choice to dedicate ourselves to God’s truth and to act on it with goodness and love towards other Christians—and even unbelievers as it seems fit.

<sup>23</sup> ἀναγεγεννημένοι οὐκ ἔκ σποράς· φθαρτῆς ἀλλὰ ἀφάρτου διὰ λόγου ᾧ ζῶντος θεοῦ καὶ μένοντος <sup>τ</sup> – This verse contains the only use of σπορά as “seed” in the NT. Normally “seed” is σπέρμα. But notice that Peter’s reference to his readers being “scattered” in 1:1 is διασπορά (diaspora). The point that Peter is making is that the origin of his reader’s biblical belief and their being God’s children with authentic inwardness is not found in the destructible elements of the created reality, not even in their own independent choices as free-will agents, but in the indestructible element of God Himself and His eternal message—that the Spirit of God, operating within the created reality, miraculously caused their new spirituality in the midst of their hearing the NT information of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. In other words, God’s message is as good and permanent as God Himself. Thus, the origin of their belief in truthful ideas is not themselves. It is God and God alone.

<sup>24</sup> ὁτι πάντα σὰρξ ὡς χόρτος καὶ πάντα δόξα ἡ αὐτῆς ὡς ἄνθος ὁ χόρτος καὶ τὸ ἄνθος <sup>τ</sup> ἐξέπεσεν – Peter supplies a biblical reason for their pursuing genuine love of one another—the eternal endurance of the OT and NT message (Isaiah 40:8 – יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ) vs. the temporary nature of the created reality and of human, physical existence with all the things we use to try to bring attention and value to ourselves and our lives so that we can be deserving of people’s admiration and praise (the “glory” that is like “the flower of the grass”).

When trees and flowers bloom in the spring, the sight is spectacular and beautiful. The same is true when people receive praise and admiration for the human achievements or even their possessions. But just as the blossoms and flowers eventually fade and fall off, so will the beautiful and spectacular things we achieve and possess, even people’s applause.

Thus, the ongoing and eternal perseverance of something implies its having value and worth that is greater than anything else that is only temporary, regardless of how much honor and admiration a human being receives from other beings. Paul uses this same kind of argument in Hebrews to point out the fact that the eternal Son of God is greater in status than the temporary theophanies of God, i.e., the *angeloi* of God in that context. Even though the theophanies were God, they did not play as important a role within the created reality as the eternal Davidic king, Jesus of Nazareth. Here the ongoing and even eternal thing according to what God says in Isaiah 40 is the aggregate of His statements regarding the promises of Abraham to make the Jewish nation great during the millennial kingdom at the end of this age and to grant the blessing of eternal life (into the ages of ages) to those who embrace all His promises with the same kind of belief that Abraham had.

<sup>25</sup> τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα κυρίου μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦτο δὲ ἐστὶν <sup>τ</sup> ὁ ῥῆμα τὸν εὐαγγελισθὲν εἰς ὑμᾶς <sup>α</sup> – The apostles have continued the proclamation of the biblical message that involves the future and eternal elements of God’s project and that contains both Old Testament ways of addressing them and New Testament way of doing so. They have especially made public the information about the eternal and permanent king of the Kingdom of God, Jesus of Nazareth. Peter reminds his readers that this is the message that constitutes the best news and information that they have ever heard and that they have believed. It is the gospel, the good news.

Therefore, their love for one another as Christians is not only a commandment but also a part of the eternal message of God. Their physical existences will end, while their love for one another will go on into the ages after their resurrection and transformation into morally perfect and eternal human beings. Thus, the endurance and longevity of the gospel into eternity becomes a theologically important reason for Christians, who will spend eternity with one another, to persist in loving one another in the present realm. Eternity is going to be a long time which we Christians will spend with one another, and we might as well do the right work to love another in the present realm.

<sup>26</sup> Ἀποθέμενοι οὖν πᾶσαν κακίαν καὶ πάντα δόλον καὶ ὑποκρίσεις καὶ φθόνους καὶ πᾶσας καταλαλίας <sup>α</sup> – Peter now goes on to lay out the implications of hearing and believing this message.

If Peter is writing to entire Christian communities in the areas of 1:1, then he is addressing both Gentile and Jewish Christians who have come out of a pagan background and culture and erroneous Judaism respectively. And both kinds of Christians could very well have conducted their ways of life according to these words which fill out the meaning of “evil” prior to their becoming Christians.

It involved the general term κακίαν – just plain evil, making choices that are must have come from their own independent thinking deliberation as to how to define good vs. evil that ended up being contrary to God’s moral

commandments.

Then, these words fill out what Peter means by “evil”;

1) δόλον – lying and being deceitful in order to get one’s way, i.e., using cunning and treachery in order to take advantage of others for one’s own selfish and self-aggrandizing purposes, to make oneself look great, and hopefully others agree, but they have been duped.

2) ὑποκρίσεις – playacting at a religious script, whether that of paganism or erroneous Judaism (or erroneous Christianity, where religious rituals and institutions are substituted for authentic morality and the purely organic nature of the Christian community. And this is in order to hide and ignore one’s inward sin and immorality

3) φθόνους – envy, the inability to value and applaud others’ accomplishments and good fortune as their own, even if one never achieves the same level of accomplishment, etc. in life; this typically is accompanied by efforts to destroy other’s good fortune and their opportunity to enjoy the effects of their accomplishments and good fortune

4) καταλαλιᾶς – slander, speaking against people to say that what they are doing is wrong and hoping to bring harm to them one way or another, especially calling their good evil and their evil good as an important meaning of this word in 1 Peter (here in 2:1, as well as 2:12 & 3:16 (the verb form); cf. James 4:11). In 1 Peter 2:12 & 3:16, these Christian converts are being spoken against by their former friends with whom they used to engage in all sorts of immoral behavior as part of either their pagan religion and Roman lifestyle or their erroneous Judaism which they used to rationalize their sin, much the way so-called Christians do who are more committed to a religious system than they are to the gospel, God, and Jesus as their Messiah. Thus, this hypocrisy can be applied just as easily to Jewish Christians, who have been focused on a Pharisaical following of the Mosaic Covenant, such that their legalistic perspective would measure their spirituality strictly on the basis of external religious actions and doctrines, and they would not care about genuine, humble inwardness and outward love. And without an actual changed heart and genuine repentance and obedience, they naturally engage in sinful behavior. Therefore, Peter is exhorting his fellow Christians not to act like their non-Christian counterparts in the world, but instead to do what is good and thereby demonstrate that their belief in God and Jesus is authentic.

<sup>27</sup> ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα ἐπιποθήσατε, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ αὐξηήτε εἰς σωτηρίαν – In line with the metaphor of his readers’ being born again, Peter exhorts them by likening them to newborn infants to continue their pursuit of learning the biblical message that he has talked about at the end of chapter 1. This message goes on and on and on, even into eternity. It is the genuine and pure biblical message of Jesus that incorporates all that the OT has to say about his being the Jewish Messiah (and of course for us all that the NT says too). Certainly, the former pagan idolatry of the Gentile recipients of this letter and the erroneous Judaism of the Jewish recipients were filled with false ideas about the nature of reality because of their basis that took no stock in the Bible or misused the Bible respectively. Thus, the Jewish Pharisaism of Peter’s day was a mixture of truth and error. In stark contrast, the NT message of Jesus as the Messiah was and is only truth as it interprets the OT correctly and incorporates it into itself. This is the message that Jesus taught to his apostles and that they proclaim. Obviously, a problem like that of pagan idolatry and erroneous Judaism arises if “Christians” use the NT only to invent another religious system that avoids the substance of the message of the gospel—regarding both the depth of sin and the vital importance of a way of life that is moral for the believer in Jesus, and therefore takes seriously the meaning of the death of Jesus on the cross.

The KJV translates τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα as “the sincere milk of the word.” This is probably why the more modern translations follow suit with much the same, e.g., NAS95, “the pure milk of the word.” In contrast to the lies and deceptions of δόλον in the previous verse, this, i.e., λογικὸν ἄδολον, would be the rational and truthful milk of the message of God. It is this message that arms a believer to stay faithful to God and make good choices in the midst of the lies of his culture. This means also that every other worldview is to some degree irrational and just a little bit if not a lot crazy and insane. Therefore, as Christians we are guarding ourselves from insanity and insane people who are following Satan and making up their own crazy definitions of morality and explanations of the nature of reality. Therefore, by means of coming to a better and fuller understanding of the biblical message and the gospel of Jesus as the Messiah, a “newborn infant” Christian grows up into an adult who has an adult grasp of the nature of reality and who makes adult decisions based upon what he knows how God defines good vs. evil.

<sup>28</sup> εἰ ἐγεύσασθε ὅτι χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος – χρηστὸς is used to translate טוֹב (= good) in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament from about 270 B.C.; cf. Psalm 25:8 – “Good and upright is Yahweh (יְהוָה):”

טוֹב (טוֹב) (χρηστὸς καὶ εὐθὴς ὁ κύριος).” This word includes the idea of God’s being merciful to those who are humble and contrite in their inwardness. Thus, Peter is saying that if his readers as “newborn infants,” while listening to the “milk” of the gospel message regarding Jesus as the crucified Messiah, have genuinely grasped the eternal attractiveness of what he means to sinful human beings, i.e., that they will receive God’s mercy through his advocacy at the judgment, having obtained this role by dying on the cross, then they understand what is good and kind about him (and about God the Father by inference).

Peter is implying that people can listen to the gospel and it will taste bitter and yucky to them. They will want to spit out the “milk” that is this message and possibly never want to try to drink it again. To these people, Jesus tastes bad, so that they will want to avoid him at all costs, thus having nothing to do with him, at least nothing to do with him as he really is. Their rejecting Jesus is in contrast to “Christians” who only pretend that the information about him has “tasted

good” by pursuing a religious system which uses him in name only, while ignoring his substance and all the ramifications of who he is. Yet, both kinds of people consider the real Jesus to taste bad.

<sup>29</sup> πρὸς ὃν προσερχόμενοι λίθον ζῶντα ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων μὲν ἀποδοκιμασμένον παρὰ δὲ θεῷ ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον – When rebellious human beings consider Jesus to be good and kind, then they come to him and commit themselves to believe in him as their King and High Priest regardless of the fact that others deem him to be unworthy of their attention. They also come to him because God certainly looks at him as the one whom He has chosen to be the valuable, living cornerstone of the building comprised of the living bricks that are believers, i.e., that Jesus is the most important human being within the creation (cf. v. 6).

This is the first of five meanings given to the word “stone” in this passage.

<sup>30</sup> καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος πνευματικὸς εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον ἀνενέγκαι πνευματικὰς θυσίας, εὐπροσδέκτους [τῷ] θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ – Providing the apodosis, the main clause of a conditional statement, for the protasis “if” clause of v. 3, Peter indicates that, just as God uses Jesus as a cornerstone, his Christian readers “as living stones” are “being built” into a “spiritual house” of God and by God. Thus, God is causing these Christian readers to bond together like bricks in a building as they stay focused on the cornerstone, Jesus the Messiah. And as this living temple of God where Peter is implying God dwells, his Christian readers together are a “holy priesthood” who “offer spiritual offerings...to God” of their belief and love for one another. Their offerings love for one another are pleasing to Him because of their belief in Jesus as the Messiah, instead of pursuing their old manner of life which excluded Jesus—whether as Gentile pagans or unbelieving Jewish followers of the Mosaic Covenant.

This is such a radical metaphor by Peter, that all of his Jewish *and Gentile* believing readers are priests. However, God had told the Jews that their entire ethnic group were priests, in spite of the fact that He would soon set the tribe of Levi apart to carry out the specific function of priests for the rest of the nation—**Exodus 19:1** In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. **2** When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain. **3** Moses went up to God, and Yahweh called to him from the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel: **4** ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself. **5** ‘Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; **6** and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (שְׂרָפָה וְנָתַן לָהֶם כְּהֹנִים וְגֵרִים) (βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα καὶ ἔθνος ἅγιον).’

These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.”

In other words, Peter is telling all his Christian readers that they, like the people of Israel and the Levites specifically, function as those who bring offerings and sacrifices to God. In other words, under the New Covenant, every believer is his own mini-priest in the light of Jesus’ high priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek (cf. Hebrews 5-10 & 13:10ff.).

Therefore, first of all, Peter’s audience are each of “stone” of a “temple,” with Jesus as the cornerstone of this temple. This is the second meaning given to the word “stone” in this passage. Jesus is the cornerstone, and these Christians are each a stone too.

Secondly, his readers, if they are Gentiles, are also the priests of the temple who bring their own offerings to God in the light of the fact that Jesus is their high priest at the final judgment. Likewise, Jewish believers, whether from the tribe of Levi or not, are also each a priest in the temple of God, the community of believers in Jesus as the Messiah that is made up of both Jews and Gentiles. Their offerings consist simply of their “obedience to the truth” as they continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah and “earnestly love one another from a clean heart” (cf. 1 Peter 1:22).

<sup>31</sup> διότι περιέχει ἐν γραφῇ ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον ἀκρογωνιαίον ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυθῇ – Peter quotes from Isaiah 28:16 where God told both the northern Kingdom of Israel and the southern Kingdom of Judah around 722 B.C. that the Davidic Covenant that they were not trusting in will nevertheless become the cornerstone of the building comprised of His people, the authentically believing Jews.

Thus, the Davidic Covenant is the third meaning given to the word “stone” in this passage. It is both a stone and the cornerstone of God’s relationship with the Jews as it pertains to providing them with a king and ruler who protects them from their “enemies,” so that the first meaning in Peter’s metaphor makes sense that Jesus is the personification of this Davidic Covenant valuable cornerstone.

Isaiah 28 is also referring to the fact that the Israelites had made a covenant with foreign empires to protect them from harm. However, God had already made and kept and will continue to make and keep the Davidic Covenant with the nation of Israel, which is all that they need for protection from their enemies. Therefore, Peter is alluding to the fact that his Gentile and Jewish readers are the same kind of people, because they have abandoned their “covenant” with pagan idolatry and erroneous Judaism respectively and placed themselves within the Davidic Covenant by believing in the final Jewish Davidic king, Jesus of Nazareth (cf. 1 Peter 4:3).

<sup>32</sup> ὑμῖν οὖν ἡ τιμὴ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, ἁπистоῦσιν δὲ λίθος ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες, οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας – The “stone” that becomes the “cornerstone” in Psalm 118 is the truth that the psalmist himself is laying out for his readers within the psalm, truth that, by definition, either in whole or in part pertains to the biblical message.

This is the fourth meaning given to “stone” in this passage.

In Psalm 118, the Davidic Covenant, which is part of the biblical message, is certainly part of the “stone”/“cornerstone”

to which the psalmist is referring. In fact, it may be the main part and therefore the “cornerstone” *per se*. Therefore, Peter is highlighting the fact that the honor of becoming a brick in the building of the biblical truth, the Messiah, and the “spiritual house” (1 Peter 2:5), which is the honor of being a priest to God in this life—one who brings to God offerings of belief and love for one’s fellow believers—is only for those who embrace Jesus as the Messiah, while those who reject Jesus as the Messiah are also rejecting the truth of God and, therefore, God Himself.

<sup>33</sup> καὶ λίθος προσκόμματος καὶ πέτρα σκανδάλου· οἱ προσκόπτουσιν τῷ λόγῳ ἁπειθοῦντες εἰς ᾧ καὶ ἑτέθησαν Peter quotes from Isaiah 8:14 where God is telling the Jews of both the northern Kingdom of Israel and the southern Kingdom of Judah around 730 B.C. that He Himself will be a trap to them because of their unbelief, resulting in the eventual destruction of both kingdoms.

Thus, God Himself is the fifth and final meaning given to the word “stone” in this passage.

Peter is saying that, like the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Jews, Gentiles and Jews who reject Jesus as the Messiah find God to be a trap of eternal destruction. God has assigned to believers a destiny of being Jesus’ house of priests who bring offerings to God with the Davidic Covenant/him as the cornerstone of this “house,” while unbelievers will trip over him to their eternal destruction.

The latter reject the NT message of Jesus as the Messiah, but this was God’s plan for them from eternity past, just as God’s eternal plan was to provide the Messiah as the king of the eternal Kingdom of God comprised of forgiven sinful human beings. This bolsters Peter’s previous statements that part of Jesus’ role as Messiah was to be considered unworthy of attention by certain people and therefore to be rejected as the true Messiah by them.

The five meanings of stone in this passage are –

- 1) Jesus is the most valuable stone of God’s temple made up of living sinful human beings.
- 2) Each believer is a living stone of God’s building and brings offerings to God of belief and love for their fellow believers.
- 3) The Davidic Covenant, which implies the final king who is Jesus, is a stone, indeed the cornerstone of God’s protection for the Jews from their enemies.
- 4) The biblical message is the cornerstone of God’s relationship with His people.
- 5) God Himself is a stone over which unbelievers stumble to their eternal destruction, and He has predestined them to this destiny.

<sup>34</sup> ὑμεῖς δὲ γένος ἐκλεκτόν, βασιλείον ιεράτευμα, ἔθνος ἅγιον, λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε τοῦ ἐκ σκότους ὑμᾶς καλέσαντος εἰς τὸ θαυμαστὸν αὐτοῦ φῶς – There are many OT references in this paragraph of vs. 9 & 10 where Peter is arguing that his Gentile and Jewish readers have taken on a new status as the people of God who receive His eternal mercy as the Jews were labelled as such when God made the Mosaic Covenant with them and as they will prove to be when God fulfills His promises that He made to Abraham when Jesus returns and restores the Kingdom of Israel and David. This sets apart believers in Jesus as the Messiah from the rest of the world that is caught up in rejecting God’s truth and living their lives in rebellion against Him.

