

1 Peter Chapter Two

Since it was an uninspired man, Stephen Langton, an Englishman and Archbishop of Canterbury, who divided the Bible into chapters in the year A.D. 1227, we must be careful not to draw conclusions about any Scripture based upon where the chapter break is placed. Since the Holy Spirit placed a “*therefore*” here, it is clearly connected to the previous thoughts as its foundation.

Peter began the thought in 1:13, and it is best to review this section before moving into the second chapter. There is a need to gird up our mind’s loins, as Israel did during the Passover with their loins girded. Prepared for “mental” action, minds always active and assessing to be certain we are:

1. Resting our hope fully on the one “*hope of our calling*,” looking for Christ’s return.
2. Focused on being obedient children, removing ourselves from lusts ignorantly created learning the truth.
3. Learning more about God’s holiness and seeking to make it our own.
4. Knowing God’s righteous impartiality, being a Christian won’t save us if we sin and don’t repent.
5. Conducting our entire sojourn here in fear, reverence, respect and obedience.
6. Never losing sight or forgetting the amazing price of our salvation: The death of the Word upon the cross.
7. Loving our brethren, never forgetting we were born again of incorruptible seed.

Drawing from the analogy of the new birth, God expects us to become as newborn infants longing only for the spiritual milk contained in His word, and having learned what they are, seeking to remove all the character flaws that continue to make us unlike Him.

1 Therefore, laying aside all malice,

The term “*therefore*” has a slightly different idea than the “*dio – through which things*” used in 1:13. This word of transition is used much more often (over 400 times) in the NT.

“*oun... a conj. indicating that something follows from another necessarily; ... it is used in drawing a conclusion and in connecting sentences together logically, then, therefore, accordingly, consequently, these things being so...*” (Thayer, p. 463-464; 3767)

This is the first of five times that Peter will use this term in his first letter. (2:7; 4:1; 4:7; 5:6). It is used when something previously said is being summed up to draw to an important conclusion that must be remembered and acted upon. **Since** our living hope is based upon being holy as God is holy and giving reverence and respect to His demands, as obedient children, and **since** we were born again by the eternal word of God for the purpose of loving (*philadelphia* and *agape*) our brethren fervently from our hearts, the truths of this next section “**follow necessarily.**” There must be no doubt that these things are essential.

Since “*laying aside*” is an aorist participle, this is an action that was done in the past, and is such a large part of our efforts and toil that it has become an essential part of our lives. We have become the “*having laid aside ones*,” or though awkward in English it could have been translated the “*laid asiders*,” or *laid asider ones*” because it has become one of our most cherished and important goals.

apotithemi from *apó* (575), **from**, and *tithemi* (5087), **to lay**. Used in the NT only in the middle voice, *apotithemai*. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:659)

apotithemi ... is used literally of **removal of clothing**, e.g., Acts 7:58 (prior to stoning) and in the phrase “**throw someone into prison**” in Matt 14:3 ... Figurative use of *apotithemi* is predominant in the NT. Rom. 13:12 speaks of **throwing off “the works of darkness,”** Col. 3:8 **putting off vices**, Eph. 4:22, in the same sense, of **putting off the “old man”** (cf. Col. 3:9,) ... *apotithemai* refers to “**taking off vices (as a garment)**”; Eph. 4:25 (“**falsehood**”); James 1:21 (“**all filthiness and rank growth of wickedness**”); 1 Peter 2:1 (“**all malice and all guile**”); and Heb 12:1 (“**every weight, and sin**”); **the participle apothemenoi in these passages is to be understood as a challenge** (cf. Rom. 13:12) **or an imperative** (as in Col 3:8) (Exegetical Dictionary of the NT; 659)

This term was used to describe the clothing taken off and laid at Saul’s feet so Stephen could be stoned (Acts 7:58), and used of “*casting off the works of darkness*” (Rom 13:12), “*putting off*” the old man (Eph 4:22), “*laying aside of every weight*” to run the race set before us (Heb 12:1) and

“*laying aside*” filthiness (James 1:21).

Thus we are the “*laid asiders*” who have forever taken off the old man. To be holy as God is holy, there are some emotions that must be laid aside and never picked up again. Such emotions are unworthy of a born again servant of God. When we feel or see these things in our character, we must recognize them as something our holy God wants removed.

As we look at these terms we see the incongruity of those born in the image and likeness of God continuing in any of them. These are the attributes of Satan and his children, but never of God. Our God is a God of love and mercy. Such emotions are completely foreign to Him and therefore to His children. He begins with “*malice*.”

“*kakia*... 1. **malignity, malice, ill-will, desire to injure**... 2. *wickedness, depravity*... wickedness that is not ashamed to break the laws,... *evil, trouble* ... ***kakia* denotes rather the vicious disposition,**” (Thayer, P 320; 2549)

“*kakia*, “**badness in quality**” (the **opposite of arete, “excellence”**), “**the vicious character generally**” (Lightfoot), is translated “malice” in 1 Cor 5:8; 14:20; Eph 4:31; Col 3:8; Titus 3:3; 1 Peter 2:1, KJV (RV, “wickedness”; marg., “malice”); “maliciousness” in Rom 1:29; in 1 Peter 2:16, (Vine’s Expository Dictionary, NT:2549)

To see this term defined as the opposite of *arete* (*virtue – or the best anything can be*) would mean that the root meaning of this word is the absolute worst of something. It is an evil term with a malicious overtone. It is not just evil, it is evil with malice, ill-will and a desire to injure and harm. This is the single most evil and fearful thing about Satan who manifested this character in the garden and ever since. It matters little whether this desire was directed toward God, our fellow-man or even toward ourselves. It must be destroyed and forever removed.

