

LETTERS FROM A FISHERMAN



STUDIES IN FIRST AND SECOND PETER
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

MY BELIEFS REGARDING THE EXEGESIS OF THE SCRIPTURES

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV)

. . . for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:21 (NKJV)

Let me begin with the second reference above. We shall exegete this passage in detail when we come to it in the study. For now, let me simply say it speaks to the verbal, inerrant, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. Every word in the Bible was caused to be there by the moving of the Holy Spirit. Every word is used for a reason and is important. Finally, there are no errors in its writing - of the original manuscripts. Errors of men are recorded in it but the recording itself is error-free. In addition, we believe that the manuscripts we have today were protected by God to the extent that they do not differ in any significant way from the originals.

Now, going to the first passage, we find that “all Scripture,” literally, “every” Scripture, every single one of them is profitable for at least one of four things: (1) doctrine, (2) reproof, (3) correction, and (4) instruction in righteousness. Put these two passages together and this is what you come up with?

We must study the Scriptures carefully so as to obtain the actual thoughts of its human authors (and hence the Holy Spirit). Then, if we do not see any use of it for at least one of the above four things noted above, we have “sinned,” that is, we have missed the mark. One, or more, of these four things must be there, but we have not found it! Then we must study further until we do find it.

This is my philosophy with regard to writing Bible studies. I will work on each passage until I have found why God put it there. “I will leave no verse unturned” (after the idiom of leaving no rock unturned).

THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGES

Some may be critical of my studies in that I discuss the original languages and actually include the Hebrew or Greek words in the study, such as λόγος (logos), “word.” I give the pronunciation (as best I can without using diacritical marks) and then go on to give its meaning. If you do not know Greek (or Hebrew) and are not interested in learning any, it will not matter in your studies, you can just skip over the word in the original language and go on with the definition. But, for those who might be interested, it is there to see. It is of real necessity that the original languages be consulted in a Bible study - by the teacher! If the student feels the teacher is competent, then it is sufficient to rely on the teacher for checking the original language text.

AIDS TO EXEGESIS

Back in the early ‘60s, I used a typewriter and a desk and bookshelf full of books in my exegesis of the Scriptures (i.e. in writing my Bible studies). Things have changed a lot since then. Now I have

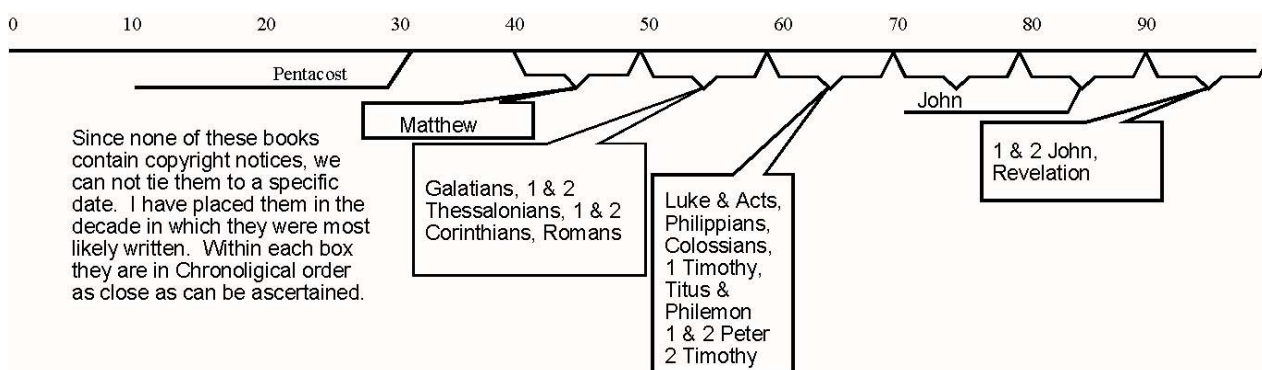
a computer with a good word processor (WordPerfect). I have a new version of WORDsearch (version 7) on my computer which gives me immediate access to:

- 14 versions of the Bible (not all of which are good ones, one is in Spanish)
- 9 commentaries or sets of commentaries on the Bible
- 4 Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias
- 10 word studies or sets of them.
- numerous other works which are sometimes useful (i.e. Josephus, Fox's Book of Martyrs, etc.)

In addition, these are all linked together so when you look up on verse, it will appear in all Bibles I may have opened, and be discussed in all commentaries, word studies, etc. that are open. This makes for a tremendous saving in time compared to the old days with a typewriter and stack of books.

One thing that all of this has not changed - my typing! The Spell Checker works sometimes but is of no use when I type the wrong word or do something equally dumb. I have to apologize ahead of time for this. I developed the habit of not spending an inordinate amount of time looking for typos in 36 years of teaching Computer Engineering. There are never any text books in Computer Engineering that are up-to-date enough to use in a university like Cal Poly. Thus, for the most part, I had to type up my lecture notes and distribute them. This was a time consuming job and I felt that the students were better off with notes with some typos in them than few or no notes at all! It is my hope and prayer that you will feel the same way.

One further note I would like to make. I would guess that most of you reading this can recite the books of the New Testament in order by heart (many with a little prompting). But, how many of you can recite them in chronological order?



ISBE provides the following chronology.

Conversion of Paul	35
Death of James, son of Zebedee	44
Death of Herod Agrippa I	44
Famine under Claudius	44-48
Epistle of James	before 50
First missionary journey	45-49
Edict of Claudius	49-50
Proconsulship of Sergius Paulus	before 51

Apostolic Council	50
Second missionary journey	50-53
1 Thessalonians. and 2 Thessalonians from Cornith	52/53
Proconsulship of Gallio	52/53
Third missionary journey	54-58
Paul in Ephesus	54-57
1 Corinthians and Galatians from Ephesus	55-57
2 Corinthians from Macedonia	57
Romans from Corinth	57/58
Arrest of Paul in Jerusalem	58
Accession of Festus—not before	57
probably	60
First Roman imprisonment of Paul	61-63/4
Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon, from Rome	62
Philippians from Rome	63
Release of Paul and journeys in West and East	64-67
1 Timothy and Titus from Macedonia	65-66
2 Timothy from Rome	67
Death of Paul in Rome	67/68
Synoptic Gospels, Acts, Jude, and Hebrews	before 67
1 Peter and 2 Peter from Rome	64-67
Death of Peter in Rome	64-67
Death of James the Just	about 66
Fourth Gospel, Revelation, Epistles of John from Ephesus	before 100
Death of John	98-100

INTRODUCTION TO FIRST AND SECOND PETER

Who was this man Peter who was the human instrument through which the Holy Spirit penned two epistles? “Simon (or Simeon) was the original name of Peter, the son of Jonas (or John), and brother of Andrew, a disciple of John the Baptist, as Peter also may have been. Jesus called him “Cephas.” A fisherman by occupation, he was an inhabitant of Bethsaida on the Sea of Galilee, though subsequently he dwelt with his family at Capernaum.”¹

“How could a dumb fisherman like Peter write to books of the Bible?” That is what many think. They are dead wrong. You might ask well as “How could a dumb tentmaker from Tarsus write so many books?” or “How could a slave who was trained in medical practices and, as a result of his services, was made a freed man, write the Book of Acts (as well the Gospel of Luke)?” We will not get very far into the first epistle and we shall see that Peter was well educated. He had to be to have the mastery of the Greek language he possessed. Even if he was a simple fisherman, McGee says,

The wonder of it all is that Jesus called men like this. I have always felt that since He called imperfect men like the disciples were, He may be able to use me, and He may be able to use you. It is encouraging to know that we don't have to be super-duper saints to be used by Him. He may not make you a fisher of men, if you are not in the fishing business. But whatever business you are engaged in, He can use you. Whatever your talent may be, if you will turn it over to Him, He can use it. Years ago a lady in my church was absolutely tongue-tied when it came to witnessing for Christ, but she could bake the most marvelous cakes! She used to deplore the fact of her inability to witness, and I said to her one day, "Did it ever occur to you that the Lord may want you in the church family to bake cakes?" That may seem ridiculous, but it is not. The important thing for us is to give ourselves to Him. Under His direction He won't have us all doing the same thing because He gives us separate gifts. The body of Christ has many members in it, and they all have different functions to perform.

McGEE, Matthew 4:19

Peter, as a matter-of-fact, continued to be a fisherman . . .

*And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, **"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."** They immediately left their nets and followed Him. Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.*

Matthew 4:18-22 (NKJV)

To chronicle his entire life would take up far too much of this study. We shall just note some of the particulars. It was Peter who held the first evangelistic meeting, Jerusalem, on the Day of Pentecost.

(for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles),

Galatians 2:8 (NKJV)

¹ISBE, “Peter”

From this verse, people consider Peter to be the Apostle to the Jews as Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles. This, however, is not a proper concept. Paul wrote,

For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh,

Romans 9:3 (NKJV)

Those are pretty strong words from someone who was supposed to be an Apostle to the Gentiles! Many of Paul's converts were Jews. On the other hand,

Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. "Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?"

Acts 10:28-29 (NKJV)

This is concerning the vision Peter saw letting him know not to call "common" what God had cleansed. Thus he witnessed to the centurion Cornelius (a gentile). It is true, however that Peter worked more with the Jews than did Paul.

He wrote these two epistles to "the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." Some of these, especially those in Galatia, were converts of Paul's. We will comment on these people when we get into the book.

It was written from "Babylon." Is this the Babylon we know of, in modern day Iraq? There was another Babylon in Egypt but this is not likely it. ISBE goes to great length with respect to the idea that it was a "code name" for Rome. McGee does it much more concisely.

"The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you." I think "Babylon" here means Babylon, although some think it is a figurative name for Rome. Simon Peter is too practical to have used a figurative term.

McGEE, 1 Peter 5:13

One final comment. The word "Suffer" in various forms, are found 15 times in 1 Peter, none in 2 Peter. Considering these words occur only about 90 times in the New Testament and some of these are of the form, "suffer me to do . . .," it is an exceptional number of times for a short Epistle. This is probably why Unger made the following outline for the first epistle.

1 Peter
Salutation (1:1-2)
Suffering and the certainty of future inheritance (1:3-12)
Suffering and personal life (1:13-2:10)
Suffering and social and domestic life (2:11-3:12)
*Faith and right conduct and **suffering** (3:13-4:6)*
Right conduct in the light of the end (4:7-19)
Suffering and right relationship between elders and the congregation (5:1-11)

WORD COUNTS -1 & 2 PETER

* are words only in 2 Peter, ** are words only in 1 Peter

#	<u>WORD</u>	5	WAY	3	GREAT
45	GOD	4	AGAINST	3	HAND**
28	CHRIST	4	AMEN	3	HEART
22	LORD	4	ANGELS	3	HUSBANDS**
20	JESUS	4	BRING	3	INCORRUPTIBLE**
15	GLORY	4	COMING	3	INDEED**
15	GOOD**	4	DEAD**	3	KNOWN
14	HOLY	4	DESTRUCTION	3	LAST
11	ACCORDING	4	EARTH	3	LIFE
11	HAVING	4	END	3	LIKEWISE**
10	DAY	4	FATHER	3	LONGSUFFERING
10	EVIL	4	FOLLOW	3	MANNER
10	GRACE	4	GODLINESS	3	MERCY**
10	LOVE	4	GOSPEL**	3	MIND**
10	WORD	4	HEAVEN	3	OBTAINED
9	CONDUCT	4	HOPE**	3	ONCE**
9	FLESH	4	LIVING**	3	PRAYERS**
9	SPIRIT	4	MAN	3	PROPHETS
8	BELOVED	4	MIGHT	3	PURE
8	PEOPLE	4	POWER	3	READY**
8	PRECIOUS	4	PREACHED**	3	RECEIVED
7	ANOTHER**	4	PROMISE	3	REJOICE**
7	BECAUSE	4	REASON	3	REST
7	FAITH	4	RESERVED	3	REVILING
7	KNOWLEDGE	4	REVEALED**	3	RIGHT
7	TIME	4	SALVATION	3	SAVED
7	WITHOUT	4	SUBMISSIVE**	3	SELF
7	WORLD	4	SUFFERINGS**	3	SHEPHERD**
6	AWAY	4	THEMSELVES	3	SIN
6	CALLED	4	UNGODLY	3	SON
6	FOREVER	3	AFRAID	3	STONE**
6	KNOWING	3	AGAIN	3	STRANGE**
6	LUSTS	3	ALWAYS	3	THINK
6	MEN	3	BLESSED**	3	TOWARD
6	RIGHTEOUSNESS	3	BOTH	3	TRUTH
6	SOULS	3	CHIEF**	3	UPON**
6	SUFFERED**	3	CONSCIENCE**	3	VIRTUE
6	YOURSELVES**	3	CORRUPTION	3	VOICE
5	COME	3	DARKNESS	3	WORDS
5	DOING**	3	DAYS	3	WRITTEN
5	FEAR**	3	DECEIT**		
5	HEAVENS	3	DELIVERED		
5	HONOR	3	DISOBEDIENT**		
5	JUDGMENT	3	DIVINE		
5	LIVE	3	ELECT**		
5	PEACE	3	ESCAPED		
5	RIGHTEOUS	3	EVILDOERS**		
5	SAVIOR	3	FERVENT		
5	SINS	3	FIRE		
5	SPEAK	3	FIRST		
5	SPEAKING	3	FOUND		
5	SUFFER**	3	GIVEN		
5	WATER	3	GOLD**		
		3	GRASS**		

WORDS APPEARING FOUR OR MORE TIMES IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

11	ACCORDING	8	PEOPLE
4	AGAINST	4	POWER
4	AMEN	4	PREACHED**
4	ANGELS	8	PRECIOUS
7	ANOTHER**	4	PROMISE
6	AWAY	4	REASON
7	BECAUSE	4	RESERVED
12	BEING	4	REVEALED**
8	BELOVED	5	RIGHTEOUS
4	BRING	6	RIGHTEOUSNESS
6	CALLED	4	SALVATION
28	CHRIST	5	SAVIOR
5	COME	5	SINS
4	COMING	6	SOULS
9	CONDUCT	5	SPEAK
10	DAY	5	SPEAKING
4	DEAD**	9	SPIRIT
4	DESTRUCTION	4	SUBMISSIVE**
5	DOING**	5	SUFFER**
4	EARTH	6	SUFFERED**
4	END	4	SUFFERINGS**
10	EVIL	4	THEMSELVES
7	FAITH	13	THEREFORE
4	FATHER	16	THROUGH
5	FEAR**	7	TIME
9	FLESH	4	UNGODLY
4	FOLLOW	5	WATER
6	FOREVER	5	WAY
15	GLORY	7	WITHOUT
45	GOD	10	WORD
4	GODLINESS	7	WORLD
15	GOOD**	6	YOURSELVES**
4	GOSPEL**		
10	GRACE		
11	HAVING		
4	HEAVEN		
5	HEAVENS		
14	HOLY		
5	HONOR		
4	HOPE**		
20	JESUS		
5	JUDGMENT		
6	KNOWING		
7	KNOWLEDGE		
5	LIVE		
4	LIVING**		
22	LORD		
10	LOVE		
6	LUSTS		
4	MAN		
6	MEN		
4	MIGHT		
5	PEACE		

Knowing and Knowledge appear 13 times

Righteous and Righteousness 9 times

Speak and Speaking 10 times

Suffer, Suffered, and Sufferings appear 15 times! (All in 1 Peter)

Now for a little trivia: The New Testament has:

114,491 words
5,035 sentences
1,278 paragraphs

with

4 letters/word average

23 words/sentence average

one sentence with 178 words!

(About same as U.S. Constitution!)

1 PETER 1

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

1 Peter 1:1-2 (NKJV)

As noted in the introduction, this epistle was written by Peter, the fisherman with the “foot shaped mouth” (every time he opened his mouth, it seemed, he put his foot into it - but, to his credit, he was at least not afraid to speak out). One might assume that Paul was a brilliant man, brought up in the school of Gamaliel and all and Peter was only a dumb fisherman! Paul said of himself,

"I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today.

Acts 22:3 (NKJV)

By the time you have finished this study, you will find that Peter was not unskilled in writing and doctrine. If you look into Strong's "Systematic Theology," you will find that over 10% of the references in the epistles are in Peter's two epistles in spite of the fact that they only occupy about 6% of the pages in your Bible devoted to the epistles. In other words, there is about 50% more theology in Peter's epistles than any of the others! Remember also Peter's special relationship with Jesus.

When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Matthew 16:13-19 (NKJV)

Lest there be any confusion on this, let me insert McGee's remarks on the above passage.

Let us look at this verse carefully. On what rock did Jesus build His church? There are those who say that it was built on Simon Peter. Well, obviously it was not, because there is a play upon words here. In the original Greek it is, "Thou art Petros [a little piece of rock], and upon this petra [bedrock] I will build my church." There are others who hold that Christ is building His church upon the confession that Simon Peter made. I don't agree with that at all.

McGEE, "Matthew 16:17"

While McGee is entirely correct, I believe this passage shows that Christ knew that Peter would be one of the foundation stones of the church - he certainly was the first spokesman at Pentecost.

Like Paul, he acclaims his apostleship. Who were the “Apostles?” Where they the “Twelve” and, if so, was Mattheias or Judas to be included? Paul was an Apostle but not one of the “Twelve.” Paul says in many of his epistles that he was “called” to be an Apostle. But he also makes mention of others.

Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord.

Romans 16:7-8 (NKJV)

The closest we can come to a definition is that they have had to been with Jesus at one time or another (even if in a vision as with Paul). Well, enough said about the author. We need to spend time on the addressees.

“Pilgrims of the Dispersion.” An interesting title, but who were they and why were they addressed in this manner? In the Greek, they are ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπίδημοις διασπορᾶς (eklektois parepidemois diasporas). The first two words are adjectives, the last the noun for which these adjectives are the antecedents.

Perhaps the first adjective is the most important here.

“For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Matthew 22:14 (NKJV)

both verbs above come from the same root, κλητός (kletos). The translation is “called.” The second verb has ἐκ (ek) = “out” prefixed to it. “Called out” or “chosen out.” Let me explain it this way. You take a bushel basket into the orchard and choose (κλητός) apples until the basket is full. You take this home and then you sort through the basket and pick out (ἐκκλητός) a few really good ones to make a pie. These are the “chosen ones,” or, in most Biblical contexts, the “elect.”

We shall come back to this, but let’s look at the others first. Next is a word used only three times in the New Testament (twice by Peter and once in Hebrews).

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Hebrews 11:13 (NKJV)

παρεπίδημοις has three parts, . παρ(α) + επί + δημοις. The last part means “people,” that is “a group of people.” Hence a δημοις (demo)cracy is a government where the people of the country rule themselves (supposedly). Add the first prefix to get επίδημοις (epidemos) and it means “to be present among one’s people² although, in one place it is different.

“Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,

Acts 2:10 (NKJV)

²THAYER, επίδημοις

It really still meets the basic definition because these “visitors” were also Jews so, they were among their own people. Finally, put it all together with $\pi\alpha\rho(\alpha)$ (para) which means “along side of,” and you have to be along side of a different people - a foreigner. The nASB has “those who reside as aliens,” and the NIV has “strangers in the world.”

Finally, the word these two adjectives modify is the Greek word from which we get “dispersion.” Thus the NKJV translation. The NASB and NIV have “scattered throughout.” Wuest has, “to those who have settled down alongside of a pagan population, sown as seed throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, chosen out ones. . .”³ For those ladies who are currently studying the book of James, you have probably already met these people.

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

James 1:1 (NKJV)

ISBE says,

The Dispersion is the comprehensive designation applied to Jews living outside of Palestine and maintaining their religious observances and customs among the Gentiles. They were known as the Golah (Aramaic Galutha'), the captivity—an expression describing them in relation to their own land; and the Diaspora, the Dispersion, an expression describing them in relation to the nations among whom they were scattered. On a notable occasion Jesus said, "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, ye cannot come. The Jews therefore said among themselves, Whither will this man go that we shall not find him? Will he go unto the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks?"

ISBE, “Dispersion”

McGee has an interesting note here.

"To the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." He is writing to the strangers, or aliens, who were scattered throughout the Roman Empire. They were Jews, called the Diaspora because they were no longer in the land of Palestine. Due to persecution and other reasons, they had settled throughout the empire. If you will check a map, you will find these places are all in Asia Minor, the area we know as Turkey today. You may recall that Paul on his second missionary journey tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of God would not allow him to go there. It is my conviction that Simon Peter had already preached the Gospel there and that the Holy Spirit wanted Paul to go to people who had not heard the Gospel. Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles, and Simon Peter was the apostle to Israelites who had turned to Christ.

McGEE, 1 Peter 1:1-2

³WUEST, 1 Peter 1:1-2

Speaking of a map, perhaps that is a good idea. If you look closely at the map, the places mentioned are in the northeastern part of what is now Turkey (then Asia Minor)

We now have an idea of to whom he was writing, but why just the Jews living in these regions?



. . .to the strangers scattered -- literally, "sojourners of the dispersion"; only in John 7:35 and James 1:1, in New Testament, and the Septuagint, Psalm 147:2, "the outcasts of Israel"; the designation peculiarly given to the Jews in their dispersed state throughout the world ever since the Babylonian captivity. These he, as the apostle of the circumcision, primarily addresses, but not in the limited temporal sense only; he regards their temporal condition as a shadow of their spiritual calling to be strangers and pilgrims on earth, looking for the heavenly Jerusalem as their home. So the Gentile Christians, as the spiritual Israel, are included secondarily, as having the same high calling.

JFB, 1 Peter 1:1-2

As with most other commentators, the Gentiles somehow get involved in this as well. Certainly we, as readers of this epistle are addressed by it!

Now, back to the first of the three words, "Elect." Even though it comes first, the grammar of the Greek moves it down so that it is followed by, "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." I won't take the time to go into the Greek word here translated "foreknowledge." You already know it when you go to your doctor and ask, "What is your **prognosis**?"⁴ A good doctor will (usually) know how your disease will run its course. God, of course, being omniscient, knows exactly what will happen with your disease as well as everything else. You were chosen by God because He knew that, given the opportunity to accept Christ, you would.

There are some who say we have no free will since everything has been planned in advance by God. Well, let me give you a human example. I am not quite as omniscient as God so the example will not be perfect.

Before I retired, many times I would go to a class as follows. On Monday I would come to class and announce an exam for Friday. On Tuesday I would go to a faculty meeting, find that a number of other professors were giving exams on Friday so I would make all the arrangements to give the exam on the following Monday. On Wednesday I would go to class and say, "I know I promised an exam on Friday but I am considering giving it on Monday instead. How many of you would like to have it

⁴OXFORD, prognosis >n. (pl. prognoses) a forecast, especially of the likely course of a disease or ailment.

postponed until Monday?” Nearly all the students would raise their hands and I would say, “Fine, we will have it on Monday.”

Did they have free will when they voted? Sure they did! I did not stand at the back of the room with a gun and shoot anyone who tried to raise their hand. “But,” you say, “What if they had voted differently?” Well, in thirty-six years of teaching, that never happened. Why? Well, I attended classes for nearly 20 years (K-Grad. School) and taught, eventually, for thirty-six, so I knew students very well. I had “foreknowledge” of what they would do, given the opportunity.

The example is not perfect because I am not perfect. Given enough years and I might have been left standing in front of the class with a red face, but not God! Before closing this subject, I need to cite one other passage.

*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and **that not of yourselves**; it is the gift of God,*
Ephesians 2:8 (NKJV)

You can not accept Christ as Savior with the Holy Spirit first entering you and giving you the faith to do so. This one limitation was inflicted upon us by our human father, Adam. Even the faith to accept is from God. Without that, a person can not accept Christ! How does that make you feel? It should make you say, “Bless the Lord! He chose me!

But wait! There is more to this. Peter adds, “*in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:*”

As McGee says,

*The apostle Peter immediately plunges us into deep doctrinal waters. For instance, he presents the doctrine of the Trinity: the foreknowledge of God the Father, sanctification of the Spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. My friend, don't let anyone tell you that the Bible does not teach the Trinity -- the Bible is full of it! We certainly cannot consider Peter to be an ignorant fisherman, by the way, because he is talking about things that most of us **do not know much about**.*

McGee, 1 Peter 1:1-2

What do you know about the sanctification of the Spirit? “Sanctification” is from ἁγιασμός (hagiasmos), used ten times in the New Testament and all by Paul except in Hebrews 12:4 and here. It was used four times in the Thessalonian Epistles. In that study I really did not define the term so I shall do it here.

SANCTIFICATION (Gk. hagiasmos, “separation, a setting apart”). The Heb. term qodesh, rendered “sanctify,” has a corresponding meaning. The dominant idea of sanctification, therefore, is separation from the secular and sinful and setting apart for a sacred purpose. As the holiness of God means His separation from all evil, so sanctification, in the various Scripture applications of the term, has a kindred lofty significance.

In the OT economy, things, places, and times, as well as persons, were sanctified, i.e., consecrated to holy purposes. Connected with this were the Mosaic rites of purification. These rites, however, when applied to persons were efficacious only in a ceremonial and legal sense and did not extend to the purifying of the moral and spiritual nature. They were symbolical and thus were intended not

only to remind the Jew of the necessity of spiritual cleansing but also of the gracious purpose of God to actually accomplish the work. So David prayed not only, "Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean," but also, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." Although in the OT, as well as in the NT, men are sometimes called upon to sanctify themselves, i.e., to consecrate themselves truly to God the thought everywhere prevails that inward cleansing is the work of God.

UNGER, "Sanctification"

A related word, ἅγιος (hagios) is found many times, translated "Saints." Saints are those who have been sanctified. Jesus sanctified himself (John 17:19) in order that His disciples might be sanctified. Ro 15:16. Usually sanctification is done by God (the Holy Spirit), 1 Timothy 4:5, Jude 1:1. There is one interesting case as follows.

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.

1 Corinthians 7:14 (NKJV)

This seems strange! Can an "unbelieving wife" be saved by a believing husband? No! So what is Paul saying? MacArthur will tell us.

Christians married to unbelievers were not to worry that they themselves, their marriage, or their children would be defiled by the unbelieving spouse. On the contrary, the very opposite was the case. Both the children and the unbelieving spouse would be **sanctified through** the believing **wife** or **husband**.

Being unequally yoked, one flesh with an unbeliever, can be frustrating, discouraging, and even costly. But it need not be defiling because one believer can sanctify a home. In this sense **sanctify** does not refer to salvation; otherwise the spouse would not be spoken of as **unbelieving**. It refers to being set apart, the basic meaning of **sanctify** and **holy**, terms that are from the same Greek root. The sanctification is matrimonial and familial, not personal or spiritual. In God's eyes a home is set apart for Himself when the husband, wife, or, by implication, any other family member, is a Christian. Such a home is not Christian in the full sense, but it is immeasurably superior to one that is totally unbelieving. Even if the Christian is ridiculed and persecuted, unbelievers in the family are blessed because of that believer. One Christian in a home graces the entire home. God's indwelling that believer and all the blessings and graces that flow into the believer's life from heaven will spill over to enrich all who are near.

MacARTHUR, 1 Corinthians 7:14

Let us look at one more passage.

*To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are **sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints**, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:*

1 Corinthians 1:2 (NKJV)

Is it not nice that we don't have to wait for the Pope to make us saints? We are sanctified and made saints by the Holy Spirit when we receive Christ. There is a catch to this however, there is a purpose in it, "*for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.*" I know what "obedience" means, we are supposed to obey God. However, what does the part about the "sprinkling of blood have to do

with it?

So He said to them, "When you pray, say:

*Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.*

Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us day by day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins,

For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And do not lead us into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one."

Luke 11:2-4 (NKJV)

I have emphasized two lines. First, we are to pray **daily** and, secondly, as we pray daily, we are to **ask for forgiveness of sins**. When you accepted Christ, His shed blood cleansed you from your sins. We are, however, to keep this in mind and ask, daily, that His blood, sprinkled upon us, will maintain us in this sin free condition. Oh my! What if we forget to pray one day and we die? Our sins are still all forgiven, it is just that, by praying daily, we keep this sacrifice before us in our minds.

Peter concludes this section with prayer (as was the habit of Paul). *Grace to you and peace be multiplied*. You say, "that's not a prayer, it is a simple greeting!" Can Peter give these people grace? Can he multiply their peace? Of course not - only God can. Hence, this becomes a prayer on Peter's part.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls. Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things which angels desire to look into. Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

1 Peter 1:3-16 (NKJV)

The NKJV titles this section, "A Heavenly Inheritance" while the NIV has "Praise to God for a Living

Inheritance.” Unger calls it “Suffering and the certainty of future inheritance.”

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ How can man “bless” God? God blesses us in many ways but can we bless Him? The word here is εὐλογητός (eulogetos) which is used eight times in the New Testament and in this sense. The problem is that “bless” is an old word which we no longer really know the meaning of. Technically, the word means “to speak well of,” or, more in keeping with this context, “to speak praise to.” This is what the NIV has, “Praise be to God . . .” We certainly can and we certainly should praise the Lord, as does Peter here.

Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty firmament! Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness! Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp! Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!

Psalms 150:1-6 (NKJV)

Thirteen times the word “praise” is found here. הללוהו (halleluhu) is the word which gets transliterated “Hallelujah.” Maybe you knew that but did you know this is the Imperative form of the verb? It is a command! The Old Testament abounds in commands to praise the Lord. Perhaps we do not do enough of it?

Peter gives praise the God of Jesus Christ and to the Father of Jesus Christ. I have no problem with the later, but is God the God of Jesus Christ? Let’s ask someone who knows!

*Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to **My God** and your God.'* "

John 20:17 (NKJV)

Besides this, remember Jesus calling out “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

According to His abundant mercy has begotten us again. “Begotten” is ἀναγεννάω (anagennaō) with is ἀνά (ana) meaning “again” and the rest of the verb meaning “to be born.” Hence, “to be born again.” The NASB reads, “caused us to be born again,” while the NIV has “given us new birth.”

to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. How do you know you have really been born again? On what do you base your hope in this?

And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!

1 Corinthians 15:17 (NKJV)

It is on the basis that Christ was resurrected to a “new life” before we were.

Being born again through Christ, we have *an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away.* Peter goes on to say, because we have been born again, we have an inheritance characterized by three things: (1) incorruptible, (2) undefiled, and (3) unfading. Note the three negatives here, “in-” and “un-.” The implication is that these are typical of an inheritance but not this

one! Those who have gone through a number of my Bible studies might guess that the three Greek terms used here all start with alpha (α) = not. Peter uses the first term without the alpha in this epistle,

*having been born again, not of **corruptible** seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,*

1 Peter 1:23 (NKJV)

(He uses “not” separately from “corruptible. :) We shall comment on this in detail when we get there but, for now, we have been born again from a seed which can not be corrupted. Allow me to refer to Trench for a discussion of these “un” words

(*incorruptible*, *undefiled*, *not* fade).

*IT is a remarkable testimony to the reign of sin, and therefore of imperfection, of decay, of death, throughout this whole fallen world, that as often as we desire to set forth the glory, purity, and perfection of that other higher world toward which we strive, we are almost inevitably compelled to do this by the aid of negatives, by the denying to that higher order of things the leading features and characteristics of this. Such is signally the case in a passage wherein two of the words with which we are now dealing occur. St. Peter, magnifying the inheritance reserved in heaven for the faithful (1 Pet. i. 4), does this, -and he had hardly any choice in the matter, -by aid of three negatives; by affirming that it is [*incorrupt*], or without our corruption; that it is [*undefiled*], or without our defilement; that it is [*unfading*], or without our withering and fading away. He can only set forth what it is by declaring what it is not. Of these three, however, I set one, namely [*undefiled*], aside, the distinction between it and the others being too evident to leave them fair subjects of synonymous discrimination. . . .*

*If, indeed, it be asked wherein [*incorruptible*] and [*unfading*] differ, what the latter predicates concerning this heavenly inheritance which the former had not claimed already, the answer must be that essentially it claims nothing; yet with all this in [*unfading*] is contained, so to speak, a pledge that the more delicate grace, beauty, and bloom which it owns will as little wither and wane as will its solid and substantial worth depart. Not merely decay and corruption cannot touch it; but It shall wear its freshness, brightness, and beauty for ever. (NOTE Greek words have been replaced by their English counterparts in braces [])*

TRENCH § LXVIII

Here is proof that Peter was not only good at catching fish, but he had a great command of the language!

Reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. What is reserved? Our inheritance which, according to JFB and McGee,

The inheritance is in security, beyond risk, out of the reach of Satan, though we for whom it is reserved are still in the midst of dangers. Still, if we be believers, we too, as well as the inheritance. are "kept" (the same Greek, John 17:12) by Jesus safely (1Pe 1:5).

JFB, 1 Peter 1:5

The word reserved means it is guarded. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are taking care of it for us. We couldn't have it in a better safety deposit box than that!

McGEE, 1 Peter 1:5

The word “reserved” is from τηρέω (tereo) which, in a literal sense, is found below.

*Peter was therefore **kept** in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.*
Acts 12:5 (NKJV)

Here it is a perfect participle. Our inheritance was gained with the Resurrection and has been guarded ever since. Not only is our inheritance being securely guarded, we ourselves are being “kept.” This word is φρουρέω (phroureo) and is used in a literal sense below.

*In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was **guarding** the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me;*
2 Corinthians 11:32 (NKJV)

We have a better king than Aretas, we have the King of Kings who is guarding us. The all-powerful one. Vincent says, “*The present participle indicates something in progress, a continuous process of protection. Hence, lit., who are being guarded.*”⁵ To put this “into English,” he says he began guarding us when we were saved and will do so until we reach heaven (where we will need no guard).

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love”

I have repeated the sentence below, **emphasizing** some clauses and de-emphasizing others.

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love.

Putting the emphasized parts together,

In this you greatly rejoice that the genuineness of your faith may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. This is the main thought here - the thought that one day we shall see Christ and the genuineness of our faith will shine forth. In a “good news/bad news” scenario, this is the good news. Now for the bad, which may seem real bad but is not when compared with the good.

The other clauses are incidental. “O, by the way . . .” How can Peter talk about rejoicing when they are being grieved by trials? The particular word for “grieved” here is explained by Trench with reference to three other synonyms.

⁵VINCENT, 1 Peter 1:5

IN all these words there is the sense of grief, or the utterance of grief; but the sense of grief in different degrees of intensity, the utterance of it in different forms of manifestation. λυπέω (lupeo) (Matt. xiv.9; Ephesians iv. 30; I Pet. i. 6) is not a special but a most general word, embracing the most various forms of grief, being opposed to [the three other synonyms] This λυπέω (lupeo) unlike the grief which the three following words express, a man may so entertain in the deep of his heart, that there shall be no outward manifestation of it, unless he himself be pleased to reveal it (Rom. ix. 2).

TRENCH, §LXV

He is speaking of the type of grief I am just beginning to understand, You wonder why you have so many trials and afflictions and yet others around you seem to go through life with out any serious problems or afflictions. The reason for this is to be found in the word "**seem**." Others do not express their griefs and afflictions just as you do not discuss your inner griefs. Paul, therefore, does not elaborate on what these griefs may have been (or will be).

Going back to the good side, Peter speaks of their faith as being more precious than gold. What is more precious than gold?

Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

1 Corinthians 3:12-16 (NKJV)

Gold will last through a fire while "wood, hay, and straw" will not. Even so, their faith is more precious than it. There is the story about the rich man who asks one favor of God before He takes him home. He asks if he can bring one suitcase of his things. God grants the request and so the man appears at the gate and St. Peter says, "What's with the suitcase?" and he explains that God allowed him to bring it. St. Peter opens it and finds it full of gold bullion. "Why did you come up here with paving material?" Peter asks (you can laugh now). Seriously,

The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

Revelation 21:21 (NKJV)

Your faith is much more precious than that.

"Though now you do not see Him, yet believing,"

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of **things not seen**.*

Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV)

Peter and Paul certainly agree on this. We have no visible evidence of our home in heaven, but we need to have the kind of faith that believes without seeing.

"you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory," ἀγαλλιάσθε χαρᾶ ἀνεκκλήτῳ

(anallias the chara anekalaeto). The third word begins with α (alpha) so it is “not” something. That “something” is found below.

*So the commander let the young man depart, and commanded him, "**Tell** no one that you have revealed these things to me."*

Acts 23:22 (NKJV)

Next to the α (alpha) is εκ (ek) which is a preposition meaning “out” The rest of the verb is the common Greek word for “to speak.” Hence “to speak out.” The “young man” in the verse above was not to speak out, to not reveal. But here in 1 Peter it was impossible for those whom Peter addresses to express their joy because the Greek language, as rich as it was, did not have the words to express it! There are no words in the Greek (or English) language to express the joy they had.

receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls The end of this is what we all seek, what we all expect. The end result of our life of faith here upon planet Earth is to have our souls depart from here and go to be with the Lord. The persecution which has been mentioned is little compared to the expected end, because of our faith.

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. Here is another of Peter’s long sentences - 51 words.

The prophets in the Old Testament “inquired,” ἐκζητέω (ekkseteo) and “searched carefully,” ἐξεραυνάω (ekseraunao). The later word is used only here in the New Testament. Without its prefix, this word is found below.

*But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit **searches** all things, yes, the deep things of God.*

1 Corinthians 2:10 (NKJV)

*I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who **searches** the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.*

Revelation 2:23 (NKJV)

The prefix greatly amplifies the meaning of this verb, “to search very diligently.”

The prophets wrote some things which they themselves did not grasp. They searched for the meaning diligently, "searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." There are many places in the Old Testament that speak of the suffering of Christ, and there are many other places that speak of the sovereignty of Christ, of the kingdom age. Grace and glory are combined, and it was difficult for them to understand this. For example, Isaiah wrote in the fifty-third chapter of the sufferings of Christ; then in the eleventh chapter he wrote of the Messiah coming in power and glory to the earth to establish His kingdom. This seeming contradiction was very puzzling to the prophets, and they tried to find out how both could be true. As the prophets looked down the corridors of time they saw these two events as two great mountain peaks, but they could not see the valley of time between them.

You and I are in the unique position of living in that interval of time between the suffering of Christ, which is in the past, and the glory of Christ, which is yet in the future.

It will help you to understand the prophecies of the suffering and sovereignty of Christ if you picture the two events as two great mountain peaks. Here in Pasadena we have a backdrop of the Sierra Madre mountains. As the crow flies, they are about five miles away, but driving the winding road to get there makes them about twenty-five miles away. Mount Wilson is in the foreground and is approximately six thousand feet high. Behind that peak we can see another peak, Mount Waterman, which looks as if it is the same height as Mount Wilson. Actually, Mount Waterman is over eight thousand feet high. However, it looks as if they are the same height and that they are right together. In actual fact, they are not together at all. A tremendous valley separates them -- between twenty-five and thirty-five miles across -- and I estimate that it is probably fifty miles from one mountain peak to the other. Yet, seeing them from a distance, you would think they were right together.



Photo from ClipArt.com

McGEE, 1 Peter 1:11

(I took the liberty of replacing Dr. McGee's hand drawn sketch with an actual photo). To demonstrate what Dr. McGee speaks of, look at the following.