Regarding γένος ἐκλεκτόν (a chosen race), Peter uses the word chosen in 1 Peter 2:3,6. Isaiah 43:20 speaks of “My chosen race,” (עַמִּי בְּחִירִי; LXX, τὸ γένος μου τὸ ἐκλεκτόν). Deuteronomy 7:6 & 10:15 refer to the fact that it has always been God’s eternal plan for the nation of Israel overall to be a signpost to God and for Peter’s audience to be actual believers in Jesus as the Messiah, so that they are not among those appointed to reject the NT message. Now in a similar manner these believers are God’s chosen people for the eternal Kingdom of God.

Regarding βασιλείον ιεράτευμα (a royal priesthood), Peter speaks of a “holy priesthood” in 1 Peter 2:5. Exodus 19:6 is where God calls the Jewish nation “a kingdom of priests” (מְמַלְכָּת כֹּהֲנִים; LXX, βασιλείον ιεράτευμα). Isaiah 61:6 is where the followers of the Messiah are called the “priests of Yahweh” (כֹּהֲנֵי יְהוָה; LXX, ἱερεῖς κυρίου). Isaiah 66:20-21 says, <sup>20</sup> “Then they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as a grain offering to Yahweh on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules and on camels to My holy mountain Jerusalem,” says Yahweh, ‘just as the sons of Israel bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of Yahweh. <sup>21</sup> I will also take some of them for priests and for Levites (לֵוִיִּם לְכֹהֲנִים; LXX, ἱερεῖς καὶ Λευίτας),’ says Yahweh.” Here in Isaiah, God states that He is going to make the Gentiles who believe in Him priests. Priests bring offerings to God and teach others about their God as the entire Jewish nation has always had this role if they were willing to embrace it. Now the Christians to whom Peter is writing have this role. They bring their offerings of belief and love for one another to God, and they teach people about God through their words and actions. It is a high calling, one even we Christians in our day will continue to fulfill in the millennial kingdom when we become completely changed people of moral perfection and immortal existence.

Regarding ἔθνος ἅγιον, we should consider Exodus 19:5-6, “Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (קְדוֹשׁ יְהוָה מְמַלְכָּת כֹּהֲנִים; LXX, βασιλείον ιεράτευμα καὶ ἔθνος ἅγιον). Similarly, the Gentile and Jewish Christians to whom Peter is writing are a kind of nation within the nations of the world. They have dual citizenship and two passports, one for their present, earthly country and one for their eternal country of the Kingdom of God. And their greater loyalty is to the latter even though it is hopefully wonderful to be loyal to the former also.

Regarding λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, we should consider Exodus 19:5 as quoted above where the Hebrew reads מְכֹל־הָעָם לַיהוָה (=property/possession from all the peoples; LXX, λαὸς περιούσιος = special people), where God indicates that the entire nation of Israel are those who belong to Him as His property and possession, implying that they do so when they have genuine, biblical inwardness as that which characterizes them (cf. Deuteronomy 10:16). There is also Isaiah 43:21, וְיִצְרֵנִי לִי יְהוָה לְעֵדָה = “The people whom I formed for Myself will declare My praise (LXX – λαὸν μου, ὃν περιεποιήσαμην τὰς ἀρετὰς μου διηγεῖσθαι).” There is also [Malachi 3:17](#) “They will be Mine,” says Yahweh of hosts, “on the day that I prepare My own possession (מְכֹל־הָעָם) (εἰς περιποίησιν), and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.” Therefore, the Gentile and Jewish Christians are a people for the purpose of God’s possessing them for all eternity.

Regarding ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε τοῦ ἐκ σκοτὸς ὑμᾶς καλέσαντος εἰς τὸ θαυμαστὸν ὁ αὐτοῦ φῶς, we should consider [Isaiah 42:16](#) “I will lead the blind by a way they do not know, in paths they do not know I will guide them. I will make darkness into light before them (ποιήσω αὐτοῖς τὸ σκότος εἰς φῶς) and rugged places into plains. These are the things I will do, and I will not leave them undone.” God has promised to change the way the Jews think about reality so that, rather than their having erroneous and false understanding, God will make sure that they think correctly about Him and their existence within the creation. Similarly, these reborn Christians to whom Peter is writing have the privilege of proclaiming all the virtues and moral excellencies of God as creator, sovereign ruler, gracious, merciful, forgiving, and just.

Peter uses all these OT references to put the message of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah in proper Jewish and Gentile perspective as he writes to believers who are now properly demonstrating the characteristics of these statements and descriptions that were made in the OT. While the Gentile believers were performing pagan idolatry, it was as though they were living in darkness, i.e., a spiritual and intellectual darkness. While the Jews were focused improperly on the Mosaic Covenant, they too were in spiritual and intellectual darkness. However, now they all are now experiencing light because of both God’s having changed them inwardly and their understanding of and belief in Jesus as the Messiah. Thus, just as Jews with authentic inwardness are chosen by God to be His people, to approach God like priests with pleasing Him in mind, to be a group of people who are spiritually and morally different from everyone else in the world, to be a people whom He owns and possesses and who belong to no other “gods” or beings, and to be a people who think rightly about reality, so also these NT Christians from all ethnic groups who believe in the Jewish Messiah Jesus are the same. While some of them may not belong to the ethnic descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, they nevertheless have the same kind of belief as Abraham and will obtain the same blessing as he—eternal life (cf. Genesis 12:1-3).

Peter is not saying that God has transferred the promises He made to the Jews to the church and Christian believers. He is likening the latter to the former as those who fulfill the same kind of role that the Jews will when Jesus returns and restores the Kingdom of Israel where the Jews will observe properly the Mosaic Covenant and fulfill God’s desires as expressed in the above verses from the OT.

<sup>35</sup> οἱ ποτε οὐ λαὸς νῦν δὲ λαὸς θεοῦ, οἱ οὐκ ἠλεημένοι νῦν δὲ ἐλεηθέντες – Here we should consider Hosea 2:23, “I will sow her for Myself in the land. I will also have compassion on her who had not obtained compassion (אֶת־הָאֶרֶץ אֶסְדֵּךְ) (οὐκ-ἠλεημένην), and I will say to those who were not My people (אֶת־נֹכְחֵי לִי) (οὐ-λαῶ-μου), ‘You are My people (אֶת־נֹכְחֵי לִי) (Λαὸς μου εἶ σύ)!’ And they will say, ‘You are my God!’” This verse in Hosea comes at the end of God’s description of the *Jewish* people as having abandoned Him and engaged in pagan worship of Baal, thus no longer acting as “My people” ought to act. But God will discipline them for their disobedience and call them back to Himself, thus eventually being able to call them “My people,” and they will call Yahweh and only Yahweh, “My God.” He will also have mercy on them.

Peter is saying that this OT passage is finding a fulfillment of sorts even in what God is doing with his Gentile and Jewish readers. Just as Jews will become God’s people through His inward, miraculous work when He fulfills His promise to Abraham and makes them a “great nation,” Gentile and Jewish believers become His people likewise, not that Gentiles become Jews *per se* who are obligated to the Mosaic Covenant, but they nevertheless become participants in the *eternal* people of God and the *eternal* Kingdom of God.

Again, Peter is not denying the first Abrahamic promise of a “great nation” to the Jews only, or transferring it to the Christian church. He is likening what will happen to the Jews to what happens to all Christian believers.

<sup>36</sup> Ἀγαπητοί, παρακαλῶ ὡς παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμους ἰσχυροῦσθαι τῶν σαρκικῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν αἰτίνες στρατεύοντες κατὰ τῆς ψυχῆς – Regarding ὡς παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμους, we should consider Leviticus 25:23, “The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me (אֶת־הָאֶרֶץ לֹא תִמְכַּרְתֶּם אֶת־הָאֶרֶץ לְעַד כִּי־הָאֶרֶץ לִי וְאַתֶּם זֵרִים וְתוֹשָׁבִים) (διότι προσήλυτοι καὶ πάροικοι ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐναντίον μου).” Even though God has given the land of Israel to the Jews, it ultimately belongs to Him, so that they should consider themselves as foreigners who are living on the land for only a short time. In other words, they should never become so possessive of the land that they think that the right to live on it is inherent within them or because of their actions, as though they deserve to live on the land. They are merely caretakers of it.

These words were also used to refer to Abraham in the land of Canaan that he never fully possessed (Genesis 23:4, “I am a stranger and a sojourner (זָרָה וְתוֹשָׁב) (πάροικος καὶ παρεπιδήμος) among you; give me a burial site among you



that I may bury my dead out of my sight”).

They are also used to refer to the Israelites as strangers in Egypt before Moses led them out (Deuteronomy 23:7, “You shall not detest an Edomite, for he is your brother; you shall not detest an Egyptian, because you were an alien (ἄλλογενὴς) in his land).”

Therefore, Peter is using these OT ideas to convey to his Gentile and Jewish readers who believe in the Jewish Messiah Jesus that they are simply strangers and temporary residents where they are currently living, because they are not yet home. Implied is that they will not reach home until Jesus returns and they acquire their immortal and morally perfect condition when God transforms them from mortal sinners to such.

They are also temporary residents in northern Turkey because they have a different fundamental desire from that of the non-believers who both are enslaved to their unwillingness to obey God perfectly and fundamentally committed to making the present realm as secure and homey a place for them to exist as the eternal Kingdom of God will be for believers. This earth as it is currently is not the permanent home of believers, and our longing for safety and security that is both permanent and complete should never govern and rule our choices and decisions (cf. 1 Peter 1:1). Thus, while Abraham was a refugee in his own land, the land of Canaan, all Christians are refugees on the current earth, waiting to go home, so to speak, to the eternal Kingdom of God, which certainly was also Abraham’s long-term desire, starting with the millennial kingdom where God will fulfill His promise to make his descendants the greatest nation in history (cf. Genesis 12:1-3; Hebrews 11:9,10).

Instead, the recipients of this letter should desire be to obey God in the midst of their sinfulness and to receive His mercy in the eternal Kingdom of God, regardless of their insecurity and suffering in whatever circumstances they find currently themselves. The result should be that they fight tooth and nail not to give in to their natural born sinfulness and desires that are a part of only the present realm and will disappear when they are made immortal. These desires could be their natural reaction to being mistreated unjustly for being Christians (1 Peter 2:2:13-3:7) or their natural desires to reengage in the behavior they shared with their Gentile fellow city dwellers (1 Peter 4:3-5), but they are also contrary to God’s moral commandments and to the fundamental orientation inside them that exists because of God’s gracious work, to which Peter refers by using the word ψυχῆς. This word here means their personal, embodied existences, which includes the changed inwardness that God has brought about through the work of His Spirit (cf. Peter’s use of this word in 1:9,22; 2:25; 3:20; 4:10).

**Romans 7:14** For we know that the Covenant is spiritual, but I am of fleshly natural-born humanity, having been sold into slavery to sin. **7:15** Thus, on the one hand, I do not understand what I am doing, because I am not practicing what I want, but I am doing the very thing I hate. **7:16** But if I am doing this very thing I do not want, I am agreeing with the Covenant, that it is good. **7:17** Nevertheless, no longer am “I” the one doing what I am doing, but it is sin which dwells in me. **7:18** Thus, I recognize that goodness does not dwell within me, that is in my natural-born humanity, for the desiring is present in me, but the doing of good is not. **7:19** Instead, I am not doing good, which I want, but I am practicing evil, the very thing I do not want. **7:20** But if I am doing this very thing which I do not want, no longer am “I” the one doing it, but it is sin that indwells me. **7:21** In this way, I discover the principle in me who wants to do good—that evil is present within me. **7:22** For I joyfully concur with the Covenant of God in my inner man, **7:23** but I see another set of instructions in my members, which is warring against the instructions in my mind and making me a prisoner of the instructions of sin that are in my members. **7:24** I am one miserable person! Who will rescue me from this deadly body? **7:25** Thanks be to God in the light of Jesus the Messiah our Lord! Therefore, as a result, on the one hand, with my mind I am serving the instruction of God, but, on the other hand, with my natural-born humanity the instruction of sin.

<sup>37</sup> τὴν ἀναστροφὴν ὑμῶν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἔχοντες καλὴν, ἵνα ἐν ᾧ καταλαλοῦσιν ὑμῶν ὡς κακοποιῶν ἐκ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων ἑποπτεύοντες δοξάσωσιν τὸν θεὸν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπισκοπῆς – The pagan worshipers in the Roman Empire were more respectful of the Jews as strict monotheists and followers of long standing traditions than they were of Christians who assigned the status of deity to a man, Jesus of Nazareth, and also introduced something completely new into the religious culture of the empire. Thus, the Gentiles, as pagan worshipers, were critical of Christians and not Pharisaical Jews as evil doers.

The same could be just as true of Jews who were adherents of erroneous Judaism, that because the Christians were not emphasizing the Mosaic Covenant above Jesus as the Messiah, they considered them evil doers.

Peter also goes on to say in 4:4,5 that those who were these Christians’ friends before they became Christians are now upset at them for changing their beliefs and their lifestyles, calling the Christians’ good behavior evil and calling their own evil behavior good.

The idea of “doing good” or “right” with a form of either καλός (2x) or ἀγαθός (12x) is a key theme in 1 Peter. He is encouraging his readers to do what is good and right in the face of harsh criticism and persecution from even their former friends in obedience to Jesus who suffered the same kind of persecution to the point of death on the cross. This is how they reveal their willingness to be his disciples and keep from succumbing to the temptation to give up their faith in God in the midst of intense pain and suffering.

Consequently, it makes more sense to conclude from this letter that Peter is writing to both Gentile and Jewish believers, and maybe to mostly Gentile believers (?), and not to only Jewish believers. Here, Peter encourages his believing Gentile readers (and Jewish readers by extrapolation) to persevere in their belief and moral obedience with the result that pagan idolaters (and anyone who adheres to erroneous Judaism) will first observe their biblical moral

behavior and then incur God's condemnation, which will be the way that they glorify God when He completes His judgment of all human beings at the end of the present realm. These unbelievers will not glorify God by believing, embracing, and speaking about how wonderful God is when the judgment occurs. Instead, they will glorify Him by permitting Him to demonstrate His pure justice. As Peter said in 2:8, they have been appointed to suffer God's condemnation and eternal destruction. And as Paul says in Romans 9:22-24 first of the Jews and with ramifications for the Gentiles – 22 What if God, because He desired to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? 23 And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, 24 even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.

Even though Paul speaks of God's glory being made known on only "vessels of mercy," he does not mean that His glory is not also revealed through His just condemnation and destruction of "vessels of wrath." Paul is simply emphasizing at this point God's mercy as glorious.

In this way, Christians' good behavior in the midst of fighting against their inner sinfulness will be a fitting contrast to unbelievers' evil behavior that will be judged and condemned by God. The former will lead to believers' receiving eternal forgiveness and life. The latter will lead to unbelievers receiving eternal justice and destruction. And both outcomes will glorify God because of His mercy and justice respectively.

And the unbelievers' glorifying God at the judgment will be after they have observed (ἐποπτεύοντες) the good deeds of Christians. Peter will mention again the importance of unbelievers' observing believers' good conduct of life in the context of believing wives and unbelieving husbands (3:2). Their good behavior is a vital manner of proclaiming the gospel to unbelievers, because it confronts them with the importance of morality in the presence of God.

<sup>38</sup> Ὑποτάγητε τὴν πάσῃ ἀνθρώπινῃ κτίσει διὰ τὸν κύριον, εἴτε βασιλεὶ ὡς ὑπερέχοντι –

Now Peter provides four examples (people under their government, slaves under their masters, wives "under" their husbands, and husbands with respect to their wives) of "good deeds" (2:12) which his Christian readers should pursue, and then he will bottom line it all in 3:8ff.

Thus, he lists several ways that Christians should demonstrate doing good in the midst of unbelievers' claiming that they are doing evil. Each of these ways involves a human authority structure—government to whom its citizens should submit, masters to whom their slaves should submit, and husbands to whom their wives should submit. It is interesting that God has sovereignly embedded in the fabric of reality in both the present, temporary realm and the future, eternal realm situations where a human being leads/rules over other human beings who follow/obey him. On the one hand, in the present, temporary realm, governments and marriages are morally good, while slavery is morally evil. On the other hand, Jesus will rule over all those who enter fully into the eternal Kingdom of God in the future either beginning with the restored Kingdom of Israel and the millennial kingdom of Revelation 20, or beginning with the end of this coming messianic kingdom. And Peter mentions in this letter and in this order the present relationships of the government/citizen, master/slave, husband/wife, and, at the end of the letter and not really related to the previous three examples, the elder/"younger" relationships within the Christian communities of his day.

Additionally, in the case of the Christians who receive this letter in the 1<sup>st</sup> century Roman Empire, the first three relationships involving authority are ones that are out of their control. As citizens of the Roman Empire, they cannot get rid of the emperor and his subordinate governors, nor their masters if they happen to be slaves, nor their husbands as wives. It is also important to realize that Peter is not sanctioning and granting theological approval to slavery, in spite of its appearing in OT times too. He is giving moral advice and counsel to those who are stuck in the institution as it exists with no end in sight in the Roman Empire where rebellion against the government is something that he is not advocating and that more than likely will never happen because of the Roman army and their tight grip on the political situation among the citizens.