This is the nasty disposition, which in many respects is the exact opposite of love and tenderness. It is a desire to injure, or the feelings of ill-will, hatred and longstanding desire for vengeance we feel toward another after they have harmed us. It settles into a fixed malignity in which our desire to injure both the desire to harm them or rejoicing if we hear of harm befalling them.

Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles;

18 Lest the Lord see it, and it displease Him, And He turn away His wrath from him. Pr. 24:17-18

When such feelings enter the heart, they must be taken off like dirty clothes. They are improper and opposed to the holiness of God. With urgency, we must forever remove this.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 1Jn. 4:7-8

There can be no room in such a purified heart for hatred enmity and a desire to harm.

all guile,

“*dolos*... (fr *delo* to catch with a bait... prop. *bait*... a lure, snare; hence ***craft, deceit, guile***...” (Thayer, p. 155; 1388)

dolos ... properly, **a bait for fish**, ... then, **any cunning contrivance for deceiving or catching**, as **the Trojan horse**, the **robe of Penelopé** ... generally, **any trick or stratagem**, II.; wiles, 2. **guile, craft, cunning, treachery**, (Liddell & Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon, NT 1388)

Since one of the most fundamental elements of God’s holy character is truth and love, it is impossible for God to lie or to deceive, and especially to deceive in the hopes of destroying or stealing from another what is rightfully theirs. Those who are born again and seeking His holiness will do the same. Since only when we know the truth can we be made free (Jn. 8:32) all guile and hypocrisy lead back into bondage. Jesus complimented Nathaniel highly because he had no deceit (guile - same word as here).

Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!” John 1:47

Guile and deceit are highly prized abilities in the world. They are used to get out of trouble, to make others believe that they have good motives or are doing good things when they are not. They are used to make others feel they are qualified to do things they cannot do. But like bait in a trap, such deception generally leads to others being harmed because those with guile are neither as friendly nor as helpful as they portray themselves to be. There is no place in the family of God for lies and deception with base motives either in conduct or word. If we seek to hide what we are instead of openly confessing it, then we cannot be helped and will not be forgiven by God. This appears to be a characteristic of Judas, who learned it from Satan as he

exemplified it in the garden of Eden where, pretending to be helpful and a friend lied to and murdered her. True children of God will flee these things.

Yet as the Christian is banishing these things from his own mind, he must always be aware that others are still using such guile. This is why Christians must become as wise as serpents and harmless as doves, we are always watching for this.

*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),** 5 to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. Gal. 2:4-5*

*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. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. 3 **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. 2Pet. 2:1-3*

*"Beware of false prophets, who **come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.** Mt. 7:15-16*

hypocrisy,

Actors and plays were just as much a part of the Greek culture as they are in our own. People who can move others to emotions by pretending to be something they are not, are considered to be good actors, and they are well paid and famous even today. On the stage, such an ability is respected and honored. But there is another side of this ability called "hypocrisy."

The noun *hupokrisis* occurs 6 times in the NT: once each in the Synoptic Gospels and 3 times in the Epistles. The verb occurs only in Luke 20:20. The stem *hupokr-* derives originally from theatrical language; first it referred to "playacting," and then later also to "hypocrisy." (Exegetical Dictionary of the NT; NT:5272)

"*hupokrites...* 1. *an answering; an answer;...* 2. *the acting of a stage-player...* 3. *dissimulation, hypocrisy...*" (Thayer, p. 643; 5272)

In real life, when someone pretends to be or to feel something that is not real, they are being a hypocrite and a sinner. People generally use such "acting" tactics to get something they want by pretending to be something they are not. Everything a Christian does and says must come from a genuine and sincere heart. Hypocrisy and feigning are what people do when they have no true interest in something, but they know it is expected, so in order to fit in, they act as though they we are acting in love when in fact we are only acting to receive the praise of men. Living sacrifices who are transformed must work to actually comply with God's demands and expectations, not just settle for shallow actions. Yet all the while realizing that there are multitudes, even in our midst who are not what they appear to be.

*But **evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.** 2Tim. 3:13*

*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!** For you **cleanse the outside** of the cup and dish, **but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.** 26 Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. 27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!** For you are like **whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.** 28 Even so you also **outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.** Mt. 23:25-28*

envy,

While *agape-love* would lead Christians to be very happy with those who have good things happening to them, those in the world feel exactly the opposite.

***Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 16 Be of the same mind toward one another.** Rom 12:15-16*

***members should have the same care for one another.** 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. 1Cor. 12:25-26*

Sadly, those in the world do not rejoice at the good fortune of others. They feel that good fortune in others lessens them in some way, making them unhappy.

"*phthonos...* envy, is the **feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing the**

advantage or prosperity of others; this evil sense always attaches to this word..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT: 5355)

"*phthonos*... a **state of ill will toward someone because of some real or presumed advantage experienced by such a person** - 'envy, jealousy.' (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:5355)

"*phthonos*... , masc. noun. **Envy, jealousy, pain felt and malignity conceived at the sight of excellence or happiness** (Matt 27:18; Mark 15:10; Rom 1:29; Phil 1:15; 1 Tim 6:4; Titus 3:3; James 4:5). *phthónoi*, envyings, bursts of envy (Gal 5:21; 1 Peter 2:1). *Phthónos*, unlike *zelos* (2205), zeal, is incapable of good and always is used with an evil meaning. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT: 5355)

This feeling, though very common in the world, has no place in a church filled with loving brethren who have pure and holy hearts. Love banishes such things. This was the emotion Pilate saw in the Jewish leaders when they delivered him up to death. Before we obeyed the gospel, this was a feeling we all felt when something good happened to someone we did not like.