My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning? O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent. But You are holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in You; They trusted, and You delivered them. They cried to You, and were delivered; They trusted in You, and were not ashamed. But I am a worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people. All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!" But You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother's breasts. I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother's womb You have been My God. Be not far from Me, For trouble is near; For there is none to help. Many bulls have surrounded Me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots. But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me; O My Strength, hasten to help Me! Deliver Me from the sword, My precious life from the power of the dog. Save Me from the lion's mouth And from the horns of the wild oxen! You have answered Me. I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You. You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel! For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him; But when He cried to Him, He heard. My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay My vows before those who fear Him. The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever! All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn

to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You. For the kingdom is the LORD s, And He rules over the nations. All the prosperous of the earth Shall eat and worship; All those who go down to the dust Shall bow before Him, Even he who cannot keep himself alive. A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation, They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, That He has done this.

Psalms 22:1-31 (NKJV)

The Gospel writers did not give us as detailed a description of the crucifixion as did the Psalmist. What was the Psalmist thinking when he wrote this psalm? I do not know what he was thinking but I do know one thing . . .

for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:21 (NKJV)

Peter says these men were “moved” φέρω (phero) which is quite graphically illustrated in the verse below.

*. . .and when the ship was caught in it and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and let ourselves **be driven** along.*

Acts 27:15 (NASB-U)

The Holy Spirit “drove” the Old Testament prophets to write what they wrote. Noone insists they really understood the full significance of what they wrote.

*To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, . . .*The NKJV here sounds like a bit of double-talk. It really is not. As observed by ATR

To the prophets who were seeking to understand. Bigg observes that "the connexion between study and inspiration is a great mystery." Surely, but that is no argument for ignorance or obscurantism. We do the best that we can and only skirt the shore of knowledge, as Newton said.

ATR, 1 Peter 1:12

They wrote as the Spirit moved them to write, and they knew there was importance in what they were writing, but they, themselves, did not fully understand the significance of what they wrote. It would a time before what they wrote meant. They did not understand *but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven*—I am reminded of a verse here that is not quite right for the context, but illustrates the point.

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

1 Corinthians 3:6 (NKJV)

God’s work for us is a cooperative one. The Old Testament prophets wrote it and the Apostles interpreted it so that we can know it. The Holy Spirit had them write, the same Holy Spirit revealed the truths of the prophecies to them. Peter concludes this though with the statement that these are

things which angels desire to look into. McGee, in his characteristic way says,

"Which things the angels desire to look into." It is my opinion that the angels, God's created intelligences, are standing up yonder looking at you and me wondering why we don't get busy and give out this tremendous message today. They desire to do it themselves. They would love to come and proclaim it to the world. You recall that the angel Gabriel came and made the announcement to Mary and later to Joseph that Jesus was to be born. Also, he came to tell Zacharias that he was going to have a son, named John, who would be the forerunner of the Messiah. I am sure that Gabriel would love to come down again and say to me as I make my radio broadcast, "Move over, McGee, you are not putting enough into it. This thing is lots more wonderful than you are making it!" Although he would like to come down, God won't let him. He says to Gabriel, "No, I've got to use that poor instrument, McGee." Today he is using human instruments to get out His Word, because we are not living in the day of the ministry of angels

McGEE, 1 Peter 1:12

To continue, I could add that, even though a "poor instrument," McGee has it over me, a poorer instrument, but this is where you are now - with me!

In view of all this, Peter moves on with some practical advice, or is it a command? *Therefore gird up the loins of your mind,*; Paul gave similar advice.

But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

1 Thessalonians 5:8 (NKJV)

The word is ἀναζώννυμι (anazonnumi) and in the perfect tense, used as an imperative (i.e. a command). Thayer says,

to gird up; mid. to gird up one's self or for one's self i. e. prepared,-a metaphor derived from the practice of the Orientals, who in order to be unimpeded in their movements were accustomed, when about to start on a journey or engage in any work, to bind their long and flowing garments closely around their bodies and fasten them with a leathern girdle;

THAYER, ἀναζώννυμι

To put it slightly different,

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

Hebrews 12:1 (NKJV)

be sober, The admonition, "be sober" is not what you might think it to be. It is not an admonition to stay away from alcohol (although that would be included). The word νήφω (nepho) is also found below.

But you **be watchful** in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

2 Timothy 4:5 (NKJV)

rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

“Rest your hope” is from ἐλπίζω (elpizo) which is in the aorist tense and imperative mood - all of which is to say, it might better be translated, “Start resting your hope . . . “ Resting it on what? On this grace which we shall receive at the Rapture of the Church.

How are we to do all this? Peter lists the ways:

- *as obedient children,*
- *not conforming yourselves to the former lusts,*
- *not in your ignorance;*
- *be holy in all your conduct, as He who called you is holy*

God does not expect things from us which are unreasonable. The first here is, literally, “to be obedient children.”

So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him:

"You are My Son,

Today I have begotten You."

*though He was a Son, yet He learned **obedience** by the things which He suffered.*

Hebrews 5:5 & 8 (NKJV)

If Christ was obedient - even to death on the cross, we too need to be obedient children, listening to what our heavenly Father asks of us. The other side of this is second on the list.

“Not conforming yourselves. . . “ συσχηματίζω (suschematizo) is a Present Middle Imperative. It is a command to continue conforming ourselves to our former passions. God forgives us for these former passions as they were held in ignorance.

So, finally, we are to be “holy” is our conduct. This is not something Peter dreamed up. The Old Testament demands it!

For I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth. For I am the Lord who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.

Leviticus 11:44-45 (NKJV)

"Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.

Leviticus 19:2 (NKJV)

Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the Lord your God.

Leviticus 20:7 (NKJV)

But, how can I be “holy?”

Is our holiness to be an attribute like God's holiness? No. Our God is absolutely perfect, and we will never, while we are in this life, reach that state. Oh, I have met several folk who thought they had reached that state, but I could not find anyone who would agree with them that they had reached that exalted level. Then what does it mean to be holy as God is holy?

Our God is a complete, wonderful personality. Although you and I are mere human beings, we can be full grown; we can reach maturation. A beautiful little baby in a crib may win a blue ribbon, but if he is still a little baby in a crib seventeen years later, something is wrong. He should be a healthy young fellow turning out for football practice. As Christians, we should be growing spiritually like that. What can produce this kind of growth? The Word of God.

McGEE, 1 Peter 1:16

Let us go on.

And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

1 Peter 1:17-21 (NKJV)

We go on with another long sentence (66 words). *And if you call on the Father . . .* “IF” in the Greek is εἰ (ei) which indicates a first class (or type A) condition - a condition that is true or the writer believes to be true. Thus this might be translated, *And if you call on the Father which I believe you are doing currently, . . .*

I suppose you would expect this of God, but Peter spells it out, “*who without partiality judges according to each one's work.*” ἀπροσωπολήμπως (aprosopolemptos) is a rather formidable word found only here. Remove the α (alpha) = “not” and you get the word found in the passage below.

*Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no **partiality**.*

Acts 10:34 (NKJV)

Interestingly, it is Peter who uses this word without the “not” affixed to it. He adds “not” as a separate word. Now, having removed the α (alpha), we may split the word into two words. The first is προσωπον (prosopon) = “the face” and the later is λαμβάνω (lambano) (the form of the later word changes when by itself). = to take with the hand. Put together it means to take a person “by the face,” that is to judge someone by their outward appearance or by superficial standards.

God judges us by one thing and one thing alone, our “work.” “Wait a minute,” you exclaim, “We are not saved by works!” True, but,

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling;

Philippians 2:12 (NKJV)

Now, Paul wrote the following.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not **of works**, lest anyone should boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV)

You see - no works! But what did he write in verse 10?

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.**

Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV)

You are not saved by works. You are not kept saved by works. But you are expected to do the will of God once you have been saved. You want to be like those below.

For we are God's **fellow workers**; you are God's field, you are God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how **he builds on it.** For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. **Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.**

1 Corinthians 3:9-13 (NKJV)

We all have work to do and God, one day, will judge what kind of work we have done. Have you done that which is lasting or is the work you do nothing but wood, hay and stubble? As you work, Peter says, "conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear." Our "stay here?" παροικία (paroikia) is used in below.

By faith **he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country**, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;

Hebrews 11:9 (NKJV)

The word is made up of two words, παρα (para) = "along the side of" and οἶκος (oikos) = "house" or "home." Thus the word means to make your home along side of some other people or, in other words, "to be an alien." During our time here on earth we are to "conduct ourselves" (keep on conduction ourselves) in fear.

Trench say of "fear,"

OF these three words the first, δειλία (delia) is used always in a bad sense; the second, φόβος (**phobos**) is a middle term, capable of a good interpretation, capable of an evil, and lying indifferently

between the two; the third, εὐλάβεια (eulabia) , is quite predominantly used in a good sense, though it too has not altogether escaped being employed in an evil. . . .

φόβος (phobos), very often united with [another word](as at Gen. ix. 2; Deut. xi. 25; Exod. xv. 6; I Cor. ii. 3; Phil. ii. 12), and answering to the Latin' metus,' is, as has been said, a, middle term, and as such used in the N. T. sometimes in a bad sense, but oftener in a good. Thus in a bad sense, Rom. viii. 15; I John iv. 18; cf. Wisd. xvii. 11; but in a good, Acts ix. 31; Rom. iii. 18; Ephesians vi. 5; Phil. ii. 12; **1 Peter 1:17**. . .

TRENCH §X

You have, no doubt, heard of people with “phobias.” This is the source of the word. Peter is not saying you should have a “theophobia” (fear of god) but a reverential fear of Him. One might use the term “respect.”

“Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers.”

What does Peter mean by “redeemed” above? Are we redeemed like S&H Green stamps (I give away my age with that!)? We are “saved,” but what is this business with “redeem?” The word, λυτρόω (litroo) means “to liberate by payment of a ransom.”⁶ To be redeemed, something must be paid. Here Peter tells us what was not paid, *corruptible things*. He gives two examples, silver and gold, which might normally be used in a redemption process. What then? Before answering this, he tells us what we have been redeemed from. *from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers.* It is something “handed down from the fathers, πατροπαράδοτος (patroparadotos) Such a long word is a combination of three Greek words, πατήρ (pater) and παρά (para) and δίδωμαι (didomai) - “father + over + to give.” so, here, it is “those things which were handed over to us from our fathers.” Remember that, technically, Peter is writing to Christian Jews and hence the “fathers” are the Jewish leaders of the past. I would rather replace “conduct” with “manner of life.” That is what the pious Jews were doing when Christ came (and are still doing). In addition to the commandments, they had among other writings, the Talmud which ISBE says,

Commonly the Talmud is declared to be the Jewish code of Law. But this is not the case, even for the traditional or "orthodox" Jews. Really the Talmud is the source whence the Jewish Law is to be derived. Whosoever wants to show what the Jewish Law says about a certain case (point, question) has to compare at first the Shulh?an 'arukh with its commentary, then the other codices (Maimonides, Alphasi, etc.) and the Responsa, and finally the Talmudic discussions; but he is not allowed to give a decisive sentence on the authority of the Talmud alone (see Intro, 116, 117; David Hoffmann, Der Schulchan-Aruch, 2nd edition, Berlin, 1894, 38, 39). On the other hand, no decision is valid if it is against the yield of the Talmudic discussion. The liberal (Reformed) Jews say that the Talmud, though it is interesting and, as a Jewish work of antiquity, ever venerable, has in itself no authority for faith and life

ISBE, Talmud

From there came traditions such as the one below.

⁶THAYER, λυτρόω

Sabbath day's journey

Chart: Jewish Watches

Jewish Day

Watch	Time of Day
First Watch	Sunset to 9pm
Second Watch	9pm to Midnight
Third Watch	Midnight to 3am
Fourth Watch	3am to Sunrise

First Watch	Sunrise to 9am
Second Watch	9am to Noon
Third Watch	Noon to 3pm
Fourth Watch	3pm to Sunset

The Jewish Day is sunset to sunset, in eight equal parts. Supposed to be a distance of 2,000 cubits, or less than half-a-mile, the distance to which, according to Jewish tradition, it was allowable to travel on the Sabbath day without violating the law (Acts 1:12; Compare Ex 16:29; Num 35:5; Jos 3:4).

EASTON, Sabbath day's journey

To make things even worse, the Jewish leaders found ways to circumvent their own made-up laws. If you needed to go further than 2000 cubits on the Sabbath, you need only carry a small tent with you. Go a Sabbath day's journey, set up your tent and sit in it for a few minutes and it became a "home." Then you could pack it up and go another Sabbath day's journey.

Jesus Christ paid the supreme sacrifice to save the Jews (and Gentiles alike) from all this burden. I do not intend to start a course in Theology here but I will cite a portion of what Thieses says about "redemption".

THE WORK OF CHRIST: HIS DEATH - ITS TRUE MEANING

1. It is vicarious
2. It is a Satisfaction
3. It is a Ransom.

*The death of Christ is represented as the payment of a price or ransom. Stephen speaks of Moses as a "redeemer" (Acts 7 :35, Greek, lutrotes) ; but the idea of a ransom is that of a payment of a price in order to set another held in bondage free. Thus. Jesus said that He had come to give His life a ransom (lutron) for many (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45), and the work of Christ is spoken of as a redemption (I4uke 1:68; 2:38; Heb. 9:12). In these references we have the word lutrosis. The verb lutroomai occurs in Luke 24 :21; Tit. 2 :14; **1 Pet. 1 :18**. The compound, apolutrosis, occurs ten times (Luke 21 :28; Rom. 3 :24; 8 :23; 1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 1:7, 14; 4:30; Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:15; 11:35).*

Deissmann says: When anybody heard the Greek word lutron, "ransom" in the first century, it was natural for him to think of the purchase-money for manumitting slaves.

Three documents from Oxyrhynchus relating to manumissions in the years 86, 100 and 91 or 1107 A.D. make use of the word. Gp. cit., pp. 327f.

This ransom is not paid to Satan, as we have already pointed out, but to God. The debt that requires cancelling is due to God's attribute of justice; Satan has no legal claims against the sinner, and so does not need to be paid before the sinner can be set free

THEISEN, Pages 328

So, as Peter says, we are redeemed *with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.*

Why does he speak of a “lamb without blemish?”

Your ***lamb shall be without blemish***, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

Exodus 12:5 (NKJV)

(See also Leviticus 4:32; 9:3; 14:10; 23:12; Numbers 6:14; and Ezekiel 46:13)

The law required that! He was “foreordained,” according to the NKJV. The NAS has “foreknown” and the NIV has “chosen before.” Which is correct? The word is προγινώσκω (proginosho) made up of προ (pro) = “before” and γινώσκω (ginosko) = “to know.” Thus we have “to know beforehand.” It is why a doctor gives us his “prognosis!” Where do the other translations get “foreordained?” You will have to ask the translators, but,

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Romans 8:29 (NKJV)

When it comes to God, “foreknowing” amounts to “foreordaining,” or “predestining.” With respect to the word “world”, Wuest make a distinction, cited below.

"World" in the Greek text is κόσμος (kosmos), which speaks of an ordered system, and here of that perfect universe which left the hands of the Creator. The Greeks have a word for a rude, unformed mass, a word from which we get our English word "chaos:" [In Genesis 1: 1 we have a kosmos, a system in which order prevails, and in 1 :2, a chaos, a rude unformed mass, the latter the result of God's curse because of Lucifer's sin. Before this universe was created, the Lord Jesus had been foreordained to be the Saviour of lost sinners, and the saints had been foreordained to become recipients of the salvation He would procure for lost sinners at the Cross {Eph. 1 :4; Rom. 8:29)

WUEST, 1 Peter 1:20

Our Redemption “*was manifest [made clear] in these last times for you who through Him believe in God.*” We have previously noted the we live in “last times.” Peter and Paul and the others lived in “last times.”

Peter speaks of this faith and hope they had in God. What God? , The God “*who raised Him from the dead **and gave Him glory**, so that your faith and hope are in God.*” It is the resurrection of Christ, accomplished by the Father, upon which we base our faith and knowledge of God. This is a thought that is expressed in the following.

1: To God be the glory, great things He has done; So loved He the world that He gave us His Son, Who yielded His life an atonement for sin, And opened the life gate that all may go in.

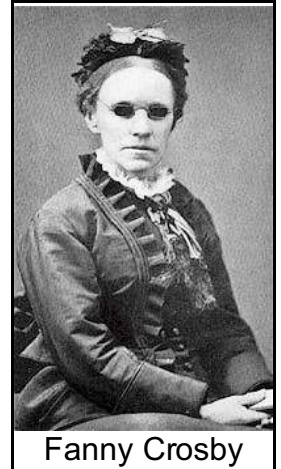
Refrain

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, Let the earth hear His voice! Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, Let the people rejoice! O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son, And give Him the glory, great things He has done.

2: O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood, To every believer the promise of God; The vilest offender who truly believes, That moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

Refrain

*3: Great things He has taught us, great things He has done, And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son; But purer, and higher, and greater will be Our wonder, our transport, **when Jesus we see.***



Fanny Crosby

Refrain

Words: Fanny Crosby, in *Brightest and Best*, by W. H. Doane and Robert Lowry, 1875.

<http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/t/o/togodbe.htm>

For a blind woman, Fanny Crosby had 20/20 vision of God's glory. Today she can see him perfectly! By the way, this woman, who lived from 1820-1915, wrote (at least) 294 Hymns under over 120 pseudonyms!

Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because

*"All flesh is as grass,
And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass.
The grass withers,
And its flower falls away,
But the word of the Lord endures forever."*

Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

1 Peter 1:22-25 (NKJV)

"Since you have purified your souls . . ." This sounds important. How do you purify your soul? Not by listening to "soul music!" The verb ἁγνίζω (hagnizo)⁷ which is a derivative of the Greek word for "holy." And means to separate yourselves from worldly things. How can we accomplish this "separation?" Peter says it is *"obeying the truth through the Spirit"* How? Let Dr. McGee say.

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit." The Word of God is a miracle cleansing agent. On television today advertisers make great claims for their soaps and other

⁷When a word begins in a vowel, it has a mark over it, Ὁ which "points" one way or the other. When it points as here, it is pronounced as if there were an H in front.

cleansing agents. They tell us how superior their product is over the products of their competitors. All of them are trying to sell a "miracle" product. My friend, the only true miracle cleanser in this world is the Word of God. It is the best bar of soap that you can get. The Word of God will really take spots out, and many of us need to get closer to it.

McGEE, 1 Peter 1:22

While McGee is very practical, let us get a bit more technical.

The Septuagint translation of the Old-Testament technical term [ἁγνίζω (hagnizo)] for the purification of the people and priests (Joshua 3:5; 1 Chronicles 15:12; 1 Samuel 16:5). Also, of the separation from wine and strong drink by the Nazarite (Numbers 6:2-6). In this ceremonial sense, John 11:55; Acts 21:24, 26; 24:18. In the moral sense, as here, James 4:8; 1 John 3:3.

VINCENT, 1 Peter 1:22

The driving force here, as Peter says, is a "sincere love." "Sincere" here is an interesting word to use. It is ἀνυπόκριτος (anupokritos) remove the ἄν (an) = "not" and you have the word, ὑπόκρινομαι (hyprinomai and hypokritos) from which we get "hypocrite." Thayer defines it thus.

1. to take up another's statements in reference to what one has decided for one's self i. e. to reply, answer, (Hom., Hdt., al.). 2. to make answer (speak) on the stage, i. e. to personate any one, play apart, (often so from Dem. down). Hence 3. to simulate, feign, pretend, (from Dem. and Polyb. down):

THAYER, ὑπόκρινομαι

The idea of acting out a role in a stage play is interesting. In Peter's day, when plays were put on in the various amphitheatres, the actors would hold large masks in front of the faces. These had two purposes. The practical purpose was to act like megaphone and amplify the voice and the other is to portray some character. How many masks do you own? I believe we all own at least a few. We usually do not act the same when we are at home as when we are at church. We may act like sweet little old men and women (or younger, as it fits you) at church but as real bullies at home.

In teaching at Cal Poly for so long, I served on many screening committees and we would select a few good sounding candidates and speak to them on the phone. Then the real good ones would be invited to come and spend a day with us. The thing I learned over the years is that what you see in one day in the interview process is not at all necessarily what you will see when they report to work!

As Christians, we need to put away our masks when we are fellowshiping with other believers (and, I suppose, non-believers too). Thus we will show a sincere love to others. But that is not all. We are to love the brethren:

- *fervently*
- *with a pure heart*

Fervently is from ἐκτενῶς (eltenos), used only twice in the New Testament. The other place it is found is in Acts.

*So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made **fervently** by the church to God.*
Acts 12:5 (NASB-U)

The verbal form is found in Acts also.

*To this promise our twelve tribes, **earnestly serving** God night and day, hope to attain. For this hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews.*

Acts 26:7 (NKJV)

The base of this word is to “stretch out.” (Acts 27:30) and, in a moral sense, then, to “stretch yourself to the limit.” To do all that you possibly can. They were to love one another, to use a modern term, “with all their hearts.” Speaking of hearts, the second part of this is with “a pure heart.” How do you have a “pure heart?” The Greek term is καθαρός (katharos). I need not tell you the translation - we get our word “cathartic” from it.⁸ If you have ever taken a cathartic medicine, you now what the term means! I don’t know about you, but I had my share of Milk of Magnesia when I was a kid and I found out what it does. We have to do to our hearts which “Phillips” does to our stomachs.

One way to cleans the heart is to not be a hypocrite and reveal the deep things of your heart to the proper person! You should not air these things to the general public. But, if you have offended someone, you should cleanse your heart by apologizing (assuming you were wrong) or exolaining your remarks (if you really were right).

This is all predicated upon the fact that you have “*been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.*”

Peter now embarks on a agricultural lesson concerning seeds, σποράς (sporas), the Greek word from which we get “spore,” He also includes grass, χόρτος (chortas) which is more than what we think of as “grass,” it is all growing things which are eaten by man or animal. Last is the flower άνθος (anthos) whice James also speaks of.

*Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, but the rich in his humiliation, **because as a flower of the field he will pass away.** For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.*

James 1:9-11 (NKJV)

Peter cites from Isaiah with:

*"All flesh is as grass,
And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass.
The grass withers,
And its flower falls away,
But the word of the Lord endures forever."*

*The voice said, "Cry out!"
And he said, "What shall I cry?"*

⁸catharsis >n. 1 the process of releasing pent-up emotions, for example through drama. 2 Medicine, rare purgation. -DERIVATIVES cathartic >adj. & >n. cathartically >adv. ORIGIN C19: from Gk katharsis, from kathairein 'cleanse', from katharos 'pure'.

*"All flesh is grass,
And all its loveliness is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
Because the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
Surely the people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
But the word of our God stands forever."*

Isaiah 40:6-8 (NKJV)

Note that Peter's recitation of Isaiah 40:6-8 is almost identical with the original. Actually compare Peter with that below.

All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower fades: but the word of our God abides for ever

Isaiah 40:6-8 (LXX)

Many of the New Testament quotations come from the Septuagint which was read by a fairly large number of the Jews at that time. This is just one example. Assuming that Peter wrote this letter himself (not dictating it to someone as Paul often did), he must have known Greek well and so it would not be unnatural for him to read the LXX. Robertson says, however that is it a , "Quotation from Isaiah 40:6-8 (partly like the LXX, partly like the Hebrew)⁹ This may be, who can tell, he probably quoted it from memory and so, bottom line, it is taken from neither of these but from the heart -

With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You!

Psalms 119:10-11 (NKJV)

This is often used as an encouragement for people to sit down and memorize (i.e. by rote) the Scriptures. Others underline them in their Bibles. But neither is what is meant here. What is it then? How many things do you remember that you did not set out to memorize. When you drove to church today, did you get here because you recalled from your memory how to get here, or is the drive to church just a part of you that you do not need to make a conscious effort to recall? This is what is meant.

Perhaps I am biased. If you asked me to quote a certain verse of the Bible, I probably would fail. Not since I was in high school have I deliberately sat down to memory scriptures. On the other hand, you ask me about what the Bible has to say about something, I can usually come up with a number of related Scriptures, but I would have to use a concordance or my computer to give you chapter and verse - I just know it is there somewhere. Usually I would be able to give you the book, but that is about all. Thus, I can see Peter just writing down this section of the Psalm without even thinking about it.

Well, back to the "ag" lesson. Peter stresses the importance of being born of an "incorruptible seed" because regular seed is short-lived. In citing from Isaiah, he speaks of our glory as the flower of grass. The "glory" he speaks of (a common Greek term) is the glory of **man**, not God's glory.

⁹ATR, 1 Peter 1:24

In meditating on this, I am mindful of the several times my wife have been called on to settle the estate of a friend or relative. It really makes you think. The last time we did it, we filled seven large demisters with the “precious things” of their former owner. Life is but a vapor.

whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

James 4:14 (NKJV)

I am sure that she would now agree that all these “precious” things which she “gloried in” are nothing now that she is with the Lord. It makes us think we need to go through all the “precious thing” we have and dispose of them so that our sons won’t have to and, in addition, we can gain some much needed space. The one thing that is absolutely essential to keep is, you guessed it, the Bible. That is the precious thing that will keep us on the right track - *The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.*” The Bible was written over 1900 years ago. It has been burned, banned, buried people who owned it, and Satan has done all he can to wipe it out. **But** there are millions (if not billions) of Bibles in the world today.

Peter was surely correct when he wrote, *the word of our God stands forever*

1 PETER 2

therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

1 Peter 2:1-3 (NKJV)

In view of what we learned in Chapter One, Peter gives us advice on what we should be doing. Dr. McGee notes,

In chapters 2 – 4 Peter deals with the suffering of God's children and the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ. And in these three chapters we will see what suffering accomplishes in the lives of believers: Suffering produces separation (1Pet. 2); suffering produces Christian conduct (1Pet. 3); and suffering produces obedience to the will of God (1Pet. 4)

McGEE, 1 Peter 2:1

“Laying aside” is αποτίθημι (apotithemi) is from a common Greek word, τίθημι (tithemi) = “to set” or “to put.” something. The prefix, απο (apo) is a preposition meaning “away from.” Hence the sense of the word is to take something you currently have and get rid of it (put it away for good). The verb is in the Imperative Mood - it is a command from Peter to us. It is an Aorist Imperative, meaning “**Start** putting away . . .”

What should we start putting off (if we have not already)? Peter gives us a list.

- 1; *deceit,*
- 2: *hypocrisy,*
- 3: *envy,*
- 4: *all evil speaking*

These are but a few of the things that God allowed man to get into in the first place.

*being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of **envy**, murder, strife, **deceit**, **malice**; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;*

Romans 1:29-31 (NASB)

Only “hypocrisy” is omitted from Paul’s list. To make sure we have put these away, or to know what remains to be put away, let us examine these characteristics.

“Deceit” is from κάκια (kakia) and means “malignity, malice, ill-will, desire to injure”¹⁰ If you are doing anything that hurts another, especially a brother or sister in the Lord, you must stop doing that. How you stop we will consider later.

“Hypocrisy” (not found in the Romans passage) is from υπόκρισις (hypokrisis) from which you can

¹⁰THAYER, κάκια

tell our word “hypocrisy” comes. We have already looked at this at page.10, 31. “Play acting, pretending to be someone we are not.

“Envy” is φθόνος (phthonos) (try to pronounce that!). “Envy” is about as good a translation as any. Of course, you are never envious(?). We should not be doing that!

Finally, we have “evil speaking.” is one word, καταλαλιά (katalalia). The root, λαλιά (lalia) is “to speak” and the preposition, κατα (kata) is “down.” Hence the word means, in expanded form “to put another person down by our speech.” The person who does this would be guilty of being arrogant.¹¹ It is the person who builds himself up by putting others down. You have all met people like that. Don’t be like that and, if you are, stop being like that.

Now, how to do these things? Peter gives the “formula” (literally) *as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.* “Newborn babes” is found in Luke,

*"And this will be the sign to you: You will find a **Babe** wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."*
 Luke 2:12 (NKJV)

You know, if Christ was willing to become a “newborn babe” for our sakes, we ought to be willing to do the same for Him!

Peter is here addressing those whose faith is weak because of their ignorance of the Scriptures.

*In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. **You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness.** But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.*
 Hebrews 5:12-14 (NIV)

Peter, likewise, says that those of you who are weak need to become as babies and feed on the milk of the word. In other words, don’t get bogged down in vague theology but read the Scriptures that are easy to understand and “able to make one wise.”

Now, Peter’s use of the term “milk” here is not the same as in Hebrews and in Paul’s statement,

I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able;
 1 Corinthians 3:2 (NKJV)

JFB describe it this way.

Verse 2. new-born babes -- altogether without "guile" (1Pe 2:1). As long as we are here we are "babes," in a specially tender relation to God (Isa 40:11). The childlike spirit is indispensable if we

¹¹OXFORD arrogant >adj. having an exaggerated sense of one's own importance or abilities.

would enter heaven. "Milk" is here not elementary truths in contradistinction to more advanced Christian truths, as in 1Co 3:2 Heb 5:12, 13; but in contrast to "guile, hypocrisies," &c. (1Pe 2:1); the simplicity of Christian doctrine in general to the childlike spirit. The same "word of grace" which is the instrument in regeneration, is the instrument also of building up. "The mother of the child is also its natural nurse" [STEIGER]. The babe, instead of chemically analyzing, instinctively desires and feeds on the milk; so our part is not self-sufficient rationalizing and questioning, but simply receiving the truth in the love of it (Mt 11:25)

JFB, 1 Peter 2:2

Sometimes it is interesting to debate the characteristics of the "Hypostatic Union" with other believers but, while it may be interesting and informative, it is not what causes us to grow in Christ. We need to be sure we have a strong basis in the fundamentals of Christ. Leave the debating for people who have time for such things.

Peter says that, if we do so, we will grow. Peter adds to this, "if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious." Dr. McGee. In his typical style, writes,

*"If so be" should be translated "since" -- **since ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.** You see, at the moment of salvation, a child is born with an appetite for the Word of God, just as a newborn infant immediately starts to eat. When my little grandson came home from the hospital at only two or three days old, all we had to do was stick a nipple in his mouth. He knew what to do. I didn't give him a lecture on how to drink milk; he seemed to know all about it. In the same way, I don't think we need programs to teach the spiritual babes in Christ how to get into the Word of God. Instead of programs, we need to give them the Word so they can feed on it.*

McGEE, 1 Peter 2:3

Note the emphasized part, "Since . . ." The "IF" is a first class condition in the Greek and so ought to be translated "Since." It is my desire that, in these classes, I can "Pasteurize and Homogenize" this milk for you to drink.

Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture,

"Behold, I lay in Zion
A chief cornerstone, elect, precious,
And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame."

Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient,

"The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone,"

and

"A stone of stumbling
And a rock of offense."

They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

1 Peter 2:4-10 (NKJV)

At this point, Peter “had rocks in his head!” Seriously, he takes up the idea of “stones.” Let us back up a bit. Jesus and Peter were speaking,

"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Matthew 16:16-18 (NKJV)

This is why there is a Pope in Rome - some insist that Jesus was saying that His church would be built upon the rock - Peter. I would rather go with McGee who writes,

Let us look at this verse carefully. On what rock did Jesus build His church? There are those who say that it was built on Simon Peter. Well, obviously it was not, because there is a play upon words here. In the original Greek it is, "Thou art Petros [a little piece of rock], and upon this petra [bedrock] I will build my church." There are others who hold that Christ is building His church upon the confession that Simon Peter made. I don't agree with that at all. Who is the Rock? The Rock is Christ. The church is built upon Christ. We have Simon Peter's own explanation of this in 1Peter 2:4,

McGEE 1 Peter 2:4

Others claim there is no such play on words because they were speaking in Aramaic in which there is no such distinction. First, I am not positive that Jesus always spoke to His disciples in Aramaic but, in any case, when Peter penned these words, he obviously knew of the distinction.

So, Jesus is the cornerstone. Somewhere near that cornerstone is Peter. A great deal further up in the building you and I will be found. We have seen what Jesus promised Peter, that he would be a stone in this building. He says the same to us, as living stones, you are being built up a spiritual house.

In this regard, Vincent writes,

It seems as though Peter must have had in mind the conception embodied in Christ's commission to him, of a building erected upon a rock. The metaphor of a house built of living stones is violent, and sufficiently characteristic of Peter; yet it pictures, in a very striking way, the union of stability, growth, and activity in the ideal church

VINCENT, 1 Peter 2:4

At this point I would like to point out a difference in terms. In Matthew, the word was Πέτρος (Petros) = "Peter" and πέτρα (petra) = "rock." It is the word we get "petrified" from and the name of the place in Israel called Petra. Here the word is λίθος (lithos) = "stone." It is the word we get "lithograph" from (i.e. stone writing). I would like to comment on the difference in terms but, unfortunately, I do not

know why a different terms is used here and have not found a reference that does. The propable reason is that he then cites from Isaiah 28:16.

*Therefore thus says the Lord God:
"Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation,
A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation;
Whoever believes will not act hastily.*

Isaiah 28:16 (NKJV)

*Therefore thus saith the Lord; even the Lord " Behold, I la)' for the foundations of Sion
a costly stone, a choice, a comer-stone, a precious stone, for its foundations; and he
that believes on him shall by no means be ashamed.*

Isaiah 28:16 LXX

Stone here (in the LXX) is λίθος (lithos) and hence the reason Peter uses this term. In contrast to us, who are stones being built into God's building - the church, those who are not are described by his quotation from the Psalms and Isaiah.

The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.

Psalms 118:22 (NKJV)

He will be as a sanctuary, But a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense To both the houses of Israel, As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Isaiah 8:14 (NKJV)

I have commented before on Peter's knowledge of the Old Testament. If you go into a (good) Bible book store today, you will find many fine commentaries on the New Testament but few on the Old Testament. To understand the New Testament you must have a basic understanding of the Old Testament. I knew a bookstore owner who said, "The Old Testament is the cake and the New Testament the frosting, you are not supposed to eat the frosting without the cake!" I agree.

Note that "Both houses of Israel" refers to the Northern Kingdom - Israel, and the Southern Kingdom, Judah.

What is meant by, "*The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone?*" This passage from comes from the Psalms (see above) was often quoted by Jesus and even Peter himself.

See Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17, where Jesus himself quotes Psalm 118:22 and applies the rejection of the stone by the builders (hoi oikodomountes, the experts) to the Sanhedrin's conduct toward him. Peter quoted it also (and applied it as Jesus had done) in his speech at the Beautiful Gate (Acts 4:11). Here he quotes it again to the same purpose

ATR, 1 Peter 2:7

Dr. McGEE cites a concept that was alive in Peter's day.

This is a very important passage of Scripture. You will recall that it is a quotation from Psalm 118:22.

There is a tradition that takes us back to the time of the building of Solomon's temple in Jerusalem. In 1 Kings 6:7 we read this about the actual construction of the temple: "And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." The stones, you see, were hewn to exact measurement in the quarry; and when they reached the building site, there was no sound of a hammer -- they were just fitted into place.

Well, the tradition is that at the beginning of the project a very large, fine-looking stone came up from the quarry, but the builders couldn't fit it in any place; so they moved it to one side. Because it was in the way, eventually they just pushed it over the brow of the hill to make room for the other stones that they were receiving and forgot about it. Finally, when all the stones had been fitted into place, they sent down word to the quarry, "Send up the cornerstone." The building was finished except for the cornerstone. Word came back, "We sent the cornerstone to you at the very beginning." Then they remembered, "That's the stone we pushed off the hill!" So with a great deal of effort, they had to haul that stone back to the top of the hill, and they found that it did fit right into place. If this tradition is accurate, it certainly explains the verses before us.

McGEE 1 Peter 2:7

Peter then makes a distinction, one you must examine carefully.

- (1) They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were **appointed**.
- (2) You are a **chosen** generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people

There are two groups of people, the ones that are disobedient and the ones who are not. He says of us who believe that we are a "**chosen**" generation. The word is ἐκλεκτός (eklektos), the word that we get "Elect" from (See notes on pages #10, 31) But the disobedient are the "appointed," τίθημι (tithomi).

*And they were carried back to Shechem and **laid in** the tomb that Abraham bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem.*

Acts 7:16 (NKJV)

The word would be more often translated "placed." Do you see the difference. You go to your cupboard to "choose" something. You may also go there to "place" something there. In one action you are bringing something to you, the other you are putting something away from you. Jesus use this concept below.

*But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and **appoint him his portion** with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Matthew 24:48-51 (NKJV)

But enough about "them" What about us who have been "chosen?" Peter gives some synonyms for this.

- a royal priesthood,
- a holy nation,
- His own special people

The fact that we would be “priests” was announced in the Old Testament.

*'And you shall be to Me a **kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."*

Exodus 19:6 (NKJV)

Note that the notion of a “holy nation” is mentioned there as well. This is, finally, revealed to John.

*And they sang a new song, saying:
 "You are worthy to take the scroll,
 And to open its seals;
 For You were slain,
 And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
 Out of **every tribe and tongue and people and nation.**
 And have **made us kings and priests** to our God;
 And we shall **reign on the earth.**"*

Revelation 5:9-10 (NKJV)

In the old KJV it says we shall also be. . . , a peculiar people” Sometimes I think that Old King James may have been right. However, the word simply means “possession” and is found below.

*who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the **purchased possession**, to the praise of His glory.*

Ephesians 1:14 (NKJV)

*who gave Himself for us, that He might **redeem us** from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.*

Titus 2:14 (NKJV)

Peter then tells us why we have been so elected. “that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.” Again we have a set of contrasts.

- out of darkness into His marvelous light;
- who once were not a people but are now the people of God,
- who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy

Job speaks of the contrast between darkness and light some thirteen times (Job 3:4; 3:9; 10:22; 12:22; 12:25; 17:12; 18:6; 18:18; 24:16; 26:10; 29:3; 30:26; 38:19). Jesus commissioned Paul to effect this change.

And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. I will deliver you

*from the Jewish people, as well as from **the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light,** and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'*

Acts 26:14-18 (NKJV)

After “light” comes “people.”

Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, And I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy; Then I will say to those who were not My people, 'You are My people!' And they shall say, 'You are my God!' "

Hosea 2:23 (NKJV)

Adam Clark writes,

It does not appear that these promises have had their fulfillment among the Jews. They must either be understood of the blessings experienced by the Gentiles on their conversion to God by the preaching Of the Gospel, or are yet to be fulfilled to the Jews on their embracing the Gospel, and being brought back to their own land.

CLARK, Hosea 2:23

Keep in mind what was said at the beginning. Technically, Peter is writing to Jews, Jews that were dispersed through all Asia Minor. But, in the broader sense, he is writing to you and to me. So, it is altogether proper to say that we are “His people.”

Finally, the last result of our election is “having obtained mercy.” “Mercy” is ἐλεέω (eleeo) and “not obtained mercy” is a Perfect Participle which indicate as long existing condition or state. On the other hand, “now have obtained mercy,” is an Aorist Participle which speaks of a one time event in which this mercy was granted - at our salvation.

So, to sum this rather long section up, because of the mercy we have received, we truly are a “people” (Christians), a holy nation (a multitude of people of the same nature¹²) and people who have receive the light. Hence we are truly blessed.

Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

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

1 Peter 2:11-17 (NKJV)

Beloved, I beg you . . . Peter uses the term “beloved” some five times in 2 Peter 3:1-17. He really loved the people to whom he was writing. The word “beg” is better translated “urge”. As in 1 Peter

¹²THAYER, ἔθνος

1:1-2, he refers to them as *sojourners and pilgrims*.. Having spent the first chapter reminding them not only, of their trials and afflictions, but of their position in Christ, he now gives guidance as to how they ought to live. Remember, in the introduction, I noted that all Scripture had to be profitable for (a) doctrine, (b) reproof, (c) correction, (d) instruction. We have spent all of chapter 1 on doctrine. Now we get to the other three things.

“Correction:” *abstain from fleshly lusts*

“Instruction:” *having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles*

“Abstain” is from ἀπ-έχω (ap-echo), two simple words (hence I have put in the dash). The main word means “to have” or “to hold.” The preposition means “away from” When you put them together it means to keep (something) sway from you. “Abstain” is as good a word for this as any. Peter says “stay away from fleshly things.” No! He speaks here of lusting after them. “Fleshly” is σαρκικός (sarkikos) is derived from σάρξ (sarks) which, in this context, refers to “mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God.”¹³ We might put it simpler by referring to our “old nature.” Now I eat quite regularly and watch a little (very little) TV and eat some (well, a lot of) M&M’s but filling the needs of our old flesh does not have to be “lustful.” ἐπιθυμία (epithumia) is also a compound word. Without the preposition (i.e. the prefix) which means “to keep the θυμός (thumos) turned upon a thing.”¹⁴ so, with the main word, it is “to set one’s heart upon a thing,” or, in this case, “to lust after.” I suppose the M&M’s are a lust for me, the TV is not.

Paul is not saying to stay away from all worldly things. He is encouraging us not to desire them to the excess where they interfere with our spiritual lives. That is something you may need to “correct.”

As for “instruction,” are conduct is to be honorable among the Gentiles. Note that, in the narrower sense, Peter is speaking to Christian Jews. In the wider sense, then, we are looking at our conduct among the unsaved. McGee writes,

Having your conversation [behavior] honest among the Gentiles." You see that true Christian separation is not some pious position that is to be assumed. It is not simply refraining from doing worldly things. It is very positive action. It includes honesty and good works. All believers in any kind of business dealing show forth the praises of God by their honesty. That is a witness to the world

McGEE, 1 Peter 2:12

Let me illustrate the point with what appears to be a good example but is not. Every once in a while my flesh lusts for some ColdStone ice cream. One day I went in and ordered a cup of it and then, after it was all prepared, found they did not accept credit cards and I had no cash on me (I usually do not). So, the girl that waited on me said to take it anyway (i.e. for free). I drove home and ate it. But then I thought, that is not conduct becoming to a Christian. So I got in the car and drove back there and gave the girl the money, along with a good tip. You may say, “Well, that certainly is a good example!” But, No! I failed to let her know I was a Christian and it was my belief in Christ that led me to return to the store. I missed a good chance to be a good witness - I did not *show forth the praises of God* “in doing so.

¹³THAYER, (3) σάρξ

¹⁴THAYER, ἐπιθυμία

Anyway, had I told her about Christ, that is what Peter instructs us to do.

Now, Peter adds to this something a bit hard to understand. *When they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God.* Wuest expands the translation of this to . . .

in order that in the thing in which they defame you as those who do evil [namely, your Christianity], because of your works beautiful in their goodness which they are constantly, carefully, and attentively watching, they may glorify God in the day of His overseeing care.

WUEST, 1 Peter 2:12

I really like J. B. Phillips' paraphrase of this.

.I beg you, as those whom I love, to live in this world as strangers and "temporary residents", to keep clear of the desires of your lower natures, for they are always at war with your souls. Your conduct among the surrounding peoples in your different countries should always be good and right, so that although they may in the usual way slander you as evil-doers yet when disasters come, they may glorify God when they see how well you conduct yourselves.

PHILLIPS, 1 Peter 2:11-12

Next is more "instruction" from Peter. *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man.* To what extent does this mean we are to obey in a democracy or republic or a monarchy? Do you know what forms of government there are? I am not a political scientist but I can name the following:

- **Democracy** - >n. (pl. -ies) a form of government in which the people have a voice in the exercise of power, typically through elected representatives.
- **Republic** - >n. a state in which supreme power is held by the people and their elected representatives, and which has an elected or nominated president.
- **Monarchy** - >n. (pl. -ies) government by a monarch or king.
- **Theocracy** - >n. (pl. -ies) a system of government in which priests rule in the name of God or a gods.
- **Anarchy** - >n. 1 a state of disorder due to lack of government or control¹⁵

Israel was ruled by a Theocracy until they rejected God as the "monarch" and choose Saul to be king. Then they were under a Monarchy. When Peter wrote this, they were still under a monarchy, a two tiered monarchy. The Roman king was supreme, but the Jews had their own king who was a puppet, subject to the whims of Rome.

To apply this today, what form of government do we have? The founding forefathers set it up as a Republic. The Supreme Court, politicians, and others have worked at tearing this down and replacing it with a Democracy but, the way we are going, we may soon end up with an anarchy!

Article IV, Section. 4.

*The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union **a Republican Form** of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and on Application of the Legislature, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) against domestic Violence*

¹⁵OXFORD, definitions of governmental forms

Article II, Section 1

Clause 2: Each State shall **appoint**, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, **a Number of Electors**, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector

<http://www.house.gov/Constitution/Constitution.html>

Note that, when the constitution was written, the people did not vote for president at all, at least, there was nothing that said they could. It was up to the government of each state to decide how to pick the electors for the Presidency! That is why we still have the Electoral College, but when it is finally done away with, we will become a Democracy.

Whatever form of government we find ourselves under, Peter instructs us to obey *every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors*. Christ also indicated this.

And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

Luke 20:25 (NKJV)

McGee's comments on Jesus' words are,

They were using the legal tender of the Roman Empire. Rome did provide certain advantages and privileges. Rome maintained law and order by her standards and provided protection. Rome made and maintained roads and kept the sea lanes open. She had a universal currency system which was an aid to business. The Jews owed Rome something for the use of coins, roads, and law and order. Caesar had something coming to him.

McGEE, Luke 20:25

Paul goes even further,

Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 (NKJV)

Are we to obey every ordinance that the Federal, State, and local authorities create? Are we ever exempt? What happens when we do not?

When we see a car darting in and out of traffic so its occupants can exceed the speed limit and have a bumper sticker extolling Christianity, what happens? It makes me angry, but it makes the unsaved be less inclined to associate with Christians. It is a very poor witness.

What about when the government orders you to fight in the front lines where you will be killing men

(or women nowadays)? Some cite the sixth commandment, "You shall not kill."¹⁶ as reason for not going to war. If the government makes a law that is in direct contradiction to God's law, we must do like Peter and John did,

*But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men."
Acts 5:29 (NKJV)*

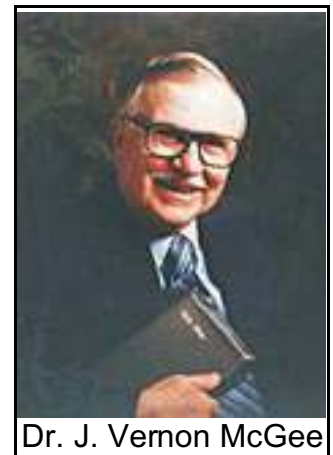
Unfortunately, a number of Christians have disobeyed the laws of the land because they have not understood God's laws. Reading Exodus 20:13 in the Hebrew text, the word is רצח (ratsah) which means "murder," not "kill." There is a difference, murder >n. 1 the unlawful premeditated killing of one person by another¹⁷ and kill >v. 1 cause the death of.¹⁸ If there were no difference, how would you explain scriptures like the following?

*Then the Lord said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the Lord, out in the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may turn away from Israel." So Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor."
Numbers 25:4-5 (NKJV)*

IF you decide to practice "civil disobedience," make sure that your actions are based on the fact that the Bible teaches contrary to the law. Dr. McGee wrote,

*Then what should be the believer's relationship to the law? He is to obey the law. That is what Peter is saying here -- "submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." Since they were under Roman law, they were to obey it. Although Rome intended that their laws should be just, they were not. Remember that Roman law crucified Christ and persecuted the early Christians; yet Rome boasted loudly about justice. It sounds like modern America where religion -- that is, the preaching of the Word of God -- **is very politely being suppressed. Are we to rebel against the government?** No. We are to obey the laws of the land
McGEE, 1 Peter 2:13-14*

(The highlighting is mine). I do not know when Dr. McGee penned the above words. I searched the Internet and could find no date. I did find a website that claimed that he, Dr. MacArthur, Franklin Graham, and a number of prominent Christian teachers are all heretics! So much for the Internet. He must have penned the words quite a few years ago. The reason I say so is that the Word of God is not "politely" being suppressed, it is very blatantly being oppressed. What are we to do? I am happy to note that this past election has shown that some of Christianity is awaking to what is going on and beginning to take a stand. But, someday we may have to voice the words of Peter and John



Dr. J. Vernon McGee

¹⁶ Exodus 20:13 (NKJV)

¹⁷ OXFORD, "Murder"

¹⁸ OXFORD, "Kill"

But Peter and the apostles answered, "**We must obey God rather than men.**

Acts 5:29 (NASB-U)

Peter goes on, "We are to obey "as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good." Punishment of evildoers?" JFB wrote,

No tyranny ever has been so unprincipled as that some appearance of equity was not maintained in it; however corrupt a government be, God never suffers it to be so much so as not to be better than anarchy [CALVIN]. Although bad kings often oppress the good, yet that is scarcely ever done by public authority (and it is of what is done by public authority that Peter speaks), save under the mask of right. Tyranny harasses many, but anarchy overwhelms the whole state [HORNEIUS]. The only justifiable exception is in cases where obedience to the earthly king plainly involves disobedience to the express command of the King of kings.

JFB, 1 Peter 2:14

I know that Calvin lived before Hitler as did Horneius (whoever he may have been). Nevertheless, The tyranny of Rome against Christians was every bit as bad as was life under Hitler. It is my prayer that Jesus will come for His "bride" before things get so bad in this country that we have to choose between laws!

So, why do we need to obey the laws of the land? "*For this is the will of God.*" Enough said! If it is God's "will," we must. But there is a reason given beside the fact it is God's will. "that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men"

"Doing Good" is from ἀγαθο-ποιῆα (Agatho-poiia), two common Greek words combined together and meaning just that "good-doing." The term is used nine times in the New Testament. Once in 1 John 3:11, four times in 1 Peter and four times in Luke 6.

*Then Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to **do good** or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?" . . . And if you **do good** to those who **do good** to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, **do good**, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.*

Luke 6:9 & 33-35 (NKJV)

Paul cited a passage from the Old Testament regarding this.

If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat;
And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;
For so you will heap coals of fire on his head,
And the Lord will reward you.

Proverbs 25:21-22 (NKJV)

Therefore
"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
If he is thirsty, give him a drink;
For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."

I suspect that “heaping coals of fire” on ones head is a way of “silencing them.” Perhaps I should not admit it, but this is one of my favorite Scripture passages (the one about heaping coals of fire). Peter says this will “silence” ignorant and foolish men. “Silence,” φημῶ (phimao) is an interesting word in a few of the passages where it is found:

*So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was **speechless**.*

Matthew 22:12 (NKJV)

*For the Scripture says, "You shall not **muzzle** an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."*

1 Timothy 5:18 (NKJV)

I like the idea that by our doing good we will put a muzzle on the people who are against us. These are, according to Peter, ignorant and foolish men (I suppose if Peter were to be politically correct today, he would have replaced “men” by “persons”). The words used are φρόν (phron) which means (1) the midriff or diaphragm and (2) the mind, the facility of perceiving and judging.¹⁹ (Since the Greeks thought the seat of thinking was in the midsection, there is a connection between the two definitions. The other word is γνῶσις (gnosis) which refers to intelligence and understanding,²⁰ “Now,” you say, “that sounds like it refers to someone really smart!” You are correct, but, these two words both have α (alpha) in front of them and, by now I suspect, you know what that means - NOT. The people who you will be affecting are those who have not the facility of perceiving nor any intelligence and understanding.

I hate to say it, but the description sounds like a good many of our political figures! These were the ones Peter was referring to then! It, unfortunately, sounds like some Christians as well.

How are we to practice this? Peter certifies with “*as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. Honor all people.*” Free” is ἐλεύθερος (elutheros). It is usually used in the New Testament in the sense of slaves who had become “freemen,” slaves whose owners had set them free. This fits you and me to a T. We have been set free from sin by Christ. Christ shed His blood to wash away every sin that you and I have committed, are committing, and will commit. This means we can do anything we want! You do not believe that? Listen to what Paul has to say, four times,

***All things are lawful** for me, but all things are not helpful. **All things are lawful for me**, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*

1 Corinthians 6:12 (NKJV)

***All things are lawful for me**, but not all things are helpful; **all things are lawful for me**, but not all things edify.*

¹⁹THAYER, φρόν

²⁰THAYER, γνῶσις

1 Corinthians 10:23 (NKJV)

Right between these two statements, Paul says something else.

*But beware lest somehow **this liberty of yours** become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.*

1 Corinthians 8:9-13 (NKJV)

Peter then adds to what Paul taught, do not use your freed as a “cloak for vice.” “Cloak” is fro ἐπι-κάλυμμα (epi-kalumma) which is used only here in the New Testament. Two Old Testament references are below.

*You shall also make a covering of ram skins dyed red for the tent, and a **covering** of badger skins above that.*

Exodus 26:14 (NKJV)

*Then he made a covering for the tent of ram skins dyed red, and a **covering** of badger skins above that.*

Exodus 36:19 (NKJV)

You may notice that the word “covering” appears in each passage twice. The first occurrence in each case is the translation of another (but related) Greek word. The “second” covering” noted was one which covered over the first covering and everything else. It was what his all of the tabernacle from the view for outsiders. Do not “hide” what you do under the guise of freedom.

“Vice” is simply the Greek word for “evil things.” Vice” is too restrictive a term to be used here. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians above, whether than using this freedom unwisely, we ought to use it to

- *Honor all people.*
- *Love the brotherhood.*
- *Fear God.*
- *Honor the king.*

Note that “king” is not capitalized. It is not a reference to the “King of kings.”

McGee summarize these four things much better than I can

"Honour all men." A Christian should respect other human beings. He doesn't say to love all men -- believe me, some of them are very unlovely!

"Love the brotherhood." While we respect all men, we are to love the brotherhood, meaning other believers.

"Fear God." Certainly we as believers are to reveal by our lives that we are God-fearing people.

"Honour the king." We owe an honor to the office of the man who rules over us. I have never voted

for a president whom I really wanted. I have always voted against the other candidate. I have never known a president who I felt was really capable. However, regardless of who is president and regardless of his inability, he should be honored because of his office. I am not impressed by some Scripture-spouting, pious individuals who attack the president of the United States. The office is to be honored.

McGEE, 1 Peter 2:17

Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

*"Who committed no sin,
Nor was deceit found in His mouth";*

who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 Peter 2:18-25 (NKJV)

Peter now begins to give advice to specific people -servants. "Servants" is οἰκέτης (oiketēs), which is derived from the Greek word for "house," hence a household servant or a domestic servant. It is related to the word διάκονος (diakonos) from which we get "deacon." The reason why I get a bit technical here is it is not the word from which we usually get "servant" or "slave," δούλος (doulos) which is used some 124 times in the NT, four of which are found below.

*Paul, a **bondservant** of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God*
Romans 1:1 (NKJV)

*Paul, a **bondservant** of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness,*

Titus 1:1 (NKJV)

*James, a **bondservant** of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.*

James 1:1 (NKJV)

*Jude, a **bondservant** of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ:*

Jude 1:1 (NKJV)

What is the difference. I can cite TRENCH here who writes,

οἰκέτης [oiketēs] is often used as equivalent to δοῦλος [doulos]. It certainly is so at 1 Pet. ii. 18; and hardly otherwise on the three remaining occasions on which it occurs in the N. T. (Luke xvi. 13; Acts x. 7; Rom. xiv. 4); nor does the Septuagint (Exod. xxi. 27; Deut. vi. 21; Prov. xvii. 2) appear to recognize any distinction between them; the Apocrypha as little (Eccles. x. 25). At the same time οἰκέτης [oiketēs] (= 'domesticus') does not bring out and emphasize the servile relation so strongly as δοῦλος [doulos] does; rather contemplates that relation from a point of view calculated to mitigate, and which actually did tend very much to mitigate, its extreme severity. He is one of the household, of the 'family,' in the older sense of this word; not indeed necessarily one born in the house;

TRENCH, §IX

To put it in everyday English, the word Peter uses here expresses the type of service rather than the severity of being a slave. Paul uses the other word in a similar vein below.

Bondservants, *be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.*

Ephesians 6:5-8 (NKJV)

Paul tells them to be obedient. Peter's advice is basically the same. Paul's reason for asking them to be obedient is for a testimony. Peter, on the other hand has another viewpoint. He asks them to obey *with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.*

Before we proceed, slavery has been around since (probably) before the flood. It will continue until the Return of Christ. But, in a very real sense, most people who must work for a living are slaves to that job. As the bumper sticker reads, "I owe, I owe, so it's off to work I go." Some people love their jobs for them their bosses would be the ones Peter calls "the good and gentle." For those who would quit their jobs in an instant if they did not need the money, their bosses would fit into the category Peter calls "harsh." - "σκολιός (scolios), the root of our medical term "scoliosis." which is used of spines that are crooked. The word is found in two other places.

*And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this **perverse** generation."*

Acts 2:40 (NKJV)

*that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a **crooked** and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,*

Philippians 2:15 (NKJV)

Some people has to work for some pretty shady dealers. I do not know if I could work for someone who was downright crooked, but, if I was hungry enough - who knows? It does not matter which kind of boss you have, you are to obey them in fear.

Peter adds to this. *For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.* Before we look at what is commendable to do as slaves (servants, employees, etc.) we need to look at the word "commendable." It comes from a very common Greek word, χάρις

(charis) - from which we get "charismatic." The thing that is unusual here is that out of the 155 times it appears in the New Testament, it is almost always translated "grace." Three of the exceptions are in Luke.

*But if you love those who love you, what **credit** is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what **credit** is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what **credit** is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back.*

Luke 6:32-34 (NKJV)

I personally think that Peter had this occasion in mind as he penned these words. Look at what Christ went on to say.

But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Luke 6:35-36 (NKJV)

Peter is asking slaves to do the same. He says, *For what **credit** is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently?* But "credit here is from κλέος (kleaos) (which is used only here). It is translated "glory" in the KJV. As to its meaning.

For what glory (poion gar kleos). Qualitative interrogative (what kind of glory). "What price glory?" Kleos is old word from kleōo (kaleōo, to call), report, praise, glory, here only in New Testament—
ATR, 1 Peter 2:20

What glory κλέος (kleaos)

Lit., what kind of glory. This word for glory occurs nowhere else in the New Testament.

VINCENT 1 Peter 2:20

glory -- what peculiar merit.

JFB, 1 Peter 2:20

Perhaps JFB's note is the best to use here. "What particular merit is there in suffering for what you did wrong?" I remember many years ago when Red Skelton had a "Mean little Kid" segment on his show and he always used the phrase, "If I do it, I get a whipping . . . I do it anyway." Getting what you deserve has no particular merit.

But, Peter writes, if you suffer for something you did not do, thus is commendable. McGee writes,

"But if, when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." Of course, the natural reaction in all of us is to strike back when we have been unjustly treated. I confess that this is my first reaction, but I am learning to let God take care of it. God says in [Romans 12:19](#), "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," and He does a much better job of it than I could. The Lord Jesus Himself said, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven . . ." ([Matt. 5:11-12](#)). And Peter says, "This is acceptable with God."

McGEE, 1 Peter 2:20

Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

Romans 12:19 (NKJV)

"Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matthew 5:11-12 (NKJV)

I do not believe McGee could have said it better. This is the same thing as I would say. The problem is, when you teach or study God's word, He seems to always accompany it with an object lesson. Do not ask for patience if you do not want to suffer things for which patience is needed. The advice here is even harder to take. How can one sit quietly and undergo undeserved punishment and keep still about it? I can tell you from experience, it is terribly hard to do.

If taking "a beating" for something that is not your fault, why should God expect us to say nothing. McGee cited Romans 12:19 which tells us that it is for God to take the vengeance out on the people doing the wrongful things, not us. But it is still hard, does God not know that? Peter has the answer.

For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps. My friend, have you ever had to suffer what Christ went through? I think not. If Christ were willing, the Just for the unjust, to take such persecution, we ought to be willing to do what God gives us.

Peter cites from Isaiah,

And they made His grave with the wicked--But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth.

Isaiah 53:9 (NKJV)

Peter goes on and finishes up this chapter with yet more examples of what Christ did for us and what we owe Him who did so.

*who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return;
when He suffered, He did not threaten,*

We do not know much about what Peter suffered, but we know that Paul did.

To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.

1 Corinthians 4:11-13 (NKJV)

Both Paul and Peter (in citing Isaiah) use the word λoidορέω (loidoreo) and in both cases it is expressed as a passive present participle, stressing that it was a protracted reviling that they suffered.

Jesus set the example for us when He *committed Himself to Him who judges righteously*. Committed here is a common Greek word, παραδίδομι (paradidomi), a compound of the verb "to give to" and

a preposition “over,” thus to give oneself over to another. Jesus placed himself in the hands of His Father. He could do so, and we can do so, because the Father is the one, the only one we can count on to “judge righteously.” There is no need to cite the Greek here, it means the same as the English does, to judge righteously.

Christ bore our sins “on the tree.” Have you ever wondered about the word “tree” rather than “cross.” is scriptures such as this? The word ξύλον (ksulon) refers to either a tree (Luke 21:3) but also to “wood” and objects made of wood., a gibbit, a cross and “A log or timber with holes in which the feet, hands, and neck of prisoners were inserted and fastened with straps²¹. The use of this term rather than the common Greek term for a cross is probably used due to the following Old Testament passage where the same Greek word is used (in the LXX)..

*"If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a **tree**, his body shall not remain overnight on the **tree**, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God.*

Deuteronomy 21:22-23 (NKJV)

Peter writes, “who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed.” Because of His death on the Cross, our “stripes” are healed. There is an important point to note here.

"By whose stripes ye were healed." Healed of what? I notice that when so-called faith healers use the words, "by whose stripes ye were healed," they refer to [Isaiah 53:5](#) rather than to this verse in 1 Peter, because Peter makes it evident that the healing is of sins. I certainly agree that the Lord Jesus came to be the Great Healer -- but the Great Healer heals of sins. No human physician can handle that problem. And Peter's use of these words from [Isaiah 53:5](#) reveals that the prophet Isaiah was not speaking primarily of physical healing but of that which is more important and more profound, healing from sin.

McGEE, 1 Peter 2:23

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

Isaiah 53:5 (NKJV)

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

Peter concludes with the above statement. He likens us to sheep. How many times are we likened to sheep in the Scriptures. The Lord is my shepherd.²²

All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:6 (NKJV)

²¹THAYER, ξύλον

²²Psalms 23:1

But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

Matthew 9:36 (NKJV)

Then, they had no shepherd. But now, we have both a Shepherd and Overseer.

Shepherd and Bishop -- The designation of the pastors and elders of the Church belongs in its fullest sense to the great Head of the Church, "the good Shepherd." As the "bishop" oversees (as the Greek term means), so "the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous" ([1Pe 3:12](#)). He gives us His spirit and feeds and guides us by His word. "Shepherd

JFB, 1 Peter 2:25

Interestingly enough, Jesus not only is our Shepherd and Bishop (Overseer) he also sets the example for today. Today we have "Pastors" and "Elders" who have the responsibility to look after His sheep. Pastor²³ is another name for Shepherd. It is obvious from comparing 1 Timothy 3:1 and Titus 1:5 that "Overseer": and "Elder" are two terms describing the same office, one in terms of age and wisdom, the other in terms of duties. Christ set the example for the whole age of Grace.

²³OXFORD, -ORIGIN ME: from Anglo-Norman Fr. pastour, from L. pastor 'shepherd', from past-, pascere 'feed, graze'.

1 PETER 3

Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel-- rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

1 Peter 3:1-6 (NKJV)

In Chapter One, Peter wrote some general advice which he concluded in Chapter Two. Then he began giving specific advice. First it was to . *sojourners and pilgrims*, then to *servants*. Now he gets specific. with respect to women, Christian women. We believe that the Scriptures were written, word for word, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It would seem that the Holy Spirit looked ahead to the 20th and 21st centuries as He guided Peter in writing this.

He tells wives to be “submissive” to their husbands. He goes further than that in speaking to wives who have unbelieving husbands. How many Christian women (in the U.S. at least) are in this situation? I do not know why it seems there is such a large number of women with unbelieving husbands but there does not appear to be nearly so many husbands with unbelieving wives. I will not speculate as to the reason.

“Submissive” is from ὑποτάσσω (hypertasso). The root word τάσσω (tasso), refers to being “assigned to a post with a suggestion of duties as connected therewith; often used of a military appointment.”²⁴ The prefix is the word from which we get “hypo.” which emphasizes the concept of placing oneself under a superior.

Before going further, note the second word in this chapter - “likewise.” He was speaking of slaves being obedient to their masters and “likewise” the wife is to be obedient to her husband. Note also the little word, “own.” She is to be obedient, not to someone else’s man, but only to her own. JFB make this note in this respect.

your own -- enforcing the obligation: it is not strangers ye are required to be subject to. Every time that obedience is enjoined upon women to their husbands, the Greek, "idios," "one's own peculiarly," is used, while the wives of men are designated only by heauton, "of themselves." Feeling the need of leaning on one stronger than herself, the wife (especially if joined to an unbeliever) might be tempted, though only spiritually, to enter into that relation with another in which she ought to stand to "her own spouse

JFB 1 Peter 3:1

I am afraid that this is quite true, especially of wives of unsaved husbands leaning - to far - on their pastor. It is unfortunate that some churches have been split because of a woman getting too involved with the preacher. Dr. McGee has a lot to say about wives in such situations and their obedience to

²⁴THAYER, τάσσω

them. I think it not worth the space to include his comments, only the thought. We can draw a parallel from what we learned in Chapter Two where we were requested to be obedient to our ruling powers - obedient except what such obedience would be contrary to the will of God. Submission to the husband is the same. She should be submissive only to the point that she is in compliance with God's will and man's laws. If he asks her to help him rob a bank, she is not to be obedient. If he asks her to go into a lewd nightclub, a place where a Christian has no place, she should gracefully refuse to go. But, in all other cases she is to obey.

That is pretty tough to do (I would imagine, not being in that situation I can only imagine) but there is a good reason for it.

*If some do not obey the word, they, **without a word**, may be won by the conduct of their wives. I have known women who have made the situation worse by constantly preaching to their unsaved husbands. There is only one person who can work in his heart to come around to accepting Christ - the Holy Spirit. Peter was "without a word."* JFB cite Clement of Alexandria as below.

The discreet wife would choose first of all to persuade her husband to share with her in the things which lead to blessedness; but if this be impossible, let her then alone diligently press after virtue, in all things obeying him so as to do nothing at any time against his will, except in such things as are essential to virtue and salvation"

JFB, 1 Peter 3:1

I know I refer to Dr. McGee a lot - he puts theology where the common person is, and I do not like long quotations²⁵, but I think this is a very good example of what Peter was talking about.

Another lady came to me when I was a pastor and said, "Dr. McGee, I bring my husband to church every Sunday." (She was the kind of woman who could bring her husband; she was a dominant personality.) She continued, "He is not saved, and every Sunday I think he will make a decision for Christ but he doesn't. On Monday morning I sit at the breakfast table just weeping and telling him how I wish he would accept Christ. When he comes home from work in the evening, again I just sit there at dinner and weep and beg him to accept Christ." I got to thinking about what she had said. How would you like to have dinner every evening and breakfast every morning with a weeping woman? I wouldn't care for it myself, and I'm sure you wouldn't want that either. So I called her up and said, "Suppose that for a year's moratorium you simply do not talk to your husband about the Lord at all?" She said, "Oh, you mean that I'm not to witness?" I said, "No, I didn't say that. Peter says that if you cannot win your husband with the Word, then start preaching a wordless sermon. How about your life? What kind of life are you living before him?" I want to tell you, that put her back on her heels because she wasn't living as she knew she should live. But she agreed to my suggestion because she did want to win him, and she was a wonderful woman in many ways. I was amazed myself when, in six months' time, her husband made a decision for Christ one Sunday morning. The wordless sermon had won, my friend

McGEE, 1 Peter 3:2

This reminds me of the word of a song we used to sing. "And we pray that all unity may one day be

²⁵In teaching Computer Engineering at Cal Poly, there was no one to quote in my lectures, but in theology, there are men much more qualified than I to speak

restored. And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love, They will know we are Christians by our love “

Let us go on! This is a very difficult thing that Peter asks and so he gives as much help with it as he can. In verse 2 he says *“when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.”* This is the first thing a woman should do in the way of a “silent witness.” “Observe” here is an Aorist Participle in the Greek, it indicates a continuous action in the past, The wife is to be consistent in her behavior before her husband. Her behavior is to be “pure in its conduct” (i.e. chaste). Peter says this is also to be done “in fear.” The other translators do not see it that way: The NASB says “as they observe your chaste and **respectful behavior**” and the NIV has “when they see the purity and **reverence** of your lives.” There seems to be no justification for these variations (although “reverence” is close). Paul, however, uses the same word, φόβος (phobos) from which we get “phobia.” He uses it when he writes,

*Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she **respects** her husband.*

Ephesians 5:33 (NKJV)

Note, in passing, Peter is writing to wives of **unsaved** husbands for whom he can not give advice, Paul writes concerning wives of **saved** husbands and so gives advice to them as well. But we are studying Peter’s words so we shall continue with that.

Next, Peter says, *Do not let your adornment be merely outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel.* Before I comment on women’s adornment, note the word “merely!” He is not here telling women that it is wrong to “adorn” themselves, he is simply saying that is not sufficient²⁶.

“Apparel” here comes from κόσμος (kosmos) from which we get “cosmetics.” I’ve know preachers who preached that it was wrong for women to wear makeup and “worldly adornment.” But I also knew a good preacher whose comment was, “If the old barns need paint, paint it!” Again, note that Peter is not condemning the practice of women fixing themselves up to look nice. He does not say anything about their adorning themselves through the **lack** of proper apparel!

The important thing for the wife is not the outward things noted above but *the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.* Wuest translates this as follows:

let your adornment not be that adornment which is from without and merely external, namely, an elaborate gathering of the hair into knots, and a lavish display of gold ornaments, or the donning of apparel, but let that adornment be the hidden personality in the heart, imperishable in quality, the adornment of a meek and quiet disposition, which is in the sight of God very costly.

1 Peter 3:3-4, WUEST

I do not think I can add anything to this translation - it says it all, but we can go on with *.For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being*

²⁶You should, however, note that the word “merely” (NKJV, NASB) is in italics, it is not in the Greek text - it is implied by the context.

submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. Peter is referring back to Genesis 18 when it was announced she would have a child.

*Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, **my lord being old also?**"*

Genesis 18:12 (NKJV)

Today, with my computer, I could find this reference quite quickly. But Peter had only his memory (and, one might say, the memory of the Holy Spirit who was guiding him) to recall this passage. On the other hand, in honesty I must say there are a number of passages in Genesis where Abraham is referred to as "my lord," by others. Nevertheless, in all of these other passages it was a proper title for him.

The important part of this passage is what follows, "*whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.*" There is something wrong in this translation. Only the NASB notes that "become" ("are") is an Aorist Indicative - "you **have become** her children . . ." There are some women (or girls) who are "Jobs Daughters," but, as Robertson observes, "*The women somehow do not organize "daughters of Sarah" societies.*"²⁷ and as McGee observes, "*She looked up to Abraham. It is wonderful when a wife can look up to her husband.*"²⁸

Paul wrote,

Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

Galatians 3:7 (NKJV)

If Christians are "sons of Abraham" I assume it proper to call these wives "daughters of Sarah." Note, however, there are two conditions placed on this.

- *if you do good*
- *if you are not afraid with any terror*

I do not think I need to elaborate on "doing good." As to the other,

Do not be afraid of sudden terror,
Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;
For the Lord will be your confidence,
And will keep your foot from being caught.

Proverbs 3:25-26 (NKJV)

"Terror" is πτόησις (ptoasis) which is found only here in the New Testament. It is found in the Old Testament only once as well, in the above passage from Proverbs. Strange that Peter would remember this one obscure passage in Proverbs. It is not strange that the Holy Spirit was aware of it!

²⁷ATR, 1 Peter 3:6

²⁸McGEE, 1 Peter 3:6

A side note on exegesis is in order here. If the word is used only once in the New Testament and once in the Old Testament, how does one determine its meaning? The answer is you have to turn to the secular Greek of the day to see how it is used there. One classical reference which does this is *"The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament"* by Moulton and Milligan. Here they give the example, *"know yourselves in the sight of men, and ye are there where ye are terrified."*²⁹

As far as the terror Peter speaks of, Robertson says,

Greek, "fluttering alarm," "consternation." Act well, and be not thrown into sudden panic, as weak females are apt to be, by any opposition from without. BENGEL translates, "Not afraid OF any fluttering terror coming from without"

JFB, 1 Peter 3:6

Do not blame me for the remark about "weak females!"

Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

1 Peter 3:7 (NKJV)

Not to leave the men out, Peter here inserts a verse for the men (husbands). Before we look at this, let me point out a curious thing in both the Hebrew and Greek.

English	Hebrew	Greek
Husband	איש(ish)	άνήρ (aner)
Man	איש(ish)	άνήρ (aner)
Wife	אשה (isha)	γυνή (gune)
Woman	אשה (isha)	γυνή (gune)

Neither Hebrew nor Greek has words to distinguish "man" from "husband" and to distinguish "woman" from "wife." A man's wife is his "woman!"

This being the case, how do we know that Peter now turns to discussing "husbands" rather than "men" in general? Look at the verse! *"Husbands, . . . , dwell with them . . . the wife"*. Would you translate this as *"Men, . . . , dwell with them . . . the women"* The only woman a man is to dwell with is his "woman" (i.e. his wife) and, as such, by definition, he is a "husband."

Ladies, I have good news for you and bad news. The good news is that your husband is to

- Dwell with you with understanding
- give honor to you.

The bad news is that Peter calls you

- The weaker vessel.

²⁹M&M, ΠΤΟΞΩ

I am sure that this verse would not go over well with the women's lib groups! But, to get more serious, what does Peter say here? Note that he begins with "likewise." μοιως (homoios) is the word we get "**homogenized**" and, sorry to say, "**homosexual**" It means "in the same way. In the same way as what? Basically, he is saying to the husbands that what he said to the wives applies to them as well (in the reverse direction, of course). There is one difference though.

The woman is the weaker vessel. The term, ἀσθενής (asthenes) is found in verses like the following.

*Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the **weakness** of God is stronger than men.*

1 Corinthians 1:25 (NKJV)

*We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ! We are **weak**, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored!*

1 Corinthians 4:10 (NKJV)

Because of this, the man has a special obligation. He is to "cohabit" with her (the Greek word means "cohabit") "according to knowledge." He needs to recognize that, because the wife is the weaker vessel, he needs to make allowances for her. He is not to insist that she is to carry the brick hod (full of bricks) up to him on the roof when he is building a chimney. (A hod full of bricks can weigh more than 100 pounds!) The husband is to make allowances for this. The NASB does a much better job of translating the first part of this verse - "*You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman.*"

I grew up with the understanding that I was to open the doors for ladies, give them my seat on the bus, and a host of other things. Women's Lib has gone a long way to wiping that all out! I don't know why. To do these things is to follow through with the rest of the verse - *giving honor to the wife*. I have a lot of tools in the garage and tool shed. I have several old hammers that I will beat on just about anything with, but I also have a real good hammer that I only use for the purposes for which it is intended. In a manner of speaking, I am showing "respect" to that hammer. (I know the ladies will not like to be likened to a hammer but it is the best anagoge I could come up with). Husbands are to give honor to their wives. "Honor" is a word you have heard and not known it, it is τιμή (time) which appears in the name "Timothy" = "He who honors God." (the last part of the name is for "God").

Finally *not only* is the wife to be shown respect, but also "*as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.*" Husbands are to recognize that their wives are just as much a part of the body of Christ as anyone else. I find it curious that Peter writes this as it seems self-evident. However, since Paul speaks about **men** being in charge of the church,

I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.

1 Timothy 2:8-12 (NKJV)

I suppose some men would tend to think the wife to be inferior with respect to being "heirs together." The point Peter is stressing is that the two must be together as heirs so that their prayers might not

be hindered.

For where **two** or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."
Matthew 18:20 (NKJV)

If Dad prays that the Lord would use son Billy in the ministry and if Mom prays that God would send Billy to the mission field, what is God to do? To “hinder” is ἐγκόπτω (enkoptō), “to cut into, to impede one’s course by cutting off his way; hence to hinder.”³⁰ The two must pray “together.” I put “together” in quotes to emphasize that this does not necessarily mean “at the same time” but, more generally, to pray the same thing.

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

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

And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled." But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

1 Peter 3:8-17 (NKJV)

“Finally . . .” Peter, like Paul, uses this word to sum up a section of his epistle. It does not mean he is done with the epistle (he has two more chapters to go). He addresses this section to “all of you,” husbands, wives, servants, all Christians. He gives a list of what “all of us” should do.

- *be of one mind,*
- *have compassion for one another;*
- *love as brothers,*
- *be tenderhearted,*
- *be courteous;*
- *not returning evil for evil*
- *not returning reviling for reviling*

³⁰THAYER, ἐγκόπτω

Being of one mind is from ὁμοφρόν (homophron). We looked at the last part of this word, φρόν (phron), on page #48 and the first part ὁμοίως (homoios) on page #43, 50, 61. Your minds need to be “homogenized.” This is the way the church grew and what will make it continue to grow.

*Now all who believed **were together**, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with **one accord** in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. **And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.***

Acts 2:44-47 (NKJV)

Not seen in the above passage is the fact that the verbs are all Present Participles. History is usually written in the Aorist tense. When the Present Participles are used, it indicates an action that occurred over an extended period of time.

Second on the list is “compassion,” συμπαθής (sumpathes). Does the Greek word sound familiar? Sympathetic is derived from this Greek word. Both the NASB and NIV use “sympathetic” here. Have you ever considered what “sympathetic” actually means, in spite of the fact we use it all the time? Have you heard the word “pathos?” If you remove the prefix on συμπαθής (sumpathes) you end up with παθής or, in a slightly different spelling, πάθος (pathos). According to my thesaurus, “pathos” its synonyms are commiseration and pity. The prefix means “with.” If someone is suffering (one of the principle topics of this book), you are to “suffer with them.” You are to feel their feelings.

When a Christian friend is sad, you should really be saddened by it yourself - not just say how sorry you are for them. Paul said it!

Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

Romans 12:15 (NKJV)

Third, we are to “love as brothers.” I am tempted to say, Peter would have had to be careful these days to make it clear that we are not to “love as lovers.” For those of you who have been swayed by politically correct language, “brothers” includes “sisters.” As a member of a local church, you should love everyone (at least almost everyone) as if they were blood brothers and sisters. They are, you know, the difference is it is Christ’s blood rather than our own. Incidentally, the Greeks had a word for it and Peter uses it here (the only place it is found in the New Testament), φιλάδελφος (philadelphos). Some of you are bound to say, “That’s not true, you have spoken of ‘brotherly love’ in other places.”³¹ Actually, change the ος (os) to ία (ia) (removing the other accent) and you have the word we have discussed before. This word refers to “the love of brothers” but the word we have here is “loving like a brother.” As such, it has a deeper meaning as I noted above. There is a hymn that speaks to this in our hymnals³² “*We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord And they’ll know we are Christians by our love, by our love*” I will not give the full verse for copyright

³¹Thayer and other Greek works say things such as this, that this is the only appearance of the word. They fail to mention, however, that other forms of the word are found!

³²“Hymns for the Family of God, hymn #677

reasons).

Next is “*be tenderhearted.*” It is interesting how the Greek language has single words for all of these things. Here it is a hum-dinger! εὐσπλαγχνος (eusplanchnos). We have already come across εὖ (eu) in our studies, “good” or “well,” The rest of the word is a medical term - in fact, the whole word is a medical term. It is used by Hippocrates (you have heard of the hippocratic oath which doctors take) for “having strong bowels.”³³ Realizing that in the day that Peter wrote this, the “bowels” were regarded as the place for ones emotions rather than the “heart,” the word, today, means “good hearted.” I don’t know which is the better term, “good hearted” or “tenderhearted.” Either way, I suspect you get the meaning. When someone is being mean to you yo say, “Aw, have a heart!” I still believe “good hearted” is the right translation. Paul uses this same term.

*And be kind to one another, **tenderhearted**, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.*
Ephesians 4:32 (NKJV)

Fifth on the list is “courteous” The word found here, ταπεινόφρον (tapainophron) is found in Proverbs 29:23 (it not being found anywhere else in the New Testament.)

*Pride brings a man low, but the Lord upholds the **humble-minded** with honor.*
Proverbs 29:23 LXX

The above verse from Proverbs is instructive. Remove the last part of the word we are looking at and you have ταπεινός (tapainos) which is also used in this verse. “Pride brings a man **low**.” We need to avoid pride like the plague. God will bring a man “low” who is prideful. Instead, we are supposed to use our “minds” φρήν (phen) to be brought low. The word means “low in mind.” “I.e. having a **modest** opinion of oneself.”³⁴ I really believe this term needs better understanding by many Christians. Peter is not saying that, as Christians think, we need to be doormats and let people walk all over us. There is a difference between being a “doormat” and keeping a proper perspective of ourselves. We are not to think us to be any better than Christ has made us but we should not think ourselves lower either! We are “new creations”³⁵ in Christ and need to be “modest” I do not know where the translation “courteous” comes from in the NKJV!

The last two items are a bit different in their nature, *not returning evil for evil, not returning reviling for reviling.* I believe the first part of this stands by itself, I don’t have to describe it further, As for “reviling,” it is λοιδορία (loidoria). This is the only place this noun is used but the verb is found below.

*Then they **reviled** him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples.*
John 9:28 (NKJV)

*And those who stood by said, "Do you **revile** God's high priest?"*
Acts 23:4 (NKJV)

³³Hippocrates p. 89 c, εὐσπλαγχνος (from THAYER on εὐσπλαγχνος

³⁴THAYER, ταπεινόφρον

³⁵2 Corinthians 5:17

*And we labor, working with our own hands. Being **reviled**, we bless; being persecuted, we endure;*
1 Corinthians 4:12 (NKJV)

Looking at the first two passages briefly, the people reviled Jesus but He did not revile back. The second passage Paul was thought to be guilty Old Testament reviling the high priest but went on to say that he did not mean to do that.

The last passage is the compliment to our passage. We should not return reviling for reviling but blessing! ***Being reviled, we bless.*** Before we leave this subject, do you know what reviling is? I had a general idea but I really never bothered to look it up before! revile >v. (usu. be reviled) criticize abusively.³⁶ Some synonyms are vilify, vituperate - big help these are! Better ones are: "get after" or "take to task."

Well these last two items are pretty easy to understand, but they are not easy to carry out. When someone really hurts you, do want to show him love? - or hate? When they say bad things about you, do you want to say good things or bad things about them? It is easier said than done but, nonetheless, Peter says this is what we are to do as God's people.

but on the contrary In the Corinthian passage above, Paul said that instead of returning reviling with reviling, they returned it with blessing. Peter comes to the same conclusion. We are to do just the opposite (ἐν-αντίος enantios), we are to return reviling with blessing.

You may say, "wait a minute! That is not fair." Why should we do something good for someone who has done us harm? Peter has already answered this question for us, *knowing that you were **called** to this.* "Called" here is the same word as is used for our "election." When God chose us, He did so with certain expectations and this is one of them. As a reward for being faithful in this, Peter tells us that, in so doing, "you may inherit a blessing." We have been studying our inheritance and included in that inheritance is a blessing.

"For . . . "

I should warn each of you that you should not take what I say as final. You need to do some research as well. Likewise, Peter wants us to know that all of this is not just his idea, but it comes from the Word of God. I will place verses 10-12 along the side of Psalm 34:12-16

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

1 Peter 3:10-12

*Who is the man who desires life,
And loves many days, that he may see good?
Keep your tongue from evil,
And your lips from speaking deceit.
Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and
pursue it.
The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And
His ears are open to their cry. The face of the
LORD is against those who do evil, To cut off the
remembrance of them from the earth.*

Psalms 34:12-16 (NKJV)

³⁶OXFORD, Revile

The comparison is actually better if you look at the LXX.

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

1 Peter 3:10-12

12 'What man is there that desires life,
loving to see good days?
13 Keep thy tongue from evil,
and thy lips from speaking guile.
14 Turn away from evil, and do good;
seek peace, and pursue it.
15 The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous,
and his ears are open to their prayer:
16 but the face of the Lord is against them that
do evil,

Psalm 33(34) 12-16 LXX

They read almost word for word³⁷ Note that, to have a love for life and to have good days, the Psalmist begins with the tongue. James has a whole lot to say about the tongue To be specific,

*My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. **But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God.** Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.*

James 3:1-12 (NKJV)

The first sentence is an admonition to me, and I am well aware of it. That is why I am so careful to be sure that what I teach is in agreement with the Bible. I am not "perfect" however, because I do stumble once in a while.

Perhaps you know what James said about the tongue, but how about this?

The mammal tongue is undeniably complex. Seven or eight tongue muscles, each with extensive terminations in the tongue body, are variously described. In the rat, over 3,000 motor units comprise the muscles of one side of the tongue alone. Tongue muscles are typically categorized according to morphology (i.e., extrinsic versus intrinsic) or to presumed function (i.e., protrusor versus retrusor),

³⁷Note that the numbers of the Psalms in the LXX differ by one from the Hebrew starting at Psalm 10.

and these categorizations form the basis for virtually all studies of the tongue motor system, from cellular to systems levels of investigation. Yet morphologic and kinematic evidence suggests that neither categorization scheme is functionally based or even heuristic. Extrinsic and intrinsic muscles share overlapping courses in the tongue body (1). Thus, with the exception of the extralingual portion of extrinsic muscles, the mechanical effects of many extrinsic and intrinsic muscle fibers are likely similar, not disparate. The same may be said for some protrusor and retrusor muscles (3). Additionally, movements of the mammal tongue are not restricted to the protrusion-retrusion axis but involve complex changes of tongue shape in three dimensions. These changes include the simultaneous lengthening and shortening of different tongue regions (6), a behavior clearly incompatible with a simple protrusion-retrusion model of tongue function.

<http://jap.physiology.org/cgi/content/full/96/2/438>

The tongue is both extraordinary and complex. What was it that got our Lord crucified? Was it not the wagging tongues of the people? They could find no fault in him other than, perhaps, what He said.

Next, those of you as old as I may remember the old "Movietone" news reels we saw at the theater. They were, according to their motto, "the eyes and ears of the world." Well, I will tell you that they fell far short of what our God does. His eyes and ears are constantly open to our needs and pleas. That is in regard to you and me. As far as the unrighteous are concerned, the Psalmist says that the face of the Lord is upon them.

It is interesting the anthropomorphism that are used for God. Here it is the "eyes" ὀφθαλμός (ophthalmos) from which we get our ophthalmologist (eye doctor) and the "ears" ὠτὰ (ota) from which we get otologist. (Ear doctor). But "face" is from πρόσωπος (prosopos). The Psalmist also said,

*The **face of the LORD** is against those who do evil, To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.*

Psalms 34:16 (NKJV)

also

*So the Lord said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name." And he said, "Please, show me Your glory." Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." But He said, "**You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.**"*

Exodus 33:17-20 (NKJV)

Peter did not finish the Psalm so I shall.

*. . .to destroy their memorial from the earth. The righteous cried and the Lord hearkened to them 17and delivered them out of all their afflictions. 18The Lord is near to them that are of a contrite heart; and will save the lowly in spirit. 19 **Many are the afflictions** of the righteous: but out of them all the Lord will deliver them. 20 He keeps all their bones: not one of them shall be broken. 21 The death of sinners is evil: and they that hate righteousness will go wrong 22 The Lord will redeem the souls of his servants, and none of those that hope in him shall go wrong.*

The face of the Lord is against them *to destroy their memorial from the earth*. Interesting that Peter, whose epistle is all about suffering and afflictions, left verse 19 out!

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

For the Lord spoke thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying:

"Do not say, 'A conspiracy,'

Concerning all that this people call a conspiracy,

Nor be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled

The Lord of hosts, Him you shall hallow;

Let Him be your fear,

And let Him be your dread.

He will be as a sanctuary,

But a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. [see page # 39)

To both the houses of Israel,

As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

And many among them shall stumble;

They shall fall and be broken,

Be snared and taken."

Isaiah 8:11-15 (NKJV)

Peter has cited from Isaiah 8 before. Here it is to verse 12. The next verse in Isaiah says to "hallow" Him. In the LXX the verse reads, "Sanctify you the Lord." just as Peter says here. McGee wrote

This means you ought to know more than a little about the Bible. The tragedy of the hour is that there are so many folk who say they are Christians, but the sceptic is able to tie them up into fourteen different knots like a little kitty caught up in a ball of yarn -- they cannot extricate themselves at all. Why? Because of the fact that they do not know the Word of God. "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts." Oh, today, do you have a little sanctuary, a little chapel in your own heart? When you are riding along in the car or walking down the street or are in the shop or office or classroom, is there a little chapel in your heart where you can withdraw and sanctify the Lord God in your heart? If there is, folk outside will know that you belong to God, and you will not have to mouth it all the time or make yourself obnoxious by making some pious statement. Oh, if in our lives today we would sanctify the Lord God in our hearts. How we need to do that

McGEE, 1 Peter 3:14

Always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, Peter does not say to have the right defense when you argue with people about the Gospel. He writes concerning the "hope that is in you," in your heart. This is not to say that we are not to witness to the unsaved, but the best witness is by the way we live, by what our hearts direct us to do.

Strange how words change meaning! "Defense" here is ἀπολογία (apologia) from which we get "apologize." We also get the word "apologetics" from it, something you learn when you go to seminary. According to the dictionary, it's meaning is "apologetics >pl. n. [treated as sing. or pl.]

reasoned arguments in justification of a theory or doctrine.³⁸ Peter is not saying that we are to apologize, *apologize (also -ise) >v. express regret for something that one has done wrong.*³⁹ But that we need to be able to support our faith. The Psalmist wrote,

*With my whole heart I have sought You;
Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!
Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You!*

Psalm 119:10-11 (NKJV)

While some take this as a command to do Bible memorization (which is not bad), it means to make God's word so much of your inner being you can defend your faith without stammering. One must be careful in this defense. I once knew a good pastor who would say, "win an argument, loose a soul." We can be "know-it-all's" and be real smug in our discussion with them but that will not lead them to Christ. Peter says to do it *with meekness and fear; having a good conscience.*

Do not permit your readiness to answer, nor the confidence you have in the goodness of your cause, to lead you to answer pertly or superciliously to any person; defend the truth with all possible gentleness and fear, lest while you are doing it you should forget his presence whose cause you support, or say any thing unbecoming the dignity and holiness of the religion which you have espoused, or inconsistent with that heavenly temper which the Spirit of your indwelling Lord must infallibly produce

CLARK, 1 Peter 3:16

Forty-some years ago when I began teaching the Bible, I would never have thought that others might call us "evildoers." They may have thought as strange, uninformed, and the like, but "evildoers?" America has changed a lot since then and, more and more, being a Christian is likened to being someone bad. *That when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.* What to do when others "defame" you? "Defame," ἐπηρέαζω (eperazo) is used only in one other place, which is instructive.

*Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who **spitefully use you.***

Luke 6:28 (NKJV)

You may not "be ashamed." Peter is saying, *"Have a good conscience so that when you hear these rumors about yourself, it will not bother you because you know they are not true."*⁴⁰ Peter says, *"For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil."* There is that word again, "suffering," another of the fifteen times he uses it. "If it is the will of God . . ." Peter uses the Optative mood here which expresses a hypothetical condition. God does not sit up in heaven and say to Himself, "Gee, I don't think so-and-so has suffered enough, I am going to make him really suffer!" God do not allow us to suffer because it is His will for us to suffer but because, by our suffering, the

³⁸OXFORD, apologetics

³⁹OXFORD, apologize

⁴⁰McGEE, 1 Peter 3:16

cause of Christ may be furthered.

Now that we looked at the conditional clause, *it is better to suffer for doing good than for doing evil*. I don't think it good to suffer, for good or evil. So, then, why should I suffer for doing good?

One may object, I would not bear it so ill if I had deserved it. Peter replies, it is better that you did not deserve it, in order that doing well and yet being spoken against, you may prove yourself a true Christian

JFB, 1 Peter 3:18

Let's finish the chapter!

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

1 Peter 3:18-22 (NKJV)

The Lord does not ask us to do something He would be unwilling to do Himself. Peter writes "*For Christ **also** . . .*, This much is clear, the rest is not! This passage of Scripture has either been misused, misinterpreted, or simply not understood by many good Bible scholars. To use a rather trite expression, "Fat chance I have of explaining it!" Seriously, I shall do my best. Peter should have practiced what he preached . . .

*[Paul] as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are **some things hard to understand**, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.*

2 Peter 3:16 (NKJV)

It is not hard to understand his statement about Christ's work on the cross with the just (i.e. Jesus Christ) suffering for the unjust (i.e. us). We need only to read the Gospels to see how man put Christ to death. Peter then says that it was the Holy Spirit who made Him alive again.

*"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know-- Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, **you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death**; whom **God raised up**, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.*

Acts 2:22-24 (NKJV)

Peter, at Pentecost, said "God raised up," and here says "the Spirit made alive." I suppose these are

not contradictory but complementary. The Spirit made Him alive again and then God (the Father) raised Him up. So much for that - now the hard part.

He also went and preached to the spirits in prison. Who are these "spirits in prison?" Robertson says, "Luther admits that he does not know what Peter means."⁴¹ He concludes with "So the theories run on about this passage. One can only say that it is a slim hope for those who neglect or reject Christ in this life to gamble with a possible second chance after death which rests on very precarious exegesis of a most difficult passage in Peter's Epistle"⁴² I was always taught that, since the only way to heaven is through accepting the work of Christ on the cross, those who died before that time were sent to Hades (or "Abraham's bosom") to await the time when Jesus descended into Hades for three days and nights where he preached to them so they, too, could accept Him on the basis of the work on the cross. It seems logical, but the text does in no way make this interpretation the only one.

Dr. McGee, is usually a devotional type teacher, but here he really dug deep as he wrote, *"This has been a most misunderstood passage of Scripture. The key word to this entire passage is in [verse 20](#); it is the little word 'when.'"*⁴³ "when" what? We need to look at the verses that follow this.

*He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, **when** once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.*

Not very long ago we did a study in Genesis and, when we got to Genesis 6, I gave the following outline.

I - THE CONDEMNATION OF THE FLOOD : Genesis 6:1-12

The Three Generations

- A: The First Generation:
 - The Spirit's Striving with Man. 6:01-04
- B: The Second Generation:
 - The Lord's Sorrowing over Man. 6:05-08
- C: The Third Generation:
 - The Father's Sighting of Man. 6:09-12

In that study I noted that it would, no doubt, taken Noah and sons a long time to build such a large object as the ark. But God often times uses time for more than one thing. When Jacob and family were taken into Egypt for 400 years, it was, in part, to allow them to go into a great nation, but the other reason for the 400 years was because God was waiting . . .

But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

Genesis 15:16 (NKJV)

⁴¹ATR 1 Peter 3:19

⁴²Ibid

⁴³McGEE, 1 Peter 3:19

God allowed three generations of predeluvian people to watch as Noah and sons built an ark - a testimony to the salvation that was to come to them.

*By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, **by which he condemned the world** and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.*

Hebrews 11:7 (NKJV)

When once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls. You still don't get the connection? Don't feel that you are alone in this! We need to look at this from several viewpoints. First, our friend Dr. McGee.

When did Christ preach to the spirits in prison? "When once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah." In Christ's day, the spirits of those men to whom Noah had preached were in prison, for they had rejected the message of Noah. They had gone into sheol. They were waiting for judgment; they were lost. But Christ did not go down and preach to them after He died on the cross. He preached through Noah "when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah." For 120 years Noah had preached the Word of God. He saved his family but no one else. It was the Spirit of Christ who spoke through Noah in Noah's day. In Christ's day, those who rejected Noah's message were in prison. The thought is that Christ's death meant nothing to them just as it means nothing to a great many people today who, as a result, will also come into judgment.

McGEE, 1 Peter 3:20

Some commentators say things like the following . . .

3:19-20. Through whom... He... preached to the spirits in prison has been subject to many interpretations. Some believe Peter here referred to the descent of Christ's Spirit into hades between His death and resurrection to offer people who lived before the Flood a second chance for salvation. However, this interpretation has no scriptural support.

Others have said this passage refers to Christ's descent into hell after His crucifixion to proclaim His victory to the imprisoned fallen angels referred to in 2 Peter 2:4-5, equating them with "the sons of God" Moses wrote about (Gen. 6:1-2). Though much commends this view as a possible interpretation, the context seems more likely to be referring to humans rather than angels.

The "spirits" (pneumasin, a term usually applied to supernatural beings but also used at least once to refer to human "spirits"; cf. Heb. 12:23) are described in 1 Peter 3:20 as those who were disobedient when God waited patiently for Noah to finish building the ark. They had rebelled against the message of God during the 120 years the ark was being built. God declared He would not tolerate people's wickedness forever, but would extend His patience for only 120 more years (Gen. 6:3). Since the entire human race except Noah (Gen. 6:5-9) was evil, God determined to "wipe mankind... from the face of the earth." The "spirits" referred to in 1 Peter 3:20 are probably the souls of the evil human race that existed in the days of Noah. Those "spirits" are now "in prison" awaiting the final judgment of God at the end of the Age.

The problem remains as to when Christ preached to these "spirits." Peter's explanation of the resurrection of Christ (3:18) "by the Spirit" brought to mind that the preincarnate Christ was actually in Noah, ministering through him, by means of the Holy Spirit. Peter (1:11) referred to the "Spirit of Christ" in the Old Testament prophets. Later he described Noah as "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5). The Spirit of Christ preached through Noah to the ungodly humans who, at the time of Peter's writing, were "spirits in prison" awaiting final judgment.

This interpretation seems to fit the general theme of this section (1 Peter 3:13-22)—keeping a good conscience in unjust persecution. Noah is presented as an example of one who committed himself to a course of action for the sake of a clear conscience before God, though it meant enduring harsh ridicule. Noah did not fear men but obeyed God and proclaimed His message. Noah’s reward for keeping a clear conscience in unjust suffering was the salvation of himself and his family, who were saved through water, being brought safely through the Flood.

BKC, 1 Peter 3:19

I suppose this explanation (i.e. the final conclusion) is as good as any. Suffice it to say, this is a difficult passage and we can not always understand all that is written for us.

Peter then goes to, *There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, He speaks of an “antitype” which is ἀντίτυπος (antitypos), obviously a transliteration.⁴⁴ In cases like this it means “a thing resembling another, its counterpart; something in the Messianic times which answers to the type prefiguring it in the O. T. “⁴⁵ The “type” is the saving of Noah and family via the water. The antitype then also deals with water, namely baptism. Peter is not here referring to the “Baptism of the Spirit” but the ordinance of water baptism.*

NOTE: A short side trip on the subject of baptism is in order here. βάπτισμα (baptisma) and its related verb have the root meaning of “to dip, to immerse, submerge.”⁴⁶ M&M note that it is used of a “submerged boat.” That fact that it means to immerse (completely) is born out in the following.

*Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, **because there was much water there.** And they came and were baptized.*

John 3:23 (NKJV)

*Now as they went down the road, **they came to some water.** And the eunuch said, “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?” Then Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch **went down into the water,** and he baptized him. Now when they **came up out of the water,** the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.*

Acts 8:36-39 (NKJV)

*And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city **to the riverside,** where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there. Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. And **when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.”** So she persuaded us.*

Acts 16:13-15 (NKJV)

⁴⁴Note that the Greek letter, Y or u (Upper and lower case) is pronounced like German ũ and sometimes transliterated “u” and sometimes “y.”

⁴⁵THAYER, ἀντίτυπος

⁴⁶THAYER, βάπτισμα

If the idea was to “sprinkle” or “pour,” Philip could have sprinkled some water from his “canteen” on him and that would be enough. These passages indicate that there had to be enough water to be immersed as they were all in a place where there was sufficient water for it. Is this the only way one can baptize? Is it wrong to sprinkle instead? First, it is an act of obedience and in no way affects our salvation. Second it is a symbol (which we shall look at when we return to the text) and sprinkling is replacing one symbol with another, one step further removed. In short, it is possible but it is not the preferred way.

Back to Peter!

Baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God). The fact that we are immersed in water might give some the idea that they were taking a bath, a spiritual bath anyway, Peter says “No!” to that. It is done to show an “answer of good conscience.”

He exhorted them to have the courage to commit themselves to a course of action by taking a public stand for Christ through baptism. The act of public baptism would “save” them from the temptation to sacrifice their good consciences in order to avoid persecution. For a first-century Christian, baptism meant he was following through on his commitment to Christ, regardless of the consequences. Baptism does not save from sin, but from a bad conscience. Peter clearly taught that baptism was not merely a ceremonial act of physical purification, but (alla, making a strong contrast) the pledge (eperōtēema, also trans. “appeal”; cf. nasb) of a good conscience (syneidēeseōs; cf. v. 16) toward God. Baptism is the symbol of what has already occurred in the heart and life of one who has trusted Christ as Savior

BKC, 1 Peter 3:21

I am not quoting from McGee here. I guess we all make a mistake now and then. He claims that Peter is referring to the baptism of the Spirit. But how can that be when the antitype had to do with water? Let us move on by going backward. Leaving out the parenthetical matter in the paragraph, we are left with the following. This will give us a better overall view of the intent of this section.

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him

Christ went through worse than we have. But, He has now gone into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. This is then the promise that we, too, may ascend into heaven, when it is our time, and we also will take our positions in heaven. Christ has authority over angels. Will we too? This question has been asked through the ages. I can only give you the following synopsis.

Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters of this life?

1 Corinthians 6:3 (NASB)

This certainly opens up a whole new vista of truth. I do not understand what this means; it is beyond my comprehension. All I know is that man was made a little lower than the angels, and through redemption man was lifted into a place of fellowship with God, a position above the angels

McGEE, 1 Corinthians 6:3

Since they were going to judge supernatural beings (the fallen angels, 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6), surely

they should handle mundane matters satisfactorily.

BKC, 1 Corinthians 6:3

*... and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and **joint heirs with Christ**, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

Romans 8:17 (NKJV)

Whether we will judge all angels or only the fallen angels is obviously not clear. The point is moot anyway since the angels that have not fallen have nothing for which they will be judged. The fact that we are "joint heirs with Christ" would seem to say we will have the same authority that He does.

Let us now take a broader view. Peter says that Christ is in command of "*angels and authorities and powers.*" "Authorities," ἐξουσία (eksousia) refers to "the leading and more powerful among created beings superior to man, spiritual potentates."⁴⁷ The other term, "powers" is a more general term which would seem to cover all other powers in high places (i.e. evil powers). Will we have authority over them as does Christ? The answer is the same as that for the angels. The important point is that Christ has led the way for us into a position with God.

⁴⁷THAYER, ἐξουσία

1 PETER 4

Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles--when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

1 Peter 4:1-6 (NKJV)

“Therefore” is there for us to look back to the fact that “Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God” (3:18) In Chapter three Peter told us why Christ did it, here he tells us how He did it. He *suffered for us in the flesh*. When He suffered for us, he had the same flesh and blood that we do. The nails hurt His hands as badly as they would hurt ours. The sword piercing His side produced the same immense pain in Him as it would in us.

Are you ready to suffer? Perhaps you already have, but still need to know how. *Arm yourselves also with the same mind*. ὀπλιζω (hoplizo) “to arm oneself” is used only here and is an Aorist Imperative. It is a command to do something which you are not currently doing. You are to take up arms. Paul told us to do that as well.

*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. **Put on the whole armor** of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

Ephesians 6:10-12 (NKJV)

Paul uses a slightly different term here for “armor” πανοπλία (panoplia) which differs mostly in the addition of παν [or πας] (pan) meaning “all” or “entire” or, in the above case “whole” armor. Here Peter has in mind just one piece of armor. That armor is you “mind” You are to take on the same attitude that Christ had, an attitude in which “suffering” is to be considered a part of being a Christian.

If you are feeling sorry for yourself right now, remember how sorrowful Christ must have been. I say “must have been,” but we know exactly how much he suffered.

And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Luke 22:41-44 (NKJV)

That is real suffering! Anyway, we are to “arm our minds.” What do you are your mind with?

He exhorted believers to arm themselves with the same courageous attitude or mind-set Christ had

regarding suffering. The word translated “arm yourselves” (hoplisasthe, used only here in the NT) referred to a soldier putting on armor (cf. Eph. 6:13). With the same determination and care with which a soldier puts on his armor, Christians are to adopt Christ’s “attitude” (ennoian, lit., “thought”;
BKC, 1 Peter 4:1

Now, what does Peter mean when he goes on with, “*he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin?*” Anyone who would suffer for Christ’s sake certainly would not continue to willfully⁴⁸ sin.

*In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever **does not practice righteousness** is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.*

1 John 3:10 (NKJV)

Identification with Christ, arming oneself with His attitude, also means sharing in His suffering and death. Christ suffered in His body, and a believer suffers in his body also. One who has suffered in this way is done with sin, that is, his being identified with Christ demonstrates (as does baptism) his break with a sinful life. Because of Christ’s death, “we should no longer be slaves to sin, because anyone who has died has been freed from sin”—

BKC, 1 Peter 4:1

As such, we “no longer should live the rest of our time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God” Now, how can we avoid “living in the flesh - that is what we are, flesh and blood? He is not saying that. Of course we have to live in this old body of ours but we are to cater to the needs of our soul and spirit, not to the cravings of the carnal. Four times Paul said that he was “*an apostle of Jesus Christ **by the will** of God*”: (2 Corinthians 1:1, Colossians 1:1, Ephesians 1:1, 2 Timothy 1:1). He was no longer living for the lusts of men but for the will of God. It was God’s will that he be an apostle. We know that for sure because of the way the Lord reached out to him on the road to Damascus (Acts 9).

The people in Macedonia did so as well,

*And not only as we had hoped, **but they first gave themselves to the Lord**, and then to us by the will of God.*

2 Corinthians 8:5 (NKJV)

Everything Paul did was according to the will of God. We have the following example.

*Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, that I may come to you with joy **by the will of God**, and may be refreshed together with you.*

Romans 15:30-32 (NKJV)

When you arise in the morning, the first thing on your mind ought to be, what does God want me to do today (unless He has already told you). On Sunday mornings you do not have to ask what to do

⁴⁸We still commit sin, daily, but not consciously if we have so suffered.

that morning, you should know that you go to church (if possible).

You do not need to satisfy the lusts of the flesh because, if you are like most Christians, you are like Peter when he adds, *“we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles--when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.* Boy, what a list of former activities! Could such a person do all these things? Take a look at Hollywood, at Washington DC, or any professional sports arena - you will easily find people who do just that!

My first inclination here is to go on. You know the sort of things Peter is speaking of, or do you really? I guess I lived a rather shielded life, I was saved at the age of ten (about). My parents were not Christians but, at least, they had high moral values which they instilled into us kids. So, I really do not know what goes on at some of these “affairs.” So, let’s take a quick look. If you would rather not, skip this section.

WHAT TO CEASE FROM DOING

- *lewdness,* ἀσέλγεια (aselgeis)
- *lust,* ἐπιθυμία (epithumia)(1 Peter 1:14)
- *drunkenness,* οἰνοφλυγία (oiniphlugia)
- *revelries,* κῶμος (komos)
- *drinking parties,* πότος (potos)
- *abominable idolatries.* ἀθέμιτος εἰδωλολατρία (athemitos eidololatria)

The first, “lewdness” is interesting in that the Greek word is derived from the alpha (α) prefix = “not” and the rest of the word is derived from the name of a city “whose citizens excelled in strictness of morals”⁴⁹ “Lust” we noted in 1:14 on pages #43, 50, 61. “Drunkenness” is an interesting word, the first part is the Greek word for wine and the last part, φλυγία (phlugia), means “to bubble up.” In other words to have too much of the “bubbly.”

“Revelries” is *“a nocturnal and riotous procession of half-drunken and frolicsome fellows who after supper parade through the streets with torches and music in honor of Bacchus or some other deity, and sing and play before the houses of their male and female friends”*⁵⁰ “Drinking parties” is just what it says.

The last one is a bit of a puzzle. Stay away from “abominable” idolatries. Are we not to stay away from all idolatries? ἀθέμιτος (athemitos) is *“contrary to law and justice, prohibited by law, illicit, criminal”*⁵¹ Robertson says the following:

To the Christian all "idolatry," (eidōlon, latreia), worship of idols, is "abominable," not allowed (alpha privative and themistos, themistos the old form, verbal of themizōo, to make lawful), but particularly those associated with drinking and licentiousness. The only other N.T. example of athemitos is by Peter also (Acts 10:28) and about the Mosaic law. That may be the idea here, for Jews often fell into idolatrous practices

⁴⁹THAYER, ἀσέλγεια

⁵⁰THAYER, κῶμος

⁵¹THAYER, ἀθέμιτος

I think what Peter is really trying to say here is this. You and I all know that we are not to have a statue of Buddha on our mantel and bow down to it every morning - that would be idolatry. We believe we know what idolatry is. Peter is saying, “wait a minute, these thing I’ve just mentioned are a form of idolatry too!” We noted what Thayer said about “revelries” above, “. . . *parade through the streets with torches and music in **honor of Bacchus or some other deity***. . .” Perhaps you never thought of it that way but this is the way it is!

*In regard to these, they think it **strange** that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.* The Greek word, ξενίζω (xenizo) has two vastly different meanings, although they both have the same root. It means “to receive a quest” or, to emphasize the common root, “to entertain a stranger”

*Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly **entertained** angels.*
Hebrews 13:2 (NKJV)

This is the only other place the word is found in the New Testament. It is found in the following:

*Upon this they perceived that they were become naked to one another; and being ashamed thus to appear abroad, they invented somewhat to cover them; for the tree sharpened their understanding; and they covered themselves with fig-leaves; and tying these before them, out of modesty, they thought they were happier than they were before, as they had discovered what they were in want of. But when God came into the garden, Adam, who was wont before to come and converse with him, being conscious of his wicked behavior, went out of the way. This behavior **surprised** God; and he asked what was the cause of this his procedure; and why he, that before delighted in that conversation, did now fly from it, and avoid it*

JOSEPHUS, Antiquities 1:1:4

*But the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, smote him with an incurable and invisible plague: for as soon as had spoken these words, a pain of the bowels that was remediless came upon him, and sore torments of the inner parts; and that most justly: for he had tormented other men's bowels with many and **strange** torments.*

2 Maccabees 9:6

In the passage from Josephus, God was “surprised” because Adam and Even were behaving in a different way. When you accept Christ and follow after Him, your “old” friends will find it “strange” that you no longer do the things you did with them. Peter calls it a “flood of dissipation.” “*Dissipation is from ἄσωτία (asotia) = “not capable of being saved” Wuest translates this section with “they think it a thing alien to you that you do not run in a troop like a band of revelers with them in the same slough of dissoluteness.*”⁵²

In case you have not experienced it,” a changed life provokes hostility from those who reject the

⁵²WUEST, 1 Peter 4:4

gospel. Consequently they heap abuse believers.”⁵³ Why? They will never admit it but it is because of jealousy, they would like to get out of the mire but can not, or will not, do so. The revelers will pay the ultimate price one day because, as Peter says, *They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the **living and the dead**.*

THE LIVING

*For we must all appear before the **judgment seat of Christ**, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.*

2 Corinthians 5:10-11 (NKJV)

THE DEAD

*Then I saw a **great white throne** and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.*

Revelation 20:11-12 (NKJV)

For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. God’s judgements are different than the kind we are used to. You go to a beauty contest and someone wins. They do not have a prize for the most ugly. You go to a foot race. The one who comes in first gets a prize. The one who comes in last isn’t even noticed. Some are winners, the others are not winners. With God all are judged. They are judged and found to be “winners” (i.e. those who dwell with Him in Paradise) and others are judged and found to be losers (i.e. those who will dwell in the eternal fire.) There is no room for “Mr. In-Between” - “You’ve got to accentuate the positive Eliminate the negative Latch on to the affirmative Don’t mess with Mister In-Between”⁵⁴

But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:7-11 (NKJV)

The end of everything has been drawn near and getting nearer. This is the way the Perfect Indicative of ἐγγίζω (engizo) should be translated. It is equivalent to saying we are living in the “last days.” Because of this, Peter counsels us to do six things and adds some conditions to each.

THINGS FOR US TO DO - AND HOW TO DO THEM!

- *be serious and **watchful** in your prayers.*

⁵³BKC, 1 Peter 4::4

⁵⁴Words by Johny Mercer

- have fervent love for one another, for "***love will cover a multitude of sins.***"
- Be hospitable to one another ***without grumbling.***
- As each one has received a gift, ***minister it to one another,*** as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.
- If anyone speaks, ***let him speak as the oracles of God.***
- If anyone ministers, ***let him do it as with the ability which God supplies***

First we are to pray. You knew that, of course. Somehow, I do not think that "serious and watchful" is a very emphatic way of translating what Peter said here.

Christians are to be clear-minded (sōophronēesate, lit., "be of sound mind"; cf. Mark 5:15) and self-controlled (nēepsate, lit., "be sober"; cf. 1 Peter 1:13; 5:8) so that they are able to pray (cf. Eph. 6:18). Prayer, of high priority in persecution, is to be clear, reasonable, sober communication with God.

BKC. 1 Peter 4:4

By the way, did you know there is more than one kind of "prayer?"

Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,

1 Timothy 2:1 (NKJV)

In addition to the above four Greek terms used above, there are three others. I won't go into all of the Greek words for prayer. One is used for "supplications" above - asking God for things for ourselves. Another is used for "intercessions," asking God for things for other people. A third is "giving of thanks" for whatever purpose. The word Peter uses can best be described as being a proper noun, Prayer. It does not indicate the purpose of it but the act itself. I could tell you to look at TRENCH §li but, as much of it is in Latin, German, etc., you probably would not get much from it. The only statement that would make sense to use is his closing remark, "*Thus much on the distinction between these words; although, when all has been said, it, will still to a great extent remain true that they will often set forth, not different kinds of prayer, but prayer contemplated from different sides and under different aspects.*"⁵⁵

Thus we have it from Peter how we are to pray in these last days. James lists some ways we are not to pray! "*You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures*"⁵⁶ and "*But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*"⁵⁷

After prayer comes the command "*Have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."* How "fervently" are we to love [ἀγαάπη (agape)] one another? Well, the word, ἐκτενής (ektenes) is used in only one other passage in the New Testament.

⁵⁵TRENCH §li

⁵⁶James 4:3 (NKJV)

⁵⁷James 1:6-8 (NKJV)

*And being in agony, He prayed **more earnestly**. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

Luke 22:44 (NKJV)

That was really fervent! The word means “stretched out, intently, assiduous,”⁵⁸ “showing great care and perseverance.” Peter didn’t have any stronger word to describe how we are to love each other. He also had a reason, it covers a multitude of sins. But what does he mean by that? James uses the same terminology.

let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

James 5:20 (NKJV)

Looking at the Greek here will reveal nothing that the English does not already show, this is a very literal translation. Another place where it is found is below.

Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.

Proverbs 10:12 (NKJV)

(Interestingly enough, while Peter appears to quote from the LXX quite often, he does not do so here as the LXX reads quite differently.) While it does not help much in the understanding of this verse, I can not refrain from citing this comment from McGee.

I knew a pastor in Texas who told me that he had a lock of hair right on top of his head which would always stand up no matter how he combed it. He said that the choir threatened to quit because of it. They sat behind him and could always see that hair come up sometime during his sermon. They actually became angry with him because of that lock of hair. Every time he went for a haircut he had the barber cut it off because he did not want to offend his choir. Imagine that type of thing! If they had had love in their hearts, that lock of hair wouldn't have bothered them one bit.

McGEE, 1 Peter 4:8

An interesting parallel is cite by JFB,

Compare the conduct of Shem and Japheth to Noah (Ge 9:23), in contrast to Ham's exposure of his father's shame. We ought to cover others' sins only where love itself does not require the contrary.

JFB, 1 Peter 4:8

But Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness.

Genesis 9:23 (NKJV)

By now, I think you should have the idea so let us go to the next item!

⁵⁸THAYER, ἐκτενής

Be hospitable to one another **without grumbling**. I can just imagine what McGee's remarks would be here without even looking. It is not enough to be "hospitable" to someone, you need to do it without grumbling. Have you ever been the person in the church who had to find accommodations for guest speakers and missionaries in people's homes? If so, you probably know what Peter is speaking of.

Well, what do you know, McGee let me down when he wrote,

I think hospitality can also be expressed in ways other than entertaining in your home. The minister who is traveling and speaking in conferences needs to be alone. He and his wife need to have a room in a motel where he can study and pray rather than be in a home where he has to carry on conversation all the time. May I say, if you want to extend hospitality to your visiting speaker, take care of his motel bill. Maybe you could also invite him out for dinner.

McGEE, 1 Peter 4:9

I believe he "missed the boat" on this one. It is true that traveling speakers and some actually request a motel room. But, if you are "without grumbling," You can welcome him (or her) into your home, show them their room, the bathroom, and the kitchen, stove and refrigerator and say like they do in some foreign countries, "My homes is your home." Tell them that if they wish to be alone and undisturbed, you understand and will certainly provide them with the solitude they need.

"Hospitality" comes from an interesting word, φιλόξενος (philoxenos), a compound of "to love" (phileo love) and "stranger." It, therefore, means to be a "stranger lover." It means to be one who really enjoys taking care of the stranger in town." It may be expressed as below.