The question that Peter is answering here in 2:13-17 is not, "Is it ever right to rebel against government (or other authorities)?" so that the answer is, "No." The question he is answering (as Paul is in Romans 13) is, "Is it ever right for Christians, whose king and ultimate authority is God along with the earthly Messiah Jesus, to obey existing governments (and other authorities)?" and the answer is, "Yes." And this would also be true for Jewish Christians whose government of the "great nation" of the Abrahamic Covenant will include the Mosaic Covenant, that in the meantime, they should submit to the laws in whatever country they reside until Jesus returns and restores the Kingdom of Israel for them on the land of Israel.

In the future, eternal Kingdom of God, it will obviously be Jesus as the human being who is the icon of God whom all human beings will follow. He will be the ultimate human leader for all of eternity. And it is probably because of both God's relationship with all human beings who are obligated to follow Him as their transcendent Creator and Jesus' relationship with the citizens of the eternal Kingdom of God who will be obligated to follow him as the King of the eternal realm that God designed the present realm in such a way that it includes examples of a human authority structure. In a sense, we get to practice submitting to human beings in this realm as we ready ourselves for submitting to Jesus in the Kingdom of God. Plus, we get to see how sinful human beings provide bad examples of the government/citizen relationship through their tendency towards tyranny and inappropriate rebellion.

In the present realm where all human beings are sinners, the absence of especially the government/citizen relationship of leaders/followers could lead very easily to anarchy and chaos. If every person did exactly what he wanted to do at every moment of his sinful life, the result would be tremendous hurt, pain, and suffering for everyone—even more than

what has existed in human history. However, in the future realm where all human beings will be morally perfect, theoretically there will be no need for a human leader, because God, the transcendent Creator, and His moral commandments will be everyone's leader. Nevertheless, God has designed into the Kingdom of God a king, His proxy and unique representative Jesus of Nazareth, who is God within the creation. And because Jesus is the central figure of all creation for all eternity, he will also be the ultimate human leader.

Thus, one of the most obvious ways in which Christians demonstrate goodness in the face of critical unbelievers is by willingly submitting to governmental authorities—while Christians also submit to their eternal king, Jesus of Nazareth, as their Messiah, who will be their advocate before God and secure His eternal mercy for them at the final judgment. Therefore, submitting to various authorities, including Jesus, becomes an offering to God by Christians as priests (2:5,9), while always keeping in mind that God is the ultimate sovereign Ruler and is a morally perfect Leader. Even though this seems contradictory, obeying Jesus as king while also obeying those who reject Jesus as king, Peter will explain that this is actually “the will of God” (2:15).

It can hardly go unnoticed that sinful human leaders in history have perpetrated unspeakable evil and suffering on their followers, including on Christians who, by their pursuit of biblical morality and by their willingness to proclaim the good news of God's eternal mercy through Jesus, are constantly presenting the one, true explanation of reality to the world. But it is precisely this explanation of reality to which ALL human beings, left to themselves, are hostile, which means that ALL rulers, as even implied by Peter in this letter, tend towards expressing great disdain towards the biblical message. Yet, Peter is also saying that Christians are morally obligated to subordinate themselves to and obey leaders who are hostile towards them and their God while these very same Christians are morally obligated to subordinate themselves to and obey their ultimate human leader, Jesus, who himself subordinated himself to and obeyed governmental leaders who were so hostile towards him that they murdered him!! Peter will add this element to his argument in this letter starting in 2:21.

As a bit of an aside, on the one hand, the Mosaic Covenant forbids Jews to submit to or “make alliances” with “foreign” powers. Nevertheless, in light of the circumstances in Peter's day where the Jews cannot have their own completely independent government on the land of Israel, it makes sense to the apostles, perhaps partly because Jesus himself submitted to both the Jewish and Roman authorities when he was on earth, to comply with the Roman government until God sees fit to return the Jews to their land and establish them as an independent nation, which will occur when He fulfills His promise to Abraham at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus to make of them a “great nation” (cf. Romans 13; Revelation 20).

Therefore, submitting to the Roman government would be true for especially the Gentiles who have no formal obligation to the Mosaic Covenant. In addition, the Gentile believers could have easily concluded that they, like the Jews, have no formal obligation to authorities in the present realm, because their ultimate destiny is the eternal realm, and their ultimate ruler is the king of the eternal Kingdom of God, Jesus. They could think that their citizenship in the eternal Kingdom of God releases them from responsibility to follow governments in the present realm. However, Peter is teaching them that part of what it means to be a follower of the Jewish Messiah—for the sake of one's eternal salvation—is to submit humbly and honestly to present, sinful earthly authorities (just as Jesus did! Cf. 2:21ff.). Indeed, the idea of Christians' submitting to another king, Jesus, eventually became a major complaint among the Romans and the reason for great persecution towards Christians. This characteristic of Christianity was even used by unbelieving Jews as a criticism of Christians, hoping to land them in trouble with the Roman authorities. Cf. Acts 17:6,7 – When [the hostile and unbelieving Jews] did not find them [Paul and Silas], they began dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, “These men who have upset the world have come here also. Jason has welcomed them, and they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus (emphasis mine).” Of course, the irony is that Jews are supposed to be looking for the Messiah as predicted by OT, and this Messiah will be “another king,” standing opposed to “Caesar” or to any other ruler who would reject him as *their* king. Therefore, the Jews in Acts 17 were rejecting their own OT theology in their efforts to criticize Christians and cause the Roman government to punish the Christians for treason.

<sup>39</sup> εἴτε ἡγεμόσιν ὡς δι' αὐτοῦ πεμπομένοις εἰς ἐκδίκησιν τ' κακοποιῶν ἢ ἐπαινον δὲ ἀγαθοποιῶν – Peter is saying that, in general, the purpose and the intent of all governments are to do what is right with respect to (divinely prescribed) justice—to punish criminals who are really criminals and to show approval for those who do actual, biblical goodness within society, in order to encourage all their citizens to pursue goodness and shun evil. Peter, like Paul in Romans 13, is certainly not naïve as to think that governments may not succumb to such evil residing in their leaders that very harsh, cruel, and oppressive circumstances will occur for their citizens, as in the case of the Spanish Inquisition, the German Holocaust, the Turkish genocides, American slavery, etc.

However, Peter is putting forth a general principle to which Christians should abide and even describing a perfect government, which only that of Jesus during the millennial kingdom will be. As a result, all Christians need to think through exactly what biblical wisdom would call them to do in very harsh circumstances. The same goes for situations involving evil masters (cf. 2:18-20) and unbelieving (and oppressive?) husbands.

It seems to me that, because the Bible calls us to respect the individuality of each person who must wrestle with his own personal issues and circumstances before God, no one has the right to tell another person what to do in any of these difficult circumstances, i.e., whether to flee or stay, or something in between. This is to say that no pastor, elder, therapist, or even friend should ultimately decide what another individual Christian should do in difficult circumstances

that involve a leader in this Christian's life. It is only the individual Christian who has ALL the data that is necessary to make a good decision in such situations, and, therefore, it is only the individual Christian who has the right and the responsibility to make such a decision. Others may offer their perspective but can never claim to know the situation well enough to decide for the person what he or she must do.

It also seems, as I mentioned above, that Peter is setting forth a general truth to the effect that leader/follower circumstances will tend towards being oppressive towards the followers—because of the sinfulness of the leaders. Even though Peter does not put the elder/younger relationship of a Christian community directly in the same context as the other three leader/follower relationships, it eventually became true that Christian communities became oppressive for the followers of Jesus after the death of the apostles in the 1<sup>st</sup> century of the Roman Empire. Notice in 5:3 that Peter warns Christian leaders about becoming heavy handed towards their Christian followers, thus revealing that he recognized that even Christians can do so because of their continued, inherent sinfulness.

Unfortunately, Christian leaders have historically granted themselves much more authority, basically apostolic authority, than they should have. The most obvious example has been the overweening and excessive confidence that they have exhibited with respect to their understanding of the Bible, effectively making themselves equally authoritative as, if not more authoritative than, the Bible itself. For example, their insistence that historical councils and creeds, which have put forward ideas that have subsequently been adopted by most other Christians and, therefore, have become “traditional” is, in fact, a denial of biblical and apostolic authority. Of course, Christian leaders have tried to back up their confidence in “traditional” doctrines with their own supposed study of the Bible, but they have not actually demonstrated adequate knowledge in the authors' arguments (in my opinion, which is just another opinion, and is certainly not apostolic!!). Therefore, in this way, Christian leaders have become tyrannical and oppressive, like their political counterparts, which means, also, that Christian leaders have become as hostile to the biblical message and to Jesus (!) as these political counterparts, even while claiming to worship Jesus. By refusing to grant individual respect and responsibility to each believer in Jesus as the Messiah, these leaders have rejected the truth of the Bible in its description of the nature of mankind, which ultimately requires each person to submit to ONLY the biblical authors as authoritative spokesmen for God and Jesus and to no one else.

<sup>40</sup> ὅτι οὕτως ἐστὶν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ἀγαθοποιούντας τ' φημοὺν τὴν τῶν ἀφρόνων ἀνθρώπων ἄγνοσίαν – Foolish men = pagan Gentiles and erroneous Jews, especially those in positions of authority within the Roman government, who refuse to embrace Jesus as their king and Messiah and are critical of Christians for their belief in spite of their moral behavior. Thus, Peter states that it is even more important for his Christian readers to comply with the divine plan of the government before Jesus returns and establishes his own as a way to give unbelievers no reason to complain about them and the fact that their religious beliefs are contrary to the socially accepted norm within the Roman Empire. Pagan religious people believed that adherence to the longstanding traditions of the Roman Empire's various religions was vital to the survival of the empire in that their religious performances kept the gods happy and gracious towards its inhabitants. And erroneous Judaism denied the fact of a crucified Messiah. Thus, for the pagan Gentiles, Christianity, even more than Judaism, because the latter at least had a track record of centuries old established traditions, could therefore potentially upset the gods. And for erroneous Jews, Christianity could upset the delicate balance that currently existed between the Roman government and the monotheistic Jews.

However, Peter is saying that if Christians do all they can within society to comply with its politically created laws and its accepted moral standards (as long as they are not contrary to God's moral commandments), then they can reduce to a minimum the objections to their esoteric religion.

In addition, people, who are fundamentally hostile to the biblical message, will always look for ways to criticize Christianity and Christians. Therefore, acting well within society will at least reduce the possibility of criticizing Christians for the wrong reasons. However, we know from history, that Christians' pursuit of good, honest, biblical morality never eliminated the option of unbelievers' criticizing them. In fact, it is true that sometimes Christians' moral behavior actually exacerbates (increases!!) the hostility towards them by unbelievers by exasperating (annoying to an extreme degree!) these unbelievers. This is what Peter will go on to talk about in 4:1-5.

<sup>41</sup> ὡς ἐλεύθεροι καὶ μὴ ὡς ἐπικάλυμμα ἔχοντες τῆς κακίας τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἀλλ' ὡς 'θεοῦ δοῦλοι' – Yes, Christians are free from the pagan gods and any cultural/political obligation that they may feel to them. Christians are also free from this world with its lies and deceptions, and they are ultimately free from all other human beings, even their governmental leaders who are not as great in authority as God and Jesus. But this does not give Christians the right to act any way that they want. Instead, they have an even greater moral obligation to the *polis* of their culture, i.e., to submit to the governing authorities. Therefore, what comes with a commitment to the Jewish Messiah and willful enslavement to God and him is an obligation to extend one's moral behavior beyond the community of believers to the community of unbelievers, indeed, to the whole Roman Empire and its leaders.

Christians are free from the world in that it is not their final home or source of authority. But they are free also to submit to the world's governments and laws as a means to keep peace within a country and humbly wait for Jesus' return.

<sup>42</sup> πάντας τιμῆσατε, τὴν ἀδελφότητα ἡγαπάτε, τὸν θεὸν φοβείσθε, τὸν βασιλέα τιμᾶτε – By being slaves of God and willing to submit to a nation's laws (as long as they do not require Christians to violate God's moral commandments), Christians show this by respecting all human beings as made in the image of God with their own individual accountability before God at the final judgment, by caring for their fellow Christians and their physical,

psychological, emotional, and spiritual well-being, by truly fearing God more than man for the sake of their eternal salvations, and by respecting their political leaders as those who are placed in their positions by God in His sovereignty—even if their political leaders become a major test of their faith and trust in God because of their evil behavior (implied).

<sup>43</sup> Οἱ οἰκέται ὑποτασσόμενοι ἐν παντὶ φόβῳ τοῖς δεσπόταις, οὐ μόνον τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς καὶ ἐπιεικέσιν ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς σκολιοῖς – This is the first way that the Christians can “honor all men” (v. 17) and the second way that Christians can “hold to a good way life among the Gentiles” (cf. 2:12). These household slaves (οἱ οἰκέται) could be Jews, but at this point in Roman history, it seems more likely that they are Gentiles who were prisoners of war after Rome conquered other nations and peoples. Or they may be fellow Greeks who willingly became the property of the wealthy citizens in order to survive.

And perhaps the Gentile slaves have concluded that their eternal destiny and enslavement to the eternal Master, the Jewish Messiah, no longer obligates them to their earthly masters, especially to those who mistreat them. However, Peter is pointing out that an important element of Christianity is that it does obligate its followers to treat those in authority over them (even in the master/slave relationship which cannot be changed in the Roman Empire) with respect and obedience, even if it is clear that the latter, by their outward behavior, are dishonest and evil. Peter is saying that this is true even for those in the Roman Empire who have lost their freedom and right to live as they want, i.e., slaves. The slaves should obey their masters with the respect that is due all human beings who are made in the image of God and are in need of His mercy and forgiveness just as much as Christians have discovered that they are. Cf. 1 Peter 3:2 regarding wives of husbands who are unbelievers.

These verses, like similar ones in Paul’s letters, are not a moral argument for or against or an evaluation of slavery *per se*, but simply an exhortation to submit to earthly masters, even in the unfortunate situation of slavery, *if it exists*.

Slavery in the Roman Empire was not something that the slaves could change. They were stuck in their slavery, so that their status and role within society was out of their control. Peter is exhorting the *Christian* slaves who are part of the *Christian* groups to whom he is writing to act in a biblically moral manner in a situation that they cannot change and in which they are stuck. So this should be the case for any Christian who finds himself in a situation where he has no choice to be or do otherwise. Keep loving others and living the truth of the gospel as well as possible while trusting God to render justice in regard to their situation when He sees fit, especially at the final judgment—and until they can extricate themselves properly from the difficult circumstances.

<sup>44</sup> τοῦτο γὰρ χάρις ἔστι διὰ συνείδησιν θεοῦ ὑποφέρει τις λύπας πάσχων ἀδίκως – Again, Peter is assuming that the person cannot change his circumstances and, as far as he can tell at the moment, is stuck in his difficult situation without any recourse.

Thus, the respect and deference given to immoral leaders who treat their subjects/followers/slaves unfairly and immorally is an important example to human beings of God’s grace and mercy that is freely given to Christians who are granting them respect and deference, because the whole circumstance has not only been planned from eternity by the transcendent Creator and Storyteller, but also involves the sustaining of the authentic believer’s belief in the Jewish Messiah in the midst of intense difficulties that could potentially crush the person’s belief. It is also a good example of God’s grace and mercy towards the Christian which He freely gives to him even though he does not deserve them. As a result, the circumstance also includes humility for the believer that is based upon an understanding of God’s sovereignty and His project of using the present, evil realm as a springboard to the future, eternal realm. Therefore, a slave should be willing to put up with the junk in his life, while humbly and graciously waiting for God to complete His plans for him and move him into the eternal Kingdom of God.

The concept of having a good understanding of reality, of which God is at the top of the list of important things within this reality, is central to Peter’s point in this whole letter (cf. 1 Peter 2:2; 3:16,21). It is what a human being knows and grasps intellectually that drives him to make the choices that he does. Thus, Peter exhorts his readers to continue growing in their understanding of God so that their choices reflect truth and not error, thereby providing a clear contrast between believers and non-believers in this world.

<sup>45</sup> ποῖον γὰρ κλέος εἰ ἀμαρτάνοντες καὶ κολαφιζόμενοι ὑπομενεῖτε; ἀλλ’ εἰ ἀγαθοποιοῦντες καὶ πάσχοντες ὑπομενεῖτε, τοῦτο χάρις παρὰ θεοῦ – Peter asks if there is anything for which someone can be praised if the person does what is wrong and is punished for it, even enduring the suffering as something which he deserves? The answer is an obvious, No! But if someone, in this context a Christian slave, is obeying God and obeying his master by doing what is good and shunning evil and immorality, and then he suffers for the good which he is doing, probably because his master is simply choosing to be hostile to God, His truth, and one of His followers, he by the endurance of his belief and his goodness is demonstrating God’s grace in his life.

Thus, Peter puts the point of v. 19 even more clearly by stating that it is only God’s grace as it is granted to human beings who do nothing really wrong in society, for example, as slaves obeying their masters and yet are harshly treated and even punished as if they are committing great crimes, that causes an authentic believer to persevere in his belief and endure being unjustly punished.