For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. 4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Titus 3:3-4

But after we obeyed the gospel and saw the love God had for us, this emotion no longer has any place in our heart and must be banished and replaced with love, generosity and happiness at the good fortune of others.

and all evil speaking,

This is a broad term that covers any misuse of the tongue to bring evil or bad thoughts about others from our mind into all who listen to us.

"*katalalia*.... **defamation, evil-speaking**..." (Thayer, NT:2636)

"*katalalos* a "**backbiter**," and *katalalia* (NT:2636), "**backbiting**," are formed from *kata*, "**against**," and *laleo*, "**to speak**." *Katalalos* is used in Rom 1:30. *katalalia* is translated "evil speaking" in 1 Peter 2:1, "backbiting" in 2 Cor 12:20. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:2636) .

"*katalaleo, katalalia, katalalos* ... "**to importune someone with speeches**," "**to prattle something to someone**" (Ps.-Luc. Asin., 12), "to blurt out" (Aristoph. Ra., 752), especially, "**to speak against, to accuse, someone**," **with a suggestion of the false and exaggerated: "to calumniate**," In the Septuagint (LXX) *katalalew* is mostly (9 times) in the sense of "hostile speaking," and in isolated instances of "**to scorn**," "**to mock at**" "**to revile**" (Job 19:3), or "**to calumniate**" (Ps. 100:5) etc. The main emphasis is on **the hostility denoted by kata-** , whether against God (Num 21:5,7; 77:19 ; Hos 7:13; Mal 3:13), his servant Moses (Num 12:8), or frequently one's neighbor (Ps. 49:20)..." (Kittel, TDWNT; NT:2637)

The tongue of the Christian should never be used to speak evil or say untrue things about others. The tongue is not designed for such things and no one should misuse it in this way. A holy tongue speaks only as the oracles 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. 1Pet. 4:11

Evil speaking is wrong for two reasons. First, it comes from a heart that is filled with malice or envy. No one speaks evil of another unless they have negative feelings toward them. The second reason it is wrong is because we are passing these terribly sinful feelings from one heart to another. It is bad enough that we have the feelings, worse yet that we are revealing that we have them, and reaches the very depths, when we ignite the same terrible feelings we have toward someone in the heart of another. This is how strife and the destruction of the unity of God's people often begins.

Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; and where there is no talebearer, strife ceases. 21 As charcoal is to burning coals, and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife. 22 The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, And they go down into the inmost body. Pr. 26:20-22

Love cannot grow unfettered in a garden full of such terrible thorns and weeds. They must be laid aside, stripped from our hearts and removed from the church as quickly as possible to become obedient children and to become holy as God is holy.

An ungodly man digs up evil, And it is on his lips like a burning fire. 28 A perverse man sows strife, And a whisperer separates the best of friends. Pr. 16:27-28

He who covers a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates friends. Pr.

17:9

2 as newborn babes,

In using the Greek relative pronoun “as,” the Spirit makes a direct “*comparison*” between a newborn baby and God’s people.

“*hos...* adverbial form of the relative pronoun *hos, he, ho*, which is **used in comparison, as, like as, even as, according as, in the same manner as**, etc. ... When thus used *hos* refers **a. to the manner (‘form’) of the action expressed by the finite verb, and is equiv. to in the same manner as, after the fashion of;** ...c. *Hos* makes reference to a similarity or equality... d. *hos* so makes reference to the quality of a person, thing, or action, as to be equiv. to **such as, exactly like, as it were**” (Thayer, p. 680-682; 5613)

It could be translated, “*like as, even as, according as*” or “*in the same manner as*” a newborn child. By “*making reference to a similarity or equality*,” this verse reveals that for the rest of our lives we should see ourselves as newborns in regard to God’s word, always longing for the spiritual milk of found in the word. This makes perfect sense since we have all be begotten and born again and are in fact from that moment, as the children of God, in need of spiritual sustenance to grow to a spiritual maturity. We should always long for the word of God in the same way that a newborn child longs for milk. This refers to the newly born or just after being born.

“*artigenetos... just born, new-born: 1 Pet 2:2...*” (Thayer, p. 75; 738)

For a time immediately after birth, the newborn can only drink milk and it is not even possible for them digest solid food. As Christians, this is not something we can ever grow out of. We must always be like newborns in this respect.

God’s children are to always be like new-born or just born infants. Such infants are not distracted with the smells of cooking in the kitchen, nor the sights and sounds around them, they have only one strong desire, the milk provided by their mother. This is the figure Peter is expressing here.