*Christian love may be displayed through extending free food and lodging, offering hospitality (philoxenoi, lit., "being friendly to strangers") without grumbling to those who are traveling. During times of persecution, hospitality was especially welcomed by Christians **who were forced to journey to new areas.**—*

BKC, 1 Peter 4:9

The initial readers of this epistle were those especially noted in the above citation, the Cristian Jews of the Dispersion.

Next comes, "As each one has received a gift, **minister it to one another**, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

Spiritual Gifts can be discussed at length, but not here. Let me begin with a definition.

*SPIRITUAL GIFTS (Gk. ta pneumatika, the spiritual supply; charismata, "gifts"). A phrase used to denote the endowments bestowed by the Holy Spirit in the primitive church (1 Cor. 12:1), and the same as "gifts" (v. 4). A spiritual gift "means any extraordinary faculty, which operated for the furtherance of the welfare of the Christian community, and which was itself wrought by the grace of God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, in special individuals, in accordance, respectively, with the measure of their individual capacities, whether it were that the Spirit infused entirely new powers, or stimulated those already existing to higher power and activity (Romans 12:6ff.)" (Meyer, Com., on 1 Cor. 12:1). These gifts **included** word of wisdom; knowledge; faith; healing; effecting of miracles; prophecy; distinguishing of spirits; tongues; and their interpretation (1 Cor. 12:8-10). See under*

various heads.

UNGER, Spiritual Gifts

Note that he says “each one!” Do not say, “Oh, I don’t have a spiritual gift!” You do too! God has given every one of His people one gift or another. Some He has given many gifts but all have at least one. Another point, in the definition above, it is given as a “past tense” thing. Berean Bible Church has this to say,

Article XI - THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We specifically reject the teaching which holds that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to be sought by the believer as a specific experience after and apart from conversion, or that speaking in tongues is the evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. We also reject that teaching which holds that physical healing for the body is included in the atonement of Jesus Christ and may be claimed on the same basis as salvation. We further believe that any gift of the Holy Spirit which may be exercised today must be in strict conformity to the Word of God and not in violation of Biblical standards and principles. (I Corinthians 12:13; I Corinthians 14:19; I Corinthians 22-34; 1 Corinthians 22:40; II Corinthians 12:7-10)

BBC, Statement of Faith

We, too, believe that many of the gifts mentioned by Unger were given to the “primitive church” as a sort of “jump starter.” We believe the miraculous gifts passed of the scene with the Apostles. Most people would agree but some would object to saying that “speaking in unknown tongues” is still with us. Let me begin by saying that **nowhere** in the Bible is an unknown tongue mentioned. There are six verses in 1 Corinthians 14 that have “unknown tongue” in the KJV (2:4; 13-14; 19; & 27). But, if you have the KJV, note that all six are in italics. The translators put that in there, it is not in the Greek and hence is not in any of the newer translations. At Pentecost, the disciples spoke in tongues **unknown to them** but not unknown to those who heard them,

*Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak **in his own language**. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man **in our own tongue, wherein we were born?** Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, **we do hear them speak in our tongues** the wonderful works of God.*

Acts 2:6-11 (KJV)

Oxford gives a definition of “tongue” which includes, “ 2 a person's style or manner of speaking. 3 a **particular language**”⁵⁹ A “tongue” is a language, a means of communication which means there has to be, at least, two people that understand it. Paul, in effect, forbade the speaking of tongues at Corinth, If you do not think so, consider the following.

If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, **and let one**

⁵⁹OXFORD, “Tongue”

interpret. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God.

1 Corinthians 14:27-28 (NKJV)

Paul's ruling was that you had to speak one at a time and this had to be followed by an interpretation of what was spoken. If you were to get up and speak in an "unknown tongue," how could you possibly know that someone would be present to interpret it? You say, "that would be impossible!" to which I say, "That's why I say Paul forbade it!"

To summarize where we are, today we would usually speak of "gifts" as special abilities God has given each of us in furthering His kingdom, not supernatural powers. I do not know what gift(s) God has given you but you have at least one and, according to Peter here, we are to "minister it to one another." "Minister" here is from διακονέω (diakoneo) from which we get "Deacons." In Acts 6, the Apostles appointed "deacons" to take care of the temporal affairs of the church. The deacons in our church still are responsible for that. "Stewards" here is οἰκέτης (oiketēs) which we met with on pages #43, 50, 61. There is a very good Biblical definition of a "steward" in the Old Testament.

And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

Genesis 39:4 (KJV)

JFB state,

*The Spirit's gifts (literally, "gift of grace," that is, gratuitously bestowed) are the common property of the Christian community, each Christian being but a steward for the edifying of the whole, **not receiving the gift merely for his own use***

JFB, 1 Peter 4:10

Why do I spend so much time preparing these Bible lessons week after week? I believe God has given me the ability ("gift") of understanding and teaching the Bible. I could just sit at my desk for hours and study the Scriptures for my own benefit and, in fact, I must benefit from it a lot more than any of you do, but God did not give me this gift to use for myself. It is for the edifying of others (I just hope that it does edify someone!) Peter ends this verse with, "*of the manifold grace of God.*"

Now, us men in the church, and especially mechanics, know what a manifold is. It is under the hood of each of our cars. In fact there are two of them. I don't know what they look like in a Mercedes, they must be really something! Oxford says it is "*2 (in an internal-combustion engine) the part conveying air and fuel from the carburetor to the cylinders or that leading from the cylinders to the exhaust pipe.*"⁶⁰

They had no cars in Peter's day so he must have been thinking of something else! (No kidding!) Someone who knits a lot would know what "variegated" yarn is, yarn which continually shifts from one color to another. God gives us abilities like that, each one has something different to share with the others.

⁶⁰OXFORD, "Manifold"

Now Peter concludes with two special gifts.

If anyone speaks, ***let him speak as the oracles of God.***

If anyone ministers, ***let him do it as with the ability which God supplies***

First, what is the difference between “speaking” and “ministering?” The problem is that you are thinking of a “minister” who stands up and preaches the Word. That is not the kind of ministering Peter had in mind. What he had in mind is what they had to do early on in the church.

Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

Acts 6:2-4 (NKJV)

At this point, those who served the church we divided into two groups, groups today we would refer to as “deacons” and “elders.” Note that one group is not better than the other! Peter describes the duties of the two offices.

“Elders” (speakers) are to be “oracles.” Do you know what an “oracle” is? Oxford says it is “2 an infallible authority.” Robertson does a better job of defining it.

(the substance of Christian teaching), here of the utterances of God through Christian teachers.

ATR: 1 Peter 4:11

We find this in Hebrews

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

Hebrews 5:12 (NKJV)

Deacons are to serve ***with the ability which God supplies***. I do not know where the NKJV gets “ability” as the word is really “strength” as translated in the NASB and NIV. Let’s take a look at the source of our strength!

*The LORD said to Gideon, "You have too many men for me to deliver Midian into their hands. In order that Israel may not ***boast against me that her own strength has saved her,****

Judges 7:2 (NIV)

*But you have planted wickedness, you have reaped evil, you have eaten the fruit of deception. Because ***you have depended on your own strength*** and on your many warriors,*

Hosea 10:13 NIV

*Then they sweep past like the wind and go on--guilty men, ***whose own strength is their god.***"*

Hab. 1:11 NIV

*Warnings to Zion and Samaria You who rejoice over Lo Debar, Who say, "Have we not taken Karnaim for ourselves ***By our own strength***?" "But, behold, I will raise up a nation against you, O house of Israel," Says the Lord God of hosts; "And they will afflict you from the entrance of Hamath To the Valley of the Arabah."*

Amos 6:13-4 (NKJV)

I believe these Old Testament passages teach us well that we are not to depend on our own strength. We are use the strength that God provides us with.

Peter concludes this section with *that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.* We have just looked at what happens when we depend on our own strength. We need to serve such that “in all things” it is God, in the form of Jesus Christ, that receives the glory. Peter points out that this is proper since glory and dominion belong to God - always!

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now

*"If the righteous one is scarcely saved,
Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?"*

Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

1 Peter 4:12-19 (NKJV)

We have been looking at a lot of positive things we, as Christians are to do. There is a lot do be done. There was a lot to be done when Peter penned these words. But, now, comes the bad news - sort of a “good new/bad news scenario.” To ease into this subject, Peter uses his favorite word for them, “Brethren.” (See page #8), literally “Beloved,” ἀγαπητός (agapatos) = “loved ones.” It is the same word that is found below

*To all who are in Rome, **beloved of God**, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Romans 1:7 (NKJV)

Peter loved these people just as God did. Peter would have loved us just as God does. Peter wants to let us know that what he is about to say is not to be someway vindictive or to make us feel bad, he is going to say it in real love because it has to be said.

Do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you. We have already discussed the word “strange” back in verse 4, Page #79. The “bad news” part of this is the “fiery trial.” This is πύρωσις (purosos). This is found in only one other place.

*"The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her **burning**," standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.'*

. . . "and cried out when they saw the smoke of her **burning**, saying, 'What is like this great city?' 'They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.'

Revelation 18:9-10 &18-19 (NKJV)

The verbal form of this word is found in 2 Peter and in Revelation.

looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, **being on fire**, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?

2 Peter 3:12 (NKJV)

I counsel you to buy from Me **gold refined in the fire**, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

Revelation 3:18 (NKJV)

Peter is saying, in a sense, that, as in Revelation 3:18, "you will be as gold refined in the fire." One interpretation of this passage is below.

. Peter warned his readers about the coming of a more intense period of persecution. He again stressed mental readiness (cf. 1:13; 4:7): Do not be surprised (xenizesthe, "amazed"; cf. v. 4) at the painful trial you are suffering. The nasb translates this last phrase "the fiery ordeal among you." Literally rendered it could read "the among you burning." The verb pyrōosei is from pyroo4(sic), "to burn." The meaning may be metaphorical as in 1:7 where the context is quite similar. However, the verse could also be aptly applied to the historical reality of the Neronian persecution. Christians were blamed for the burning of Rome. Some were covered with pitch and used as living torches to light the imperial gardens at night. Peter may have believed that the provincial officials were likely to follow their emperor's example and stake-burn Christians in Asia Minor. Such persecution should not take the Christians by surprise as though something strange (xenou) were befalling them.

BKC, 1 Peter 4:12

This fires is allowed by God "to try you." Does God really "try" us? Was James wrong?

Let no one say when he is **tempted**, "I am **tempted** by God"; for God cannot be **tempted** by evil, nor does He Himself **tempt** anyone.

James 1:13 (NKJV)

God does not "tempt" us be he does "test" us. There is a difference. I believe the difference is if signifcance and should be examined carefully - but not by me. I will let Wuest do it for us.

THERE are two words in the Greek New Testament both meaning "to test." It is important in the interests of accurate interpretation, to distinguish between them, since they refer to different kinds of testings. One is dokimazo. We will look at some instances of its use in the early manuscripts. These are of great help in the forming of an accurate judgment as to the usages of New Testament words, since an illustration is often clearer than a definition. The word is used in a manuscript of A.D. 140 which contains a plea for the exemption of physicians, and especially of those who have passed

the examination. The words, "passed the examination" are the translation of dokimazo. From this we arrive at the definition. The word refers to the act of testing someone or something for the purpose of approving it. These physicians had passed their examinations for the degree of Doctor of Medicine. In the inscriptions, the word is almost a technical term for passing as fit for a public office. It is found in the sentence, "Whichever way, then, you also approve of, so it shall be," and in the phrase, "To instruct, if you will, the strategus or any other magistrate whom you may sanction.". The words "approve" and "sanction" are the translations of dokimazo.

The word has in it the idea of proving a thing whether it be worthy to be received or not. In classical Greek! it is the technical word for putting money to the test. In the New Testament almost always it implies that the proof is victoriously surmounted. The word further implies that the trial itself was made in the expectation and hope that the issue would be such. At all events, there was no contrary hope or expectation.

The other word is **peirazo**. The word meant in the first place "to pierce, search, attempt." Then it came to mean "to try or test intentionally, and with the purpose of discovering what good or evil, what power or weakness, was in a person or thing." But the fact that men so often break down under this test, gave peirazo a predominant sense of putting to the proof with the intention and the hope that the one put to the test **may break down under the test**. Thus the word is used constantly of the solicitations and suggestions of Satan.

Dokimazo is used generally of God, but never of Satan, for Satan never puts to the test in order that he may approve. **Peirazo is used at times of God, but only in the sense of testing in order to discover what evil or good may be in a person.**

The English reader can see from this study that it is important that one recognize the difference in these words which both mean "to test," especially when one learns that they have the same translation in some parts of the New Testament. For instance, dokimazo occurs in Luke 14:19 and peirazo in John 6:6, and yet the one English word "prove" is the translation. The man who bought the oxen went to examine them, not for the purpose of discovering what their good points might be or whether they had any defects. He bought them for sound, healthy stock, and fully expecting that they were what the seller represented them to be, he merely went to put his approval upon what he had bought. That is dokimazo.

WUEST, TREASURES, page 126

I have highlighted several portions of the above citation. As he notes **Dokimazo is used generally of God**, since it has the expectation that one will pass the test. The word we are considering is **peirazo, which would be used by Satan.**

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to **be tempted** by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.

Matthew 4:1-2 (NKJV)

Finally, however, **Peirazo is used at times of God, but only in the sense of testing in order to discover what evil or good may be in a person.** Sometimes God uses this to show **us** what kind of stuff we are made of. God already knows. Dr. McGee said,

I do not know what your problem is, but I assure you that it is not something strange. Others have

gone through the same thing, and you will never be the one who will suffer more than anyone else. When Paul was chosen as an apostle, the Lord said, ". . . I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:16). Paul has gone the limit of suffering; therefore you will not be going the limit, and you should not consider your suffering a strange thing.

McGEE, 1 Peter 4:12

Have you ever been a place where you really suffered? Unless you are very young, if you have not had this experience, you indeed are very blessed - I think. My wife and I have been through our share of suffering in our nearly fifty years together.

There was the time when our boys were small and a very self-righteous Pastor called on us with one of his deacons (i.e. a Baptist church). We had gone to another church in town the previous Sunday, just to see what they were doing. Then on Wednesday night we went to the quarterly Congregational Meeting. Well, the reason for the call was that we had no business coming to a congregational meeting after we had visited another church one Sunday. I tried to find out what the problem was with that and the harder I tried, the louder he got - to the point where my wife had to take the boys and put them in the bath tub and turn the water on full force so they could not hear him. A few days later the deacon called and apologized and told me that he had no idea that was what the pastor was going to do, he was really upset.

Not all of these trials come from the church (although many seem to). In 1993, I was diagnosed with colon cancer. The entire year of chemotherapy was a real ordeal for both my wife and I. But, praise the Lord, I am still here! In a situation like that, you can spend a lot of time asking the Lord why He lets us go through things like that. We really didn't, we really believe the Lord has a purpose in everything, even though we may not see it at the time. I think that after every trial we go through, we are stronger Christians because of it.

So far, I trust you have followed what I have been trying to teach. But now comes, *rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.* Rejoice! How can you do that when you are suffering? Here are what some good men have stated.

The fact that there is no shortcut to living the Christian life. There is no easy way. Let me repeat, the Christian life is a banquet -- because He has invited us to the table of salvation -- but it is not a picnic. . . . We hear so much talk about how everything is supposed to be smooth and lovely in the Christian marriage and in the Christian home. My friend, I do not agree with that at all -- sorrow and suffering will come to the Christian home. I know of nothing that drew my wife and me together like the death of our first little one. And believe me, we wanted that little one. We sat in that hospital room and simply wept and prayed together. That is still a sacred memory in our lives -- it did something for us

McGEE, 1 Peter 4:13

*Christian, expect trouble: "**Count it not strange concerning the fiery trial, and as though some strange thing had happened unto thee:**" for as truly as thou art a child of God, thy Saviour hath left thee for his legacy, -"In the world, ye shall have tribulation; in me ye shall have peace." If I had no trouble I would not believe myself one of the family. If I never had a trial I would not think myself a heir of heaven. Children of God must not, shall not, escape the rod. Earthly parents may spoil their children but the heavenly Father never shall his. "Whom he loveth he chasteneth," and scourgeth*

every son whom he hath chosen. His people must suffer; therefore, expect it Christian; if thou art a child of God believe it, look for it, and when it comes, say, "Well suffering, I foresaw thee; thou art no stranger; I have looked for thee continually." You cannot tell how much it will lighten your trials, if you await them with resignation. In fact, make it a wonder if you get through a day easily. If you remain a week without persecution, think it a remarkable thing; and if you should, perchance, live a month without heaving a sigh from your inmost heart, think it a miracle of miracles. But when the trouble comes, say, "Ah! this is what I looked for; it is marked in the chart to heaven; the rock is put down; I will sail confidently by it; my Master has not deceived me."

SPURGEON, Exeter Hall, Strand.3/11/1855

Psalm 143:3, 4 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul: he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead. Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.

Children of God, do not expect to be always happy, or else you will be disappointed. You will have more troubles, if nobody else does. Depend upon it, that adversity is one of the covenant promises. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," is your Master's own word to you, and you must not expect to find it untrue. You will find it true to the letter. And sometimes the troubles of life will penetrate even to your heart, and make you feel desolate. When you are so, **think it not strange concerning the fiery trial** as though yours were a new path in which nobody ever walked before you. Ah! no; David was there. Many others have been there.

SPURGEON Metropolitan Tabernacle, 3/26/1914

Next, Peter writes, "If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.." We are blessed if we are reproached! How can that be? Again may I say, suffering is a token that you are a child of God. The greatest proof that you are a child of God is that you can endure suffering. If you are being carried around on a silver platter with a silver spoon in your mouth, you must not be God's child because that is not the way He does things.⁶¹

Let me give you the answer from an expert.

"Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

Matthew 5:11 (NKJV)

For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me."

Romans 15:3 (NKJV)

Jesus said. Someone has said, "Jesus said it, I believe it, and that is enough for me." A little Greek grammar needs to be observed in what Peter adds. *for the Spirit of (glory & God)" rests upon you.* In other words, he is not speaking of two spirits, the Holy Spirit is both the Spirit of God and of glory. There is something here that may bother you. He says the Holy Spirit "rests" on you - I thought the Holy Spirit indwelt us! The problem is that we tend to get too literal when it comes to speaking about God. The Holy Spirit, being God, is omnipotent, He is everywhere; in you, below you, above you, in Heaven, in your believing friend, etc. When we speak of the Spirit "in you" were a talking about His

⁶¹McGEE, 1 Peter 4:14

role in bring you to a saving grace and keeping you thereafter. But, the Spirit has other roles as well.

Wuest wrote concerning the word “rests,”

But not only is the fact of persecution an indication of a spiritually prosperous life, but also of the fact that the Holy Spirit is resting upon the Christian. The words "rest upon" are the translation of a Greek word used in 3 manuscript of 103 B.C. as a technical term in agriculture. The writer speaks of a farmer resting his land by sowing light crops upon it. He relieved the land of the necessity of producing heavy crops, and thus gave it an opportunity to recuperate its strength. The word is used in Matthew 11: 28 where our Lord says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," literally, "and I will rest you." Here our Lord causes the sinner who comes to Him to cease from his own efforts at carrying his load of guilt and suffering, taking it upon Himself, allowing the believer in his new life powers to function as a child of God. In our First Peter passage, the Holy Spirit rests and refreshes the believer in the sense that He takes over the saint's battle with sin and the heretofore futile effort at living a life pleasing to God, by giving him victory over the evil nature whose power was broken the moment God saved him, and by producing in his life His own fruit.

WUEST, 1 Peter 4:14

But consider this as well.

*But the earth was unsightly and unfurnished and darkness was over the deep, and the Spirit of God **moved** over the water.*

Genesis 1:2 LXX

*The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God **was hovering** over the face of the waters.*

Genesis 1:2 (NKJV)

This same Greek word is used in the LXX at Genesis 1:2. The Hebrew word used here is רָחַף (rahep) and is also use in the following

*As an eagle stirs up its nest,
Hovers over its young,
Spreading out its wings, taking them up,
Carrying them on its wings,*

Deuteronomy 32:11 (NKJV)

Both the Hebrew and the Greek words have to do with shielding a person or a thing from outside powers. The eagle protects its young. The Holy Spirit was protection for the earth as it hovered over the waters, and the Holy Spirit hovers over the believer to protect him or her.

“On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified” This part of the verse is not in the better manuscripts because it is not in the better Greek manuscripts. I can not really comment on it as I do not have the older manuscripts to teach from.

As Christians, we will have to suffer in many ways, but Peter lists some ways in which we are not to suffer.

THINGS WE DO NOT NEED TO SUFFER IN

- *as a murderer,* φονεύς (phoneus)
- *a thief,* κλέπτης (kleptus)
- *an evildoer,* κακοποιός (kakaposos)
- *or as a busybody in other people's matters* ἄλλοτριεπίσκοπος (allotriepiaskopos)

The first three of these are pretty clear in the English. We all know what a murderer is, I think. When one takes another's life, it may be accidental manslaughter, it may be in the carrying out of orders on the battle field, but the word here is for cold premeditated murder. You have all heard of "kleptomaniacs." These are those who "help themselves" because they can't help themselves!. We are not talking about those who are not under control here, we are talking about outright thieves.

"Evildoer" is a translation of the Greek word which means exactly that, to do evil things. Murder is evil. Stealing is evil. There are other things that are also evil. But the last one in this list may seem out of place. Spurgeon commented on that..

But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

A curious mixture that,—is it not? A murderer is classed with "a busybody in other men's matters." But, really, people of this latter sort are very obnoxious. there are some who seem as if they cannot mind their own business; I have heard that it is for two reasons; first, because they have not any business to mind, and, secondly, they have no mind at all with which to mind their business. But these very people think they can mind other people's business; and the more is the pity. See how strongly Peter condemns them, and asks that none of those to whom he writes may have to suffer because of such wrongdoing.

SPURGEON, Metropolitan Tabernacle, 12/28/1884

You would have to be pretty smart to be a busybody in Greece, the word is hardly pronounceable. Let us begin with the last part of the word. ἐπίσκοπος (episkopos). We say this word (its translation back on page #55 where it is translated "bishop." It is also used in 1 Timothy 3:1 where it is also translated "bishop" but clearly is an indication that "bishop" and "elder" are two names for the same office. The first part of the word, ἄλλοτριος (allotriepios) refers to taking something belonging to another. Thayer says, "one who takes the supervision of affairs pertaining to others and in no wise to himself."⁶² Robertson notes, *It is interesting to note also that episkopos here is the word for "bishop" and so suggests also preachers meddling in the work of others*⁶³

Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Spurgeon, in preaching on Ezekiel 9:8

So it was, that while they were killing them, I was left alone; and I fell on my face and cried out, and

⁶²THAYER, ἄλλοτριεπίσκοπος

⁶³ATR, 1 Peter 4:15

said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Will You destroy all the remnant of Israel in pouring out Your fury on Jerusalem?"

Ezekiel 9:8 (NKJV)

made the following observation.

This destruction, we are told, began at the sanctuary. Suppose the Lord were to visit London in his anger, where would he begin to smite? "Oh," somebody says, "of course, the destroying angel would go down to the low music-halls and dancing-rooms, or he would sweep out the back slums and the drink palaces, the jails and places where women of ill-life do congregate." Turn to the Scripture which surrounds our text. The Lord says, "Begin at my sanctuary." Begin at the churches, begin at the chapels, begin at the church members, begin at the ministers, begin at the bishops, begin at those who are teachers of the gospel. Begin at the chief and front of the religious world, begin at the high professors who are looked up to as examples. What does Peter say? "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

The first thing the slaughtermen did was to slay the ancient men which were before the temple, even the seventy elders of the people, for they were secret idolaters. You may be sure that the sword which did not spare the chief men and fathers made but short work with the beset sort. Elders of our churches, ministers of Christ, judgment will begin with us; we must not expect to find more lenient treatment than others at the last great assize; nay, rather, if there shall be a specially careful testing of sincerity, it will be for us who have taken upon ourselves to lead others to the Savior

SPURGEON, Metropolitan Tabernacle, 10/23/1913

Now Peter writes, "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?" This is a tough passage! It is a bit easier to understand if you realize Peter is quoting Old Testament scripture again.

If the righteous will be recompensed on the earth, How much more the ungodly and the sinner.

Proverbs 11:31 (NKJV)

If the righteous scarcely will be saved, where will shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Proverbs 11:31 LXX

Peter here cites the Greek of the LXX virtually word for word. The Hebrew text has the same idea but states it differently.

Spurgeon preached a total of (at least) sixteen sermons incorporating this passage.

I will hint at the points on which it invites our thoughts. It suggests to every unconverted person here this one question. It seems that it is not very easy for the righteous to be saved: "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the wicked appear?" If the branches in Christ that bear no fruit, are taken away, what must become of the Sabbath-breakers, the despisers of God, the atheists, the drunkards, the unchaste, the dishonest, the blasphemers? I raise the question-solve it! Let it burn into your soul!

SPURGEON, Metropolitan Tabernacle, 10/6/1867

He ends another sermon with this grave warning, one that many Christians today need to heed.

Thus far have I spoken to God's people, and if you think that this is rather rough upon them, what shall I say to you who do not love the Lord at all? O sirs, if the fan that is in Christ's hand purges his own floor in this stern way, what will that fan do with you who are as chaff to the wheat! If he sits here as a refiner, and purifies the sons of Levi, and puts even the gold into the fire, what will become of the dross? "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" If the language of God is sharp even to his own beloved, because he says, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent," what will his language be to those who are not his children, but are living in open rebellion against him? Tremble, ye that forget God. Hear his own words, they are none of mine: "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." God help you to flee from the sin of doing nothing! The Lord Jesus Christ himself lead you into the Father's service! Amen.

SPURGEON, Metropolitan Tabernacle, 08/05/1886

Incidentally, the title of this last sermon was, SERMON #1916 - "The Great Sin Of Doing Nothing."

Peter concludes this chapter with "Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God **commit** their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator." According to my Thesaurus, "commit" is to invest, dedicate, or entrust. Paul made such a commitment. McGee observed,

Paul is saying, "I came to Christ and simply committed everything to Him. I made a deposit. What things were gain to me I counted loss, and what was loss became gain to me, in order that I might win Christ." Paul listed about eight different things that he formerly trusted for his salvation (see Phil. 3:1 through Phil. 6). Then he said, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Phil. 3:7-8). In effect, he was saying, "I flushed all that down; I trusted that no longer. I only trusted Christ."

McGEE, 1 Peter 4:19

The word order in the Greek is different than in the English translation, indicating a different emphasis." commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator" is actually "commit their souls to a faithful Creator in doing good." "Creator" is based on the verb κτίζω (ktizo), a rather exceptional term for the "Creator." (The nominative form of the word is found only here). One would expect to find the verb in Genesis 1:1 (in the LXX) but it is not in Genesis! When God finished the Creation, He rested! The word we have here is different. The verb is found below.

*For we are His workmanship, **created** in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV)

The world is a "done deal." God is done with that! But, you and I are "new creations!"

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new **creation**; old things have passed away; behold, all*

things have become new.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)

God is a “faithful Creator” who is continually in the process of creating new Christians. Peter is saying we need to commit our lives to Him who creates us anew. To Him who changes us and makes us what He wants us to be. A lot of people (especially women, but men too) go to plastic surgeons who do an “extreme makeover” on them. When they do this, they commit themselves to the hands of the doctor who has the power to make them over into a hideous looking monster. You have to have faith in him (and his malpractice insurance) that he won’t do that. But you and I are to commit ourselves to the One who will (or already has) made us into new creations - the “extreme makeover” of all time!

1 PETER 5

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

1 Peter 5:1-4 (NKJV)

Peter has addressed the Jews of the Dispersion, and us as well. Now he turns to the Elders. He starts the chapter with “to the Elders.” The word is πρεσβύτερος (presbuteros) from which (obviously) we get “Presbyterian.” (For those of you of Baptist leanings, I am sorry to have to point this out!). The word has a primary meaning of “old man.” If you want to get technical, the term can be applied to an older woman as well and even a young man if he is the elder of two brothers, hence

*"Now his **older** son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing.*

Luke 15:25 (NKJV)

The mainline Presbyterian Church has interpreted this too literally when they not only have women Elders but insist that there should be a teen-aged Eder on the Board to represent the youth. (When referring to a female, it would have use a feminine article with it. One must distinguish, however, between the use of the word in a purely secular sense and in the technical sense as used in Titus 1.

*For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, **and appoint elders** in every city as I commanded you-- if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. For a **bishop** must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.*

Titus 1:5-9 (NKJV)

Well, now that I made the Baptists among us unhappy, I suppose I need to be fair and do the same for the Episcopalians who have Bishops and they have Elders and Priests. The above passage makes it quite clear that “bishop” (overseer) and “elder” refer to the same office, the first the duty of the office and the other characteristics of the man. For our Roman Catholic friends, I need to point out that Peter who is alleged to be the first Pope refers to himself as an Elder (rather than an apostle).

Peter is quite right, All Apostles were Elders but not vice versa - the apostle had to have seen Jesus. Peter refers to himself as “*a fellow elder **and a witness** of the sufferings of Christ.*” Thus the qualifications for Apostle. But in this passage, he is speaking as Elder to Elder (man to man?). He adds, “*a partaker of the glory that will be revealed.*” Peter speaks of both the past (seeing the sufferings of Christ) and the future, seeing the glory yet to be revealed.

But, now, he give an “exhortation” to the Elders among those to whom he is writing. *Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers.* Peter is really tying the office down. Now we

have it that the “Elder” and the “Bishop” being the same office, he points that out here - “serving as overseers.” and he also exhorts them to “shepherd” the flock. Oxford indicates that a “pastor” is derived from Anglo-Norman Fr. pastour, from L. pastor 'shepherd', from past-, pascere 'feed, graze'.⁶⁴

So the office of “pastor” (preacher, minister, or whatever you may refer to him as) is also the same as that of Elder.”

*Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, **especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.***

1 Timothy 5:17 (NKJV)

Thus Paul also makes that connection. Those who “labor in the word” might me called elder-teachers. In Presbyterian church the distinction is made between “Teaching Elders” and “Ruling Elders.” This is a proper but an excessively formal distinction. In our church we have four Elders” whose real distinction is a legal one, they are the trustees of the Berean Bible Church Corporation. The Pastor(s) are employees of the corporation and serve at the pleasure of the directors and the members of the corporation. This, too, is an excessively formal distinction but one that must be made when legal matters are addressed.

Peter elaborates on the role of the Elders (especially the teaching one. So does Kenneth Wuest, I am reminded of something I read many years ago and underlined it in the book (something I hardly ever do) because it was so relevant at the time. He is writing about how the term “pastor” is from the Latin, meaning “shepherd.” We’ve already noted this.

Thus, he would miss the practical illustration of the shepherd in the East who always leads his flock, never drives it. The story goes that a traveler in the East once saw a man driving a flock of sheep. He said to the man, "I thought that eastern shepherds always led their flocks, never drove them." Replied the man, "Oh, I am not the shepherd. I am the butcher." All of which means that the pastor who attempts to drive God's flock to the living of a holy life only works havoc amongst his people but the pastor who leads the people by a Christlike life attains his purpose.

WUEST, “The Pastoral Epistles” Preface

Now, Peter writes how the Elders (Shepherds) are to serve Christ. “Serving as overseers,

What to do	What not to do
<i>willingly</i>	<i>by compulsion ἀναγκαστῶς (anankastos)</i>
<i>eagerly;</i>	<i>for dishonest gain</i>
<i>being examples to the flock</i>	<i>as being lords over those entrusted to you,</i>

The adverb for “compulsion is found only here in the New Testament. The noun is found below.

*But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in **distresses.***

⁶⁴OXFORD, “pastor”

2 Corinthians 6:4 (NKJV)

*Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, **in distresses**, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

2 Corinthians 12:10 (NKJV)

If you are serving as an Elder and it is a source of real distress for you, either you are not serving rightly or you should not be serving at all. The right way to serve is “willingly.” I do not need to elaborate on the Greek here, everyone knows what it means to willingly do something.

Next, do not serve for “dishonest gain.” Again, the adverb, αἰσχροκερδῶς (aischrokerdos) is used only here in the New Testament. The noun is derived from two words, αἰσχος (aischro) meaning “dishonorable,” and κέρδος (kerdos) which means “gain.” Hence “dishonest gain” is a good translation for it. The Elder should serve eagerly. Dr. McGee wrote, “*It's wonderful to be in the Lord's service where you can do your job because you love to do it and you want to do it.*” That has made the ministry of teaching the Word of God a sheer joy to me⁶⁵ Shepherds who serve with false motives care only for themselves and devour the flock.⁶⁶ This last quotation refers to the Old Testament where it is written,

"Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to the shepherds: "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? "You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock.

Ezekiel 34:2-3 (NKJV)

Finally, do not serve as lords over the flock. “Lording over” is a good translation of the Greek. The idea is well illustrated in the quotation from Wuest above. An elder has to be a leader and lead the congregation, not push them around. The congregation must follow the Elder because he is the sort of person they admire, not simply out of respect for the office.

when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away

There are a number of crowns mentioned in the New Testament.

*Then Jesus came out, wearing the **crown of thorns** and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!"*

John 19:5 (NKJV)

*For what is our hope, or joy, or **crown of rejoicing**? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? 1*

Thessalonians 2:19 (NKJV)

*Finally, there is laid up for me the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

⁶⁵McGEE, 1 Peter 5:2

⁶⁶BKC, 1 Peter 5:2

2 Timothy 4:8 (NKJV)

*Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the **crown of life** which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

James 1:12 (NKJV)

*and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the **crown of glory** that does not fade away.*

1 Peter 5:4 (NKJV)

*Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the **crown of life**.*

Revelation 2:10 (NKJV)

Robertson notes the following:

In the Gospels it is used only of the crown of thorns, but Jesus is crowned with glory and honor (Hebrews 2:9). In all these passages it is the crown of victory as it is here. See 1 Peter 1:4 for amarantos, unfading. Amarantinos is made from that word as the name of a flower amaranth (so called because it never withers and revives if moistened with water and so used as a symbol of immortality), "composed of amaranth" or "amarantine," "the amarantine (unfading) crown of glory." ATR, 1 Peter 5:4

Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for

*"God resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble."*

1 Peter 5:5 (NKJV)

This verse is going to cause us a bit of trouble. It deals with "younger people," νέος (neos). It also deals with "elders," a term which we have commented on at length. So, the, what is this verse saying. Should younger men submit to the Elders of the church? Should younger men submit to men who are older than them? Should younger Elders submit to the older Elders?

Paul wrote to Timothy and said,

*Do not rebuke an **older man**, but exhort him as a father, **younger men** as brothers, **older women** as mothers, **younger** as sisters, with all purity.*

1 Timothy 5:1-2 (NKJV)

Paul uses both πρεσβύτερος (presbuteros) and νεοτέρους (neoterous) (another form of the word) in this verse. It is obvious in this passage that Paul is dealing in generalities, not with the office of Elder. Here, however, Peter has been addressing Elders and then says "likewise."

What am I to do when I read,

Here the antithesis between younger and elder shows that the word refers to age, **not to office.**
ATR, 1 Peter 5:5

The younger members were to place themselves willingly under the authority of those who had been given the **responsibility of leadership**
BKN, 1 Peter 5:5

"Ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder." After all, **your father,** if you have a good or a godly father, has a lot of sense and maybe more sense than you have.
McGEE, 1 Peter 5:5

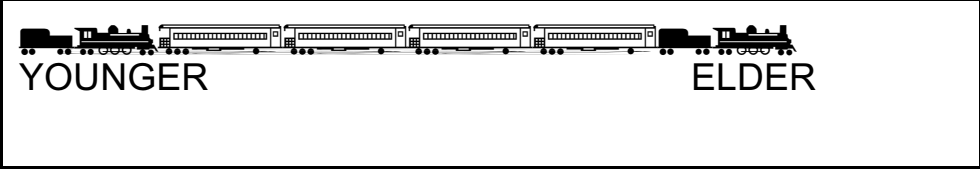
... probably means here inferiors, or those not in sacred offices; and may be understood as referring to the people at large who are called to obey them that have the **rule over them** in the Lord. In this sense our Lord
CLARK 1 Peter 5:5

If these men can not agree, in football terms, I guess I need to step back and punt! The beautiful thing about God’s Word is that, in cases like this, you may interpret it in any of these ways and still be right! Young people should submit to older ones, and especially to those who are known to be leaders. A number of people have noted how much their fathers “had learned” in the few years they were away at college and then out starting their careers. All of a sudden, old Dad wasn’t so dumb after all. I had that experience with my older son. He told me one day as he was raising his two sons, “Gee Dad, now I understand why you did the things you did when we were kids!”

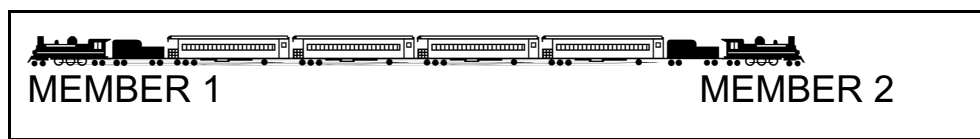
I believe that those who think the above reference is simply to older men are right when Peter goes on to say, “all of you be submissive to one another.” This seems a bit awkward. After all, Paul writes,

Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.
Ephesians 5:24 (KJV)

If you read the passage from which the above was taken, Paul is not saying that the wives are inferior to their husbands, only that where there are two (or more) people, one has to be the leader and the other follows. Pictorially, I like to think of it as two identical engines with one helping the other.



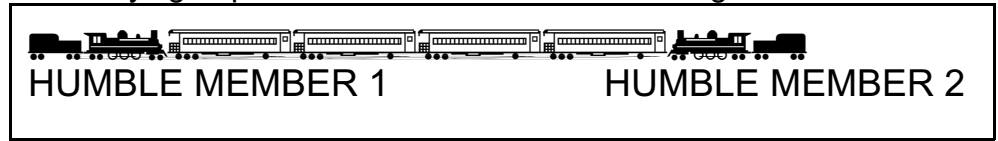
Having two leaders is tantamount to having a string of railroad cars with an engine on each end trying to pull the cars. It just doesn’t work that way



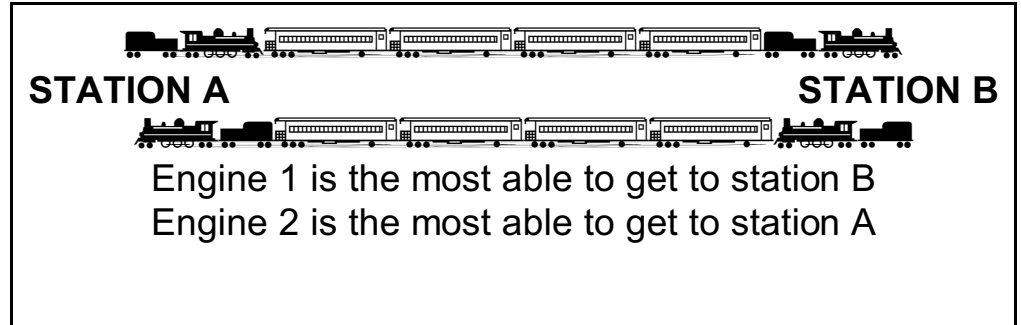
So, how can everyone be subjective to everyone else? Well Peter solves that problem by adding,

and be clothed with humility. If each one is humble, none will “lord it over” the others. I still have a problem. Now the two engines are trying to push the cars toward the other engine!