<sup>46</sup> εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ ἦν ἐκλήθητε, ὅτι καὶ Χριστὸς ἔπαθεν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ὑμῖν ὑπομιμνῶν ὑπογραμμὸν ἵνα ἐπακολουθήσητε τοῖς ἵχνεσιν αὐτοῦ – The Messiah suffered at the hands of the Roman and Jewish leadership for doing what is right. So should all Christians be willing to do so as following in his footsteps. This is their calling from God, to be like their Messiah.

It is important for understanding Peter's argument regarding compliance with various leaders, as part of the authority structure which God has embedded in reality, to recognize that he is saying that the situation for Jesus was such that he did no wrong before men and submitted to being unjustly punished by the governments of the Roman Empire and the Jewish people—as not only his calling from the Father but also as the plain design of the reality in which we live until Jesus returns and squashes all earthly rebellion against God and him, thus tolerating no dissent when he rules.

Indeed, this fits the whole context here in this portion of 1 Peter. Jesus submitted to the authorities of his day, even though they were acting illegally and immorally, especially by virtue of the fact that they were obviously rejecting and murdering God's Messiah and king of the universe. Even though Pontius Pilate claimed that Jesus was innocent, he insulted Jesus by refusing to recognize him as God's proxy and the Jewish Messiah. And he unjustly mistreated him by giving in to the intimidation of the Jews and crucifying an innocent man. Therefore, Pilate was equally culpable with the Jews in murdering Jesus on the cross. Yet, Jesus, because his role as the Messiah required that he die, complied with both the Roman leaders and the Jewish leaders, leaving all Christians an example to follow in the midst of their own circumstances of unjust, immoral, and anti-God treatment by leaders—unless they can reasonably leave their circumstances.

Therefore, it is the same scenario of Jesus that Jesus' followers must be prepared to endure, simply because of their choosing to associate with him. Consequently, the same humility, patience, and grace that Jesus exhibited in the face of immoral and unjust human authorities should be reflected in the lives of his followers in the midst of the same kind of treatment by the world, i.e., hostility towards God and the truth of the biblical message—especially the gospel of God's mercy through Jesus.

Indeed, as mentioned above, it seems that Peter and other NT authors assume that all human authorities do act to some degree immorally, so that the prime example of their immorality will be their hostile mistreatment of genuine believers in the Jewish Messiah. This only reveals their inherent corruption, because they refuse to submit to the Bible and its divine message about the nature of reality that features Jesus of Nazareth as the central character of human history and the eternal priest and king of those human beings who are willing to embrace him as such. As a result, all human governments up to this point in history and continuing until Jesus returns become great examples of how not to lead and rule other people. And they should make believers long for Jesus' return when all this will change as he becomes the prime ruler of the world.

<sup>47</sup> ὃς ἀμαρτίαν οὐκ ἐποίησεν οὐδὲ εὐρέθη δόλος ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ – Probably the most difficult OT concept for the Jews to accept is that their own moral perfect Messiah, who would free them from their enemies, from unjust governments, and from God's condemnation, had to be rejected by them and the current Roman government in order to fulfill his divinely given role. This is the message of Isaiah 53, which Peter quotes to the effect that Jesus, having done nothing to deserve punishment, unjustly suffered under his contemporary authorities, thus accepting God's role for himself as the suffering Messiah.

[Isaiah 53:9](#) His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet he was with a rich man in his death, because he had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in his mouth (LXX – οὐδὲ εὐρέθη δόλος ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ).

<sup>48</sup> ὃς λοιδορούμενος οὐκ ἀντελοιδόρει, πάσχων οὐκ ἠπείλει, παρεδίδου ὁ δὲ τῷ κρίνοντι ὁ δίκαιος – This is how Jesus “honored all men” and complied with the ruling authorities (2:13,17). By refusing to defend himself at the very moment when he was being unjustly treated by the Romans and by his own people, the Jews, Jesus was demonstrating that he was willing to follow God's eternal plans and purposes for him as the Messiah, who would suffer death on behalf of his people, both believing Jews and believing Gentiles.

All the while, Jesus considered the fact that God the Father is both sovereign over human history, thus orchestrating his own painful circumstances, and was evaluating/judging even him, his choices, and his actions, so that he, the most important human being of all history, committed himself to desire fundamentally to obey God and therefore to obey Him completely.

Plus, God would eventually evaluate and judge the choices of those who unjustly mistreated him such that they would encounter God's wrath and destruction—if they never became authentic believers during their lives. Jesus was willing to wait for God's justice, both when the Romans would destroy Jerusalem and at the end of history, rather than insisting that justice be fulfilled immediately by rescuing him from his Roman and Jewish enemies.

As he was confronted moment by moment with the rejection of his messiahship by both Gentiles and Jews, he simply kept handing himself emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually over to God and His eternal plans for him, thus never insisting that people treat him differently from the way that they were. Thus, he too was “holding fast to his good way of life among the Gentiles” and the Jews (cf. 2:12) as an example for all Christians. And he was humbling himself under the mighty hand of God so that He would exalt him at the proper time, casting all his anxiety on Him (cf. 5:6,7).

<sup>49</sup> ὃς τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν αὐτὸς ἀνήνεγκεν ἐν τῷ σώματι αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον, ἵνα ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις ἀπογενόμενοι τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ ἡζήσωμεν, οὗ τῷ μώλωπι ἡ ἰάθητε – cf. Isaiah 53:5, “But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed (וְלִפְנֵי הַיְשָׁרִים הָיָה מוֹלַתָּנוּ) (τῷ μώλωπι αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς ἰάθημεν).”

Peter, like Isaiah, is referring to the judicial mercy that his Christian readers will receive at the final judgment through Jesus' advocacy. In this sense, Jesus has “born our sins in this body” and “healed” us by suffering death which he did not deserve but that we deserve. Thus, Jesus' death at the hands of the Roman and Jewish governing authorities should move us intellectually to renounce immorality because of its heinous and death-deserving nature, and embrace biblical



Switching metaphors, Jesus' death also produces a cure of sorts for our immorality by intellectually leading us towards obedience to God that, if done perfectly, would not deserve death. All this assumes the miraculous inward change of fundamental commitments that Peter's readers have received from God. This change exists even while natural born rebellious passions wage war against their fundamental desires and even overwhelm them at times (cf. Romans 7). Yet, they also miraculously pursue goodness and morality, that will result in a complete moral transformation and perfection in the eternal Kingdom of God, after they have first received God's mercy at the judgment. And all this, Peter is arguing, should take place within the context of the difficulty of following sinful leaders—kings, governors, masters (and later, husbands and, by extrapolation, Christian leaders after the death of the apostles).

**Hebrew 9:28** so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many (ἅπας προσενηχθεις εις το πολλων ἀνενηκεν ἁμαρτίας), will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await him.

**James 2:21** Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar (**ἀνενέγκας** Ἰσαὰκ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον).

<sup>50</sup> ἦτε γὰρ ὡς πρόβατα ἡλωμένοι, ἀλλὰ ἐπεστράφητε νῦν ἐπὶ τὸν ποιμένα καὶ ἐπίσκοπον τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν – ἐπιστρέφω is used in the LXX to translate שׁוּב. For example, Deuteronomy 4:30, “When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days you will return (שׁוּבָה) (ἐπιστροφήση) to Yahweh your God and listen to His voice (שׁמָעָה בְּקוֹלֵי) (καὶ εἰσακούσῃ τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ).”

If Peter were writing to only Jews, he would be telling them that they have returned or turned to the God of the Abrahamic promise who has always been their Shepherd in theory because He called them to be His people for the sake of the earthly Kingdom of Israel which will appear first when Jesus returns and for the sake of the next earthly Kingdom of God after God destroys the present realm and creates a new one according to Revelation 21.

Again, this is like the master/slave relationship in the Roman Empire where it was politically and legally impossible for a wife to divorce and leave her husband. She was stuck in her relationship with him, and Peter is encouraging her how to conduct herself as a Christian in this situation which may be quite difficult.

<sup>52</sup> ἐποπτεύσαντες τὴν ἐν φόβῳ ἀγνὴν ἀναστροφὴν ὤμων – It would be the heartfelt commitment and moral choices that the wife makes corresponding to the truth of the biblical message that proclaims the “truth” to the unbelieving husband and becomes the human catalyst to his own belief. Her behavior is pure in the sense that it is based upon a single-minded commitment to the truth of the biblical message, especially regarding the Messiah and Jesus as this Messiah. It is respectful, literally “in fear” (ἐν φόβῳ), in that it is in fear of God and looks to the final judgment and God’s promise to execute His justice on those who rebel against Him and to grant His mercy to those who humble

themselves before Him with authentic inward repentance.

But these could be a reference to her sexually pure lifestyle and her respect for her husband, even if he mistreats her, both of which may have been in short supply in the Greco-Roman culture. Cf. 1 Peter 2:18 regarding slaves of masters who are either believers or non-believers.

But in the light of the next verse, I think that the first option is more coherent.

<sup>53</sup> ὃν ἔστω οὐχ ὁ ἔξωθεν ἑμπλοκῆς ὀτριχῶν καὶ περιθέσεως χρυσίων ἢ ἐνδύσεως ἱματίων κόσμος – Peter realizes that women down through history have enjoyed paying attention to their physical beauty. But he urges his female readers who are wives of husbands to whom they are submitting be even more concerned about their biblical moral beauty that stems from authentic inwardness. He is not condemning external beauty products. He is encouraging women to place an emphasis on their moral conduct from a genuine biblical inner change.

<sup>54</sup> ἀλλ' ὁ κρυπτός τῆς καρδίας ἄνθρωπος ἐν τῷ ἀφθάρτῳ τοῦ ἡραεῶς καὶ ἡσυχίου πνεύματος, ὃ ἐστὶν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ πολυτελής – Peter points out that the display of the biblical message in a person's life begins with inwardness, that itself is hidden from the sight of others, but that becomes manifest through the “spirit” of the person, which includes, like Jesus, an entrusting and handing over of ones' life and experiences to the sovereign and merciful God (cf. 2:23).

Thus, this inner characteristic of biblical belief with single-minded waiting for eternal life, which diminishes the need to get agitated about the things of the present life, manifests a certain morality that itself reveals the biblical message to those who come in contact with this person. Peter is NOT saying that the woman should have a quiet mouth (as though she should never speak), but instead a quiet SPIRIT, i.e., that her personness should include a worldview and psychological condition that is convinced of God's eternal plans, purposes, sovereignty, and mercy—all of which are in operation in the person's life at every moment. Therefore, this quiet spirit willingly and humbly submits to God's eternal plans and purposes that are being worked out in the woman's life, so that she is not uncontrollably disturbed by the negative circumstances in her life, including those of having an unbelieving husband.

This is of great value to God because it is the very condition which God requires for any sinner, whether male or female, to acquire eternal salvation and life.

<sup>55</sup> οὕτως γάρ ποτε καὶ αἱ ἄγιοι γυναῖκες αἱ ἐλπίζουσιν εἰς θεὸν ἐκόσμουν ἑαυτάς ὑποτασσόμεναι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν – Peter alludes to women in the OT who followed their husbands, and I think that we can add from the context that this was even when the latter were disobedient to God. However, we do not know exactly what their culture was like and what their circumstances were. So I think that it is unreasonable for us to assume that we understand all that was going on in their minds and the minds of their husbands that led to their submitting themselves to them. Perhaps in a different culture or with a different man, their decision could have been different, while also still considering themselves as doing the best they can to submit to their husbands. This is how they bejeweled themselves and made themselves look pretty.

Nevertheless, these women should be examples for the Gentile and Jewish Christian wives who are basically stuck in a situation where their husbands are not believers.

<sup>56</sup> ὡς Σάρρα ὑπήκουσεν τῷ Ἀβραάμ· κύριον αὐτὸν καλοῦσα, ἥς ἐγενήθητε τέκνα ἀγαθοποιοῦσαι καὶ μὴ φοβοῦμεναι μηδεμίαν πτόησιν – An example of a wife's following her husband (even when he was disobedient?) was Sarah and Abraham. There is no explicit instance in the biblical story of Abraham where Sarah calls him “Master” in the midst of his disobeying God. But there is the example in Genesis 18 after God has told Abraham that at his advanced age he is going to have a natural son by Sarah in her advanced age – [Genesis 18:12](#) Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord [יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי, ὁ δὲ κύριός μου = my Lord/Master] being old also?”

Therefore, I think that Peter is referring to her overall attitude and treatment of him, that certainly (for her own personal reasons, which we do not know exactly) included her compliance with his misguided ideas to tell the Pharaoh of Egypt (Genesis 12:10-20) and Abimelech, the king of Gerar (Genesis 20:1-18), that she was his sister, which resulted in some negative repercussions for the two kings. These were rather “terrifying” experiences for Sarah, but I think we can assume that her considering that God knew what He was doing by having given her Abraham with his stupid ideas sustained her belief through them.

Thus, the overall principle is for wives to subordinate themselves to their husbands as the way God has designed reality and as an important way for them to demonstrate the doing of good to a world that is most unbelieving. But certainly no one can tell any individual wife what this subordination looks like in any given situation. It is her sole, individual choice for which she is accountable before God.

<sup>57</sup> Οἱ ἄνδρες ὁμοίως, ὡς οὐκοῦν κατὰ γνώσιν ὡς ἀσθενεστέρῳ σκεύει τῷ γυναικείῳ, ἀπονέμοντες τιμὴν ὡς καὶ ὁ συγκληρονόμος χάριτος ζωῆς εἰς τὸ μὴ ἐγκόπτεσθαι τὰς προσευχὰς ὑμῶν – This is the third way that the Christians can “honor all men” (2:17) and the fourth way that they can “hold to a good way of life among Gentiles” (cf. 2:12).

The husbands are to treat their wives well as what Peter calls “a weaker vessel.” Three options for what he means—1) physically weaker; 2) weaker in terms of leadership with the biblical order of marital relationships; 3) lacking social power and authority to change her circumstances as a married woman within the Roman Empire. In this context of Peter teaching his readers how to be holy in their current situation in the Roman Empire among Gentiles who reject Jesus and are mistreating them, #3 makes the most sense. This is also coherent with his saying in the next clause that

the Christian husband is obligated to be holy by loving and leading his wife as someone whom God will equally accept into the eternal Kingdom of God. Paul is saying the same thing in Ephesians 5:15-31. We can assume that this exhortation by Peter to husbands must be obeyed even if their wives lack genuine belief (to match the situation that Peter described in 3:1ff. regarding believing wives complying with and loving their unbelieving husbands). Love for one's spouse is a biblical obligation regardless of the spiritual state of the other person.

Here, Peter assumes the husbands whom he is addressing are actual believers. Indeed, he connects a husband's salvation with his treatment of his wife. If he commits himself to treating her well, as a fellow human being who will also gain eternal life because of her belief, then he is properly demonstrating authentic belief. Peter also connects the husband's belief with his prayers to God. If the husband is praying for God to cause his belief to persevere so that he may obtain mercy and eternal life, then God will always answer in the affirmative—if his belief is authentic and he is treating his wife as someone who will also be granted mercy. However, if the husband lacks authentic belief and falls short of properly treating his wife, then no amount of appeal to God for mercy from a heart of unbelief will result in God's granting him eternal life. Thus, Peter is speaking absolutely, as though describing a thoroughly authentic heart which God will commend vs. a thoroughly rebellious heart which God will judge and condemn. Cf. 3:12 and the quote from Psalm 34.

Thus, Peter is once again connecting a believing sinner's eternal destiny to his conduct and way of living life, as well as to his knowledge of reality which we derive from the Bible. Knowing God results in understanding human beings as created by God and how to treat them according to the type of relationship that exists, e.g., husband/wife, government official/citizen, etc. This is to say that we are saved not just by our belief, but also by our actions which demonstrate either authentic belief or unbelief.

Also, with these exhortations to husbands, Peter is also implying that there is an eternal benefit to being a Christian government official or a Christian master of slaves. Granting one's followers the respect of being either co-heirs of eternal life or potential co-heirs will temper the leader's/ruler's/master's behavior towards his followers and make him treat his followers with due biblical respect. He will recognize them as owned by God their creator and not by him.

<sup>58</sup> Τὸ δὲ τέλος πάντες ὁμόφρονες, συμπαθεῖς, φιλάδελφοι, εὐσπλαγχνοί, ταπεινόφρονες – Here is the bottom line for how these Christians should be holy (1:15), should do what is right in the face of persecution and being slandered as evildoers, and should “honor all men” (2:17), while they “hold to a good way of life among the Gentiles” (cf. 2:12). Peter indicates that the above exhortations that include those specifically to Christian citizens who submit to their government, Christian slaves who submit to their masters, Christian wives who submit to their husbands, and Christian husbands who love their wives appropriately can be summed up *for them as Christians* in a unified thinking about the apostolic message of Jesus as the Messiah, along with a sympathetic caring for one another as fellow believers with the common goal of eternal salvation and life, tender and gentle towards one another, and humble before God as those who have received His gracious promise of eternal life, which they do not deserve.

In the next verse, he includes how these unified in thinking Christians should treat unbelievers, including those in authority who mistreat them and insult them.

<sup>59</sup> μὴ ἀποδιδόντες κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ ἢ λοιδορίαν ἀντὶ λοιδορίας, τοῦναντίον δὲ εὐλογοῦντες ὅτι εἰς τοῦτο ἐκλήθητε ἵνα εὐλογίαν κληρονομήσητε – It makes more sense to see Peter as speaking of how Christians should treat non-Christians. Yet, these exhortations can easily apply to their relationships with one another if these same issues arise there.