He is not contrasting the maturity of Christians as they pass from one level to the next. From the day of one’s birth (baptism) until the day of their physical death they must long for God’s word as a newborn babe. This is not the same figure as the one used in Corinthians and Hebrews:

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; 1Cor. 3:2

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. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Heb. 5:12-14

Some of his readers were elders! (1Pet, 5:1-4). Hence, whatever stage in their Christian development, all Christians should still be like these new born infants when it comes to their attitude toward the spiritual value of God’s Word to help them grow to maturity. We must never be distracted from it, it should never lose its essential value in our eyes. Just as the smells of a well cooked steak will not tempt a new born babe, the smells of human wisdom will not tempt those who long for the spiritual milk of the word.

desire the pure milk of the word,

epipotheo.... : **to long for something, with the implication of recognizing a lack** - ‘to long for, to deeply desire, deep desire.’ ‘the spirit which he has placed in us longs jealously’ or ‘the spirit that he placed in us is filled with jealous desire’ James 4:5. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT 1971)

epipotheo.... “**to long for greatly**” (a strengthened form of *potheo*, “to long for,” not found in the NT), is translated “I long,” in Rom 1:11; in 2 Cor 5:2, RV, “longing” (KJV, “earnestly desiring”); in 1 Thess 3:6 and 2 Tim 1:4, RV, “longing” (KJV, “desiring greatly”); (Vine’s Expository Dictionary NT:1971)

There root idea, which perfectly first that of the newborn is “*to long for something, with the implication of recognizing a lack.*” When one hears the hungry cry of a newborn infant, they are seeing an attitude that God longs to see in His own children toward the spiritual sustenance the word of God can give. This term is placed in the imperative mode and is to be understood as a command. God wants us to have a strong desire and a yearning with affectionate feelings

directed toward God and His Word.

As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? Ps 42:1-2

There are many passages and many different reasons for this. We need to learn them so we can long for the milk of the Word.

9 How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. 10 With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! 11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You. ... 14 I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches. 15 I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways. 16 I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word. 97 Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day. 98 You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies; For they are ever with me. 99 I have more understanding than all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my meditation. 100 I understand more than the ancients, Because I keep Your precepts. ... 105 Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path. ... 140 Your word is very pure; Therefore Your servant loves it. ... 162 I rejoice at Your word As one who finds great treasure. Ps. 119:9-11, 14-16, 97-100, 105, 140

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; 8 The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; 9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them Your servant is warned, And in keeping them there is great reward. Ps. 19:7-11

It is a great gift that we must learn to fully appreciate and long for in this manner if we are ever to gain its full benefits.

Yet this longing must be exclusively for the “**pure milk**” of the word. The term “*pure*” is used of things that have exactly what they are supposed to have within them and nothing else. Pure milk means that it has no additives or impurities in it.

“*adolos*... The sense of this adjective in 1 Peter 2:2 is now set at rest by its constant occurrence in the papyri in the sense of “**pure**,” “**unadulterated**.” ... “**wheat that is new, pure, unadulterated, and unmixed with barley**.” (Moulton & Milligan, Vocabulary of the Greek NT, NT:97)

adolos ... occurs only once in the N. T. (1 Peter 2:2), and is there beautifully translated ‘sincere,’—“the sincere milk of the word;” **see the early English use of ‘sincere’ as unmixed, unadulterated;** and compare, for that ‘milk of the word’ which would not be ‘sincere’ 2 Cor 4:2. We can only regard *adolos* it as setting forth the same excellent grace under another image, or on another side. Thus if the *akakos* has nothing of the serpent’s tooth, the *adolos* has nothing of the serpent’s guile; if the absence of willingness to hurt, of the malice of our fallen nature, is predicated of the *akakos*, the absence of its fraud and deceit is predicated of the *adolos*, the Nathanael “in whom is no guile” (John 1:48). (Trench’s Synonyms of the New Testament)

This word is actually the word “*guile*” used above with the “*alpha privative*” which denies and removes it. It is the “*without guile*” milk of the word. The purity of the word of God absolute. There is no admixture of human wisdom or anything from man. It is as pure and clean today as it was when it came from the hands of God.

Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. 6 Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar. Pr. 30:5-6

The words of the Lord are pure words, Like silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times. 7 You shall keep them, O Lord, You shall preserve them from this generation forever. Ps. 12:6-7

Your word is very pure; Therefore Your servant loves it. Ps. 119:140

The pure milk can only be stored within the word of God. God also likens it to the food that brings true strength and growth.

*And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. 3 So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that **He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord. Deut. 8:2-4***

There is some diversity in the translations:

as newborn babes, long for the **spiritual** milk which is without guile, (ASV)

like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the **word**. (NASU)
as newborn babes, desire the **pure/sincere** milk of the word, (KJV/NKJV)
like newborn infants, long for the pure **spiritual** milk, (ESV)
newborn babies you should crave (thirst for, earnestly desire) the pure (unadulterated) **spiritual** milk, (AMP)

like newborn babies, crave pure **spiritual** milk, (NIV)

The reason for this diversity is based on the term the Holy Spirit chose for “word.” While the common Greek term “word” is “logos,” and used 330 times, it is easy from the context of those uses to get a clear idea of its meaning in Scripture. That is also true of the second most common “hrema,” which is used 68 times. The word “logikos” is only used here and in Romans 12:1. This forced the translators to rely entirely on the use of this term in the Greek language. Because of its close ties to logos, some translators were content to simply translate it word. But since it also had two other uses, others wanted to go in that direction. Since it has these three possible meanings, only the context could be used, and they all fit well here.

logikos ... a. with reference to *leg-ein* “**belonging to speech**” ... “**instruments of speech**”). b. With ref. to *logos* ... “**belonging to reason**,” “**rational**.” In this sense it is a **favorite term in Greek philosophy**, esp. among the Stoics. ... (Kittel, TDWNT, NT NT:3050)

logikos ... **pertaining to “the reasoning faculty, reasonable, rational,”** is used in Rom 12:1, of the service (*latreia*) to be rendered by believers in presenting their bodies “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God.” **The sacrifice is to be intelligent, in contrast to those offered by ritual and compulsion; the presentation is to be in accordance with the spiritual intelligence** of those who are new creatures in Christ and are mindful of “the mercies of God.” (Vine’s Expository Dictionary NT:3050)

This is the term that has come directly into our language as *logic*. But is this the logic of the words (the absolute truth), or is it the logic of spiritual thinking. This same dilemma is also true in Romans. There, they did not translate it “word,” but with either “reasonable” or “spiritual.”