This does not work either. So, then, what is it that Peter has in mind? Some people have one talent (given them by the Lord) some have another. They can work together with the one with the greatest ability at the time being the leader at that time. At another time, the other member may be the leader. Hence the idea shown below.



Now, let us determine what he means by being “clothed” with humility.



The last word is a very peculiar one, occurring only here. It is derived from κόμβος, [kombos] a roll, band, or girth: a knot or roll of cloth, made in tying or tucking up any part of the dress. The kindred word ἐγκόμβωμα [enkomboma], from which the verb is directly formed, means a slave's apron, under which the loose garments were girt up. Compare Horace's "puer alte cinctus," a slave girt high. Hence the figure carries an exhortation to put on humility as a working virtue employed in ministry. This is apparent from the evident reminiscence of that scene in which Peter figured so prominently—the washing of the disciples' feet by the Lord, when he girded himself with a towel as a servant, and gave them the lesson of ministry both by word and act. Bengel paraphrases, "Put on and wrap yourselves about with humility, so that the covering of humility cannot possibly be stripped from you."

VINCENT, 1 Peter 5:6

*"God resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble."*

This same quotation is found in James 4:6. They are quoting from the verse below.

Surely He scorns the scornful, But gives grace to the humble.

Proverbs 3:34 (NKJV)

The Lord resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble.

Proverbs 3:34 LXX

The quote is word-for-word from the LXX except the LXX uses “Lord” rather than “God.” “Resists,” ἀντιτάσσω (antitasso) is formed from ἀντι (anti) = “against and τάσσω (tasso) = “to station.” Hence it is to “stand against” or, as Thayer puts it “To range in battle against.”⁶⁷ I do not think

⁶⁷THAYER, ἀντιτάσσω

I need to define “proud,.” I’ll let someone else do that.

*In pleasing God . . . We must put off and lay aside all pride, whether it be the pride of talent, the pride of self-righteousness, the pride of wealth, the pride of dress, the pride of rank, or the pride of spiritual attainments, for even a haughty word is detestable with God. Among the things which the Lord hateth we find prominently mentioned a proud look. **If a proud look be his abomination, what must pride itself be?** It is written, "The Lord resisteth the proud," and this implies that their views and designs are contrary to his own, and he sets himself to oppose them*

SPURGEON, Metropolitan Tabernacle, 3/22/1874

*These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: **A proud look**, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren.*

Proverbs 6:16-19 (NKJV)

Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 5:6-11 (NKJV)

“Therefore” is “there for” you to recall what Peter has just written concerning your need to be humble. “Humble yourself under the **mighty hand of God**.” This anthropomorphism for God is used a number of times in the Old Testament

Hezekiah Keeps the Passover

*Also **the hand of God** was on Judah to give them singleness of heart to obey the command of the king and the leaders, at the word of the LORD.*

2Ch 30:12 (NKJV)

Job Maintains His Integrity

*"I will teach you about the **hand of God**; What is with the Almighty I will not conceal.*

Job 27:11 (NKJV)

The End of the Wise and the Fool

*Nothing is better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that his soul should enjoy good in his labor. This also, I saw, was from **the hand of God**.*

Ecclesiastes 2:24 (NKJV)

*For I considered all this in my heart, so that I could declare it all: that the righteous and the wise and their works are in **the hand of God**. People know neither love nor hatred by anything they see before them.*

We have pretty well covered what it means to humble oneself when we considered the Elder, above .on page #102. Peter adds to this “*that He may exalt you in due time.*” It is of importance to note one other use of the word, ὑψόω (hypsoo)

Therefore God also has **highly exalted Him** and given Him the name which is above every name,
Philippians 2:9 (NKJV)

As He did for Christ, so He will do for us. Paul brings this out below.

*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs - heirs of God and **joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.***

Romans 8:14-17 (NKJV)

As such, Peter urges, “casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.” Luke wrote,

*Then they brought him to Jesus. And they **threw** their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him.*

Luke 19:35 (NKJV)

When you “throw” something to someone else, you no longer have it. When I learned that I had colon cancer and had a week to wait for surgery, the Lord enabled me to “cast all my cares on Him.” As a result, instead of getting all tensed up over the impending surgery, I experienced just the opposite (thanks to all of you and others who were praying), I finally understood what Paul was writing about.

*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and **the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding**, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 4:6-7 (NKJV)

Peter now is reaching the end of his exhortations. “*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.*” Be sober - we spoke on that back on page #81. Vigilant is from γρηγορέω (gregoreo) which means, literally, “to wake from sleep, to stay awake.” Jesus knew all about this.

*Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and **watch with Me.**" He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep, and said to Peter, "What? **Could you not watch** with Me one hour?*

Matthew 26:38-40 (NKJV)

Peter tells us to “watch out!” Why? He tells us why, because it is like we are in the lions cage at the zoo. The roaring lion is not going to give us any peace - that is for sure. Satan (the devil) is also like that. Have you ever watch a nature movie and seen a lion devour its pray? If you have, you know it is something you do not want to be, the pray for a roaring lion - the devil.

What do we then do? Run like the dickens? No, Peter says, “resist him.”

This verse could also be a veiled allusion to the horrors of the Neronian persecution in the Roman Coliseum, in which lions mauled and devoured Christians. Satan desired to do the same thing spiritually, to defeat believers' testimonies

BKC, 1 Peter 5:8

James has the same warning but also gives the result.

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

James 4:7 (NKJV)

In order to resist him, you must remain “steadfast in the faith.” As McGee wrote,

"Whom resist stedfast in the faith." The picture here is of an army standing against an enemy. We should stand with other believers. I do not think you can resist the Devil by yourself. You not only need the armor of God, but you will also need other believers to stand with you. That is the reason that whenever I have need, I let all the listeners to my radio broadcast know about it. I want them to stand with me in prayer -- we need to do that. "Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."

McGEE, 1 Peter 5:9

I suppose that is why we have a Prayer Chain in our church. “But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you” Peter says to remember that our God is a God of grace and that he has called you and me to participate in that grace. He will do great things for us but we must “suffer a while” first - here on Planet Earth. We have seen a lot of “suffering” in this epistle. But now, we find out what will be the result of all that. God will do four things here.

- perfect, καταρτίζω (katartizo) “to make one what he ought to be”⁶⁸
- establish, στηρίζω (sterizo) “to make stable”⁶⁹
- strengthen, σθενάω (sthenao) “to strengthen, to make strong.”⁷⁰
- settle θεμελιόω (themelioo) “to lay a foundation, to establish.”⁷¹

The four attributes are fairly synonymous with one another. Collectively, they indicate that we will be made perfect in Christ.

⁶⁸THAYER, καταρτίζω

⁶⁹THAYER, στηρίζω

⁷⁰THAYER, σθενάω

⁷¹THAYER, θεμελιόω

Peter ends with, “*To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen,*” words of praise to God.

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

1 Peter 5:12-14 (NKJV)

Peter adds a P.S. McGee says, “*Peter is the author, but Silvanus wrote this for him. If you don't like the quality of the Greek here, blame Silvanus.*”⁷² “*As Paul often did at the close of his epistles, Peter may have penned these last verses himself. Silas served as Peter's amanuensis*”⁷³

00Now for an interesting problem. “*She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you.*” Who is “she?” It may surprise you that some commentators say, “the co-elect woman,” means Peter's wife.”⁷⁴

(Note that the KJV has “church” in italics, meaning the translators interpreted this to mean the church.) Hence, *Peter was sending greetings from the church in “Babylon” to the churches in Asia Minor. According to historical evidence, Peter was in Rome during the final years of his life.*⁷⁵

Peter adds, *and so does Mark my son.* This, incidently, lends a little credence to the idea that he was mentioning his wife, not the church, since now he says “and so does Mark” This is the Mark that deserted Paul and Barnabas on their first journey. He evidently joined up with Peter at some point. Note, however, that Paul later said,

*for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica-- Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. **Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.***

2 Timothy 4:10-11 (NKJV)

Greet another with a kiss of love. I have already noted my lack of success with this in high school. However, fifty years ago Peter might have said, “greet each other with a warm hug.” Today, with all the harassment suits abounding, I guess Peter would have to settle for a warm handshake!

I shall end this study with the same words that Peter ended the epistle - *Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.*

⁷²McGEE, 1 Peter 5:12

⁷³BKC, 1 Peter 5:12

⁷⁴ATR, 1 Peter 5:13

⁷⁵BKC, 1 Peter 5:13

LETTERS FROM A FISHERMAN

PART TWO - II PETER



STUDIES IN FIRST AND SECOND PETER
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A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO 2 PETER

It is interesting to note that every one of the “2nd” books in the New Testament are shorter than the corresponding 1st book.

1 & 2 Books	1 st Book	2 nd Book
Corinthians	16 chapters	13 chapters
Thessalonians	4 chapters	3 chapters
Timothy	6 chapters	4 chapters
Peter	5 chapters	3 chapters
John	5 chapters	1 chapter (2 nd & 3 rd)

Presumably, this is because the second epistle was just a “follow up” on the first. This is the case here. According to Unger

Occasion and Date.

Antinomian Gnosticism had begun to manifest itself. The false teachings spread with its immoral tendencies. The apostle wrote to correct this evil and to forewarn of conditions at the end of the age. There is no decisive evidence that Second Peter was not written shortly after First Peter. It was penned probably in A.D. 66-67, which date would meet all requirements.

Purpose and Plan

The epistle is the second in which the apostle proposes to stir up the “sincere” minds of his readers “by way of reminder” (2 Peter 3:1). To this end he urges upon them growth in Christian grace (2 Peter 1:5-15), warns against false teachers (2 Peter 2), and urges believers to patient expectation of the Lord’s return (2 Peter 3:1-14).

UNGER 2 Peter

Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder),

2 Peter 3:1 (NKJV)

With this short introduction, we shall begin the study.

2 PETER 1

Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

2 Peter 1:1-4 (NKJV)

In the first epistle, Peter introduced himself simple as “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ.” Here he is much more specific, adding his other name and his other relationship to Christ. “**Simon** Peter, a **bondservant** and apostle of Jesus Christ. Both of these two additions are explained below.

Peter’s combining these distinctly Hebrew and Greek names may be an indication of the mixed audience (Hebrew and Greek Christians) he addressed.

Peter adds the term servant (doulos, lit., “slave”; cf. Matt. 23:11) to his title apostle of Jesus Christ (cf. Rom. 1:1; Titus 1:1). Near the close of his life, at the apex of his apostolic authority, he was Christ’s servant first, and His apostle second.

BKC, 2 Peter 1:1

We noted whom he wrote to before, Jews of the dispersion, but by now, Gentiles are also to be included. Peter, as he grows in his apostleship, realizes his position as a servant of Christ, just as did Paul. Peter is writing to the same people as before (but, most likely, with many more added) since he wrote,

*Beloved, I now write to you **this second epistle** (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder),*

2 Peter 3:1 (NKJV)

He now gives these people a different title. Before it was “To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in . . .” and now it is “*To those who have obtained like precious faith with us.*” I do not believe this translation gives the full impact of Peter’s greeting. He uses the word, ἰσοτίμων (isotimon). The main part of the word we found in 1 Peter meaning “to honor.” the prefix has been carried over into English with words like you learned in Geometry, **Isosceles**, a triangle having “two equal” sides. Putting this together, Peter says those whom he is writing to have received the same identical honor as he himself has. One gets the impression by reading the introduction to both epistles that those he addresses had profited from the first epistle and now possessed this “like precious faith.” “Obtained” is an Aorist Participle, they had obtained it and still possess it.

Finally, he makes it clear that it was not something he did, it was not something they did, it was through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. They “obtained” it through Christ. The word is λαγχάνω (langkano) with is used twice in the Gospels in a very interesting way.

So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, **his lot fell** to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.
Luke 1:8-9 (NKJV)

They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but **cast lots for it**, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." Therefore the soldiers did these things.

John 19:24 (NKJV)

I assume that all (or most) of you are God's Elect. Why did God choose you rather than someone else? Perhaps there is someone more worthy than you, why not them? On the other hand, you may be of the mind, "Why not choose me, look how good I am!" Neither view is right. God had a purpose in choosing whom He did but we do not know what it was. The priests had no way of knowing who should serve next in the temple, so the cast lots. This is the way they determined the right priest to serve. They cast lots (Luke used a different term) to determine whether Matthaïas or Justis and Matthaïas got the position. Why? I do not know why. They did not know why, but God did.

As far as the soldier are concerned, they were simply fulfilling prophecy (I am sure they did not know it).

They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

Psalms 22:18 (NKJV)

I do not know why God chose you! I do not even know why He chose me. All I can say is the following.

*For whom He **foreknew**, He also **predestined** to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He **predestined**, these He also **called**; whom He **called**, these He also **justified**; and whom He **justified**, these He also **glorified**.*

Romans 8:29-30 (NKJV)

Paul gives us the Divine progression. We could spend weeks on the above passage. But, let me just give the following.

Believers are those God foreknew. This does not mean simply that God foreknows what believers will do, but that God foreknows them. Nor does divine foreknowledge merely mean an awareness of or acquaintance with an individual. Instead it means a meaningful relationship with a person based on God's choice (cf. Jeremiah. 1:4-5; Amos 3:2) in eternity before Creation

BKC, Romans 8:29-30

Since we are not God and know not what God does, as far as our knowledge is concerned, we have been chosen by lot.

Peter starts the greeting with "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." I do not think I need to explain "Grace" and "Peace" to you, you have all experienced it (if not, check with me later!). Not, however, that you can not obtain peace without first obtaining grace. "Multiplied?"

And he [Peter] is a New Testament writer who uses arithmetic. He says, "Grace and peace be multiplied" -- he is talking about multiplication. Paul didn't go into mathematics. He said that God is rich in grace and that the peace of God passes all understanding, but Simon Peter gets down to where the rubber meets the road. He takes out the multiplication table and says, "I hope grace and peace will be multiplied unto you." How wonderful this is.

McGEE, 2 Peter 1:2

Do you realize if you take 2 and add 2 to it ten times you will end up with 22 **but** if you multiply it by 2 ten times you will have 2048? Peter wanted a speedy expansion of their grace and peace!

Peter used the same expression in the introduction to his first epistle and Jude did also. How well do you "know" God. "To know" is γινώσκω (ginosko) but the word here has a prefix, ἐπι-γινώσκω (epi-ginosko) which strengthens the meaning, "to know very well." I know my wife and I know some of the people who sell hardware at Miner's. But I know Gail much much better than I know these other people. This is the thought here. Almost everyone in the U.S.A. knows about God, some in a negative way. But it is only the born again Christian who gets into His Word that really knows Him. To really obtain this "grace and peace," you must first obtain a good knowledge of Him who gives it.

There is something missing in this greeting. Peter refers to "God" and to "Jesus our Lord." Why leave out the Holy Spirit? If you are a born-again Christian, the Holy Spirit dwells within you. You do not need to have Peter send a "greeting" from the Holy Spirit, He is already with you.

Next, "*His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness.*" Power is δύναμις (dunamis or dynamis). If you go out to Diablo Canyon (and have special permission to go in) you can see the two giant "dynamos" (usually called "generators" today) in there producing a fairly large percentage of the states power needs. We also get the word "dynamic" from this Greek word Both examples illustrate the kind of power available from our God. He has used this mighty power to give us all things that pertain to life. What do you need to live a more successful Christian life? Dr. McGee comments on "all things that pertain to life and Godliness."

I don't know about you, but I have always wanted to live it up. I don't mean that I have wanted to go out and paint the town red -- you run out of paint when you attempt that sort of thing. But "his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." Don't say that God has not made an arrangement for you to live for Him. He has made every arrangement for our life in Christ and our godliness of life for Him.

McGEE, 2 Peter 1:3

Someone may say, "Wait a minute, I surely do not have all I need!" Well, what did Peter write? "*through the **knowledge** of Him who called us by glory and virtue*" How well do you know Him? How much of His Book have you absorbed. The only way to have power is to have knowledge of Him and the only source of that knowledge is the Bible. Study the Scriptures How did Timothy receive his ability to be Paul's "right hand man?"

*But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that **from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.***

2 Timothy 3:14-15 (NKJV)

PROMISES! Peter writes, “have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises.” Where does one find the “exceedingly great and precious promises?” You might try • **Spiritual, from God.** Genesis 49:24; Exodus 15:2; Exodus 31:13; Exodus 33:16; Leviticus 21:8; Deut. 33:25; Deut. 33:27; 1 Samuel 2:4; Neh. 8:10; Job 23:6; Psalm 1:3; Psalm 18:1-2; Psalm 18:28; Psalm 18:32; Psalm 18:35-36; Psalm 23:2-3; Psalm 27:14; Psalm 28:8; Psalm 29:11; Psalm 30:7; Psalm 31:24; Psalm 37:6; Psalm 37:17; Psalm 37:24; Psalm 37:39; Psalm 52:8; Psalm 55:22; Psalm 61:5; Psalm 63:8; Psalm 66:9; Psalm 68:18; Psalm 68:28; Psalm 68:35; Psalm 71:16; Psalm 72:6; Psalm 72:17; Psalm 73:23; Psalm 73:26; Psalm 81:10; Psalm 84:5; Psalm 84:11; Psalm 89:17; Psalm 92:12-14; Psalm 94:17-18; Psalm 105:4; Psalm 119:32; Psalm 119:102; Psalm 132:15-16; Psalm 138:3; Psalm 138:8; Psalm 144:1-2; Psalm 146:5; Proverbs 10:29; Proverbs 16:6; Isaiah 1:25; Isaiah 4:3-4; Isaiah 6:6-7; Isaiah 26:12; Isaiah 28:6; Isaiah 33:5-6; Isaiah 40:11; Isaiah 40:29; Isaiah 40:31; Isaiah 41:10; Isaiah 41:13-14; Isaiah 41:17-18; Isaiah 44:3; Isaiah 45:8; Isaiah 45:24; Isaiah 54:17; Isaiah 57:19; Isaiah 58:8; Isaiah 58:10-11; Jeremiah 31:12; Jeremiah 31:14; Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 16:14; Daniel 11:32; Hosea 6:3; Hosea 14:5-8; Habakkuk 3:19; Zech. 10:12; Zech. 12:8; Malachi 3:2-3; Malachi 4:2; John 1:16; John 17:11; Acts 20:32; Romans 9:23; Romans 14:4; 1 Cor. 12:6; 1 Cor. 13:10; 1 Cor. 13:12; 1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; 2 Cor. 3:5; 2 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 9:8; 2 Cor. 10:4; Ephes. 3:20; Phil. 1:6; Phil. 2:13; Phil. 4:7; Phil. 4:19; Col. 1:11-12; 1 Thes. 5:24; Hebrews 12:10-11; James 1:17-18; 1 Peter 1:5; 2 Peter 1:2-4; 1 John 1:9; 1 John 4:4; Jude 1:1; Jude 1:24.

If these “spiritual promises are not enough, you might try for **Temporal, from God.** Genesis 1:30; Genesis 8:22-9:3; Genesis 22:17; Genesis 26:4-5; Genesis 28:20-21; Genesis 49:11-12; Genesis 49:20; Genesis 49:24-25; Exodus 15:26; Exodus 23:22; Exodus 23:25-26; Exodus 34:24; Leviticus 25:20-22; Leviticus 26:4-10; Numbers 10:29; Deut. 1:10; Deut. 2:7; Deut. 4:4; Deut. 4:40; Deut. 5:33; Deut. 6:2-25; Deut. 7:13-24; Deut. 8:1-10; Deut. 8:15-18; Deut. 10:18; Deut. 11:12-15; Deut. 12:7; Deut. 12:28; Deut. 15:4; Deut. 15:6; Deut. 26:18-19; Deut. 28:7-8; Deut. 29:5; Deut. 32:13-14; Joshua 1:8; Ruth 1:6; 1 Samuel 2:7-8; 2 Samuel 7:8-9; 1 Chron. 17:7-8; 1 Chron. 29:12; 1 Chron. 29:14; 1 Chron. 29:16; 2 Chron. 1:12; 2 Chron. 31:10; Ezra 8:22; Neh. 8:10; Job 5:10; Job 12:23; Job 22:18; Job 37:6; Job 37:10; Job 37:13; Job 37:16-17; Job 38:1-41; Psalm 21:3-5; Psalm 23:1; Psalm 23:5; Psalm 34:10; Psalm 36:6; Psalm 44:3; Psalm 65:8-13; Psalm 68:6; Psalm 68:9-10; Psalm 68:19; Psalm 69:35-36; Psalm 81:13-16; Psalm 85:12; Psalm 91:1-15; Psalm 103:2-5; Psalm 104:1-35; Psalm 105:24; Psalm 107:35-38; Psalm 111:5; Psalm 113:9; Psalm 115:16; Psalm 127:1-5; Psalm 135:7; Psalm 136:1-26; Psalm 144:12-15; Psalm 145:15-16; Psalm 146:5-9; Psalm 147:8-9; Psalm 147:13-14; Eccles. 2:24; Eccles. 3:13; Eccles. 5:19; Isaiah 25:4; Isaiah 30:23-26; Isaiah 31:1-2; Isaiah 33:15-16; Isaiah 43:20; Isaiah 48:21; Isaiah 51:2; Isaiah 55:10; Jeremiah 5:24; Jeremiah 10:13; Jeremiah 14:22; Jeremiah 27:4-6; Jeremiah 30:19; Jeremiah 31:35; Jeremiah 51:16; Ezekiel 36:28-38; Daniel 5:18; Daniel 6:20; Daniel 6:22; Hosea 2:8; Hosea 11:3; Joel 2:21; Joel 2:23; Joel 2:26; Amos 4:7; Jonah 4:6; Zech. 10:1; Malachi 3:10-12; Matthew 5:45; Matthew 6:26; Matthew 6:30-33; Matthew 10:29; Luke 12:22-31; John 6:31; Acts 14:17; 1 Cor. 2:9; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 7:6; 2 Cor. 9:8-10; Phil. 4:19; 2 Peter 2:7-9⁷⁶

I don’t seriously expect you to look all these up. I only give you these lists to point out the abundance of promises we received from God’s word. Peter says these promises are “exceedingly great and precious.” We have already considered “precious,” but here we have “exceedingly great” along with it. The word is derived from μέγας (megas) from which we get words like mega phone, megabucks, and so on. Large. We are always enticed into buying the “large economy size” of things. The word here has a superlative suffix attached to it. We don’t have “great” promises from God, we have the

⁷⁶NAVE’S, “Promises”

“greatest” promises.No one gives promises like God!

Now for the “greatest.” *“You may be partakers of the divine nature!”* Do you realize what Peter is saying to us here? What is “the divine nature?” What is “nature?” Well, we all (especially the unsaved) talk about “Mother Nature” (who is really “Father God”). It might be well to translate this word, φύσις (phusis) as “species.” The “nature” of man is “Homo sapiens” It is, according to us homo sapiens, the highest order of life upon this planet. Well, that is correct as long as you add “on this planet.” There are even higher life forms. Next comes “angels.”

*What is man that You are mindful of him,
And the son of man that You visit him?
For You have made him **a little lower** than the angels,
And You have crowned him with glory and honor.*

Psalm 8:4-5 (NKJV)

One day that will change but, for now, angels come next. Up at the “tippity top” is the “divine nature.” We are told about this below.

*For since the creation of the world **His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature,** have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.*

Romans 1:20 (NASB)

There is one other passage that speaks of this nature, it comes to us from when Paul was in Athens defending the Faith.

*"And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, "so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; "for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' "Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that **the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising.***

Acts 17:26-29 (NKJV)

The Bible Knowledge Commentary, with respect to this passage says this.

The conclusion is inevitable: since humans have been created by God, the divine Being, He cannot possibly be in the form of an idol, an image conceived and constructed by man (cf. Rom. 1:22-23). ("Divine being" translates theion, lit., "divine nature," used frequently in classical Gr., but in the NT only here and in 2 Peter 1:3-4). This would be a revolutionary concept to the Athenians, whose city was "full of idols" (Acts 17:16) and "objects of worship" (v. 23).

BKC, Acts 17:29

It is a “revolutionary concept to men today. Do you realize that you have become, according to this, as God?” We have a divine nature! Peter says so. Paul said so too!

*...even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, **and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus**, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*

Ephesians 2:5-7 (NKJV)

"Wait," you say, "I am still right here on planet Earth!" Yes, I am too, but positionally in God's eyes, we are in the heavens with Him. The positional position we hold will become actual when we arrive in heaven. That is yet future. What is not future is "*having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*" We have "escaped!" The word is ἀποφεύγω (apofeugo). If you take away the prefix, you have φεύγω (feugo), the source of our word "fugitive." With the prefix it is "to flee away." and hence "to escape." The verb is in the second person plural - in other words it is something you must do. It is what Peter wrote to his readers that they should have done. Paul wrote,

*So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in **corruption**, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.*

1 Corinthians 15:42-43 (NKJV)

In that passage, physical corruption - the decomposition of the body, is described. Peter uses it here in a moral sense of having corrupt morals. As Christians we can and must escape this. You may say "Wait, I still have my old nature, I can not do that!" It is true we can still fall into sin but what is being spoken of here is being a slave to it. We have a higher standard to live for and so reject the lower immoral life.

But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:5-11 (NKJV)

Dr. McGee in a previous citation noted that Peter used a multiplication table. (Page #110). But here he uses addition. *faith + virtue + knowledge + self-control + perseverance + godliness + brotherly kindness = love*. We are to perform this addition function with "all diligence." The Greek word has to do with speed but not in the sense of "haste makes waste" but in the sense of doing something regularly and hence making good progress.

"The Christian life is a very serious business. However, we have made it sort of an extracurricular activity. The present-day thinking is that it is not something to be taken into the business world or the schoolroom or into social life. Rather, it is something sort of like your Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes which you wear only at certain times. However, Peter said that it is something to which we are to give "all diligence."

McGEE, 2 Peter 1:5

BKC says,

In this beautiful paragraph Peter orchestrates a symphony of grace. To the melody line of faith he leads believers to add harmony in a blend of seven Christian virtues which he lists without explanation or description. A carnal Christian has spiritual myopia (v. 9), but a spiritual Christian is both effective and productive (v. 8) in his understanding of the Lord Jesus and his application of biblical principles to daily

BKC, 2 Peter 1:5-9

“Add” to you faith. “Add” comes from a very interesting Greek source. ἐπιχορηγέω (epichoregeo), without the prefix, comes down to us in English as “Chorus.”

*“Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and **dancing.***

Luke 15:25 (NKJV)

The verbal form of the word for “add”, then originally meant “to be a chorus leader.” or, in some cases, “to furnish a chorus at one ones expense.”⁷⁷ The idea of the chorus, in time, faded away and then it simply referred to one “furnishing abundantly.” I suppose the root idea is where BKC came up with the above citation.

So, Peter gives us this list of SEVEN GRACES OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

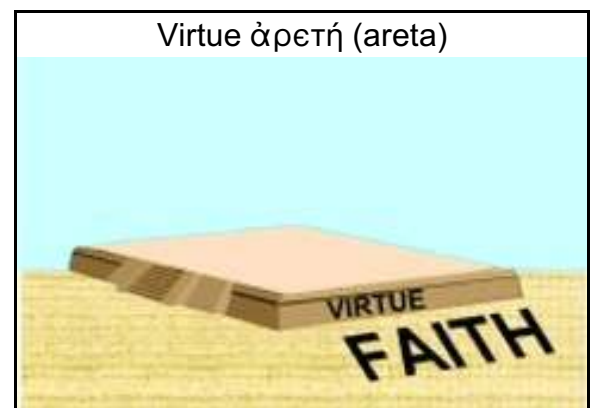
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|----|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Virtue | ἀρετή (areta) |
| 1. | Knowledge | γνῶσις (gnosis) |
| 2. | Self-control | ἐγκράτια (engratia) |
| 3. | Perseverance | ὑπομονή (hupomona) |
| 4. | Godliness | εὐσέβεια (eusabia) |
| 5. | Brotherly Kindness | φιλαδελφία (philadelphia) |
| 6. | Love | αγάπη (agape) |

The A. V. exhorts to add one virtue to another; but the Greek, to develop one virtue in the exercise of another: “an increase by growth, not by external junction; each new grace springing out of, attempting, and perfecting the other

VINCENT, 2 Peter 1:5

Vincent’s description may be viewed below as we look at each of these “grace” springs out of its predecessor.

With FAITH as the foundation, the first Grace is “Virtue.” The Greek means “*any excellence of a person (in body or mind) or of a thing, excellence of person, hence a*



⁷⁷THAYER, χορηγέω

virtuous course of thought, feeling, and action.”⁷⁸ Vincent says,

Not in the sense of moral excellence, but of the energy which Christians are to exhibit, as God exerts his energy upon them. As God calls us by his own virtue (v. 3), so Christians are to exhibit virtue or energy in the exercise of their faith, translating it into vigorous action

VINCENT, 2 Peter 1:5

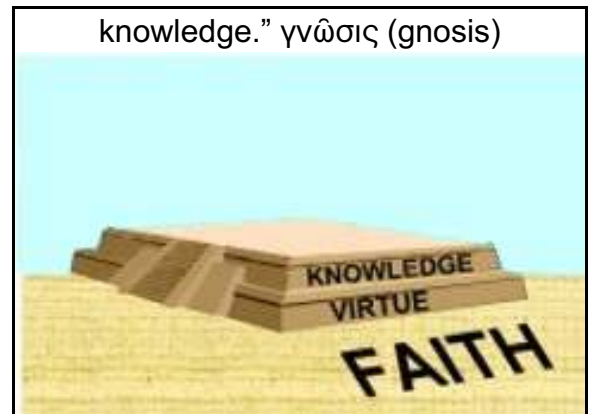
We can not leave Dr. McGee out of this.

Virtus to the Roman of the first century meant a great deal more than chastity. It characterized the very finest of Roman manhood: strength, valor, courage, and excellence. My friend, these same qualities should also characterize your life and mine. How the world needs believers who have the courage to stand for that which is right and to stand up and be counted for God in this day! Therefore Peter is saying, "Add to your faith courage."

McGEE, 2 Peter 1:5

So, now you have, according to Dr. McGee, courage, courage do to what? You need to know what to do. Thus we are lead to “knowledge.” γνώσις (gnosis). We find a related word in Acts.

*Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself." So Paul stretched out his hand and answered for himself: "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because today I shall answer for myself before you concerning all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, "especially because **you are expert in all customs and questions which have to do with the Jews.** Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently.*



Acts 26:1-3 (NKJV)

There are people who are gnostics, “gnostic >adj. 1 of or relating to knowledge, especially esoteric mystical knowledge⁷⁹ but you have probably heard the term agnostic who is “a person who believes that nothing is known or can be known of the existence or nature of God.”⁸⁰ We certainly are not agnostics but neither are we “gnostics” in these sense listed above. Jesus said it all!

*Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "**If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**"*

John 8:31-32 (NKJV)

Now that you have added to the foundation of faith you “have the courage to stand for that which is

⁷⁸THAYER, ἀρετή

⁷⁹OXFORD, gnostic

⁸⁰OXFORD, agnostic

right” (McGee), you must obtain **knowledge** as to how you are to take this stand and set a “*virtuous course of thought, feeling, and action.*” (Vincent) Without knowledge you may do more harm than good. You must get into the word and learn what it has for you. You must also be open in your prayer for knowledge that God can impart directly to you - personal knowledge applicable to you only.⁸¹

*Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You!*

Psalm 119:11 (NKJV)

Knowledge of God’s word is essential if you are to be the person God wants you to be.

Now that we are ready to do what God’s Word tells us and have begun to build on the foundation of faith, Peter says the next layer in this is Self-control ἐγκράτεια (enkrateia). It is listed by Paul as part of the Fruit of the Spirit.

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, **self-control.** Against such there is no law.*
Galatians 5:22-23 (NKJV)



The word refers to, “the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites.”⁸² A new Christian with his or her new-found faith is apt to be so excited about it that they go off “half-cocked.” They need to channel their energies and knowledge is the proper way. They have to practice Christianity with the kind of restraint Paul teaches.

*And everyone who competes for the prize is **temperate** in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.*

1 Corinthians 9:25 (NKJV)

*Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us **run with endurance** the race that is set before us,*

Hebrews 12:1 (NKJV)

Without “self-control” it is difficult to “run with endurance.” We need to do this so we can endure throughout the course God has set before us. We need Perseverance.

Perseverance ὑπομονή (hupomona) This word refers to “the characteristic of a man (or woman) who is unswerved from his deliberate purpose and loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and

⁸¹I am not speaking of having a “revelation,” that is not right, but God does speak to us as individuals.

⁸²THAYER, ἐγκράτεια

sufferings"⁸³ As we build one grace upon the other, we begin to be transformed.

*For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it **may be conformed to His glorious body**, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.*
Philippians 3:20-21 (NKJV)

The road is long and it is narrow. Christ said so.

"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Matthew 7:13-14 (NKJV)

Make sure you have the necessary perseverance to reach the end. This is why this grace must be built on self-control. The Marathon runner must pace himself or herself in the early part of the race so that the end of the course may be reached in due time.

Now that you are on the narrow road, self-controlled and persevering, you need to have Godliness εὐσέβεια (eusabia). Peter already used this word in verse 3. Paul uses in three times in the passage below.

*If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine **which accords with godliness**, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, **who suppose that godliness is a means of gain**. From such withdraw yourself. **Now godliness with contentment is great gain**. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

*But you, O man of God, flee these things and **pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.***

1 Timothy 6:3-11 (NKJV)

Godliness, according to Paul (above) must be preceded by teaching and knowledge of the word. We have already added that grace. Self-control is included so that godliness does not become a way to



⁸³THAYER, ὑπομονή

gain what one would like in life. Paul concludes with many of the graces we have thus far added to faith. Thayer says it is “reverence, respect, and piety towards God.”⁸⁴ So now we have built up so that we may be reverent and respectful to God. But what about our fellow Christian?

That is why we next come to Brotherly Kindness φιλαδελφία (philadelphia). Many times in our Bible studies to date we have come to the Greek word φιλέω (phileo) and contrasted it with αγαπάω (agapao) i.e. man’s love for one another verses the love of God. So here it is translated “brotherly kindness.” It could just as well be translated “brotherly love” but the translators (presumably) chose this term to distinguish it from the next and final grace, love. By the time one has taken on the previous graces of faith, one should be able to have strong affections for the brother or sister in the Lord. I do not mean this is the sense of man-woman relations but person-person relationships. As the hymn writer wrote, “they will know we are Christians by our love” (for each other).

Well, we have almost reached the top, the pinnacle on which we may base our Christian lives. The one last, but not least, grace is that of divine love, Love αγάπη (agape)



- *Love suffers long,*
- *Love is kind,*
- *Love does not envy,*
- *Love does not parade itself,*
- *Love is not puffed up,*
- *Love does not behave rudely,*
- *Love does not seek its own,*
- *Love is not provoked,*
- *Love thinks no evil,*
- *Love does not rejoice in iniquity*
- *Love rejoices in the truth,*
- *Love bears all things*
- *Love believes all things,*
- *Love hopes all things*
- *Love endures all things.*



1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NKJV edited)

Love is the capstone of our faith in Christ. It completes the “graces” God gives us, built upon our faith.

For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. “Abound” is πλεονάζω (pleonazo). Paul uses this term below.

*Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that **abounds** to your account.*

Philippians 4:17 (NKJV)

⁸⁴THAYER, εὐσέβεια

*We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all **abounds** toward each other,*

2 Thessalonians 1:3 (NKJV)

A curious translation problem occurs here. All of the newer translation as well as the KJV have **If** these things are yours,” yet there is no condition expressed in the Greek. Darby’ translation has *“for these things existing and abounding in you make you to be neither idle nor unfruitful as regards the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ;”*⁸⁵ The problem is solved, however, when you go back to the beginning of the thought. Peter writes that we are to add to our faith the above seven virtues. He does not know whether they will or not and hence the “if”

If you have acquired these, according to Peter (hence the Holy Spirit)⁸⁶ then we will *neither be barren* {ἀργός (argos)} *nor unfruitful* {ἄκαρπος (akarpas)} “barren” is usually translated “idle” (Matthew 12:36; 20:3; 20:6; 1 Timothy 5:13) In Titus 1:12 it is translated “slow” (slow bellied). It means “shunning the labor which one ought to perform.”⁸⁷ The above “graces” will keep you from shunning the labor that the Lord gives you to do. “Unfruitful” is not necessary to look at the Greek to discern - it is the Greek word for “fruit” with an α (alpha) in front of it - hence not fruit(ful). Jesus spoke with regard to fruitfulness.

*"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, **neither can you, unless you abide in Me.**" I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. **"By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.***

John 15:1-8 (NKJV)

For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Have you been to your ophthalmologist lately? How is your eyesight? In this instance, the old KJV still has the closest translation.

*But he that lacketh these things is blind, and **cannot see afar off**, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:*

2 Peter 1:9-10 (KJV)

⁸⁵DARBY 2 Peter 1:8

⁸⁶In writing Bible studies we often attribute things to the human author, it is reasonable to do so. We do so however with the caveat that it ultimately came from the Holy Spirit.

⁸⁷THAYER, ἀργός

There are two Greek words here, one common and one rare. τυφλός (tuphlos) = “blind” is the common word and needs little more explanation except for what the other word supplies. It is μωπάζω (muopazo) which is used only here in the Bible. Loosely translated, it means “to close the eyes.” but further definition is needed. It does not refer to closing them completely, but to squinting. I will cite the full section from Robertson and then “translate it.”

*Seeing only what is near (muōopazōon). Present active participle of muōopazōo, a rare verb from muōops (in Aristotle for a near-sighted man) and that from mueōo tous ōopas (**to close the eyes in order to see, not to keep from seeing**). The only other instance of muōopazōo is given by Suicer from Ps. Dion. Eccl. Hier. ii. 3 (muōopasousēei kai apostrephomenēei) used of a soul on which the light shines (blinking and turning away). Thus understood the word here limits tuphlos as a short-sighted man screwing up his eyes because of the light.*

ATR, 2 Peter 1:9

Squinting does two things; it limits your field of vision and, by doing so, enables you to see things you might not otherwise be able to see. Hence the example of a near sighted man squinting so as to make out something in the distance. Photographers know that, if they want a very sharp photo of something, they have to stop the lense way down (make the opening small) to take the picture.

To make a long story short, Peter is speaking of people who are (wilfully) near-sighted. Peter says because of this, “*he has forgotten he was cleansed from his old sins.*” BKC says,

But it seems preferable to say that Peter wrote of Christians who are spiritually immature. After all, they had been cleansed from their sins (cf. Titus 3:5), but had not grown spiritually.

BKC 2 Peter 1:9

Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure. Do you have any doubts about your salvation? Are you afraid you might loose it? If I were to give you a nice gift, I would be sure that it was given without reservation, buy would you? Peter is not saying to make sure you are saved, he is asking you to make sure you know it. McGee said, “*I have been married for a long time, and I never have to lie awake at night and wonder whether or not I am married; but to make my marriage meaningful, I have to work at it, and I have been working at it for a long, long time*”⁸⁸ (makes me wonder how happy a marriage he had!)