Thus, Peter includes treatment of hostile, non-believers (within the context of their fellow city dwellers who slander them and their leaders/followers) in the logical summary of his exhortations. He wants his readers (as mostly in the category of followers, because they are all members of the society of the Roman Empire who must follow their governmental leaders) to act in a gracious and giving way towards those who slander them as their fellow society members and towards those who rule over them, asking God to grant them the special favor of mercy and eternal life from God, just as He has done so for them!

As a result, God has called people who will receive His mercy at the final judgment to treat others, especially those who slander them for their Christianity, which certainly may include unbelieving and harsh leaders, with mercy in hope that God will treat them likewise at the judgment (while realizing that God may judge them as rebels against him (cf. 2:23) as it becomes clear at the judgment that they are not actual members of the “chosen people” of God (cf. 2:9)). Just as Jesus did not insult those who falsely accused him (the people of Israel, their leaders, and the Roman authorities), Christians should not insult their false accusers, including false accusers who are in positions of leadership within a particular human authoritative structure (cf. 2:23). Again, we see conduct connected with eternal salvation.

Cf. **Luke 6:36** “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”

<sup>60</sup> ὁ γὰρ θέλων ζωὴν ἀγαπᾶν καὶ ἰδεῖν ἡμέρας ἀγαθὰς παυσάτω τὴν γλῶσσαν ὅτι ἀπὸ κακοῦ καὶ χεῖλη τοῦ μὴ γαλήσῃ δόλον – LXX of Psalm 34:12 – τίς ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος ὁ θέλων ζωὴν ἀγαπᾶν ἡμέρας ἰδεῖν ἀγαθὰς . LXX of Psalm 34:13 – παῦσον τὴν γλῶσσάν σου ἀπὸ κακοῦ καὶ χεῖλη σου τοῦ μὴ λαλῆσαι δόλον.

<sup>61</sup> ἐκκλινάτω ὁδὸς ἀπὸ κακοῦ καὶ ποιησάτω ἀγαθόν, ζητήσάτω εἰρήνην καὶ διώξάτω αὐτήν – LXX of Psalm 34:14 – ἐκκλινον ἀπὸ κακοῦ καὶ ποίησον ἀγαθὸν ζήτησον εἰρήνην καὶ διώξον αὐτήν

<sup>62</sup> ὅτι ὀφθαλμοὶ κυρίου ἐπὶ δικαίους καὶ ὅτα αὐτοῦ εἰς δέησιν αὐτῶν, πρόσωπον δὲ κυρίου ἐπὶ ποιοῦντας κακά ὅτι ὀφθαλμοὶ κυρίου ἐπὶ δικαίους, καὶ ὅτα αὐτοῦ εἰς δέησιν αὐτῶν. LXX of Psalm 34:16a – πρόσωπον δὲ κυρίου ἐπὶ ποιοῦντας κακά. Psalm 34 was written by David when he feigned madness before

Abimelech who drove him away. Abimelech is most likely King Achish of Gath whom David feared would harm him (1 Samuel 21:10-15). In the Psalm, David expresses his trust in God who will be faithful to him and grant him life and protection from his enemies, especially Saul from whom he was also fleeing. The Psalm sounds like a description of all the Jews in the millennial kingdom who will be protected by God and provided with a life of abundance under the rule of Jesus as their king. But it is also an exhortation to continue to do good in the face of danger and persecution.

Peter uses David's words to encourage his Christian readers that they will enjoy God's protection of their authentic belief, so that they will acquire eternal life—the ultimate protection from those who are persecuting them. They will see the “good days” that they desire in the eternal Kingdom of God—but only if they follow David's example and obey Peter's exhortations to hold on to the apostolic message, to treat each other with humility and genuine care, and to be gracious and merciful towards people, including leaders (in government, in the master/slave relationship, in the husband/wife relationship) whom they must obey, who currently are hostile to the truth and towards them, while asking God to change His mind towards the unbelievers and save them.

The “upright” are those of genuine belief who believe God for the truth He has conveyed (the Mosaic Covenant to the OT Jews and the New Covenant to NT Christians) and are making every effort to do what is good and right according to God's biblical moral commandments.

God hears these people's prayers because they are those of genuine belief. Cf. 3:7 where Peter warns against husbands' mistreating their wives because their prayers will be hindered, i.e., go unheard by God, resulting in eternal condemnation instead of salvation. The OT principle results in the same thing as Peter is using Psalm 34 here.

For the face of Yahweh to be against “those who do evil” is for Him to reject them when it comes to who does and who does not enter into the eternal Kingdom of God. Again, this all points to salvation by a sinner's way of life and not just by his belief. His belief must be accompanied by behavior and conduct that is in line with God's moral commandments, including repentance of sin and making every effort to avoid sin.

Thus, the OT example of earthly protection and prosperity for the Jews if they obey God via the Mosaic Covenant becomes the principle for Christians who receive God's protection with respect to their faith and obedient way of life that leads to the prosperity of eternal life via the New Covenant and Jesus.

Cf. 1 Peter 1:5 – who are protected by the power of God with belief for a salvation [this is the Christian's “good days”] ready to be revealed in the last season.

<sup>63</sup> Καὶ τίς ὁ κακῶσων ὑμᾶς ἔάν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἐζηλωταὶ γέννησθε – This question by Peter is basically, “What does it matter that people persecute and hurt you physically in the light of your faith and good way of life, both of which you have more of a desire for than avoidance of pain from persecution in this life?” Perhaps people can kill the body, but they cannot rob you of eternal life if you demonstrate the authenticating marks of the biblical condition for it. “Who can harm you eternally when you have authentic belief in God and Jesus and obedience to their moral commandments and who will bring you eternal salvation?”

Cf. 1 Peter 1:17 If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth.

Cf. Luke 12:4 “I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do. 12:5 “But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!”

<sup>64</sup> ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ πάσχετε διὰ δικαιοσύνην, μακάριοι ἔσθε. τὸν δὲ φόβον αὐτῶν μὴ φοβηθῆτε μηδὲ παραχθῆτε – This is the first of two times that Peter says that his audience are “blessed” (μακάριοι) because they are doing what is good and right in the midst of suffering persecution. The next time will be 4:14 If you are insulted because of the name of the Messiah, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory (τῆς δόξης) and of God rests upon you.

Matthew 5:11 “Blessed are you when people insult you (ὅταν ὀνειδίσωσιν ὑμᾶς) and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 5:12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Cf. Isaiah 8:12, “You are not to say, ‘It is a conspiracy!’ in regard to all that this people call a conspiracy, and you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it (לֹא תִירָא וְלֹא תִפְחַד בְּכָל הַחֲסִידוֹת הַזֵּאת) (LXX – τὸν δὲ φόβον αὐτοῦ οὐ μὴ φοβηθῆτε οὐδὲ μὴ παραχθῆτε).” In Isaiah 8, God exhorts the prophet not to adopt the perspective of his fellow Jews in the southern kingdom of Judah, who were intimidated by the threats of Aram and the northern kingdom of Israel to come down and do battle against them with the purpose of destroying them (cf. Isaiah 7). Instead, Isaiah did what was good, the very thing Peter is exhorting his readers to do, and trusted God for the Davidic Covenant and the survival of the Davidic kingdom in Judah. Isaiah did not succumb to the temptation to come unspooled emotionally and psychologically in the face of other people's threats against God's plans and purposes and against even his life.

After first stating that the happiest state of a human being comes from being inwardly changed by God and having genuine belief, even if this is in the midst of the most painful circumstances that people hostile to the truth could perpetrate on believers, Peter uses the beginning of the quote from Isaiah 8 to encourage his readers not to fear these hostile people. While Isaiah definitely had fellow Jews in his “community,” the Kingdom of Judah, who feared with unbelief their attackers, the kingdoms, i.e., governing authorities, of Israel and Aram, Peter's genuine believers hopefully do not have anyone in their “communities,” the gathering of Christians in north and central Turkey, who fear with unbelief their attackers, the Gentile pagans, even the Roman authorities, masters, and husbands, who are hostile to the NT message of Jesus as the Messiah. In other words, the “they” of Isaiah 8:12 were the Jews in the Kingdom of



Judah, who failed to believe God for His promise of the Davidic Covenant in the face of their authoritative attackers and were crying out, “This is too hard!” (cf. LXX – σκληρόν ἐστὶν for קָשֶׁה הַיָּהוָה), while the “they” of the communities of Peter’s readers are hypothetical, because hopefully no one in their Christian communities are failing to believe God for His Messiah, Jesus, in the face of their attackers and persecutors—the present “leaders” of the three leader/follower relationships that Peter has listed as well as their fellow city dwellers who once were their friends in pursuit of immorality but now are verbally abusing them (cf. 1 Peter 2:12; 4:3-5).

At least, doing what is good and never failing to trust God is what Peter seems to imply and is very much hoping for his Gentile and Jewish Christian readers, which is why he is writing this letter.

<sup>65</sup> κύριον δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἀγιάσατε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν. ἔτοιμοι ᾗ πρὸς ἀπολογία πᾶντι τῷ ῥαῖτοῦντι ὑμᾶς λόγον περὶ τῆς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐλπίδος –

cf. Isaiah 8:13, “It is Yahweh of hosts whom you should regard as holy (יְהוָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ) (LXX – κύριον αὐτὸν ἀγιάσατε). And He shall be your fear, And He shall be your dread.” Peter interprets God’s words to Isaiah as exhorting the prophet to adopt a fundamental perspective on God such that, inwardly, he considers God’s statements as more important than any human being’s. Thus, Isaiah should follow God, not man. Likewise, Peter uses this exhortation to Isaiah to exhort his readers to consider the Messiah’s statements as more important than anyone else’s. Because the Isaiah text says in Hebrew simply “Yahweh of Hosts” while Peter writes in Greek the Lord the Messiah, Peter is demonstrating the equality of authority of the transcendent Creator’s words and Jesus the Messiah’s words. It is the message of the Messiah that Peter’s readers have heard through apostolic workers, so that they must follow him above anyone else (cf. 1 Peter 1:12).

This is the message of eternal hope, which Peter says is in his readers because they have committed themselves to believing it. The biblical hope is the enthusiastic expectation that Jesus will return and we will share his glory in the eternal Kingdom of God. The recipients of this letter will defend this message simply by repeating as true what they have already heard and that is based upon eyewitness accounts by the apostles (cf.

This biblical obsession with the message of the Messiah will allow Peter’s readers to speak of it to any unbeliever who may want or demand to hear about it, whether out of good or evil motivation. In fact, the context of 3:16 especially would seem to indicate that the latter is what Peter has in mind, that from evil motives people would want to know why these Christians believe such crazy ideas.

This is the fourth time that Peter has quoted from Isaiah.

<sup>66</sup> ἀλλὰ μετὰ πραύτητος καὶ φόβου. συνειδήσιν ἔχοντες ἀγαθὴν. ἵνα ἐν ᾧ καταλαλεῖσθε καταισχυρθῶσιν οἱ ἐπηρεάζοντες ὑμῶν τὴν ἀγαθὴν ἐν Χριστῷ ἀναστροφὴν – It makes more sense that συνειδήσιν ἔχοντες ἀγαθὴν means “having a good understanding,” i.e., grasp of the truth of the gospel, which Peter wants them to use for defending this most important message when they are asked or challenged by others to do so. Thus, Peter points out the great value of having an accurate intellectual grasp of God and His plans and purposes (cf. 1 Peter 2:2,16; 3:21). He assumes that his readers understand that God would have them treat unbelievers with gentleness while they also fear Him as the one who has made them authentic believers through His grace and the inward work of His Spirit. And this would be the case if they are speaking to unbelievers who especially are openly hostile to the biblical message, even and maybe if they are in positions of government leadership with respect to the Christians. Our tendency is to lash out at those who hurt us, even unbelievers who persecute us for our faith. But Peter is urging his fellow Christians to speak softly, gently, and truthfully to those who are hostile to God and the Bible.

But if God does not choose to be gracious and merciful to those to whom Peter’s readers speak, then, by treating them in such a way as they humbly before God and graciously communicate the message of Jesus as the Messiah to them, Peter’s readers will add just that much more leverage to the error of their opponents when they endure the humiliation of being judged by God as rebels and being condemned by Him to eternal destruction at the final judgment after Jesus returns.

As Peter has already stated, the unbelievers will “glorify God in the day of oversight” because they will have observed the “good way of life” of the believers and, yet, will be eternally condemned by Him. Their explicit rejection of what they have seen and know will actually demonstrate God’s own righteousness and justice in a marvelous manner that will bring honor to Him, but humiliation and shame to the unbelievers, And this is simply how God has designed reality. **Luke 6:28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you** (περὶ τῶν ἐπηρεαζόντων ὑμᾶς).

<sup>67</sup> κρεῖττον γὰρ ἀγαθοποιῶντας, εἰ θέλοι τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, πάσχειν ἢ κακοποιῶντας –

Is it possible to translate this verse, “For it is better, if the desire of God desires it, to suffer for doing good rather than doing evil”? Probably not. The “rather than” (ἢ) is followed by a participle similar to the one near the beginning and therefore is comparing the two and not the infinitive and the participle.

The bottom line here is that it is better to suffer persecution from the world now for doing what is good than to suffer eternal destruction from God later for doing what is evil—even though doing evil will save one from being persecuted now by the world, making life much easier..

Peter informs his readers that there is a major discrepancy in the present realm. While the right thing is for goodness to be praised and evil to be punished, the opposite happens, especially with respect to the biblical message and those who develop the courage to embrace it and live it out, especially in the context of authority structures where the leaders tend towards being hostile towards it. The moral makeup of human beings is such that they fundamentally rebel against the

goodness of the biblical truth and its explanations and commandments regarding God, His purposes, and His requirements for human beings. So the world causes suffering in the lives of Christians by persecuting them for their biblical goodness.

Thus, Peter is saying that his readers can expect, even because this is part of God's plan and desire, to be punished by the world for doing good, i.e., for embracing and living out the biblical message. But this is better, indeed radically more beneficial because of its eternal ramifications for them, than if people do what is evil and are punished for it later by God. The reason is that true, biblical goodness by a person results in eternal life, while a commitment to evil results in eternal condemnation and destruction.

<sup>68</sup> ὅτι καὶ Χριστὸς ἅπαξ περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν ἔπαθεν, ὁ δίκαιος ὑπὲρ ἀδίκων, ἵνα ὑμᾶς προσαγάγῃ τῷ θεῷ

θανατωθεὶς ὁ μὲν σαρκὶ ζωοποιηθεὶς δὲ τῷ πνεύματι –

Some manuscripts have the word ἀπέθανεν (=he died) instead of ἔπαθεν (=he suffered). But the latter makes more sense in the light of the rest of the verse – θανατωθεὶς ὁ μὲν σαρκὶ ζωοποιηθεὶς δὲ τῷ πνεύματι, i.e., that Peter would not repeat the idea of dying but would repeat the idea of suffering from the previous verse. Thus, he mentions first that Jesus suffered, because this is a major theme of the letter, and then mentions that his suffering was by means of death as opposed to any other kind of suffering that a human being can experience in the present realm.

As in 2:21ff., Peter comments on how Jesus' suffering becomes both an example and a precedent for his followers down through history. This, too, is a major theme in this letter.

Not only is it God's plan for Christians to receive mistreatment from the world for doing what is good and right, but the basis for their doing so includes the fact that Jesus experienced the same kind of mistreatment from sinners, especially governing authorities, in order to fulfill his role as the Messiah. He did what was good, like David and Isaiah quoted in the previous verses, and endured suffering and death in order to qualify to "lead" us to God at the judgment, when he will appeal to the Father for eternal mercy on our behalf at his second coming.

Option 1) consequently, after his death, God made Jesus' spirit alive by means of raising him from the dead as a truly viable person. His body died, but his person lived on. Option 2) Jesus was put to death (passive voice) with respect to his flesh, his earthly body which was mortal (while also being morally perfect), by God according to His plan, and then he was made alive with respect to his spirit, where he fulfilled his role as the Messiah so that God's design for him was to live eternally as Messiah, King, and Priest. Option 3) Jesus was put to death (passive voice) with respect to his flesh, his earthly body which was mortal (while also being morally perfect), by God according to His plan, and then he was made alive by means of the Holy Spirit; God raised him from the dead so that he could fulfill his role as advocate and king.

I think that #2 makes the most sense in the light of Peter's encouragement to his fellow Christians to fulfill their roles as those who have Jesus as their model and example and who will be made alive after death according to God's design.

In addition, the identical syntax for the words "flesh" and "spirit" does lend itself well to this interpretation

Peter alludes to the Mosaic Covenant and its multiple sacrifices by stating that Jesus' sacrifice was ἅπαξ = once and never again, or once and for all, thus qualifying him to be our high priest at the final judgment and appeal to God for eternal mercy on our behalf. The longest and most detailed explanation of this concept is in Hebrews 5-10.

<sup>69</sup> ἐν ᾧ καὶ τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύμασιν πορευθεὶς ἐκήρυξεν – I think that it is more logical and coherent to interpret the He here as God and therefore capitalize the H. Peter is saying that, on the basis of Jesus' death and resurrection, God, the transcendent creator did what he goes on to describe.