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. Rom. 12:1 (NKJV)

(which is) your spiritual service. Rom. 12:1 (ASV)

which is your **spiritual** service of worship. NASU

which is your **spiritual** worship. (ESV)

this is your **spiritual** act of worship. (NIV)

which is your **reasonable** (rational, intelligent) service and **spiritual** worship. (AMP)

Although any of these terms would be an acceptable translation, the context seems to favor *word* since it ties back to the “incorruptible” “seed” which is “*the word of God*.” This is the source of the new birth and all that follows it. The Word of God is what all Christians throughout their entire life should long for as milk. It is food for the spirit and soul and leads to growth and salvation.

that you may grow thereby, unto salvation

The conjunction “that” (*hina - purpose or end*) reveals the goal that the Holy Spirit had in mind as the purpose for the longing for this spiritual milk. We can therefore use this as a scale upon which to weigh the extent of our longing. If we are growing then we are longing for the milk, if we have stopped growing that longing has grown cold. Everyone needs to long for the spiritual milk God has given so that they might “grow” throughout their entire life on earth.

“*auxano*... 1. trans. *to cause to grow, to augment*... Pass. *to grow, increase, become greater*... 2.

acc. to later usage... intrans. **to grow, increase: of plants... of a multitude of people... of inward Christian growth**... so as to form a temple, Eph. 2:21...of the external increase of the gospel...”

(Thayer, p. 84; 837)

auxano ... **to grow, to increase in size, whether of animate beings or of plants** - ‘to grow, growth.’ ... ‘look how **the wild flowers grow**’ Luke 12:27; ‘**the child grew**’ Luke 2:40. ‘the whole body ... grows as God wants it to grow’ Col 2:19. In Col 2:19 is used figuratively in the sense that the reference of ‘body’ is the church rather than a physical body. Normally a term for ‘growth’ would imply not only size but also number, that is to say, the growth of the church would be in terms of the increase of members of the church, though it might refer to spiritual maturity...”(Greek-English Lexicon NT:837)

Spiritual growth is described as the same process as that of a child moving from infancy to adult, or a plant’s growth from seedling to becoming full grown, producing its own fruit. In exactly

the same way as people and plants, Christians grow from spiritual infancy to spiritual maturity. As Jesus revealed in the parable of the sower, the word will always produce maturity if the rocks and the thorns are removed. This is such an integral part of God's plan that our salvation depends upon it. He used (*eis* - *the purpose and means of entrance*) to emphasize that this is the purpose and intent of its being given.

Just as a baby must drink milk to grow, and if he refuses to eat and grow he dies, so also the Christians must eat to grow, for if he refuses to grow he too will die again. The gravest danger sign of sickness in an infant is when they are no longer interested in food. This is also true of Christians. When one loses this desire for the word, they are in danger of losing everything.

3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

The point of this seems to follow that of the infant child. A child tastes its mother's milk, and finds that it tastes wonderful. Part of the reason a child enjoys its mother's milk is its nutritional value, but a second powerful motivation is that it tastes good. A third value for the infant is the peace that comes from the closeness it brings to the mother. We must choose between the second and third. The God's word taste good, because He is gracious and we can draw near to Him. Truly there is both sweetness and comfort to this truth.

The "*if indeed*" (*ei*) makes this a simple conditional statement.

"*ei...* is **first a conditional particle, if...**; secondly, an interrogative particle, *whether... I ei* conditional... is connected, according to the variety of conditions, with various tenses and moods; viz. 1. with the Indicative of all tenses, **when anything is simply and generally assumed to be, or to be done, or to have been done, or to be about to be...**" (Thayer, p. 169-172; 1487).

There is no doubt about this! It is stated this way as a rhetorical comment forcing us to answer yes or no. Have we tasted or not tasted that the Lord is gracious? The answer is obvious if we have been born again and are growing as we ought to grow, but each Christian is asked here to carefully consider whether or not they have "*tasted*" it.

"*geuo...* **to cause to taste, to give one a taste of...** In the NT only... 1. *To taste, try the flavor of...* 2. *To taste, i.e. perceive the flavor of, partake of, enjoy...* fr. Hom. Down, i.q. *to feel, make trail of, experience...* 3. *To take food, eat... to take nourishment, eat...*" (Thayer, p. 114; 1089)

"*geuo...* The word means **taste, savor, eat**. Along with the literal meaning it is also used metaphorically... used of the steward of the feast (John 2:9) with reference **to the tasting of the water that had been turned into wine** for the purpose of examining it. Luke 14:24 associates it with the **tasting of a meal**. ... Heb 6:4,5 speaks **metaphorically of the tasting of the heavenly gift, the word of God and the powers of the future world**, and refers to the experience of such gifts as forgiveness and the gospel, which become present in the worship. In an OT citation (Ps 34:8) ... is transformed in 1 Peter 2:3 into the ind., "You have tasted"; as in Heb 6:4 f., personal experience subsequent to the new birth is in mind (see 1 Peter 1:3,23; 2:2). (Exegetical Dictionary of NT:1089)

When we first taste something, we have no idea what it will be like. The man at the wedding tasted what he thought was water and found it had become wine. Things can turn out to be bitter, sour, or unpleasant or they can be sweet, spicy and pleasant.