We looked at the last word in the sentence, the first word is “therefore.” (You know the saying), Peter is making a contrast between people who are shortsighted and haves forgotten that they are cleansed from their old sins and who we should be. Peter says to be even more “diligent.” The NIV has “be all the **more eager** to make your calling and election sure.” which fits the context better. “Diligent” is an older word which most of us are not sure of the meaning. We all know what it means to be eager - especially young people on December 24th! “Diligent” carries an idea of doing something that is not pleasant but must be done while “eager” implies something we really want to do.

What were are to be eager to ensure is our “calling and election.” We have addressed both of these terms before but it will not hurt to review them again that we may “make them sure.”

⁸⁸McGEE, 2 Peter 1:9

*And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the **called** according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also **called**; whom He **called**, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

Romans 8:28-30 (NKJV)

We discussed this at length in above (page #109). The term “elect” (or “election”) has not yet be covered in this epistle. We have discussed ἐκλογή (ekloga) in other studies. The word, with out the prefix means “to choose.” The prefix is “out” hence to pick something out of a bunch. When my wife goes shopping, she take an inordinate amount of time squeezing and fondling the fruits and vegetables to find the very best ones. This is the idea of the word. It is to choose somethings and leave others behind. This, incidently, is the only verse in the New Testament where both the terms “chosen” and “election” appear together. In somewhat different form they are found in the passage below.

*For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son." And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac (for the children **not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election** might stand, **not of works but of Him who calls**), it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger."*

Romans 9:9-12 (NKJV)

“Election is the result of being called. The go hand-in-hand. This is, perhaps, why Peter links to two terms here - for emphasis. Returning the last word in the sentence, βέβαιος (bebaios) = “sure,” we read,

*Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both **sure** and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*

Hebrews 6:17-20 (NKJV)

From God’s point of few, our calling and election are sure but, from our perspective, we need to work at continuing to have faith that it is. This is not because we can loose it but so that we may take comfort in it.

“For if you do these things, you will never fall.” I do not like the word “fall” here. The NKJV, which we have been using, says “you will never stumble.” There is a difference! I am rather klutzy and, as a result I stumble quite often. Sometimes I fall (fortunately, I have learned how to fall without getting hurt badly!). The word is πταίω (ptaio) which is also found below.

*I say then, have they **stumbled** that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.*

Romans 11:11 (NKJV)

From this you see that “falling” may be the result of “stumbling,” but not necessarily. I like the way a new translation (paraphrase) puts it.

So, friends, confirm God's invitation to you, his choice of you. Don't put it off; do it now. Do this, and you'll have your life **on a firm footing**, the streets paved and the way wide open into the eternal kingdom of our Master and Savior, Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:10-11 (MSG)

(MSG is “The Message,” it is not a study Bible but one you might pick up and read in some spare moments)⁸⁹

The rest of this section is summed up (partly by the above translation and) by the citation below.

The ultimate reward of a growing, Christ-honoring life is the personal “welcome” by the Savior into His kingdom. Stephen experienced it (Acts 7:56); Paul knew when it was imminent for him (2 Timothy 4:7-8, 18); and every believer will experience such a welcome when he enters the Lord’s presence in heaven. You will receive a rich welcome is, literally, “the entrance will be supplied richly for you.” “Supplied” is from the verb epichorēgeō, translated “add” in 2 Peter 1:5. The entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be supplied with richness; it will be a wonderful “welcome home.”

BKC, 2 Peter 1:11

For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.

2 Peter 1:12-15 (NKJV)

Apparently, Peter’s execution was soon at hand as he wrote this epistle and he speaks of it here. Tradition has it that Peter was crucified - upside-down! He refused to die in the same manner as his Lord had. (Note that this is only tradition, we do not really know this for sure!) He speaks of his pending death in an interesting way. The NKJV does not help us any here, speaking of his “tent.” It is better translated in the old KJV, “tabernacle” (which, of course, was a tent). But consider this.

*“Our fathers had the **tabernacle** of witness in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen, which our fathers, having received it in turn, also brought with Joshua into the land possessed by the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers until the days of David, who found favor before God and **asked to find a dwelling for the God of Jacob. But Solomon built Him a house.** However, the Most High does not dwell in*

⁸⁹The Message® Bible by Eugene H. Peterson. The Message® is a contemporary paraphrase of the Bible from the original languages, crafted to present its tone, rhythm, events, and ideas in everyday English.

temples made with hands, as the prophet says:

*'Heaven is My throne,
And earth is My footstool.
What house will you build for Me? says the Lord,
Or what is the place of My rest?
Has My hand not made all these things?'*

Acts 7:44-50 (NKJV)

God, in His relation with Israel, dwelt in the tabernacle in the wilderness. The tabernacle is long gone and God has returned to the heavens to rule over us. Do not accuse me of teaching false doctrine. God did not physically live in the tabernacle, I am not saying that, but He made his presence known to Israel in it.

He indicates that he is die as Jesus Christ had shown him.

*Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, **but you shall follow Me afterward.**"*

John 13:36 (NKJV)

Vincent cites Lumnby (whoever he was) as saying "'Peter had now learnt the full force of Christ's sayings, and to what end the following of Jesus was to bring him"⁹⁰ There is also another passage that foretells of Peter's death.

*"Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish." This He spoke, **signifying by what death he would glorify God.** And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "**Follow Me.**"*

John 21:18-19 (NKJV)

Peter and Paul had different situations in this respect. Paul testified,

*For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. **Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith, so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through my coming to you again.***

Philippians 1:21-26 (NASB)

Paul long to "leave his tabernacle" and go be with the Lord but, unlike Peter, his time was not yet near. Thus he would be around to do what was necessary for the saints. Peter did not have time and so he writes here his "last will and testament" for those he would leave behind. Before we read this "will" I should comment on the means of his death, The NKJV says "*after my decease.*" This is an

⁹⁰VINCENT, 2 Peter 1:14

interpretation, not a translation. The word Peter uses is ἔξοδος (exodus). I could tell you that this comes from the Greek word for “way” or “road” and the prefix for “out” and hence is “out of the way.” However, you already know the meaning of this word. It is the name of the second book of the Bible, Exodus. The Israelites made an “exodus” from the land of servitude (Egypt) and into the land of promise (Canaan) - at least, they got there eventually. Peter sees that it will not be long before he makes his exodus from the place of his “sojourning” to his home in Glory. “Decease” is a horrible word to use here. It seems too final like there is nothing more. Peter is simply making a passage from one place to another.

Now what Peter is leaving to us after his home going. The key is that he left something to be remembered “I will not be negligent to remind you.” and, in addition he did something else, “*stir you up by reminding you.*” and, finally, to make it real sure, “I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.” The reminders are to follow.

For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:16-21 (NKJV)

His “reminder is what he leaves us in this epistle. But, did he really know what he was writing about? Of course he did! To be specific:

- What he did **not** do - *follow cunningly devised fables*
- What he **did** do - he and the other disciples “*were eyewitnesses of His majesty.*”

There were “fables” going around which were “cunningly designed,” σοφίζω (sophizo). Concerning this word, Robertson writes,

In New Testament only here and the Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy 1:4, etc.). Perfect passive participle of sophizōo, old word (from sophos), only twice in New Testament, in causative sense to make wise (2 Timothy 3:15), to play the sophist, to invent cleverly (here) and so also in the old writers and in the papyri. Some of the false teachers apparently taught that the Gospel miracles were only allegories and not facts

ATR, 2 Peter 1:16

It is the word we get “sophisticated” from. “Fables” is μῦθος (mythos) from which we get “myths.” The Bible contains no “myths!” Peter did not have to do this, now would he have done it. Why not? He was what every lawyer wants in the witness box when he (or she) is attempting to win a case - and “eye witness.” This is a rather interesting Greek word used only here in the New Testament. It is ἐπόπτης (epoptes) which refers to “a spectator.” a person who has actually seen something.” Well, Peter saw the Lord for several years as they ministered together. He must have learned a lot from that. But Peter says here he was an eye witness to His “majesty.” When did he see that?

The same word is used by Mary.

For He who is **mighty** has done great things for me, And holy is His name.

Luke 1:49 (NKJV)

Eye Witness Account #1: "For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: **"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."**

Then **Peter** answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, **"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"**

Matthew 17:4-5 (NKJV)

And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, **"This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!"**

Mark 9:7 (NKJV)

Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, that **Peter** said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud. **And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!"**

Luke 9:33-35 (NKJV)

All three of the Synoptic Gospels record the event that Peter speaks of and two of them expressly indicate that Peter was there to see it - in fact, got involved in it!

Since he was definitely an eye witness, "we have the prophetic word **confirmed**, which you do well to heed."

"But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth **of two or three** witnesses every word **may be established**."

Matthew 18:16

. . . but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last **two false witnesses** came forward

Matthew 26:60

This will be the third time I am coming to you. "By the mouth of two **or three witnesses** every word shall be established."

2 Corinthians 13:1

Do not receive an accusation against an elder except **from two or three witnesses**.

1 Timothy 5:19

Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the **testimony of two or three witnesses**.

The New Testament makes it clear that two or three witnesses may be used to prove something. We have Matthew and Luke confirming the events on the Mount of transfiguration and the fact there Peter was there in the midst of it. Mark also confirms it but without mention on Peter/ So what Peter says has legally been confirmed. Therefore we should heed what he says!

As a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first . . .

Though the world is darkened by sin, God's Word, pointing to the future, enlightens believers about His ways. But the day (Christ's return) is coming. In the daytime, lamps are no longer needed. And a lamp is nothing compared with the Morning Star (phōosphoros, "Light-Bringer"; used only here in the NT). Much as a lamp at night anticipates and is outshined by the bright morning star, so Old Testament prophecy looks ahead to the coming of Christ, "the bright Morning Star"

BNC, 2 Peter 1:19

Just as the above has happened and we are the "children of light," (Ephesians 5:8) and we need to know a few things, the first of which Peter new deals with.

No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Here we have one of the key passages with respect to the inspiration of the Scriptures (as noted in the introduction).

"No prophecy." The NKJV, as others, changes "all" to "no." That is, if "all is not . . ." then "none is . . ." We are speaking of every prophecy of the Bible. Technically, the Old Testament but we shall include the New Testament as well. Prophecy, what is it? προφητεία (propheteia) is defined by Thayer as "prophecy, i. e. discourse emanating from divine inspiration and declaring the purposes of God, whether by reproving and admonishing the wicked, or comforting the afflicted, or revealing things hidden; especially by foretelling future events."⁹¹ We usually think of prophecy as the last of the things mentioned by Thayer - foretelling the future. You should know that the Jews divide the Bible (the Old Testament to us) into three parts

Torah	The Law	Genesis - Deuteronomy
Nebiim	(Prophets)	Joshua, Judges Samuel, Kings, Ezra, Nehemiah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the 12 minor prophets (not Daniel).
Kethubim	(Writings).	Everything else.

We tend to think of "prophecy" is foretelling the future but the Greek word simply means "to act as God's spokesman." We are, therefore, in the broad sense, speaking of the entire revelation of God - the Bible.

None of the Bible is "of any private interpretation." This phrase has been a problem over the years since it could mean any of the following: (as suggested by BKC)

- (1) Scripture should be interpreted only in context, that is, a prophecy cannot stand alone

⁹¹THAYER, προφητεία

- without other prophecies to aid in its understanding.
- (2) Scripture should not be interpreted according to one's own individual liking.
 - (3) Scripture cannot be correctly interpreted without the Holy Spirit.
 - (4) The prophecies did not originate with the prophets

The first item is often referred to as "comparing Scripture with Scripture." It is a good practice because, if one Scripture appears to contradict another, you are misinterpreting one or both. While this a very good practice, it is not what Peter is expressing here.

The second term is often referred to as "taking Scripture out of context." In other words, you might string several verses together to get "*Then he went and hanged himself. Then Jesus said to "Go and do likewise." Then Jesus said, "What you do, do quickly."*

Matthew 27:5, Luke 10:37, John 13:27 (NKJV)

This is definitely not the way to study Scripture. Verses can not be taken out of context. But this is not what Peter meant here either.

The third item says you need the Holy Spirit to correctly interpret the Scriptures.

*But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are **spiritually discerned**.*

1 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV)

This is true also, but still not what Peter referred to.

This leaves us with, "The prophecies did not originate with the prophets." Actually, considering the definition of prophecy given above, it is not prophecy if the person dreams it up himself! Peter goes on to be more specific about this.

For prophecy never came by the will of man, but ~~holy~~ men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (The "holy" is not in the better texts). Peter wrote, as did all the other human authors of the Bible as he was "moved" by the Holy Spirit. Moved is φέρω (phero) and is used by Luke below.

*So when the ship was caught, and could not head into the wind, we let her **drive**. And running under the shelter of an island called Clauda, we secured the skiff with difficulty. When they had taken it on board, they used cables to undergird the ship; and fearing lest they should run aground on the Syrtis Sands, they struck sail and so **were driven**.*

Acts 27:15-17 (NKJV)

Thayer says, "*move or, to be conveyed or borne, with a suggestion of speed or force (often so in prof. auth. from Homer down): of persons borne in a ship over the sea, (A. V. to be driven), Acts xxvii. 15, 17; of a gust of wind.*"⁹²

The Scriptures' human authors were controlled by the divine Author, the Holy Spirit. Yet they were consciously involved in the process; they were neither taking dictation nor writing in a state of ecstasy. No wonder believers have a word of prophecy which is certain. And no wonder a Christian's nurture

⁹²THAYER φέρω

must depend on the Scriptures. They are the very words of God Himself!

BKC, 2 Peter 1:21

Dr. McGee wrote,

Now let me remind you that this is Peter's swan song, and, like Paul in his swan song, he emphasizes the importance of the Word of God for the days of apostasy. Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God . . ." (2Tim. 3:16), and Peter is saying that the writers of Scripture were moved along by the Holy Spirit. The thought is the same. It is wonderful to see how God could take each man and use him, without changing his style or interfering with his personality, to write His Word so that His message comes across. God used both of these men to write exactly what He wanted to say -- so much so that, if God spoke out of heaven today, He would have to repeat Himself, because He already has said all that He has to say to mankind. God has gotten His Word to us through men of different personalities and different skills. For this reason I call it a man-book and a God-book.

McGEE, 2 Peter 1:21

2 PETER 2

But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

2 Peter 2:1-3 (NKJV)

In addition to God's Word, the Bible, which we looked at in the last chapters, Peter warns that there will be others you will hear or read from. There were false prophets before Peter's time. I shall bring to you a rather long passage of Old Testament Scripture.

*So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel. And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people answered him not a word. Then **Elijah said to the people, "I alone am left a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it. Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God who answers by fire, He is God." So all the people answered and said, "It is well spoken."***

*Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare it first, for you are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it." So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, "O Baal, hear us!" But there was no voice; no one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made. And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, "**Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened.**" So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them. And when midday was past, they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice. But there was no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention.*

*Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, "Israel shall be your name." Then with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed. And he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood, and said, "**Fill four waterpots with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood.**" Then he said, "**Do it a second time,**" and they did it a second time; and he said, "**Do it a third time,**" and they did it a third time. So the water ran all around the altar; and he also filled the trench with water. And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again." **Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench.** Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!" **And Elijah said to them, "Seize***

the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape!" So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Brook Kishon and executed them there.

1 Kings 18:20-40 (NKJV)

Well, there were 450 false prophets that no one had to worry about anymore! But there have been others and there will be others. The one of the past have been discredited as the 450 above were but we need to be on the look out for the new ones. Peter says, "*there will be false teachers among you.*" I do not need to go into the Greek here for false prophets, the Greek is plain enough; it is the word for "prophet" with "pseudo." in front of it. You have all here of terms like: pseudonym, pseudopregnancy, pseudoscience, and pseudoscorpion.⁹³ Oxford does not list the word but pseudo prophet would be fitting. Peter describes what they will do.

- *will secretly bring in destructive heresies,*
- *denying the Lord who bought them,*
- *bringing on themselves swift destruction.*

And many will follow their destructive ways,

- *Because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.*
- *By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words;*
- *For a long time their judgment has not been idle,*
- *Their destruction does not slumber*

Dr. McGee said something which would be appropriate if I replaced his name with mine.

We do not need to pay any attention to false prophets, but let me say this to you: You do need to check false teachers. You need to check all teachers, including the one whose book you are reading right now. I urge you to check what I say by the Word of God. Don't believe it because ~~Vernon McGee~~ Wayne McMorran says it

McGEE, 2 Peter 2:1

What do we look for? What do you need to check with respect to what I teach? Did you catch a difference in words Peter used? He spoke of "false **prophets**" of the past, "false **teachers**" of the future. We believe that the book of Revelation completed the Bible so there is no more prophecy needed. But there are, and will continue to be, people who teach things which are false.

One of the things they will do is "blaspheme the way of truth." My concern is not so much that they will mislead you, I am concerned with what they do to the name "Christian." Some get people to sell all they have and go up to a mount, or to a "far county" or other place because the Lord is going to come on such-and-such a date.

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

Matthew 24:36 (NKJV)

Jesus said nothing about the year and the month so that is open for grabs! Not really, you know what Jesus meant, but some people claim this! They take their people and wait for such-and-such a date.

⁹³OXFORD, words starting in pseudo

When it does not come, the press not only ridicules them, but Christianity as a whole.

First on Peter's list of things they will do is "secretly bring in destructive heresies."

*And this occurred because of false **brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage),***

Galatians 2:4 (NKJV)

There is a certain cult who will come to your door with a Bible in hand and want to give you literature. To the unsaved or to new Christians, these people appears as true Christians, Bible and all. If you are not on to them and ask them straight out, "Are you . . . ?" you will not find out until they may have trapped you into following what the preach. This is what Peter is speaking of when he refers to "secretly bring." Destructive, ἀπόλεια (apoleia), according to Thayer means just what our translation says, "destructive." Follow their heresies and it will lead you to "destruction" rather than eternal life.

Next, peter has "denying the Lord who bought them," It is hardly necessary to elaborate on this. Paul also refers to this.

But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, . . .

*having a form of godliness but **denying its power**. And from such people turn away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts,*

2 Timothy 3:1-2 & 5-6 (NKJV)

Peter then says they will bring upon themselves "swift" destruction. "Swift" is ταχινάς (taxinas) which Peter used with respect to his departure.

*. . . knowing that **shortly** I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me.*

2 Peter 1:14 (NKJV)

As soon as Peter left, the others would move in. If you have a god pastor who is leading you in God's Word and keeping the faith, pray for him. Should you loose him, it would not take Satan long to get some of his people in there to lead you astray!

These people, according to Peter will cause "the way of truth to be blasphemed." The "way," ὁδός (hodos) is a common Greek word for, "a traveled way, road."⁹⁴ It occurs about one-hundred times. However it appears in the Nominative case only five times. Here and below.

*"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is **the way** that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. "Because narrow is the gate and difficult is **the way** which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

Matthew 7:13-14 (NKJV)

*Jesus said to him, "I am **the way**, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through*

⁹⁴THAYER, ὁδός

Me.

John 14:6 (NKJV)

There is the broad way, and there is the “way, truth, and life.” You may take your pick. The way described in John 14:6 is the one Peter claims will be blasphemed. We have accounted for only four of the “ways” (Nominative). The last is,

*The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that **the way** would be prepared for the kings from the east.*

Revelation 16:12 (NASB)

If you check the context, this is analogous to the broad way since it is the lead in to Armageddon

These people “By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words”

Peter says, if you are not careful, you will be “exploited.” The word, ἐμπορεύομαι (emporeuomai) almost needs no translation. You (the ladies at least) always need to go to the “emporium,” which is the transliteration of this term. It means to “to deal in; to use a thing or a person for gain”⁹⁵ It is found in two places that I know of.

*. . . nor did we admit of your invitation with design to prostitute the beauty of our bodies for **gain***
 JOSEPHUS, Antiquities, 6:8

*Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and **make a profit**”;*

James 4:13 (NKJV)

They will make use of you to gain their ends (if you let them). They will do so with πλαστός (plastos) words. That is they will use “plastic” words (a literal translation). Maybe Peter made a mistake, I think Satan is using people today with plastic cards! What do you know about “plastic?” I first learned about Lucite after WW2. My dad brought some home and I learned you could put it in the oven (at a fairly low temperature) for awhile and then take it and form it into any shape you wanted. But you can do the same thing with words, you can twist them around and make them appear say something they really do not mean. “What is in a word?” you ask. Let me cite a good example.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;

John 1:1 (YLT)

The last part of this verse is Θεός ἦν λόγος
 God was Word

There is a word missing and the main words are out of order. What to do? Basically, you would have to learn about how to use equative verbs in Hebrew. For those of you who are not so inclined, when two nouns are equated as such, the one that is the “narrowest” in meaning is the Subject and the other the Predicate Nominative. Neither has the definite article (there is no indefinite article in Greek, i.e. “an”). Thus, since God is a broader term than the Word, you have to translate it as “The Word was God.” Why all the fuss? There is a certain cult which is quite prevalent who have their own Bible

⁹⁵THAYER, ἐμπορεύομαι

and in it John 1:1 reads,

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god; Therefore Jesus was “a god.” “Well,” they will explain to you, “there is no definite article (“the”) in the verse so it must be indefinite, “a god.” The truth is, if there was a definite article here, the translation would have to be “and God was the Word.” Does not make much sense does it. Try to explain this to them and they will be at a loss, all they know is what they have been taught to say (most do not even know that much).

Now, how did we get started with this? We were talking about “plastic” or deceptive words. The point I am attempting to make is how much different the little one letter word “a” can make on our theology. It take very little twisting, sometimes, to get an altogether different meaning.

The good news which Peter gives us is that “For a long time their judgment has not been idle.” Thayer says, “whose punishment has long been impending and will shortly fall.”⁹⁶

Lastly, Peter says, “Their destruction does not slumber.” For “slumber,” Thayer notes “*properly, “to nod in sleep, to sleep (Hippocrates, Aristophanes, Xenophon, Plato, others); to be overcome or oppressed with sleep; to fall asleep, drop off to sleep,*” But Peter says “**not** slumber.” Their judgement is plainly awaiting them

For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)-- then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.

2 Peter 2:4-11 (NKJV)

If you examine this passage, you will find only two periods. Verses 4-9 are all one sentence of which BKC comments,

Peter then cited a case of deliverance (Lot, [v. 7](#)). In fact, [verses 4-9](#) are a single sentence, one of the longest in the New Testament. Peter was intent on demonstrating that God will judge false teachers and others who sin against Him and His Word. History, Peter wrote, gives ample verification of this truth.

BKC 2 Peter 2:4

Thus, here he continues with what God did with Angels who sinned. Somewhere in my upbringing I had been taught that angels had no “free-will” and hence could not sin. That was definitely false.

⁹⁶THAYER, ἑκπλαῖ

Satan is the prima facie case that angels can and do sin. Satan's fall is recorded for us below.

"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit. "Those who see you will gaze at you, And consider you, saying: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms, Who made the world as a wilderness And destroyed its cities, Who did not open the house of his prisoners?'"

Isaiah 14:12-17 (NKJV)

Thus was the fall of Satan (Lucifer). When was it? Some say this was between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2.

But, now we have a problem. Peter writes, "God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness." I sure wish that were true of Satan. Satan is in now way in chains of darkness, nor is he in hell (at least not all the time). From Job we learn the following.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? "Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

Job 1:6-10 (NKJV)

Evidently, Satan has access to heaven and Earth as well. I do not have to tell you that Satan is a live and well! Jude alludes to this as well.

And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

Jude 1:6 (NKJV)

One of the biggest problems here is "hell." It is the translation of τάρταρος (tartareo), a verb meaning to cast is into τάρταρος (tartaros). This word is used nowhere else in the New Testament or in the LXX. According to Robertson, "Tartaros occurs in Enoch 20:2 as the place of punishment of the fallen angels, while Gehenna is for apostate Jews."⁹⁷ This is probably as good a description as any I've seen.

McGee writes on this,

⁹⁷ATR 2 Peter 2:4

Man was sort of a Johnny-come-lately on this earth – we haven't been here too long. Before man was here on earth, apparently there was another creation. God had a program going long before man appeared on the scene, and there were many created intelligences. From among those angels, who were God's creation and who were His messengers, some rebelled against Him and apparently followed Satan. We are told in Revelation 12:7, "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels." Back in the past there was a rebellion against God led by the creature we know today as Satan or the Devil. He has many names -- he is the great deceiver; he is a liar from the beginning. This creature rebelled against God, and there followed with him a great company of angels.

McGEE 2 Peter 2:4

Beyond this I think I shall not go, this is not a study on angelology. That is for another time. The main point here is that God brings judgement on those who do not obey Him.

After angels, Peter moves to “*and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly.*” Unlike angels, it is not necessary to go into detail here. Even kids in Sunday School know about Noah and the Flood. Peter spoke of it three times, here, in 1 Peter 3:20 and later on, in 2 Peter 3:6.

Next in the judgements are Sodom and Gomorrah, “*turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds).*”

Sodom and Gomorrah serve as examples of another of God's righteous judgements. When the Pharisees asked about when the Kingdom of God would come, Jesus also spoke of these judgements.

Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after them or follow them. For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.

Luke 17:22-29 (NKJV)

Jesus likened the people of Sodom and Gomorrah to the people who live prior to the Flood. Paul does not leave them out either.

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became

fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man--and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. **For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.** Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. And even **as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge,** God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, **disobedient to parents,** undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

Romans 1:20-32 (NKJV)

It is hard to tell whether Paul was speaking of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah or the inhabitants of the U.S. (and most of the rest of the world) today! I have emphasized three parts of Paul's message above. The Gay Rights movement began a quite a few years ago but it started out with homosexual men. Today there seem to be as many Lesbians and homosexual men. Note what Paul though when he said, "**For even** their women . . ." Now we want the Ten Commandments and anything else that would remind us of God removed **as they do not like to retain God** or even hear about God. Finally, there seems to be a significant increase in children who not only disobey their parents but go so far as to kill them!

Peter does put in a positive note here and there and here it is Lot. He refers to "Righteous Lot *who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds).*" I have to confess that my mind must think like Dr. McGee. He said,

I never got that impression of Lot while reading the Book of Genesis, by the way. I'm glad for Peter's comment -- otherwise I would be apt to say that Lot was not saved. By reading the story back in Genesis of when Lot went down to the city of Sodom, got into politics there, and lost most of his family, I would come to the conclusion that he was not saved. Even when you read what happened with the two single daughters who escaped with him, you might wish that they too had stayed back in Sodom. The point Peter is making is that God got Lot out of that city; He knows "how to deliver the godly."

McGEE, 2 Peter 2:7

I guess my thought was, if he was so miserable living among the perverts in Sodom, why didn't he move somewhere else? Since he is not here to answer that, we shall have to take Peter's word for it. Of course, the Old Testament confirms this too. When Abraham knew that the Lord was going to judge Sodom, he plead with him.

Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten."

Genesis 18:32 (NKJV)

Apparently there were not even ten, just one -Lot. It is comforting to know that the Lord does not bring judgement on the good along with the bad. If the Lord ever brings judgement on the U.S. and we are still alive, He will make some way for us to escape.

So Peter conclude this section by noting that God knew hot to spare Lot and he also knows how to deliver us. *"The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.*

Peter concludes this section with information for both the godly and the ungodly. The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations. What is Peter talking about -the Lord is omniscient - He knows everything! In a sermon on this passage, Spurgeon said,

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."-2 Peter 2:9.

THERE are very narrow limits to our knowledge. There is a great breadth to our conceit; but the things that we really know are very few, after all. He who is wisest will be the first to confess his own ignorance. Our faith in the superior knowledge of God is a great source of comfort to us. That he knows everything, is a sort of omnipresent covering to our naked ignorance. Though we know not as yet, we rejoice that he knows, and it is better that he should know than that we should know. Knowledge is safer in the hands of God than it would be in our hands. The infinite God alone is to be trusted with infinite knowledge.

The first words of our text, "The Lord knoweth," often come as a comfort to my own mind. The text says, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations." This is only one of the many things, which the Lord knoweth. For instance, sometimes we meet with perplexing doctrines; perhaps we endeavor to effect reconciliation between the predestination of God and the freedom of human action. It is better not to wade too far into those deep waters, lest we lose ourselves in an abyss. "The Lord knoweth." There is a reconciling point in his mind as to all the great truths which he has revealed

SPURGEON Message 2441 - The Lord's Knowledge, Our Safeguard,
Metropolitan Tabernacle, 6/30/1887 and 12/1/1895

Here the Lord knows how to "deliver" the godly out of temptations. ῥύομαι (hruomai) "to deliver (something or someone from something)" is used by Paul as a noun in Romans.

*And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The **Deliverer** will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;*

Romans 11:26 (NKJV)

The word for "temptations," "trials," or "tests" (depending on the translation you use) is found in the same form in Revelation in a parallel situation.

*Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of **trial** which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.*

Revelation 3:10 (NKJV)

Leaving the “godly” Peter goes to the unjust. God does *reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority*. “Watch” would be a better translation than “reserve” for τήρω (tereo) which is used as in “watching prisoners in a work crew.” The day will come when these being watched will have “their wings clipped.” The word “punishment,” κολάζω (kolazo) is used only twice in the New Testament According to Thayer, its meaning is “1. properly, *“to lop, prune,” as trees, wings.* 2. *“to check, curb, restrain”*⁹⁸. This day will be a “day of judgement.” Peter does not indicate which day but we can guess.

Peter notes that the judgement is going to be the strictest for those who:

- *walk according to the flesh*
- *walk in the lust of uncleanness*
- *despise authority*

It is hardly necessary to enlarge on these things. We have spoken of them before. But Peter adds more to this list.

- They are presumptuous
- They are self-willed.
- They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.

Presumptuous is τολμήτης (tolmetes) which is used only here in the New Testament. Paul uses the verbal form of the word along with a synonym below.

But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

2 Corinthians 10:2 (NKJV)

The dictionary defines “presumptuous” as “*failing to observe the limits of what is permitted or appropriate.*”⁹⁹ This pretty well describes the situation. We already have seen one do this very thing. “*I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High*” See the remarks on Satan on page #134. They are “self-willed,” αυθάδης (authades).

A proud and haughty man--"Scoffer" is his name; He acts with arrogant pride.

Proverbs 21:24 (LXX)

For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,

Titus 1:7 (NKJV)

Lastly, Peter says they are “not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries.” “Dignitaries” is δόξας (doksas) which is derived “As a translation of the Hebrew דָּבָר, in a use foreign to Greek writing.”¹⁰⁰ It is found in the Hebrew in examples like the one below.

⁹⁸THAYER, κολάζω

⁹⁹OXFORD, presumptuous

¹⁰⁰THAYER, δόξας

Then she named the child Ichabod, saying, "**The glory** has departed from Israel!" because the ark of God had been captured and because of her father-in-law and her husband.

1 Samuel 4:21 (NKJV)

The base of the Hebrew word meaning "heavy" it means, so to speak, to be a "heavy-weight". Dr. McGee makes a good point here.

They are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." The word for "dignities" is actually glories. They speak evil of that which is sacred, that which is holy. Isn't it interesting that men take God's name in vain? They don't take the city's name in vain or their boss's name in vain or the name of some person they hate. But they take God's name in vain. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignities, of glories, of this order that God has established in His universe

McGEE, 2 Peter 2:10

in contrast, Peter writes, "whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord." In BKC we read,

False teachers were doing things even angels would not do, namely, slander such beings. One might expect stronger and more powerful beings (good angels) to criticize less powerful beings (fallen angels), but that is simply not allowed in the presence of the Lord (cf. [Jude 8-9](#)). Yet so great was the pride of these slanderers that it knew no bounds in their attack on all who disagreed with their teachings. Even so, they were totally ignorant of the very things they blasphemed ([2 Peter 2:12a](#); cf. [Jude 10](#)) (See below).

BKC, 2 Peter 2:11

*Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, **dared not bring against him a reviling accusation**, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like **brute** beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves.*

Jude 1:8-10 (NKJV)

Let us proceed to the next section.

But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption, and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children. They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet. These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

2 Peter 2:12-17 (NKJV)

This section is really a continuation of the last. "But these" refers to those we were just studying.

A perverse people who are against Christianity.

“Brute” was used in the passage in Jude above (which is highlighted). “Beasts” is a good translation of ζῴα (zoa) from which we get “zoo.” Other than in the passage in Jude above, the term is used six times in Revelation.

*Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living **creatures** full of eyes in front and in back.*

Revelation 4:6 (NKJV)

also in 4:8-9; 5:8; 5:14; 19:4

These creatures which John saw were rather weird looking ones. The ones Peter is describing are even worse! Peter says these creatures were “made” to be caught and destroyed.” The NASB translates this as “*born as creatures of instinct.*” The BKC has,

2. They Are Animalistic

The false teachers of the first century were like brute beasts. They operated from instinct, which was locked into their sin nature, rather than from rational choice. Creatures of instinct translates the one Greek word physika, “belonging to nature.” They followed their natural desires. Like animals in a jungle, their only value was in being caught and destroyed (cf. Jude 10). This harsh language from Peter is an indication of how serious he considered these heresies to be. Like beasts they too will perish is literally, “in their corruption (phthora) they too shall be corrupted” (phtharēesontai), an interesting play on words (cf. “corrupted” in Eph. 4:22).

BKC, 2 Peter 2:12b

An interesting note here concerning “paradise.” The secular use of the term is given by Thayer below.

*1. among the Persians “a grand enclosure or preserve, hunting-ground, park,” shady and well-watered, in which **wild animals were kept for the hunt**; it was enclosed by walls and furnished with towers for the hunters:*

THAYER, παραδεισος

This, in a way, describes the meaning of being “made to be caught and destroyed.” Today we would let everyone go in, not just a king and his friends. But no one is allowed to kill the wild beasts in the zoo!

Adam Clark has a comment regarding these people that is interesting.

*Intended to be taken with nets and gins, and then destroyed, because of their fierce and destructive nature; so these false teachers and **insurgents** must be treated; first incarcerated, and then brought to judgment, that they may have the reward of their doings. And thus, by blaspheming what they do not understand, they at last perish in their own corruption; i.e. their corrupt doctrines and vicious practices*

CLARK, 2 Peter 2:12

Does the term, **insurgents**, ring any bells with you today. Those who are causing so much death and devastation in the middle east (i.e. Iraq and Afghanistan in particular) fit this as the fight under

their harsh interpretation of the Quoran. Peter describes these people in great detail.

- *speaking evil of the things they do not understand*
- *will utterly perish in their own corruption*
- *will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime.*
- *They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions*
- *they feast with you, having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls.*
- *They have a heart trained in covetous practices,*
- *are accursed children.*
- *They have forsaken the right way and gone astray,*
- *following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet.*
- *These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.*

This is quite a list! Let us take them one-by-one.

- *speaking evil of the things they do not understand*

The NIV has “blaspheme in matters they do not understand.” Have you ever noticed that the people who know the most, say the least while those who are ignorant speak of things like they are experts? (I suppose I am saying too much!) There are many who speak out on social issues, claiming the Bible to be wrong in the matter but, in fact, they misinterpret the Scriptures. Homosexuality is a very much talked about subject today but the Bible does not say anything about it being wrong — they say! They have never read Romans 1. If they have, they have some excuse such as “that was meant for Paul’s day, not today.” Now, it is even gotten to the point where we have to define “marriage.” McGee mentions it.

*In the very beginning it was God who created them male and female. It was God who brought the woman to the man. And I would like to add this: He did not need to give Adam a lecture on the birds and bees. God blessed them, and marriage became sacred and holy and pure. And, my friend, **it is the only relationship among men and women that God does bless down here** -- He promises to bless no other. He says that if marriage is made according to His plan, He will bless it, and there will be happiness.*

McGEE, “marriage”

Try to find anywhere in the Bible where people of the same sex were married! But Paul said it the best.

*. . . who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. **For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.** Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. And even as **they did not like to retain God in their knowledge,** God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;*

Next on the list is,

- *will utterly perish in their own corruption*

This is pretty well covered in the passage above, *God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;*

- *will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime.*

Have you heard the term “hedonists?” Oxford says, “*2 Philosophy the ethical theory that pleasure (in the sense of the satisfaction of desires) is the highest good and proper aim of human life.*” “Pleasure” here is ἡδονή (hedone) from which hedonist is derived. The BKC observes,

they did not even hide their orgies under the cover of darkness but would carouse in broad daylight, while reveling in their pleasures (apatais, perhaps better trans. “deceptions”). And they did all this while obviously joining in the love feasts of the church (niv marg.; cf. Jude 12). They were blots (spiloi) and blemishes (mōomoi; cf. 2 Peter 3:14). Like a stain on a clean shirt or a scratch on a tiny ring, they marred the Lord’s Supper by their very presence. This was one of the injustices they did to others

BKC, 2 Peter 2:13

Paul speaks of this particular injustice.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

1 Corinthians 11:28-30 (NKJV)

- *They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions*

Like a stain on a clean shirt or a scratch on a tiny ring, they marred the Lord’s Supper by their very presence. This was one of the injustices they did to others

BKC, 2 Peter 2:13

“While partaking of the love-feast (compare Jude 1:12) with you,” they are at the same time “luxuriating in their own deceivings,” or “deceits” (to which latter clause answers Jude 1:12, end: Peter presents the positive side, “they luxuriate in their own deceivings”; Jude, the negative, “feeding themselves without fear”)

JFB, 2 Peter 2:13

These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots;

Jude 1:12 (NKJV)

Continuing the subject of “love feasts,” Peter adds,

- *they feast with you, having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin,*

“They never stop sinning is literally, “unceasing in sin,” probably referring to their sinning with their eyes¹⁰¹ This is probably a reference to Jesus’ words,

*“But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has **already committed** adultery with her in his heart.*

Matthew 5:28 (NKJV)

They are the kind of people (men) who appear to have X-ray vision and see right through a woman’s clothing as she walks past.

- *enticing unstable souls.*

What these people do is bad enough, but, Peter says, they entice others to do the same. In Chapter 1, verse 12, page#122, 143 we read about Christians who were steadfast - *you know and are established in the present truth*. The word Peter uses here is the same word but with an α (alpha) in front of it, ἀστήρικτος (asteriktos) hence “not established.” People who faith was not yet stable. It refers to the same kind of Christians Paul writes about.

*And because of your knowledge **shall the weak brother perish**, for whom Christ died? But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their **weak conscience**, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother **stumble**, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.*

1 Corinthians 8:11-13 (NKJV)

If they are “unstable,” they may easily “stumble.” Paul would never do anything which even remotely constituted “enticing.” Thayer writes, with respect to δελεάζω (deleazo), “1. properly, “to bait, catch by a bait”: 2. as often in secular authors, metaphorically, “to beguile by blandishments, allure, entice, deceive.”¹⁰² The expression is used also by James.

*But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and **enticed**.*

James 1:14 (NKJV)

There’s an old saw “misery loves company.” We might say “sinners love company” as well. The more people who are doing the same as you, the easier it is on your conscience. One of the ways the entice unstable brothers is,

- *They have a heart trained in covetous practices,*

“Trained” is γυμνάζω (gumnazo) which means, literally, “properly, “to exercise naked” (in the

¹⁰¹BKC, 2 Peter 2:14

¹⁰²THAYER, δελεάζω

palaestra).¹⁰³ (A palaestra was “>n. [in ancient Greece and Rome] a wrestling school or gymnasium.¹⁰⁴)

Here, however, the word is used in a less literal way, “a soul that covetousness or the love of gain has trained in its crafty ways”¹⁰⁵ “Practice makes perfect,” and I suppose that also applies here!