The phrase ἐν ᾧ can mean "on the basis of which" as in [Acts 4:12](#) "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which (ἐν ᾧ) [on the basis of which] we must be saved."

Also [1 Corinthians 15:1](#) Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which (ἐν ᾧ) [on the basis of which] you also stand.

Similar is [Romans 5:12](#) Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because (ἐφ' ᾧ – on the basis of which) all sinned.

Similar is [Hebrews 10:29](#) How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which (ἐν ᾧ – on the basis of which) he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

A few possibilities—1) These were unbelievers during the building of the ark, and then they became believers as the rain began and it became clear that they were going to die. Thus, they are not in "prison" *per se*, that will result in eternal condemnation, but they are in the "watch of the night," leading up to the Day of the Lord and the return of the Messiah, when they will finally receive God's eternal mercy. 2) These were unbelievers during the building of the ark, and they remained such until the moment they died, so that they are in the "prison" of death and will experience God's eternal condemnation at the judgment. 3) These were unbelievers imprisoned in their sinfulness and rebellion against God in the world during the time of Noah's building the ark whom the Spirit was communicating by Noah's building the ark God's threat and promise, as He always has in some way during human history, who rejected what the Spirit was saying to them and incurred God's wrath and destruction when the flood came. 4) In line with 2 Peter 2:4, these are *angeloi* (angels) who exhibited their rebellion during the time of Noah and who are being kept separate from all other spiritual beings in a kind of prison.

#3 makes the most sense—that Peter is using another OT example (he has quoted Isaiah 4 times already), and a very obvious one, to emphasize that God is always using His people to proclaim the truth of the biblical message to all of



humanity (Peter uses the weird phrase “spirits in prison” to refer to people who are stuck in their sinfulness in the world ) so that they may repent during the time of His patience. But most of them will refuse, stuck in their rejection of God and His truth, while they mistreat His people as they did Jesus and are put to shame (3:16) at the final judgment. Thus, on the basis of Jesus’ death and resurrection, the Spirit of God proclaimed righteousness and judgment/repentance through Noah and his actions to the people trapped in immorality in Noah’s day—their spirits (the direction and course of their lives as planned by God before the beginning of the creation) were in the prison of sin in the world and did not escape the punishment of physical death by means of the flood. These people, therefore, did incur God’s wrath and death while Noah and his family found salvation from the flood and death through the grace of God and on the basis of Jesus’ death which would eventually save them (if they were authentic believers) from eternal death. If this interpretation is correct, then the “now” in the NAS95 and the implied “now” in other English versions is not correct. God proclaimed the message of truth through Noah in his day to existing sinners, rather than Jesus’ proclaiming this message in his day to deceased sinners after he died.

<sup>70</sup> ἀπειθήσασιν ποτε ὅτε ῥάπεξεδέχετο ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ μακροθυμία ἐν ἡμέραις Νῶε κατασκευαζομένης κιβωτοῦ εἰς ἣν ὀλίγοι, τοῦτ’ ἔστιν ὀκτὼ ψυχὰι, διεσώθησαν δι’ ὕδατος – It has been the case and always will be the case that only a few, a minority, of people will obtain God’s salvation—whether in the midst of the flood during Noah’s day, i.e., physical salvation, or in the midst of the final judgment that results in eternal life. And these people during most of history are simply quietly going about their business of following God (and Jesus now), while their actions are actually declaring loudly and clearly that God is a moral judge and should be taken most seriously, or there will be severe and eternal consequences. It is our like-mindedness with respect to the truth, our compassion, brotherly love, kindheartedness, humble, etc. (3:8,9) that speaks volumes to the culture around us so that no one has an excuse before God.

Noah, as a man of faith designated by God for a special role in his day, led his family (a few people, i.e., eight of them; in comparison to the much larger number of unbelievers in the world) to God through the culture of unbelievers and the flood by means of the ark, while Peter is implying that Jesus, as the same kind of man, indeed the Messiah, leads only a few NT Christians (in comparison to the much larger number of unbelievers during Christian history) to God through their culture of unbelievers and the threat of eternal condemnation by means of their belief and appeal to God for mercy through him who died, i.e., through their water “baptism” where they recognize what Jesus has “built,” i.e., his ark-like salvation from eternal death through his own death and resurrection.

Cf. [Hebrews 11:7](#) By faith **Noah**, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness [justification?] which is according to faith. [Thus, both Paul and Peter infer from the story in Genesis of Noah that he was a preacher of the truth of God—of His mercy if they would be willing to join him in the ark, of His condemnation if they continued in their rebellion against Him.

Cf. [2 Peter 2:5](#) and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved **Noah**, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly.

Also, cf. [Matthew 24:37-39](#) and [Luke 17:26-27](#).

Thus, God has always had someone or something which has been a witness for him to unbelievers to encourage them to repent and believe, just as Paul says to the philosophers on the Areopagus in [Acts 17:26](#) “and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, [27](#) that they would seek God, if perhaps they might search for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; [28](#) for in Him we live and move and have our being, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His children.’” Even the Greek poet Epimenides had figured out that we are the products of God’s imagination and should acknowledge and worship Him as our source of existence.

Jesus is saying the same thing in [Matt. 5:44](#) “**But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, [45](#) so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.**” All of nature belongs to God, and He controls it for the benefit of all human beings, who, according to Paul in [Romans 1](#), have it within themselves to recognize this and worship God.

Thus, God had faithful Noah as a witness of God’s judgment and salvation to the unbelievers of his day, while He has faithful Jesus as the same in the day of the Christians in northern Turkey of Peter’s day. And He had faithful Peter and the recipients of this letter immediately after Jesus’ first appearance. And He has us in the modern world to proclaim the *dikaioσύνη* of Jesus to both believers and unbelievers.

<sup>71</sup> ὁ καὶ ὑμᾶς ἀντίτυπον νῦν σφῶζει βάπτισμα, οὐ σαρκὸς ἀπόθεσις ῥύπου ἀλλὰ συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς θεόν, δι’ ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ – Peter uses the word “baptism,” referring to water baptism which these Christians went through as a cultural expression of their faith in Jesus. But Peter makes it clear that water baptism ultimately refers to the process of human beings’ placing themselves in association with Jesus to appeal to God for eternal mercy through him.

This is a copy of Noah’s ark’s floating in the water of the flood of Genesis 6-9, where those on board chose to associate themselves with God instead of their rebellious culture. And both result in the rescue of people from death. In Noah’s day, the ark saved his family from physical death. In Peter’s day, association with Jesus who was raised from the dead will save people from eternal death and destruction. This is a declaration of allegiance to the Jewish God and particularly Jesus as the resurrected Messiah, which is intended to demonstrate an inward fundamental desire by the

person for God's mercy, a desire in fact that naturally leads to making an appeal to God for mercy that will be matched by Jesus' advocacy at the final judgment, i.e., at his second coming. The latter can obviously take place because Jesus has been raised from the dead for this specific role at the judgment.

For the fourth time, Peter mentions explicitly how valuable a proper grasp of the concepts of God and His plans and purposes are to the eternally bound sinful human being who believes in Jesus as the Jewish Messiah (cf. 1 Peter 2:2,19; 3:16). It is biblical understanding and belief in this truth that is fundamental to a person's being rescued by God from His eternal condemnation.

<sup>72</sup> ὅς ἐστιν ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ πορευθεὶς εἰς οὐρανὸν ὑποταγέντων αὐτῷ ἀγγέλων καὶ ἐξουσιῶν καὶ δυνάμεων – Peter mentions Jesus' current position, metaphorically speaking. As the Davidic king, he is in a position within the created reality both to rule over the creation as the Son of God and to act as high priest for sinful humans who appear at the final judgment at his second coming (cf. Psalms 8 & 110; Hebrews 1-10). It is this that Peter's readers have grasped that has led them to become believers in Jesus as the Messiah.

Thus, while Peter, in this letter, is encouraging people who are in positions of following leaders to do so willingly and humbly, ultimately, it is in order that they enjoy the leadership of the Messiah in the eternal realm, because all authorities and powers are in the process of becoming subject to him (notice here ὑποταγέντων αὐτῷ). The Christians to whom Peter is writing are obligated to comply (where it is morally appropriate) with evil, human authorities in order to reach the time when they will comply (perfectly and completely) with the only good, human authority in the creation, the Messiah. Sinful, human governments became prime examples of how NOT to govern in order to point believers towards the one and only good government of Jesus when he returns.

God will actualize Jesus' rule when he returns and restores the Kingdom of Israel and exercise hegemony over the entire world (cf. Deuteronomy 28).

<sup>73</sup> Χριστοῦ οὖν παθόντος σαρκὶ καὶ ὑμεῖς τὴν αὐτὴν ἔννοιαν ὀπίσασθε, ὅτι ὁ παθὼν τὴν σαρκὶ πέπαυται ἁμαρτίας – Peter now makes it explicit that Jesus' existence on earth becomes the paradigm for Christians. He suffered persecution and then physical death on the cross after encountering the full hostility toward God of the human authority structure of his day among both the Jews and the Romans. And his followers will do similarly, suffer physically “if the desire of God desires” (3:17), because they represent the same truth and message from God that he does. In this context, to “cease from sin/evil” is to be completely different inwardly as a sinful human being, so that a person's fundamental desire is to shun evil and pursue what is good as much as possible while approaching the final judgment and entrance into the eternal Kingdom of God (cf. the next verse, 4:2). This is to say that the person (authentic believer) who willingly allows himself to suffer the mistreatment of hostile unbelievers even to the point of death has clearly chosen to pursue goodness and morality instead of sin and evil so as not to permit himself to be bullied by the world into giving up his faith and hunger and thirst for righteousness just to save his life.

Implied is that all this inside a sinner comes about by the work of God and His grace through the Holy Spirit.

As Peter goes on to say in v. 2...

<sup>74</sup> εἰς τὸ μηκέτι ἀνθρώπων ἐπιθυμίαις ἀλλὰ θελήματι τοῦ θεοῦ τὸν ἐπίλοιπον ἐν σαρκὶ βιώσαι χρόνον – Peter states that the purpose of his readers' having a changed inwardness and pursuing goodness is so that they may behave completely differently from the unbelieving world for the rest of their lives “in the flesh,” i.e., as normal, physical human beings who have a natural born sinfulness as part of who they are.

By pursuing moral goodness in the midst of adversity and opposition to the truth, they will follow David, Isaiah, Noah, and mainly Jesus in fulfilling their role within God's story. They will obey the moral commandments of God and believe the biblical message rather than succumbing to the evil desires and influences that are encouraged by the lies of Satan and inherent in unbelieving sinful human beings so that they are led away from the truth of the Bible and from authentic belief.

Peter will be more specific about the actions that result from the “strong desires of men” in the next verses.

<sup>75</sup> ἀρκετὸς γὰρ ὁ παρεληλυθὼς χρόνος τὸ βούλημα τῶν ἐθνῶν κατεργάσθαι πεπορευμένους ἐν ἀσελγείαις, ἐπιθυμίαις, οἰνοφλυγίαις, κόμοις, πότοις καὶ ἀθεμίτοις εἰδωλολατρίαις – The moral intent of unbelieving Gentile human beings is no different from unbelieving Jewish human beings, but Peter mentions Gentiles specifically, because it is to mainly (?) Gentile believers to whom he is writing. Before they had become believers in the Jewish Messiah, they had accompanied their fellow Gentiles in rebelling against God by means of this list of actions that Peter provides. We notice that this list includes idol worship, which might be a way of referring to even the erroneous Judaism of Peter's day, but it makes more sense in midst of the other items, especially drunkenness and drinking parties, to interpret as actual pagan idolatry, which Gentiles, not Jews (?), would have practiced.

ἐν ἀσελγείαις – in licentious pursuits whereby sinners reject God's moral commandments and choose to do evil as what they think is good for themselves.

ἐπιθυμίαις – strong desires that obviously are opposite to what God requires as biblical morality and that people just naturally seek to fulfill because of their inherent sinfulness.

οἰνοφλυγίαις – consuming large quantities of wine that obviously result in getting drunk.

κόμοις – unrestrained feasting that including drinking large quantities of wine and other immoral behavior.

πότοις – drinking parties, probably for the sole purpose of getting drunk and acting accordingly, i.e., with unrestrained sin.

ἀθεμίτοις εἰδωλολατρίαις – forbidden worship of idols that was characteristic of both Gentile paganism and erroneous

Judaism as that which helped characterize their sinfulness. Gentiles actually worshipped figurines and the forces of nature as their gods while Jews worshipped a false Yahweh that they derived incorrectly from the Bible.

Therefore, he is saying that the time to pursue this kind of behavior that is immoral and contrary to God's desires has ended, while the time to live as God would have these Gentile and Jewish Christians do so has been since the time that they became believers. The implication, though, is that this will lead to mistreatment and insults from unbelievers, including from those in positions of authority over them—the Roman government which encouraged the worship of the false gods, the masters of Christian slaves, and the husbands of Christian wives.

<sup>76</sup> ἐν ᾧ ξενίζονται μὴ συντρεχόντων ὑμῶν εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν τῆς ἀσωτίας ἀνάχυσιν βλασημοῦντες – The other people in the communities inhabited by the Christians to whom Peter is writing and who have not embraced Jesus as the Jewish Messiah continue to rebel wholeheartedly against God [a flood of a complete lack of moral control—probably not true of everybody, but certainly of some, so that Peter is using them as the worst example. Like Paul's use of homosexuality in Romans 1. These would be those who exhibit an intolerant and unfriendly defiance of God vs. a tolerant and friendly defiance].

As a consequence, they cast aspersions and pour scorn on the Christians for changing their beliefs and their lives. In fact, it is shocking to the unbelievers that these Gentiles have adopted so different a belief system and lifestyle, when it was normal for people to change gods in the Roman Empires (as long as they upheld the actual Roman gods for the sake of the well-being of empire) and to pursue the same lifestyle as everyone else—abject immorality that included temple prostitution, etc.

Certainly, Jews neither condoned nor engaged (at least openly?) in this lifestyle. Instead, they had acquired a particular level of respect among even individual emperors, e.g., Tiberius, and were not expected to live as the pagan Gentiles did. But Peter's readers are former pagans of Gentile idolatry and former adherents of erroneous Judaism, and it would be absolutely shocking to their unbelieving friends that they were switching religions (abandoning the religions of their fathers and husbands) AND lifestyles, not to mention kings (the Messiah for Caesar, ultimately, and Jesus as the crucified Messiah). Indeed, it is the change in lifestyles that is important to Peter (and Paul—cf. his letters) as clear, public validation of the authenticity of people's belief in Jesus. This is why Peter (and Paul) emphasize loving one another within the Christian community and treating outsiders with love, patience, gentleness, respect, and grace. Perhaps the verbal abuse is mainly because the Christians are no longer calling Caesar their Lord in the sense that they worship him as the greatest human being (or Yahweh their God with the Messiah's not having appeared yet). Instead they call Jesus Lord and worship him as the greatest human being, indeed the very icon of God within the creation. Or it is because of a complete change in worldview and religion—exchanging the polytheism of the pagan culture and the erroneous Judaism for the strict monotheism and grace of Christianity with this man Jesus as king, priest, offering, and teacher—who has risen from the dead and will eventually rule the world when he returns.

<sup>77</sup> οἱ ἀποδώσουσιν λόγον τῷ ἑτοίμως ἔχοντι κρίναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς – In 3:15 Peter spoke of his fellow Christians' providing a defense of their faith and lifestyles to unbelievers, however the latter were asking for it. Here, he simply reminds them that their unbelieving friends will face God's judgment and will have to provide an adequate defense and explanation for their rebellion against Him. However, they will fail in doing so, because it is impossible to provide God with a sufficient rationale for one's inherent evil and immoral behavior that is contrary to His moral commandments.

In addition, believers will face God's judgment, too, but with Jesus as their high priest and advocate. Thus, God will judge both those who are destined for eternal life and obtain it ("the living") through His mercy and Jesus' advocacy and those who are destined for eternal death and destruction so that they experience it ("the dead") because they lack Jesus as their high priest and authentic inwardness during the course of their lives.

Cf. 2 Timothy 4:1 – I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom (Διαμαρτύρομαι τὸ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ μέλλοντος κρίνειν **ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς** , καὶ τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτοῦ).

<sup>78</sup> εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ νεκροῖς εὐηγγελίσθη, ἵνα κριθῶσι μὲν κατὰ ἀνθρώπους σαρκὶ ζῶσι δὲ κατὰ θεὸν πνεύματι – A few possibilities. 1) Because of the coming judgment, Jesus has announced his Messiahship to all those who have physically died before him (cf. v. 5), thus giving them the opportunity to believe in him after they have died, because they will be judged like all other people. 2) Because of the coming judgment, Jesus has announced his Messiahship to all those who have died before him (cf. v. 5) who were authentic believers, thus making them aware of their eternal salvation through him that will occur at the end of history when they will be judged like all other people, so that their hope of eternal life is drawing near "in the latter days" (cf. Genesis 49:1, **וְהָיָה אֲנִי לְבָרָכָה** , ἐπ' ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν).

3) Similar to what Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 4:13,14, Peter is saying that the NT gospel has been proclaimed to people who went on to die "according to men," i.e., by being condemned, persecuted, and killed, before the return of the Messiah, so that they will be rescued "according to God" from God's wrath and condemnation and "live with respect to their spirit," i.e., eternally, just as much as those who remain alive until the second coming of the Messiah. Just because people of belief died before the judgment of God has actually taken place does not mean that they miss out on the judgment of God, either to receive His eternal mercy through the Messiah or to be condemned eternally and destroyed. 4) The gospel has been proclaimed to those who will be judged as men and will reject the gospel and experience God's condemnation and destruction, because God has destined this for them in the "spirit," i.e., in that which He has planned for them in His mind before He brought the creation into existence.