In this case, the taste is an emotional as well as a rational and spiritual one. Peter forced those who have been born again to give an answer to their own taste of these things. Peter used one of the Psalms as the basis of this conditional statement.

Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! 9 Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him. 10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing. Ps 34:8-10

Have we tasted and seen that the Lord is good, or as He sets forth here, "*gracious?*"

chrestos primarily signifies "**fit for use, able to be used**" (akin to *chraomai*, "to use"), hence, "**good, virtuous, mild, pleasant**" (in contrast to what is hard, harsh, sharp, bitter). It is said (a) of the **character of God as "kind, gracious,"** Luke 6:35; 1 Peter 2:3; "good," Rom 2:4, where the neuter of the adjective is used as a noun, "the goodness" (cf. the corresponding noun *chrestotes*, "goodness," in the same verse); of the yoke of Christ, Matt 11:30, "easy" (a suitable rendering would be "kindly"); (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:5543)

Everyone who has truly tasted the good word to come knows that serving Jesus is a very pleasant and useful experience. Filled with love and a desire to help, Christ, is pleasant, kind and benevolent. Anyone who has become a Christian and true servant of Jesus having taken

the yoke He offers to share with us has found the truth about this.

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

*30 “For My yoke is **easy** and My burden is light.” Mt 11:28-30*

Just as we sample a new food we have never tasted before, and find the taste to be very pleasant, and then go back and fill up our plate with it, God asks us to do the same with His word and Himself. All our dealings with God are pleasant, helpful and useful. We have already tasted this much when we are born again, it is now only a case of continuing eat the same food. Since we have found the taste to be very pleasing, fill up on it. *“Taste the heavenly gift and taste the good word of God and powers of the age to come.”* Then long for that milk that will keep us from falling away.

*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and **have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6** 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. Heb. 6:4-6*

NEW

4 Coming to Him

The gracious Lord, from the previous verse, the one we have tasted and grown to truly appreciate as kind benevolent, mild, and pleasant in ruling over us as Lord. It is interesting that God first sought to show Israel how difficult it would be for them if they rejected Him as their king by having Samuel tell them of the selfish things this king would do. (1Sam. 8) Later, after Rehoboam and Israel had parted ways and Judah went into apostasy, He once again wanted them to realize the difference between serving men and serving God.

*Now when the Lord saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, "They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance. My wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. 8 Nevertheless they will be his servants, **that they may distinguish My service from the service of the kingdoms of the nations.**" 2Chr. 12:7-8*

One would think that after Egypt, they would know the hard bondage and evil wickedness of those who were over them, but it is so easy to forget. We have come to Him and the more we taste and the more we understand, the more wonderful serving Him becomes. He rules for our benefit, so we were drawn to Him.

Peter is reminding them (and us), that after leaving the terrible bondage of sin and having come to Him, we too have found the difference between the service and bondage of men and the service and bondage of sin and the service and freedom of serving Christ. It is a refreshing and wonderful change that we can truly taste and enjoy. As a present participle, this is a continuous action. Something we must continue each and ever day. We have taken His yoke upon us and we are now prepared to remain with Him forever, coming again and again for guidance and forgiveness. The term *“coming”* has been used many times in the Scriptures. When used in the four accounts of the gospel, and in Acts, it has a primarily literally meaning of physically coming. But once we leave Acts, it takes on but a much more pronounced spiritual meaning.

*proserchomai ... occurs 86 times in the NT, most frequently in Matthew (51 occurrences). The other occurrences are in Mark (5), Luke (10), Acts (10), Hebrews (7), and John 12:21; 1 Tim 6:3; 1 Peter 2:4. People approach or come to Jesus for various reasons (the disciples in Mt. 5:1; ... John's disciples 9:14; ... the rich young man in 19:16; the mother of Zebedee's sons in 20:20; the woman who wants to anoint Jesus in 26:7; the women after Jesus' resurrection in 28:9). People who seek healing for themselves or others come to Jesus ... Matt 8:2: lepers; 8:5: the centurion's servant; 9:20 ... sick woman; Matt 9:28: two blind men; 15:30: the lame, crippled, and dumb during the feeding; ... is used in **1 Peter 2:4 (come to Jesus, the "living stone")** and in Heb 4:16 (**draw near to the throne of grace**); 7:25; 11:6 (**draw near to God**); 10:1,22 (**draw near to the sanctuary**); 12:18,22 (**come to Mount Zion**). ...” (from Exegetical Dictionary NT:4334)*

This is the term used here for our spiritual journey to Jesus, It is also used of drawing near the throne of grace, drawing near to God, the sanctuary and our coming to Mt Zion. These are spiritual destinations that can only be found on the path Jesus made for us. Coming to Jesus

and to God are only recognized by them when we do everything necessary to pass through the door and enter the path that leads to life.