- *are accursed children.*

Because of this they are “men worthy of execration,” - accursed.

- *They have forsaken the right way and gone astray,*

“Right” might also be translated “straight.”

. . . and make **straight** paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:13 (NKJV)

Since the “narrow gate” (Matthew 7:13) is the way of salvation, you are going to have to walk a straight path to get there. The people we are talking about gave up on going this narrow way and, as a result, are going in “*the way that leads to destruction.*” They ended up following a different way.

- *following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet.*

Peter here refers to an incident recorded in Numbers, below.

*And they came to Balaam and said to him, "Thus says Balak the son of Zippor: 'Please let nothing hinder you from coming to me; for I will certainly honor you greatly, and I will do whatever you say to me. Therefore please come, curse this people for me.' " Then Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, "Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more. Now therefore, please, you also stay here tonight, that I may know what more the Lord will say to me." And God came to Balaam at night and said to him, "**If the men come to call you, rise and go with them; but only the word which I speak to you--that you shall do.**" So Balaam rose in the morning, saddled his donkey, and **went with the princes of Moab.***

Numbers 22:16-21 (NKJV)

This passage in Numbers is what Peter refers to. Unfortunately, this passage does not read quite right. The text goes on to say that the Lord was angry with Balaam when he went with them. The Lord told him to go with them, but he went for the wrong reason. He went, not because the Lord said to, but because he thought about all the wealth he would receive for placing a curse on Israel.

¹⁰³THAYER, γυμνάζω

¹⁰⁴OXFORD, palaestra

¹⁰⁵THAYER, γυμνάζω

The Lord stopped him on the way. More correctly, the Lord appeared to the donkey and caused the donkey to stop in her¹⁰⁶ tracks.

And when the donkey saw the Angel of the Lord, she lay down under Balaam; so Balaam's anger was aroused, and he struck the donkey with his staff. Then the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" And Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you have abused me. I wish there were a sword in my hand, for now I would kill you!" So the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden, ever since I became yours, to this day? Was I ever disposed to do this to you?" And he said, "No."

Numbers 22:27-30 (NKJV)

You might guess what McGee had to say about this!

Peter says that Balaam was mad to go and that the jackass he was riding spoke to him. Some wag has said that in the old days it was a miracle when a jackass spoke and now in our day it is a miracle when one of them keeps quiet! This jackass spoke to Balaam and rebuked him because of his covetousness

McGEE, 2 Peter 2:16
(Also for Numbers 22:28)

To use McGee's word, to have a Jackass (which is wrong since a jackass is a male donkey) speak to you must be humiliating to say the least. The point of this section is that the people we are studying would strive for monetary things rather than for God.

- *These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.*

What use is a well without water?

How dry it was! Many people are following false teachers who are like that. They are "wells without water." They are like clouds, beautiful clouds. Oh, how tremendous it is to see and hear these folk. They are very impressive, but there is no water in the well, and there is no rain in the clouds. People are thirsting today for the Word of God, and yet it is not being given to them.

McGEE, 2 Peter 2:17

Jude has much the same thing to say.

These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

Jude 1:12-13 (NKJV)

¹⁰⁶The Hebrew indicates a female ass.

Barnes notes, in addition.

The expectation of the farmer is excited that the thirsty earth is to be refreshed with needful showers. Instead of this, however, the wind "gets into" the cloud; it is driven about, and no rain falls, or it ends in a destructive tornado which sweeps everything before it. So of these religious teachers. Instruction in regard to the way of salvation was expected from them; but, instead of that, they disappointed the expectations of those who were desirous of knowing the way of life, and their doctrines only tended to destroy

BARNES, 2 Peter 2:17

The next section is another continuation of this and the previous section and continues to speak of those who oppose you in your faith.

For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

2 Peter 2:18-22 (NKJV)

Peter gives us an idea of what to look for when they speak; *great swelling words of emptiness*. Peter is very expressive with the word *ὑπέρογκος* (hyperonkos) the root of which is *ογκος* (onkos). I spent a year going to an oncologist to get rid of cancer. It is a Greek medical term for a swelling - with the prefix, a massive swelling. The NKJV has "great swelling." BKC says, "'swollen'; still another hapax legomenon by Peter" (I just threw this in so you can impress your friends - "hapax legomenon" means a term of which only one instance of use is recorded.¹⁰⁷ - I looked it up).

Peter also uses "emptiness" for which Thayer defines, "what is devoid of truth and appropriateness"¹⁰⁸ We find this in the following.

*If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is **useless**.*

James 1:26 (NKJV)

*And if Christ is not risen, your faith is **futile**; you are still in your sins!*

1 Corinthians 15:17 (NKJV)

Titus warns us about using words like this.

¹⁰⁷OXFORD, hapax legomenon

¹⁰⁸THAYER, ματαιότη

But avoid **foolish** disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless.

Titus 3:9 (NKJV)

By using these proclamations, *they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness. "For when they speak great swelling words of vanity." These false teachers use beautiful, flowery language. They soar to the heights oratorically, speaking in basso profundo voice.*¹⁰⁹

We spoke concerning lewdness back in verse 10 (page #138). The worst part of what they do is with regard to whom they do it - *the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error*. I do not know where the NKJV translators got "actually." The word is ὀλίγος (oligos) which means "scarcely" or "barely" or, one idiom would be "by the skin of their teeth." It refers to people who are (probably) new converts and hence "barely" is to be interpreted in the sense of time rather than degree. But the fact is they have "escaped." The word φεύγω (pheugo) means "to flee" Have you heard the expression "tempus fugit" - "time flies?" that is where the "fugit" comes from. Here Peter prefixes it with ἀπο - i.e. ἀποφεύγω (apofeugo) which emphasizes the idea of fleeing away from something.

These have fled away *from those who live in error*. We have previously discussed that people who do evil like company in their evil deeds and so try to draw you into them. If you are new or weak in your faith, you are a great target for them.

Clark states,

"These false teachers spoke of great and high things, and no doubt promised their disciples the greatest privileges, as they themselves pretended to a high degree of illumination; but they were all false and vain, though they tickled the fancy and excited the desires of the flesh; and indeed this appears to have been their object

CLARK, 2 Peter 2:18

*While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. BKC says, "The techniques of false teachers are only workable with the naive, for the heretics are like a 300-pound man selling diet books"*¹¹⁰

What Peter says next we need to look at in its entirety. *For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.* It is not really necessary to dive into the Greek of this passage, the translators have made it quite clear. What Peter says is clear. Why it is so is not clear. Why is it better to never have had knowledge of Jesus Christ than to have had it and then fallen away? Let look at some thoughts on this.

¹⁰⁹McGEE, 2 Peter 2:18

¹¹⁰BKC, 2 Peter 2:18

I have done something in my ministry which has not been original with me at all. I heard the late Dr. A.C. Gaebelien say this, and it was so effective and so true that I have used it on many occasions. I will sometimes conclude a message by saying, "Friends, if you came in here today unsaved and you walk out of here unsaved, I am the worst enemy that you have ever had, because you have heard the gospel and you can never go into the presence of God and tell Him that you have never heard the gospel. You have heard it, and it will be worse for you when God pronounces judgment than for any heathen in the darkest part of the earth today."

McGEE, 2 Peter 2:21

This is a true statement but I like the statement by the author of Hebrews.

*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, **if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance**, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.*

Hebrews 6:4-8 (NKJV)

What I am doing, I guess, is exchanging one difficult passage with one even more difficult. Like Dr McGee stated, "As we study this section, we are immediately confronted with the amazing fact that generally commentators have avoided this chapter. Even such a man as Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, the prince of expositors, has completely bypassed it in his book on Hebrews"¹¹ The old saying "fools rush in where angels fear to tread" applied to me here, I guess. The problem is that it sounds as if one might lose their salvation. Let me say that my interpretation of this passage is just the opposite. **If** you could lose it, you could not be saved again and, for this reason, you won't! Some commentaries indicate that it is not your salvation that would be lost but, as one Bible teacher put it, "So the writer of Hebrews is talking about the fruit of salvation, not about the root of salvation"

Peter concludes this with, *But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."* The proverb in question is Proverbs 26:11

*As a dog returns to his own vomit,
So a fool repeats his folly.*

Proverbs 26:11 (NKJV)

K&D remark concerning this proverb, "To devour again its vomit is common with the dog. Even so, it is the manner of fools to return again in word and in deed to their past folly"¹² In simple terms, it is not difficult to "backslide." The fact that this proverb is true is apparently to anyone who has owned a dog.

¹¹McGEE, Hebrews 6:4-8

¹²K&D, Proverbs 26:11

2 PETER 3

Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:1-9 (NKJV)

"Beloved!" When we finish this book, we will start, Lord willing¹¹³, a study of John's Epistles, "the Disciples whom Jesus loved." Strangely, this disciple who used the word "love" so much in his writings, never used ἀγαπητός (agapetos) which Peter uses here. Many of the newer translations use something like, "Dear friends," (NIV, ISV, God's Word) or "Dear brothers," (Living Bible). The problem is we don't use the term "beloved" in this sense much anymore.

Peter is here writing "this second epistle." While a few think he is referring to something else, it is generally agreed that this is a reference to 1 Peter. Parenthetically, he adds, (*in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder*). The KJV has "both" in italics, indicating that "both" is not in the Greek text - which is not quite true. The Greek word for "which" is in the plural and thus indicates more than one. Since he speaks of only one other epistle, "both" is proper (Greek) here.

Peter refers to the "pure" minds. Dr. McGee doesn't think that is the best translation.

"I stir up your pure minds" -- "pure" is not the best translation. A better translation would be "sincere." I don't think that the saints back in Peter's day had minds which were any more pure than our minds are today -- and I haven't found anyone yet who I thought had a pure mind. If you feel that you have a pure mind, I just haven't met you yet

McGEE, 2 Peter 3:1

The word pure is from εἰλικρινής (eilikrines) which is, "properly, found pure when unfolded and examined by the sun's light."¹¹⁴ He asks them to "stay awake" and this is to be their "reminder." The reminder is to "be mindful" of the words spoken by;

- *words spoken before by the holy prophets*
- *the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior*

One might make a looser translation of this by saying "the words of both the Old Testament and the New Testament. In other words, speaking to us today, he would say to be mindful of what is written

¹¹³James 4:13-14

¹¹⁴THAYER, εἰλικρινής

in the Bible.

There is a subtle transition at this point. It was most likely not intended by Peter but superintended by the Holy Spirit. *Know this first: that scoffers will come in the **last days**, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?"*

This transition is to the "last days." We have noted several times before that the term "last days" refer to the days between Pentecost and the Second Coming and that we are living in days that are "more last" than Peter's days. I believe that the signs of the times indicate that these last days are the final last days! For several years the news media has been bombarding us with news about the mistake we made in going into Iraq (some even include Afghanistan) but of late, even the more liberal of the news networks have been commenting on how "peace appears to be breaking out in the Middle East." So, what does that have to do with the last days?

*For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "**Peace and safety!**" then **sudden destruction comes upon** them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.*

1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 (NKJV)

I think that is a pretty accurate answer to what is happening these last days. In the meantime, Peter says, *scoffers will come*. ἐμπαίγμονή (empaigmone) = "mockers," and the related word "mocking." these men will do to Christians as men did to Christ.

*"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to **the Gentiles; and they will mock Him**, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."*

Mark 10:33-34 (NKJV)

*Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt **and mocked Him**, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate.*

Luke 23:11 (NKJV)

The only other use of the words Peter uses here are in . . . (you may guess by now) . . . Jude 1:18. Jude covers much the same thing as Peter does here. Note all the references to Jude we have already! Jude 1:12, (Page 142), Jude 1:12-13 (Page 145), Jude 1:6 (Page 134), and Jude 1:8-10 (Page 139).

They mock because they are, "walking according to their own lusts," and they mock saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? Peter had told them of this "promise."

*Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For **the promise** is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."*

Acts 2:38-39 (NKJV)

For about two-thousand years men have been mocking in a similar way. They probably will not be mocking much longer! What did they say as they mocked? "For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." Do you notice anything amiss here?

They might have said, "Since Christ ascended into heaven, nothing has changed!" They would have been closer to the truth. But, "since the beginning of the creation?" One of the greatest events of all time had already happened "since the creation," namely the first coming of Christ. But even if they limited the scope of their mocking to the days since Pentecost, million upon millions have accepted the free gift of God. Millions upon millions of Bibles have been printed and distributed. A great nation has been founded on the basis of Christianity - (if only we had remained faithful to our beginnings!).

But, I would suppose, it appears to most people like things (other than technology) do not change much. Solomon observed this.

*To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven: . . . A time to love,
And a time to hate; A time of war, And a time of peace.*

Ecclesiastes 3:1 & 8 (NKJV)

That which has been is what will be, That which is done is what will be done, And there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which it may be said, "See, this is new"? It has already been in ancient times before us.

Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 (NKJV)

We have noted things that have occurred since the creation. Peter notes another: "For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water." Peter reminds them that there has already been one great destructive judgement on this Earth. If there has been one, there can be, and will be, more!

But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. Just as those of us with fire places store up wood for a nice fire on a cold night, God is storing up his wrath of fire which He will use when the time is right. When will that be? Every generation has expected it and been disappointed. The problem is that we do not tell time in the same manner that God does.

But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. There are those who try to take this statement in some literal sense. This is not proper. Let's begin with a question; why do we have inches, feet, yards, rods, miles, etc. in our system of measurements? Well, you would not like to express the distance between Los Angeles and San Francisco in inches would you? Would you like to know the size of this sheet of paper in miles? We have different units of measurement to fit what we want to describe. God, in terms of time, is eternal. What time units do you measure eternity in? You could say that this page is 0.000134 miles wide, but you wouldn't. You might use 0.00045 leagues, but you wouldn't, these units are too large for such a measurement. Even a millennium is far too small a unit of time to express eternity in. So, you see, God has no "units of measurement" when it comes to time. Thus a millennium and a day look the same to him. "Time" is meaningless to God, only "events" We use "time" and God uses events or "seasons."

And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

Acts 1:7 (NKJV)

But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.

1 Thessalonians 5:1 (NKJV)

We say that God is omniscient, knowing all - from beginning to end. As such, He is much more patient than you or me, or those who mock. Peter reminds us that,

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

Slack - βραδύνω (braduno) is used on only one other passage of Scripture.

*but if I am **delayed**, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*

1 Timothy 3:15 (NKJV)

Paul took advice from James who wrote, “whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”¹¹⁵ God is not delayed by anything except his desire that as many as He has chosen be saved. When the last of the Elect is reached for Jesus Christ, then He will wait no longer.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

2 Peter 3:10-13 (NKJV)

But the day of the Lord will come! I have noted previously that “the day of the Lord” actually refers to several distinct “days.” The first is the Lord’s second coming and the other is at the close of the Millennium. What I have failed to note is, “why?” If you refer to the chronology I gave at the beginning of 1 Peter, you will note that Revelation was not written until around 90 A.D. There is no mention of a Millennium until we read Revelation. There were a few Old Testament references which are rather vague (Isaiah 65:17; Isaiah 66:22). Just as the “Church Age,” the “Age of Grace,” was hidden to the Old Testament prophets, the Millennium was not known by the New Testament prophets until it was revealed to John around AD90.

Here Peter is referring to the “day of the Lord” at the end of the Millennium. That day will come as a thief in the night. We spoke of this idiom when we studied Thessalonians.

For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

1 Thessalonians 5:2 (NKJV)

I should note that “in the night” is not in the better texts here (it probably got added after the idiom that

¹¹⁵James 4:14 (NKJV)

Paul used.) Jesus began the concept.

"But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

Luke 12:39 (NKJV)

Jesus do not specify "night" either. The point, of course, is the unexpectedness of it.

This is one on the most remarkable prophecies in the Scriptures in terms of technical accuracy. The Prophets (including Peter here) had to write down a description of what the Holy Spirit revealed to them (an angel in the case of John in Revelation), But if you were one of these prophets and you were shown the image to the right what would you describe it as. Helicopters had not yet been invented - the thought of man actually flying had not become a reality! So what would you refer to this strange thing flying through the sky with things whirling above it and making a great fluttering sound?



Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. .

Revelation 9:3 & 7-10 (NKJV)

It is not hard to see the prophet describing these things as locusts. The rotor blades shining in the sun would resemble a crown. If you look close at the picture, you can see the face of the pilot. The metallic bottom would certainly look like a breastplate of iron. Finally, the sound of their "wings" is described quite graphically here.

So now, looking at what Peter has to say, we will start with the word στοιχείον (stoicheion) which is translated "elements." It refers to the basic building blocks of something. Take literature for example. We have an epistle from Peter made up of a number of paragraphs which are made up of one or more sentences which contain several (or many) words. Each word consists of letters of the (Greek) alphabet. Here is where it stops. The ABC's are the basic building block of literature. You can not go any finer than this. You can tal about the "ABC's" of lots of things or you could talk about the "1,2,3's" of things. This is what the Greek word refers to, the basic building blocks. Consider the "1,2,3's" of the things below.

“1” is Hydrogen, “2” is Helium, “3” is Lithium, and so on. Most of you have been acquainted with the periodic chart of the στοιχεῖον (stoicheion) - elements at some time or another. It was not until the past few centuries that man has been able to classify the atoms, the elements, but it has long been considered that there is a point at which a drop of water, a piece of iron, etc. can not be further divided - an atom or molecule.

What does Peter say will happen? He uses the word λύω (luo) = “will be destroyed.” The word, in this form is used only here and in Revelation.

*Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be **released** from his prison.*

Revelation 20:7 (NKJV)

The root of this word means “to unloose,” hence “released” in Revelation 20:7. You have all, at one time another (via photos and movies) seen the elements being “unloosed,” split apart with a tremendous force and a mushroom cloud. How will the elements be “unloosed?” Peter writes, καυσώ (kausoo) = “a burning up.” This word is used only here and in verse 12. It is used in medical writing of a person with a “burning fever.” One interesting place it is found is in the LXX as below.

*"I watched till thrones were put in place,
And the Ancient of Days was seated;
His garment was white as snow,
And the hair of His head was like pure wool.
His throne was a fiery flame,*

The Conventional Periodic Table of the Elements

This Pattern Represents One of the Most Commonly Cited Patterns on the Conventional Periodic Table. Variations in the Color Scheme Exist Regarding Elements 57, 71 and 89, 103

1 H																	2 He
3 Li	4 Be											5 B	6 C	7 N	8 O	9 F	10 Ne
11 Na	12 Mg											13 Al	14 Si	15 P	16 S	17 Cl	18 Ar
19 K	20 Ca	21 Sc	22 Ti	23 V	24 Cr	25 Mn	26 Fe	27 Co	28 Ni	29 Cu	30 Zn	31 Ga	32 Ge	33 As	34 Se	35 Br	36 Kr
37 Rb	38 Sr	39 Y	40 Zr	41 Nb	42 Mo	43 Tc	44 Ru	45 Rh	46 Pd	47 Ag	48 Cd	49 In	50 Sn	51 Sb	52 Te	53 I	54 Xe
55 Cs	56 Ba	57 Lu	58 Hf	59 Ta	60 W	61 Re	62 Os	63 Ir	64 Pt	65 Au	66 Hg	67 Tl	68 Pb	69 Bi	70 Po	71 At	72 Rn
87 Fr	88 Ra	89 Ac	90 Th	91 Pa	92 U	93 Np	94 Pu	95 Am	96 Cm	97 Bk	98 Cf	99 Es	100 Fm	101 Md	102 No		
119	120															118	

87 La	58 Ce	59 Pr	60 Nd	61 Pm	62 Sm	63 Eu	64 Gd	65 Tb	66 Dy	67 Ho	68 Er	69 Tm	70 Yb
89 Ac	90 Th	91 Pa	92 U	93 Np	94 Pu	95 Am	96 Cm	97 Bk	98 Cf	99 Es	100 Fm	101 Md	102 No



Metals



Transition Elements



Non metals



Noble Gases



Inner Transition
Elements

*Its wheels a burning fire;
A fiery stream issued
And came forth from before Him.
A thousand thousands ministered to Him;
Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.
The court was seated,
And the books were opened.*

*"I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the **burning** flame.*

Daniel 7:9-11 (NKJV)

Suffice it to say, it refers to an intense heat. I have been told by people who have personally witnessed a nuclear explosion is that, first there is a brilliant flash and then, almost immediately, a tremendous heat wave passes over you. This is certainly an accurate description of a nuclear holocaust.

Let us back up a few words now. "The heavens will pass away with a great noise," Before commenting on this, consider the following verse which you all know.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1 (NKJV)

You probably never thought of this before but God only created one thing! The above verse might best be paraphrased as "In the beginning God created the heavens and, especially, the earth. The Earth is a part of the universe. So, when Peter writes that "the heavens will pass away" he is including the Earth as well.

"Pass away," παρέρχομαι (parerchomai) is used by Jesus as recorded below.

*Heaven and earth **will pass away**, but My words will by no means **pass away**.*

Mark 13:31 & Luke 21:33 (NKJV)

But Peter gives a description of the process. ῥοιζηδόν (rhoizedon)="Great noise" is a word that is only here in the New Testament. An Old Testament example is:

*A fountain of a garden, and a well of water springing and **gurgling** from Lebanon.*

Song 4:16 LXX

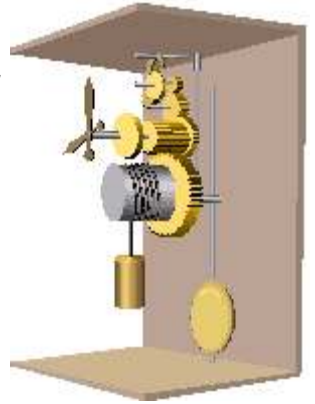
According to Robertson,

onomatopoetic, whizzing sound of rapid motion through the air like the flight of a bird, thunder, fierce flame

ATR, 2 Peter 3:10

If a nuclear blast makes such a horrific sound, what kind of noise will result from the entire Universe being undone! I suppose, if you wish to get technical, you would say "none - does a tree make a sound when it falls in the woods and no one is around?" I will not undertake to answer that!

Next, “both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up” Two words are a difficulty here. One is ἔργον (ergon) = “works” and the other is εὕρισκω (huerisko) = “will be found out”? Or “be burned up”? Or what? I would translate the first word as “inner workings.” Then it would easily follow that they would be “discovered.” Just as removing the case from this clock reveals its “works”, the undoing of the earth will reveal all of its inner works.



Therefore, What is this “therefore” there for? We do not have to review, Peter reviews for us . . . since all these things will be dissolved (unloosed, released, destroyed) . . .

Before we go into the “therefore,” we ought to answer a question as to what time period Peter is writing about? The answer is in John’s Revelation.

*Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth **had passed away**. (See page #138, 156 for this word) Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God." And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."*

Revelation 21:1-5 (NKJV)

The above passage comes after Chapter 20 describing the “1000 year reign of Christ”¹¹⁶ Skeptics then, as now, complained that they saw nothing that would indicate that these things were coming. Peter describes with precise accuracy the fact of the future end of all things in the present world system, **But the day of the Lord will come!** What he has described will come and all of the things which John, and others, have said will come prior to this.

Since this is as much as fact as 2+2=4, how should we act? *What manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God? Before we answer this, look at what Peter adds as a sort of post script. The heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?* “Well,’ you say, “we’ve already read that!” Peter uses a new word here, τήκω (teko) is here translated “melt.” This is the only occurrence of this word in either the New Testament or Old Testament. It is found a few places in classical literature as a medical term, “waste away from fever or other formless disease.”¹¹⁷ Vincent says. “*Not only the resolving, but the wasting away of nature.*”¹¹⁸ Dr. McGee makes this comment here.

Wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?”

¹¹⁶I could have put “millennium” which some skeptics claim does not appear in the Bible!

¹¹⁷M&M, τήκω

¹¹⁸VINCENT, 2 Peter 3:12

This is one of the most remarkable statements you could possibly have coming from a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee. I don't imagine that Peter figured out how the water, that sea where he fished, would burn. He didn't know how all this could be dissolved and melted. But the elements, that which we call atoms, the building blocks of the universe, are to be absolutely melted. However, this time Peter uses a different Greek word for "melt" than he used in verse 10. It is tekamai, a word that means actually "wasting away, the wasting away of nature." This could possibly suggest the effects of radioactivity when an atomic bomb goes off.

McGEE, 2 Peter 3:12

So, now to the question, "What manner of persons ought you to be?" When Jesus calmed the sea of Galilee, they asked,

"Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

Matthew 8:27b (NKJV)

"What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!"

Matthew 8:27b (KJV)

They saw "what manner" of person Jesus was. But, what about you? What should you be like? What should you be doing? Dr. McGee asks the question,

Now Peter says that, in view of the fact of what has happened and what God is going to do in the future, you and I ought not to be standing on the sidelines, twiddling our thumbs, and indulging in criticism. Christians find it so easy to criticize others, but specifically, what are you doing today to get out the Word of God? That is the important question in this hour for every Christian, every church, every pastor. Every person sitting in the pew needs to say to himself: "I am not here to sit in judgment on the preacher; I'm not here to judge other Christians; I am here to get out the Word of God, to do something positive. The question is: What am I doing to that end?"

McGEE, 2 Peter 3:11

In holy conduct and godliness, we are to be looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God! Thus according to His promise, we should look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Paul wrote,

*Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but **also to all who have loved His appearing.***

2 Timothy 4:8 (NKJV)

JFB says, all who "have loved, and do love"; habitual love and desire for Christ's appearing, which presupposes faith"¹¹⁹

Peter ends this section with, "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells." How many of you are really looking forward to the "new heavens and the new earth? I know I am looking forward to the Rapture or, if I die first, of being with the Lord. But that is not what Peter said. He is talking about a time that will occur 1007 years after the Rapture, at the end of the thousand years.

¹¹⁹JFB 2 Timothy 4:8

Why should we be so absorbed in looking forward to this? Like Paul, for me to live is Christ but to die is gain." That's what I look for sincerely. Now, read that last two chapters of John's Revelation! A portion of it is below.

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

Revelation 22:1 (NKJV)

Being with the Lord in the "old heaven" will be much better than being on this old Earth. But being with the Lord in the New Heaven and the New Earth will be much better still. This is what we should really look forward to. It is hard to do. On January 15th it was a lot easier to look forward to my May 23rd birthday than it was to look forward to the next Christmas. But the next Christmas was always a whole lot better than my birthday was. There is nothing wrong with looking forward to being in the "old heaven" with the Lord, but do not forget to eagerly await the New Heaven and the New Earth which will be unimaginably wonderful.

Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

2 Peter 3:14-18 (NKJV)

We have been "looking backwards or side ways for some time now. With all that covered, "therefore, we have some things to "look forward" to. First we need to work at "being diligent." Peter has already used this term twice (1:10, 1:15) in this epistle. We need to be concerned that we will "be found by Him in peace." Peter has given us a lot of prophecy regarding the return of the Lord. When this happens, we need to be "in peace." No need to look at the Greek, this text says exactly what Peter meant. McGee, in his ever practical way says,

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things" – that is, since we know that the earth and all its works will be burned up, we realize how important a life of godliness is here and now. We are to live a holy life down here, a life separated unto God. Friend, after all, what is really worthwhile in this earth today? What are your goals? Are you a productive Christian moving toward a worthwhile goal? Somebody says, "I want to raise my family." That's worthwhile. Somebody else says, "I want to make a good living for my family and to educate my children." That's worthwhile. Although these things are worthwhile, what is really the object of your life? Is it to live for God? If you live for God, all of these secondary issues, I believe, will take care of themselves.

McGEE, 2 Peter 3:14

We are to “consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation.” If you are like me, I really look forward to the Rapture of the Church and, if not that, at least the day I take up residence in one of those apartments that Jesus is preparing for me. But, in this case “patience is a virtue.” The reason God is taking so long is that there are still some of His elect waiting to be saved. He will not come for us as long as there is even one person whom God has called that had not yet had the opportunity to accept His sacrifice on the cross.

Peter here adds a parenthetical statement regarding the Apostle Paul, he “beloved brother.” Do you look at other members of your church as “beloved brothers and sisters?” In spite of some harsh words which Paul had for Peter (see below), he was still Peter’s beloved brother. He notes that in some of Paul’s epistles there are “some things hard to understand.” There would seem to be two sets of writings - the things Paul had written to them and in “all his epistles.”

The epistles of Peter and John and Jude are referred to by several terms, the “general epistles,” or an equivalent term “the catholic epistles” (not “Roman Catholic but “universal”). They did not write to a particular church. All of Paul’s epistles, however, were addressed to a church or its pastor (Timothy). What Peter may be referring to with “written to them” may be Galatians, Colossians, and,, perhaps, Ephesians. The “rest of his epistles then being “the rest of them!”

Paul wrote “according to the wisdom given him” which says that he did not just jot down things that were on his mind but that he wrote those things which the Holy Spirit gave him to write. Remember this in what follows and do not be harsh on Paul! The wisdom given him contained some truths which are hard to grasp.

Peter makes the accusation concerning Paul’s epistles, “ in which are some things hard to understand.” “Hey Peter, I’ve got news for you, I’ve had a hard time understanding some of what you wrote!” That is my opinion. Other also have opinions.

some things hard to be understood – namely, in reference to Christ's coming, for example, the statements as to the man of sin and the apostasy, before Christ's coming. "Paul seemed thereby to delay Christ's coming to a longer period than the other apostles, whence some doubted altogether His coming" [BENGEL]. Though there be some things hard to be understood, there are enough besides, plain, easy, and sufficient for perfecting the man of God. "There is scarce anything drawn from the obscure places, but the same in other places may be found most plain" [AUGUSTINE]. It is our own prejudice, foolish expectations, and carnal fancies, that make Scripture difficult [JEREMY TAYLOR].

JFB, 2 Peter 3:16

Do you know why the Roman Church used to forbid its members to study the Scriptures. Here is what Adam Clarke says about that.

But if we take the reading of AB, twelve others, with both the Syriac, all the Arabic, and Theophylact, the meaning is more general, as . . . (some Greek). . . must refer to the epistles, for this would intimate that there were difficulties in all the epistles of St. Paul; and indeed in what ancient writings are there not difficulties? But the papists say that the decision of all matters relative to the faith is not to be expected from the Scriptures on this very account, but must be received from the Church; i.e. the Popish or Romish Church

CLARKE, 2 Peter 3:16

Robertson probably comes the closest to the truth.

Hard to be understood (dusnoēeta). . . . We know that the Thessalonians persisted in misrepresenting Paul on this very subject of the second coming as Hymenaeus and Philetus did about the resurrection (2 Tim. 2:17) and Spitta holds that Paul's teaching about grace was twisted to mean moral laxity like Galatians 3:10; Romans 3:20, 8; Romans 5:20 (with which cf. 2 Peter 6:1 as a case in point), etc. Peter does not say that he himself did not understand Paul on the subject of faith and freedom.

ATR, 2 Peter 3:16

Paul also had a few things to say about Peter.

Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?"

Galatians 2:11-14 (NKJV)

You know what? I do not know anyone who has trouble understanding John 3:16! There are things in the Scriptures that are interpreted different by different people. That Peter and Paul did not agree on everything is not to be surprising. What is important about this is that it shows us that, even as early as the writing of this epistle, Paul's epistles had "made the rounds," they were, in effect, the beginnings of the New Testament.

Peter relates that people take some of Paul's epistles and the "untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures." In 2:14 (page #143) we consider the only other use of the Greek for "unstable." "Ignorant" here is from ἀμαθής (amathes) which is the Greek word for being educated with an alpha prefix - not educated. We have looked at people like this previously and how they distort the Scriptures to make them fit their own ideas.

You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked. "Therefore," "beforehand," both words which mean that Peter has covered what we need to know and keep in mind because, if we do not, we might stop being "steadfast" and follow after these other people. Therefore, keep what we have learned fresh in your memory so that you will not be led astray.

On the other hand, we are to, "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." This is one of the thirteen places where Peter mentions "know" or "knowledge." This was his reason for writing - to impart knowledge. But now, "grow in grace." How do we do that?

Religion in general is often represented as grace, since every part of it is the result of grace, or of unmerited favour; and to "grow in grace" is to increase in that which constitutes true religion. Religion is as susceptible of cultivation and of growth as any other virtue of the soul. It is feeble in its beginnings, like the grain of mustard seed, or like the germ or blade of the plant, and it increases as it is cultivated. There is no piety in the world which is not the result of cultivation, and which cannot be measured by the degree of care and attention bestowed upon it. No one becomes eminently

pious, any more than one becomes eminently learned or rich, who does not intend to; and ordinarily men in religion are what they design to be. They have about as much religion as they wish, and possess about the character which they intend to possess. When men reach extraordinary elevations in religion, like Baxter, Payson, and Edwards, they have gained only what they meant to gain; and the gay and worldly professors of religion, who have little comfort and peace, have in fact the characters which they designed to have. If these things are so, then we may see the propriety of the injunction "to grow in grace;" and then too we may see the reason why so feeble attainments are made in piety by the great mass of those who profess religion

BARNES, 2 Peter 3:17

To this BKC adds, "grace is not subjective, based merely on experience and emotional happenings. It is objectively related to Peter's key word knowledge"¹²⁰ Truth is the key, Jesus said so,

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

John 8:31-32 (NKJV)

So, let us close with the benediction, *To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.*"

¹²⁰BKC, 2 Peter 3:17

Greek

- ἀγαθο-ποιῖα (Agatho-poiia) (47)
 ἀγαλλιᾶσθε χαρᾷ ἀνεκκλήτῳ (analliasthe chara anekalaeto) (19)
 αγαπάω (agapao) (118)
 αγάπη (agape) (114, 118)
 ἀγαπητός (agapatos) (87)
 ἅγιος (hagios) (14)
 ἀγνίζω (hagnizo) (30, 31)
 αἰσχροκερδῶς (aischrokerdos) (99)
 ἄκαρπος (akarpous) (119)
 ἀλλοτριεπίσκοπος (allotriepiaskopos) (93)
 ἀμαθής (amathes) (161)
 ἀναγεννάω (anagennaō) (16)
 ἀναγκαστῶς (anankastos) (98)
 ἀναζώννυμι (anazonnumi) (23)
 ἄνθος (anthos) (32)
 ἀντιτάσσω (102)
 ἀντίτυπος (antitypos) (73)
 ἀνυπόκριτος (anupokritos) (31)
 ἀπ-έχω (ap-echo) (43)
 ἀπολογία (apologia) (68)
 αποτίθημι (apotithemi) (35)
 ἀποφεύγω (apofeugo) (113, 147)
 ἀπροσωπολήμπως (aprosopolemptos) (25)
 ἀπώλεια (apoleia) (131)
 ἄργός (argos) (119)
 ἀρετή (areta) (114, 115)
 ἀσθενής (asthenes) (61)
 ἀστήρικτος (asteriktos) (143)
 ἄσωτία (asotia) (79)
 αυθάδης (authades) (138)
 βάπτισμα (baptisma) (73)
 βέβαιος (bebaios) (121)
 βραδύνω (braduno) (153)
 γινώσκω (ginosko) (110)
 γνῶσις (gnosis) (48, 114)
 γρηγορέω (gregoreo) (104)
 διακονέω (diakoneo) (85)
 διάκονος (diakonos) (50)
 δόξας (doksas) (138)
 δοῦλος (doulos) (50)
 δύναμις (dunamis or dynamis) (110)
 ἐγκράτια (engratia) (114, 116)
 εἶ (ei) (25)
 εἰλικρινής (eilikrines) (150)
 ἐκ (ek) (10)
 ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπίδημοις διασπορᾶς (eklektois parepidemois disapor) (10)
 ἐκλεκτός (eklektos) (40)

ἐκλογή (ekloga) (121)
 ἐκτενῶς (eltenos) (31)
 ἐλεέω (eleeo) (42)
 ἐλεύθερος (elutheros) (48)
 ἐλπίζω (elpizo) (24)
 ἐμπαιγμονή (empaigmone) (151)
 ἐμπορεύομαι (132)
 ἐμπορεύομαι (emporeumai) (132)
 ἔξοδος (exodus) (124)
 ἐπηρεάζω (eperazo) (69)
 ἐπι-γινώσκω (epi-ginosko). (110)
 ἐπι-κάλυμμα (epi-kalumma) (49)
 ἐπιθυμία (epithumia) (43)
 ἐπιχορηγέω (epichoregeo) (114)
 ἐπόπτης (eroptes) (124)
 ἔργον (ergon) (157)
 εὐλάβεια (eulabia) (27)
 εὐλογητός (eulogetos) (16)
 εὐρίσκω (huerisko) (157)
 εὐσέβεια (eusabia) (114, 117)
 εὐσπλαγχνος (eusplanchnos) (64)
 ἡδονή (hedone) (142)
 ἰσότημον (isotimon) (108)
 κάκια (kakia) (35)
 καταλαλιά (katalalia). (36)
 καταρτίζω (katartizo) (105)
 καυσόω (kausoo) (155)
 κλητός (kletos). (10)
 κολάζω (kolazo) (138)
 κόσμος (kosmos) (29, 58)
 κτίζω (ktizo) (95)
 λαγχάνω (langkano) (108)
 λίθος (lithos) (38)
 λοιδορέω (loidoreo) (53)
 λυπέω (lupeo) (19)
 λύω (LUO) (155)
 μῦθος (mythos) (124)
 νέος (neos) (100)
 ξενίζω (xenizo) (79)
 ξύλον (ksulon) (54)
 ὁδός (hodos) (131)
 οἰκέτης (oiketes) (50)
 ὀλίγος (oligos) (147)
 ὁμοίως (homoios) (61)
 ὀπθαλμός (ophthalmos) (67)
 πανοπλία (panoplia) (76)
 παραδίδωμι (paradidomai) (53)
 παρέρχομαι (parerchomai) (156)
 παροικία (paroikia) (26)
 πατροπαράδοτος (patroparadotos) (27)

πέτρα (petra) (38)
 Πέτρος (Petros) (38)
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- *CLARK ***Adam Clarke’s Commentary*** (6 Vol.), Originally published in 1825, as a complete 6 volume set. Used by both by Arminians and Calvinists alike, this standard in Biblical scholarship transcends theological barriers and differences
- DARBY ***Darby’s Translation of the Bible***, John Nelson Darby, Electronic Form
- *EASTON ***Easton’s 1897 Bible Dictionary***, This is the Third Edition of this dictionary originally published in 1897.
- *ISBE ***International Standard Bible Encyclopedia***, James Orr, M.A., D.D., General Editor, Database © 2004 WORDsearch Corp.
- *JFB ***Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary/h*** Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible (1871) By Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown
- JOSEPHUS ***Complete Works of Josephus***, Flavius Josephus, Electronic form.
- K&D ***Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament***, Electronic form.
- LXX ***The Septuagint***, Samuel Baxter and Sons
- M&M ***“The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament,”*** James Moulton and George Milligan, Eerdmans, 1963
- *MacARTHUR = Commentaries © 2002 by John MacArthur, Jr
- *McGEE ***“Through the Bible”*** by J. Vernon McGee
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