#4 fits best the whole context, even Peter's having mentioned in 1 Peter 2:8 that God has appointed certain human beings to disobey the truth—and thus incur His condemnation. God will hold accountable people in the present realm, and those who are destined for eternal death will incur His wrath and condemnation. An important element of their accountability is how they responded to the information regarding Jesus—either rejecting it (like these people in this verse) or embracing (like the Christians to whom Peter is writing).

<sup>79</sup> Πάντων δὲ τὸ τέλος ἤγγικεν. σωφρονήσατε οὖν καὶ νήψατε εἰς τὴν προσευχάς – Peter is aware of God's project of bringing about first the restored, messianic Kingdom of Israel in the present realm and then the eternal Kingdom of God in the new creation with the Jesus' ruling over it, and he says that the time for all this to come to fruition is close at hand—even though he must also know that it is a long way off historically. What has happened that makes the kingdom “near” is that Jesus has appeared on earth for his first time. Now, it is only a matter of time before he reappears and restores the Kingdom of Israel, thus inaugurating the eternal Kingdom of God.

Peter is speaking exhortatively, to encourage his readers always to be thinking of the gospel and its message of hope for the future, starting with Jesus' return as the goal of this age of history and ending with a new, eternal earth of the next realm and set of ages. Cf. 2 Peter 3.

And he wants his readers to pray for the right thing, i.e., the perseverance of their belief, so that they survive the judgment and gain entrance into eternity with Jesus. In other words, he wants them to adopt the same understanding of reality as Jesus and his apostles, which is the message that they have received from the apostle Paul (see notes at 5:12) and others.

Cf. 1 Peter 3:7 You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered. Cf. 1 Peter 3:12 “FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE TOWARD THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER, BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL.”

<sup>80</sup> πρὸ πάντων τὴν εἰς ἑαυτοὺς ἀγάπην ἐκτενῆ ἔχοντες, ὅτι ἀγάπῃ καλύπτει πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν – This is a major theme of this letter—love for one's fellow believers in a culture that mostly rejects the truth and Christianity and, indeed, hostility (the very opposite of love) towards Christians.

Peter exhorts his readers to continue loving one another as an outward demonstration of their fundamental desire for mercy and forgiveness from God. In this manner, “love covers (so to speak) a multitude of immoral actions.” This is to say that it provides mercy and forgiveness in a context where people's hurtful actions actually deserve justice. A sinner's love is not the same as Jesus' propitiatory offering to God as they the former is an adequate appeal to God for mercy. But it is in line with Jesus' love for his fellow human beings who are sinners and thereby points to his sacrificial death on the cross as that which truly “covers a multitude of sins.”

Cf. Proverbs 10:12, “Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all transgressions (וְעַל כָּל-פְּשָׁעֵי הָאָדָם יְכַסֵּה אֱהָבָה) (πάντας δὲ τοὺς μὴ φιλονεικούντας καλύπτει φιλία).”

<sup>81</sup> φιλόξενοι εἰς ἀλλήλους ἄνευ γογγυσμοῦ – Even though the Christian community as produced by the Spirit of God in these regions contains people who never knew each other before, they are to treat one another as friends because of their common goal of eternal life. And they are to do so without complaining about how hard it is sometimes. Christians are still sinners, and at moments sinners are hard to love. Nevertheless, Christians are commanded to care for each other regardless of how difficult it becomes.

<sup>82</sup> ἕκαστος καθὼς ἔλαβεν χάρισμα εἰς ἑαυτοὺς αὐτὸ διακονοῦντες ὡς καλοὶ οἰκονόμοι ποικίλης χάριτος θεοῦ – Peter, like Paul in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12, indicates that God has assigned each believer a particular role within the community of Christians, and each role results in everyone's loving his fellow Christians appropriately. This is the same as the “very many-colored wisdom of God” that Paul speaks of — Ephesians 3:10 “so that the manifold wisdom of God (ἡ πολυποικίλος σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ) might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.” Paul adds the prefix πολυ meaning very, so the “very many-colored/diversified wisdom of God,” while Peter says the “many-colored/diversified grace of God.” They mean the same thing with Paul just adding a bit more emphasis.

Each Christian has an individual and different story within reality for the benefit of other Christians and their persevering in their belief. Just as Greek and Roman households had slaves who managed their homes and the proper operation of all the individuals within them, believers are to manage properly their individual roles with their different points of contact with other Christians that God has given each of them. As a result, Christians with their different stories carry out their intended purpose for the sake of their own and other's individual destinies and the health of the faith within the community.

Also, in Ephesians 3:2 Paul speaks of the τὴν οἰκονομίαν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ which was given to him, which is either God's gracious arrangement for Paul to be an apostle to the Gentiles or Paul's management of God's gracious gift of his being an apostle to the Gentiles.

<sup>83</sup> εἴ τις λαλεῖ, ὡς λόγια θεοῦ εἴ τις διακονεῖ, ὡς ἐξ ἰσχύος ἧς χορηγεῖ ὁ θεός, ἵνα ἐν πάσιν δοξάζεται ὁ θεός διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ᾧ ἐστιν ὡς δόξα καὶ ὁ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμήν – Peter states that the ultimate purpose of the creation and its human creatures within it is so that God may manifest His greatness that includes His mercy, morality, and goodness. Thus, when believers in God's Son, the Jewish Messiah, serve one another with love, even though many of them are strangers to one another, because they want God's mercy in the long run, this points to and manifests God's greatness—which is the point! The story of creation exists ultimately for God and not for us. Yes,

He will glorify us by transforming us into immortal and morally perfect beings, but His glorifying Himself is the main reason He does this.

There are two main roles with the Christian community—1) those who speak the instructions of God, teaching the biblical message to their fellow followers of Jesus as the Messiah (the appointed elders in the days of the apostles and by the apostles), or at least leading a discussion to arrive at the biblical author's intents (those of us who have lived after the apostles died and were unavailable to appoint and guide teachers), and 2) those who respond to the apostolic message by caring for their fellow Christians and their various needs—physical, emotional, and psychological.

Peter comments that the serving roles specifically should be carried out with “the strength which God supplies,” i.e., with the assumed grace with which God continues to work internally in authentic believers. But we can assume that this must be the same strength which those who speak and lead discussions use. In other words, everything Christians do for the sake of their fellow believers is with God's strength and power. Plus, we can assume that God is genuinely working inside Christians.

<sup>84</sup> Ἀγαπητοί, μὴ ξενίζεσθε τῇ ἐν ὑμῖν πυρώσει πρὸς πειρασμὸν ὑμῖν γινομένη ὡς ξένου ὑμῖν συμβαίνοντος – First, Peter calls his audience “Beloved,” i.e., those whom he loves as fellow Christians, just as they too should love all other Christians.

Then, he encourages them not to be surprised whenever they encounter an experience in life that is painful, literally a fiery ordeal in that it causes pain and suffering. This is because it is happening to them in order to test the authenticity of their faith and Christianity. Perhaps they are thinking that it is strange that they as God's children and those loved by God for the purpose of their being saved from His eternal condemnation are being subjected to such harsh circumstances.

In this way, Peter is reminding his readers that every painful experience this side of eternity has a divine purpose in their lives. It is intended to test and prove out the genuineness of their belief in God and the Jewish Messiah Jesus. Even if the difficulties feel strange and unwelcome as those loved by God, they should be embraced and welcomed by believers because of their intended purpose by Him.

Thus, Peter mentions another reason for doing what is right in the face of adversity and hostile treatment by unbelievers, in order to pass the test of their belief, while also rendering the condemnation of unbelievers just that much more glorious for God (cf. 2:12).

Life is fragile, and disruptions in what we have planned and done to keep ourselves safe, secure, and happy (including our becoming Christians) occur without warning. Our responsibility is to accept these painful disruptions with faith/belief, humility, and grace towards others. And we tend to take so much for granted in this highly technological world, things which can easily and quickly be taken away from us without warning and that hurt and make us sad. Again, our responsibility is to accept the painful loss with appropriate sadness and authentic belief in a God who is sovereign and loving.

<sup>85</sup> ἀλλὰ καθὼς κοινωνεῖτε τοῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθήμασιν χαίρετε, ἵνα καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ χαρήτε ἀγαλλιώμενοι – Peter indicates that any kind of suffering which comes from those who are hostile to God and His truth is like that which the Messiah Jesus experienced when he was crucified on the cross. Therefore, even if these Christians are not killed for their faith, they are suffering to some degree less than Jesus but like Jesus. And to the degree that their pain comes from a similar experience to Jesus, they should rejoice, because this means that they are on the right track to gain God's forgiveness and eternal life when Jesus returns. And it will be then that they will feel a joy that where they are practically out of their minds. And this will also be when the full glory<sup>8</sup> of Jesus is revealed by God and he inaugurates the messianic kingdom of Israel on the earth.

Obviously, rejoicing by Christians in the midst of pain is a conscious and willful choice, not something which happens spontaneously. This shows that Christianity is very much about the choices we make and that sometimes are quite difficult to make. In the midst of suffering, we choose to wait for the revealing of Jesus at his return when the suffering will end and we enter into our eternal existence, and we choose to rejoice in the hope which we have in the future of receiving salvation and eternal life from God.

Thus, Peter wants his readers to rejoice and not be sad when they encounter suffering and hardship that is similar to that of Jesus, i.e., when they are mistreated by hostile unbelievers, including those in positions of authority and whom they must follow. The purpose of their rejoicing now in the pain they are experiencing is so that they may rejoice even more when later the possibility of pain completely disappears at Jesus' second coming, which is the transition to the eternal Kingdom of God, starting with the millennial kingdom and culminating in the new earth of the new creation (cf. Revelation 20,21). It will be the latter where all sin, evil, and immorality with their consequences no longer exist. In other words, the purpose of existing as Christians in our society and culture that is to some degree opposed to God and the truth is to experience willingly the same kind and level of hostility that Jesus encountered within the nation of Israel and the Roman Empire, i.e., among both Jews and Gentiles.

<sup>86</sup> εἰ ὀνειδίξεσθε ἐν ὀνόματι Χριστοῦ, μακάριοι, ὅτι τὸ τῆς δόξης ‘καὶ τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ’ πνεῦμα ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς ἁναπαύεται τ – This is the second time that Peter says that his audience are “blessed” (μακάριοι) and have good cause to be happy because they are being persecuted for their Christianity. The first time was 3:14 Nevertheless, even if you suffer on account of righteousness, you are blessed.

Peter has already talked about the unbelieving Gentiles in these people's community who scorn them for their embracing the biblical message. This is simply a natural response by non-Christians to God, that they will speak



disrespectfully and even scornfully of Christians, as though the latter are absolute idiots and fools.

Peter repeats himself here by saying that it is a good thing to be treated in such a way because of a person's choosing to be associated with the Jewish Messiah. The reason he gives in this verse is because God is at work through His Spirit in such people and they will receive the glory and awesome experience of moral perfection and eternal life in the Kingdom of God. Peter is basically saying that it is the greatest privilege in the world to be a human being who is targeted by the Spirit of God for His miraculous, internal work and then to be targeted by unbelievers for reproach and insults.

**Matthew 5:11** "Blessed are you when people insult you (ὅταν ῥονειδίσωσιν ὑμᾶς) and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. **5:12** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

<sup>87</sup> μὴ γάρ τις ὑμῶν πασχέτω ὡς φονεὺς ἢ ἡ κλέπτῃς ἢ ὁ κακοποιὸς ἢ ὡς ῥάλλοτριεπίσκοπος – ῥάλλοτριεπίσκοπος = revolutionist?

As a negative exhortation, Peter reminds his readers that they are called by God to pursue morality and not immorality. Anything less would demonstrate a lack of commitment to the biblical message which will incur God's condemnation. Were these—murderers, thieves, evil-doers, meddlers in others' affairs—actually the kind of people these Christians used to be? Or is Peter speaking generically and only of their hearts and evil desires? Cf. the Iranian church today led partly by former prostitutes.

My guess is that some of these Christians were this evil and now have become followers of Jesus and radically changed their conduct in life.

<sup>88</sup> εἰ δὲ ὡς ῥΧριστιανός, μὴ αἰσχυνέσθω, δοξαζέτω δὲ τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῷ ῥονόματι τούτῳ – The greatest honor that a human being can experience in the present realm is to be maligned and insulted for being a follower of the Jewish Messiah Jesus. And this kind of suffering should motivate our hearts and minds to worship and give praise to God for His love, mercy, and grace that will result in eternal life for us.

Some of Peter's audience may have already suffered for being the kinds of people he lists in the previous verse. And maybe they hoped that by cleaning up their lives they would no longer suffer at the hands of other people. Instead, the opposite has happened, and Peter is encouraging them to embrace this new suffering which is for a completely different reason—because of their good and moral way of life. And it has to be hard to suffer for doing what is good after suffering as criminals.

<sup>89</sup> ὅτι ῥ[ο] καιρὸς τοῦ ῥρξασθαι τὸ κρίμα ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ· εἰ δὲ πρῶτον ἀφ' ῥήμων, τί τὸ τέλος τῶν ἀπειθοῦντων τῷ τοῦ θεοῦ εὐαγγελίῳ – Peter states that the proper logical basis for being willing to be mistreated because of being a Christian is the final judgment. No one will escape it, and only Christians will survive it into the eternal Kingdom of God. His mention of the fact that "judgment begins with the household of God" probably refers to Jesus' return to the earth with resurrected believers to meet living believers who rise up from off the earth and be with him always, starting with on the earth in millennial kingdom (cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18; Revelation 20). After this, judgment will take place towards unbelievers at the end of the millenium at the Great White Throne Judgment, and then God will destroy the present realm and create a new heavens and a new earth.

<sup>90</sup> καὶ εἰ ὁ ῥ δίκαιος μόλις σώζεται, ὁ ῥσεβῆς καὶ ῥμαρτωλὸς ποῦ φανεῖται – cf. Proverbs 11:31 – "If the righteous will be rewarded in the earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner! (אִם יִשְׁלַח ה' בְּיָמָיו וְיִשְׁלַח ה' בְּיָמָיו וְיִשְׁלַח ה' בְּיָמָיו) (εἰ ὁ μὲν δίκαιος μόλις σώζεται, ὁ ῥσεβῆς καὶ ῥμαρτωλὸς ποῦ φανεῖται)." Peter quotes this verse in Proverbs to imply that, in spite of God's grace, which makes it easy for people to be rescued from God's condemnation, it is still hard for them to be saved, because they have to go through the judgment where the Messiah, who suffered the particular hardship of the crucifixion, will appeal for mercy to the Father on their behalf. In other words, the difficulty in saving anyone who is upright is that Jesus had to die in order to reconcile him to God (cf. Romans 5:4-11). Or maybe he is referring to the trials an authentic believer experiences to arrive at the Kingdom of God. Or it could be both, which probably makes the most sense in this context.

<sup>91</sup> ὥστε καὶ οἱ πάσχοντες κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ πιστῷ κτίστη παρατιθέσθωσαν τὰς ῥψυχὰς αὐτῶν ἐν ῥἀγαθοποιῷ – Peter has been making it clear that God's plan for believers is that they suffer mistreatment in the present realm just as their Messiah Jesus did. But to become a follower of Jesus is also to be willing to entrust one's existence and experiences to God, because He is orchestrating reality exactly as He desires.

Thus, no mistreatment by unbelievers towards those who fundamentally are pursuing morality and goodness because of their changed inwardness is ever unplanned by God or a surprise to God. Indeed, it is the exact opposite. God brings about the experiences of suffering for His chosen people, those whom He has miraculously led inwardly to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, according to His eternal plans and purposes.

ὥστε = indicates result. "Consequently" or "Therefore" would be a good translation.

καὶ = and, also, indeed as in "I went to the store, and I shopped at the store," "I like oranges; I also like apples," "I like oranges, and [indeed] I like oranges" [emphasis] respectively. The last of the three options is what Peter means. Indeed, it is necessary and imperative that Christians entrust their personal existences to the one who is creating their personal existences.

οἱ πάσχοντες = those who are suffering a painful experience in their lives—involving even uncertainty, hardship, and stress. Like the paschal (?) lamb.

κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ = in accordance with what God desires for them to test, assess, and demonstrate the

authenticity of their belief in Him and Jesus as Messiah.

πιστῷ κτίστη = the one who brings into existence at every moment a Christian's personal existence, and He is faithful to His promises to bring about salvation and eternal life for him. This really is God's *hesed* in NT language.

παρατιθέσθωσαν = Peter commands his readers to entrust for safekeeping their personal existences during these times of suffering and pain, meaning that they cannot in and of themselves produce the kind of personhood that they need in order to qualify for eternal life. They ultimately need to put their personal existences in the hands of God who is the one who has brought them into existence anyway. This is the only use of κτίστης in the NT. And it is used in only 2 Samuel 22:32 in the OT.