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. 14 Because **narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.** *Mt. 7:13-14*

This is not something we do with our own mind or choices. To find our way back to God and to Jesus requires us to follow exactly what the Lord has commanded and then continue to do that as long as we want to continue to be “coming to Him.”

When Peter chose the word for come, he selected a compound word. Prefaced it with the preposition “pros” which is a preposition used when someone is moving toward something. He then used the verb “érchomai” which means to come. Hence this is “coming” “toward” or a “drawing near.”

prosérchomai; ... from *prós* (4314), to, and *érchomai* (2064), to come. To come to, approach as to location. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4334).

It is impossible to put this into English, but if you see it in Greek you catch it immediately. Peter said “pros” “pros - erchomai.” This gave special emphasis to the idea of coming or moving.

“pros a preposition,... I with the accusative, **to towards**,... denoting direction towards a thing, or position and state looking towards a thing... 1. of the goal or limit towards which a movement is directed... 2. It is used of close proximity -- the idea of direction, though not entirely lost, being more or less weakened;... 3. of relation or reference to any person or thing;... b. of the relation or close connection entered (or to be entered) into by one person with another...” (Thayer, p 541-543; 4314)

We need to understand that coming to Jesus requires a decision to continue moving in His direction, making Him the goal and limit of our movement. This preposition also conveyed the “the relation and close connection entered into by one person with another. It is difficult to say if all of this was in Spirit’s mind as He conveyed this to Peter, but it certainly could have been since all these things are listed elsewhere as the true intent of our relationship.

It is therefore the perfect preface for the figure Peter then introduced. Our closeness to Jesus is now described as Him being a living stone, and when we came to Him (in the manner He directed, and arrived at that destination), God also made us into living stones and at the same time, God joined us together with Him, and also with one another. We are now the stones in God’s Holy Temple (1Cor 3:) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone (Eph. 2.). For all who “come to Him,” are made by God to be “a holy priesthood, offering up spiritual sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ.”

as to a living stone,

As is often the case, the ASV has the most literal and true to the original grammar and word definitions. They have translated this: “coming, a living stone.” There is nothing in the original language to justify “as to” while we see this as a figurative concept, since it is a spiritual reality, we may find after this life is over that it was much more literal than symbolic. It is always better to translate it exactly and let the reader having “girded up the loins of the mind,” do the hard work required to work it out. This is one of many figures used in the Scriptures to Describe Jesus:

He is the living Stone	I Pet 2:1-7	He is God’s Beloved Son	Jn 3:16
He is the chief cornerstone	Eph 2:22	He is the Christ	Mt 16:16
He is the foundation	1Cor. 3	He is the Lord	Jn 13:13
He calls us brethren	Heb 2:10-15	He is the living bread	Jn 6:48-51
He is the husband/bridegroom	Eph 5:22-31	He is not of this world	Jn 9:5
He is King of kings	Rev 19:16	He is the door of the sheep	Jn 10:7
He is Lord of lords	Rev 19:16	He is the good shepherd	Jn 10:14
He is the Word	Jn. 1:1-4; 14	He is the resurrection and life	Jn 11:25
He is the Vine	Jn 15	He is the way, truth and life	Jn 14:6
He is the Head	Eph 1:22	He is King/Priest on throne	Ps 110: Heb 7
He is the light of the world	Jn 8:12	After the order of Melchizedek	Heb 7
He is the Lamb of God	Jn 1:29	He is the High Priest	Heb. 9:11

After reading through this list we can see that symbolism, parable, type and antitype and

spiritual realities beyond our comprehension are listed. This is simply another way to look at Jesus and the church.

As we go back into the Old Testament, the stones under consideration were the ones in the temple. While God initially set up His sanctuary on this earth as a moveable tabernacle where all the worship of God took place, and kept it that way for centuries, it came into David's mind to build Him a house. God waited until Solomon took the throne and then as Solomon built the house, stones were introduced. What had begun as the tabernacle in the wilderness was then built into a temple by King Solomon. This temple was the heart of Jewish worship to Jehovah. If a Jew wished to worship God, if he wished to offer a sacrifice to God, if he wanted to pray to God, then the temple was his focus. The OT temple was the heart of Jewish worship and sacrifice. It was here that the three feast days were commemorated where all the males had to appear. It was here that they brought their animal sacrifices. It was here that the heart of the Lord looked upon His people. The stones made up an integral part of that temple.

*Solomon had seventy thousand who carried burdens, and eighty thousand who **quarried stone in the mountains**, 16 besides three thousand three hundred from the chiefs of Solomon's deputies, who supervised the people who labored in the work. 17 And the king commanded them to **quarry large stones, costly stones, and hewn stones, to lay the foundation of the temple**. 18 So Solomon's builders, Hiram's builders, and the Gebalites quarried them; and they prepared timber and stones to build the temple. 1Kings 5:15-18*

*And the house, while it was being built, was **built of stone prepared at the quarry**, and there was neither hammer nor axe nor any iron tool heard in the house while it was being built. 1 Kings 6:7 All these were of **costly stones cut to size, trimmed with saws, inside and out**, from the foundation to the eaves, and also on the outside to the great court. 10 The **foundation was of costly stones, large stones, some ten cubits and some eight cubits**. 11 And **above were costly stones, hewn to size**, and cedar wood. 12 The great court was enclosed with three rows of hewn stones and a row of cedar beams. So were the inner court of the house of the Lord and the vestibule of the temple. 1 Kings 7:9-12*

Before David's death, he made it very clear to Solomon that all of these changes from the temple to the tabernacle were inspired by the Holy Spirit and like Moses, God made him to understand exactly how this temple, including these stones were to be built.