τὰς 'ψυχὰς αὐτῶν = their personal existences as thinking, feeling, and doing human beings with bodies that permit them to express themselves and who they are outwardly. As opposed to their spirits which are God's conception of them in His mind so that they become the very kind of persons they are in bodily form (or their spirits could refer to their fundamental desires as in 1 Peter 3:19). And as opposed to their bodies which provide the outer life of their personal existences which have an inward component. In other words, it does not make any sense to talk about a human being's personal existence without including his body Cf. [Genesis 2:7](#) "Then Yahweh God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being (חַי נָפֶשׁ) (εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν) = having a living personal existence." A bit redundant, but probably for emphasis, and notice that the body is necessary for the man to have personal existence, i.e., to be a human being. Cf. [Matthew 2:20](#) "Get up, take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for those who sought the Child's life (οἱ ζητοῦντες τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ παιδίου = those who sought to end the child's existence) are dead."

ἐν ᾧ ἀγαθοποιῶ = in the midst of doing what is good, because this is what a Christian values the most in terms of how he behaves and the manner in which he lives now in the midst of all the adversity he encounters.

<sup>92</sup> Πρεσβυτέρους ὅν ἐν ὑμῖν παρακαλῶ ὁ συμπρεσβύτερος καὶ μάρτυς τῶν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ παθημάτων. ὁ καὶ τῆς μελλούσης ἀποκαλύπτεισθαι δόξης κοινωνός – Here Peter addresses the leaders of the Christian communities to whom he is writing, and he exhorts these leaders to fulfill their responsibility.

He calls himself a fellow elder or leader of Christians—one who is of an age and has an intellectual grasp of the biblical message to communicate it to others and help them grow in their understanding of it. And of course Peter is a fellow leader of Christians.

He is an apostle of the Messiah who was personally there when Jesus suffered death and was crucified (and who was appointed an apostle by Jesus to proclaim the NT message with the same level of accuracy and authority as Jesus – cf. Luke 6:13; John 12-17).

Peter will also share in the glory of the eternal Kingdom of God with all these fellow Christians by becoming immortal and morally perfect—because of their belief in the Jewish Messiah.

It also makes the most sense that these elders to whom Peter is writing were hand-picked by the apostle Paul and/or his close associates. Cf. [Acts 14:23](#), "When they had appointed elders for them in every church (χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς κατ' ἐκκλησίαν πρεσβυτέρους) [in the cities of Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe], having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed." The Greek word χειροτονήσαντες seems to be formed from the two words χεῖρ = hand and τείνω = stretch out. Therefore, these men were hand-picked by Paul as an apostle and Barnabas as an apostolic worker with Paul. As a result, these are men whom Paul considered to have a good grasp of the apostolic message and, in his opinion only, were qualified to be elders. It is also most likely that he would have said to them face to face, "Do not teach anything other than what I have said to you and taught you regarding Jesus as the Messiah and how he relates to all the other information in the Bible, i.e., the OT" (which would have been the only Bible that existed in Paul's day). However, after the apostles had died, there was no one with their authority or accuracy of understanding of the biblical message who could appropriately appoint elders. Consequently, since the time of the apostles, leaders within the Christian community cannot be said to be actual biblical elders. At best, they are simply discussion leaders who are as dependent on only the apostolic documents as their followers, and they can never be said to have an accurate understanding of them and their message as Paul, Peter, et al. would have concluded about the men whom they personally appointed.

The word "elder" is first used to refer to leaders of a community in Genesis 50:7, in regard to the leaders of Egypt (אֲנִי-מִזְרַיִם אֲנִי-מִצְרַיִם) (οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τῆς γῆς Αἰγύπτου) who accompanied Joseph to the land of Canaan to bury his father Jacob. Then, in Exodus 3:16, God commands Moses, "Go and gather the elders of Israel (אֲנִי-מִצְרַיִם אֲנִי-מִצְרַיִם) (τὴν γερονσίαν τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ) and say to them, 'Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has appeared to me.'" The Greek word γερονσία is made up of γερ = old and ουσια = being (nominative singular feminine present active participle of εἰμι). The Greek word πρεσβύτερος is first used to refer to the elders of Israel in Exodus 17:5 (אֲנִי-מִצְרַיִם אֲנִי-מִצְרַיִם) (λαβὲ δὲ μετὰ σεαυτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τοῦ λαοῦ).

<sup>93</sup> ποιμάνετε τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν ποίμνιον τοῦ θεοῦ [ἐπισκοποῦντες] μὴ ἀναγκαστῶς ἀλλὰ ἐκουσίως κατὰ θεόν, ἡμῶς αἰσχροκερδῶς ἀλλὰ προθύμως – Peter exhorts the elders/leaders within these Christian communities to care for those who are following them in their belief and instruction of the biblical, apostolic message.

Because of the tendency of sinful human beings to get frustrated with people who are difficult to deal with and to expect to be affirmed for anything they do for others, Peter also requires that the leaders to whom he is writing carry out their responsibilities with as much grace as possible, i.e., with a willingness to act towards others simply because

they need help and not because they are either easy to relate to or quick to pay them back and affirm them in a manner pleasing to the leaders. Thus, Peter exhorts the leaders to be as gracious towards those are following them as God is towards all of us as authentic Christians!

<sup>94</sup> μὴδ' ὡς κατακυριεύοντες τῶν κλήρων ἀλλὰ τύποι γινόμενοι τοῦ ποιμνίου – Again, Peter knows that people who lead will tend to do so by exerting their power and influence in a heavy handed way, which, in turn, robs their followers of their freedom to be individuals who are ultimately and individually responsible to God for their thinking and behavior. Leaders naturally make it seem as though people are responsible to them and not to God.

Thus, Peter exhorts even the Christian elders/leaders to whom he is writing to avoid any strong-arming or manipulative tactics to control their followers' behavior, including how they think, which is Jacques Ellul's definition of propaganda in his book *Propaganda*.

Jesus said to his apostles, “The kings of the Gentiles dominate them, and those who have authority over them are called ‘Benefactors’ [literally ‘do-gooders’], but it is not this way among you. ...Let the one who is the leader be like a servant” (Luke 22:25,26).

<sup>95</sup> καὶ φανερωθέντος τοῦ ἀρχιποίμενος κομεισθε τὸν ἀμαράντινον τῆς δόξης στέφανον – Is Peter saying that the “elders” of his readers will receive something special for their efforts and something different from what their followers will receive, a sort of bonus check for handling well their responsibilities as elders? No. This would not make sense in the light of the rest of the NT documents that declare God graces and gives to all sinful, justified believers the same thing—eternal life in the Kingdom of God, regardless of their “position” within the Christian community of the present realm (cf. 2 Peter 1:1). Therefore, all believers are required to live out their entire stories with authentic belief and serve as they should. And their service becomes a part of the proof of their authentic belief and that to which God responds at the final judgment with the gift of eternal salvation—with praise, glory, and honor at the revealing of Jesus the Messiah (cf. 1 Peter 1:7). This also makes sense in the light of the fact that a Christian's role within the community of believers is just as much a gift from God as his changed heart, belief, obedience, and salvation.

Cf. 2 Timothy 4:8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Cf. James 1:12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

<sup>96</sup> Ὅμοιος τ, νεώτεροι, ὑποτάγητε πρεσβυτέροις: πάντες δὲ ἑαλλήλοις τὴν ταπεινοφροσύνην ἐγκομβώσασθε, ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν – Peter uses the opposite word from that in 5:1, i.e., νεώτεροι vs. πρεσβύτεροι. Therefore, he does not mean younger men *per se*, but everyone else who is not an elder—men women, and children. He wants them to follow those who have been chosen by Paul and/or his associates and who, Peter assumes, still have a good grasp on the biblical message (and, yet, Peter is writing this letter to remind them of what is the apostolic message, because it is clear from the NT letters how quickly even those taught by the apostles strayed from correct ideas of the gospel).

Peter then quotes the verse from Proverbs and exhorts everyone in these Christian communities to adopt an attitude of humility, i.e. an attitude of lowliness in both status and prestige, knowing that they are unworthy of God's grace, mercy, forgiveness, and the promise of eternal life.

Cf. Proverbs 3:34, “Though He scoffs at the scoffers, yet He gives grace to the afflicted (יְהוָה יִתְּנֶה עֲנָיִים [לְ]עֲנִיִּים) (κύριος ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν).”

The “afflicted” in the above verse are those who are genuinely humbled by suffering and pain in this life so that they believe and trust God for their well-being and eternal salvation. And we notice that Peter's quote is the same as the Greek text in the Septuagint.

<sup>97</sup> Ταπεινώθητε οὖν ὑπὸ τὴν κραταιὰν χεῖρα τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα ὑμᾶς ὑψώσῃ ἐν καιρῷ – The image here is to place ourselves under God's sovereign “hand” that is controlling the entire story of this creation, so that at Jesus' return He will lift us up in His hand and exalt us as His chosen people who persevered in belief through the sufferings of life. Thus, Peter gives his readers the bottom line, that they should adopt an attitude of lowliness of position, status, and prestige with an understanding of their being unworthy of God's grace, mercy, forgiveness, and promise of eternal life. This will prevent them from the kneejerk reaction of fighting back when they are mistreated. And it will help them remained focused on God's granting them eternal life at the judgment, so that all the hardship of the present life will be worth it.

When Jesus returns, Christians will experience the high position of those who are saved. They will be exalted according to the plan and timing of God. In this life, we are but lowly servants, oftentimes mistreated by the world and considered worthless human beings because of our biblical beliefs and following Jesus. This will all change when we enter the eternal Kingdom of God. We will be exalted and all unbelievers will eventually be destroyed.

<sup>98</sup> πᾶσαν τὴν μέριμναν ὑμῶν ἐπιρίψαντες ἐπ' αὐτόν, ὅτι αὐτῷ μέλει περὶ ὑμῶν – The key for Peter's fellow Christians to endure the suffering brought on by their association with Jesus is not only to focus on the outcome of their existence as authentic believers, which is eternal life (cf. 1 Peter 1:13), but also to grasp fully how much God cares for them, specifically how He cares about their acquiring eternal life.

Therefore, if they need to vent, they should do so on God. He can handle it, and He is also the very one who is causing the circumstances in their lives that is producing so much pain. Thus, to give expression to their hurt and pain by crying

out to God and by humbling themselves before Him is to cast and throw their anxiety on the very one who can handle it properly. It is to hand themselves over to God and His sovereign plan and purposes as Jesus did when he was venting in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross (cf. 2:23).

<sup>99</sup> νήψατε, γρηγορήσατε. τὸ ἀντίδικος ὑμῶν ὁ διάβολος ὡς λέων ὠρυόμενος περιπατεῖ ζητῶν [τινα] καταπιεῖν – This is the third time Peter has used the word νήφω (= stay under control) to exhort his readers (cf. 1:13; 4:7).

Peter wants his readers to remain alert and stay under control in their belief and understanding so that they are always on the lookout for the lies and deceptions of Satan, the adversary of God who injects his lies into the world of rebellious human beings where leaders and cultures follow him with ideas and actions that oppose God and the Bible, even demonstrating a large amount of hostility towards Him and His people, both Jews in general and Christians who have genuine belief.

Peter is saying that Satan's purpose is to sabotage Christians and cause them to give up their belief in God and Jesus. Fortunately, this is not actually theologically possible, but Peter warns them anyway, as a way of saying that it is possible to fake belief and therefore give it up later. Consider, for example, 2 Peter and what he says to believers in that letter.

The metaphor that Peter uses is of a lion, walking around looking for prey because he is hungry and will eat whatever crosses his path. Satan is similar, looking for people who profess faith in God so that he can possibly affect them with his lies and turn them away from God—thus devouring them and causing them to follow him in the midst of abandoning their belief in God.

Peter is implying that people are particularly vulnerable to Satan's influence when they are suffering so that they question God's goodness and love.

<sup>100</sup> ὧ ἀντίστητε ἵστεροὶ τῇ πίστει εἰδότες τὰ αὐτὰ τῶν παθημάτων τῇ ἐν [τῷ] κόσμῳ ὑμῶν ἀδελφότητι ἑπιτελεῖσθαι – In the midst of staying on the defensive against Satan, another good reason for Peter's fellow Christians to be motivated to endure in their belief is the fact that they are not alone in their suffering in the world. Other Christians are experiencing the same kind of mistreatment from unbelievers and unbelieving leaders, so that they can be assured that God's plan does not single them out for pain. Just as Peter has been saying in this letter, all Christians to some degree share in suffering rejection by the world, which was the same suffering that Jesus experienced.

<sup>101</sup> Ὁ δὲ θεὸς πάσης χάριτος, ὁ καλέσας ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον αὐτοῦ δόξαν ἐν Χριστῷ [Ἰησοῦ] τ, ὀλίγων παθόντας αὐτὸς καταρτίσει, στηρίξει, σθενώσει, θεμελιώσει – Peter states that it is of course God's grace that had worked within these fellow Christians to attract them to a glorious, eternal existence with Jesus as their king. Two options for what he means in the rest of the verse—1) God will continue working within them to make sure that they have the proper intellectual and spiritual strength and foundation that makes them qualified for the eternal Kingdom of God so that they will participate in it when Jesus returns, or 2) God will complete His work when Jesus returns either after their deaths or while they are still alive by making them strong and established in moral perfection and immortality.

The latter would be correct if Peter is saying, “After you have suffered for a little while, i.e., during your temporary stay on earth.” The former is correct if his meaning is along the lines of how I have translated the beginning, “In the midst of your suffering a little while, i.e., while you suffer during your temporary stay on earth.”

Even though the first options sounds more profound and may even seem to fit the context of the letter where Peter has encouraged the people to look forward to rejoicing even more when Jesus and their salvation are both revealed together, I think that 2<sup>nd</sup> option fits the context better.

Peter is saying that God is committed to causing their faith and obedience to persist during their relatively short lives in comparison to eternity, so that he will complete them as sinners of genuine faith, fix them firmly in their faith, make them strong in their faith, and establish them in their Christianity so that they qualify to enter into the eternal Kingdom of God.

Indeed the first three verbs—καταρτίσει, στηρίξει, σθενώσει—could each be translated “strengthen,” that God will strengthen, strengthen, and strengthen these authentic believers in their belief so that they reach their desired goal (and God's intended goal) of eternal life.

<sup>102</sup> αὐτῷ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τ, ἀμήν – Peter acknowledges that no one else can make these things happen for authentic believers who are headed towards eternal life. Only God can according to His sovereign plan, and He will. Trust Him. Amen!!

<sup>103</sup> Διὰ Σιλουανοῦ ὑμῖν τοῦ πιστοῦ ἀδελφοῦ, ὡς λογιζομαι, δι' ὀλίγων ἔγραψα παρακαλῶν καὶ ἐπιμαρτυρῶν ταύτην εἶναι ἀληθὴ χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰς ἣν ἑστήτε – Peter mentions explicitly the secretary of his letter, Silvanus, a person well-known to his readers as a traveling companion of Paul. Plus, he wants them to recognize clearly that what he has written is a description, albeit brief, of the “grace of God,” and he wants them to remain fully committed to it in their hearts. Cf. 2 Corinthians 1:19, “For the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who was preached among you by us — by me and Silvanus and Timothy — was not yes and no, but is yes in Him.” Also, 1 Thessalonians 1:1, “Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.” Also, 2 Thessalonians 1:1, “Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Also, Acts 15:22, “Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas — Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas [his

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Aramaic name, and Silvanus, his more Latin name], leading men among the brethren...” And there are 12 other verses in Acts where Silas’ name is mentioned in conjunction with Paul.

Thus, it is very possible that Silas has suggested to Peter that he write an encouraging letter of the gospel to the Christians in northern Turkey since he is the primary apostle to the Jews. This will demonstrate great solidarity between the Jewish believers in Jerusalem and the Greek and Jewish believers in Asia, etc. Peter provides a wonderful exclamation to his solidarity with these Christians by commenting on Silvanus’ faithfulness to the gospel. If Paul has trusted this man, and Peter trusts him, then they can be certain that Peter is glad to be writing to them and encouraging them. Maybe it was even Silvanus who went on a missionary journey of his own from Ephesus and Paul and proclaimed the gospel to these people. This would explain his deep concern for them and how important it is to him that Peter write to them.

<sup>104</sup> Ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς ἡ ἐν Ῥαβυλῶνι τ συνεκλεκτὴ καὶ Μάρκος ὁ υἱός μου – Just as Peter has used OT and Jewish language to address these Gentile and Jewish Christians, it would make sense that he is using OT and Jewish language to refer to Jerusalem, the hotbed of continued rejection of Jesus as the Messiah by God’s own chosen people, the Jews. Thus, “she” is the gathering of Christians in Jerusalem, the ἐκκλησία (f.) in that city. This would especially make sense if Peter wrote this letter after Paul had been arrested in Jerusalem in Acts 21 and was even possibly languishing in prison at Caesarea Maritima afterwards, so that Silvanus is in the area waiting for Paul to be released. And “Babylon” has more than likely become a nickname among Christians for the present-day Jerusalem because of the large quantity of unbelief among the Jews, who are still following only the Mosaic Covenant and not accepting the new prophet of Deuteronomy 18:15 and the New Covenant of Jesus as the Messiah.

<sup>105</sup> ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν φιλήματι ἁγάπης. Ἐιρήνη ὑμῖν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ τ. τ. – Peter’s final words are to exhort his readers to love one another as the proper demonstration of their belief in the Jewish Messiah and to wish God’s peaceful and whole existence, i.e., what God has purposed for people who will obtain entrance into the eternal Kingdom of God, on them because of their association with the Messiah.