*Then **David gave his son Solomon the plans** for the vestibule, its houses, its treasuries, its upper chambers, its inner chambers, and the place of the mercy seat; 12 and **the plans for all that he had by the Spirit**, of the courts of the house of the Lord, of all the chambers all around, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries for the dedicated things; ... 19 "**All this**," said David, "**the Lord made me understand in writing, by His hand upon me, all the works of these plans**." 1 Chron 28:11-12; 19*

As Solomon prayed in the midst of dedicating this temple, He pleaded with God to have his eyes open to this temple and when people pray toward it, God will hear in heaven. Later, God revealed that He had heard this prayer, consecrated the house and promised that His eye and heart would be there perpetually.

*"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built! 28 Yet regard the prayer of Your servant and his supplication, O Lord my God, and listen to the cry and the prayer which Your servant is praying before You today: 29 that **Your eyes may be open toward this temple night and day, toward the place of which You said, 'My name shall be there,' that You may hear the prayer which Your servant makes toward this place**. 30 And may You hear the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. **Hear in heaven Your dwelling place; and when You hear, forgive**. 1Kings 8:27-30*

*And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished building the house of the Lord and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he wanted to do, 2 that the Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon. 3 And the Lord said to him: "**I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually**. 1 Kings 9:1-4*

Within one generation, 10 tribes were given to Jeroboam and never returned or used this temple until they were destroyed many generations later. Even before his death, Solomon had filled

Jerusalem with idols temples that competed with God's temple. Not long after his son Rehoboam came into power, this temple was forsaken. This began a terrible cycle that continued until the temple was destroyed. Under some kings they were compelled to worship in the temple, but as soon as that king died and a new one who was evil arose, there was seldom never any resistance from the people, and the high places remained as a temptation and plague to the people.

Ultimately, God made the decision to allow Nebuchadnezzar to destroy this temple. But even though this temple would be destroyed, God planned to replace it. This is the context of the stone, the builders the builders rejected and the living stones growing into a holy temple.

*The **stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.** 23 This was the Lord's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. 24 This is the day the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. Ps. 118:22-24*

When Jesus quoted this Scripture, He applied it directly to those who were persecuting and planning to kill Him. Jesus went a step further after quoting it, saying that the kingdom that Israel had possessed was now to be taken from them and given to the new nation over which He would preside as king. Ultimately, (and it was now drawing near), at the destruction, those who had opposed him would be broken and ground into power.

*Jesus said to them, "**Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.** This was the Lord's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'?" 43 "**Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.** 44 **And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."** 45 **Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them.** 46 **But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet. Mt. 21:42-46***

Paul also quoted this Scripture in Romans to explain why Israel rejected their Messiah and the Gentiles accepted Him. Israel had their preconceptions about what the Messiah would do when He came. Jesus did not meet those expectations so they rejected Him. This led them to stumble just as God had prophesied. He sent the Messiah they truly needed, but not the one they wanted. Thus they stumbled over Him.

*What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; 31 **but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.** 32 **Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.** 33 **As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."** Rom 9:30-33*

But God still made Jesus the chief cornerstone of the new temple He had always intended to build. Paul adds one more important detail. The apostles and prophets (because of their inspiration from the Holy Spirit) became the foundation of the true temple which the Lord built and not man.

*So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, 20 **having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,** 21 **in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;** 22 **in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. Eph 2:19-22***

This is how we were allowed to be the ones who are coming to this living stone.

rejected indeed by men,

There is a direct tie to one of the central themes of Peter. Much of the difficulty in grasping the supreme excellence of this living stone is the reaction by the majority of men. It is difficult to see something as precious when everyone else sees it as useless. The Holy Spirit takes up the challenge of explaining why Jesus was rejected by the Jewish nation even though He really was their Messiah. He also explained that God not only knew this would be the case, but had written about it hundreds of years before it occurred. The precious living stone was indeed rejected by men. The term "reject" is defined:

"apodokimazo... "to reject" as the result of examination and disapproval (apo, "away from," dokimazo, "to approve"), is used (a) of the "rejection" of Christ by the elders and chief priests of the

Jews, Mt 21:42; Mark 8:31; 12:10; Luke 9:22; 20:17; 1Peter 2:4,7 (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:593)

Once again the preposition modifies the meaning. While the root *dokimazo* means "to test, examine, prove, scrutinize ... and recognize as genuine after examination, to approve, deem worthy." By putting "apo" as a prefix, it still means to examine, test and scrutinize, but after doing all that pushing it away from them "apo" in rejection. This is exactly what happened as Jesus stood before Pontius Pilate, and he gave them one final chance to overrule their leaders and accept Him. But they too rejected Him.

But Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" 10 For he knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy. 11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd, so that he should rather release Barabbas to them. 12 Pilate answered and said to them again, "What then do you want me to do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?" 13 So they cried out again, "Crucify Him!" 14 Then Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, "Crucify Him!" Mark 15:9-14

As Peter and John stood before the same leaders who rejected and sought to have Him crucified, Peter brought up this same point.

let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead-- by this name this man stands here before you in good health. 11 "He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the very corner stone. 12 "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved." Acts 4:10-12

Men have indeed rejected the stone. It has been looked upon with contempt, disdain and disgust by the majority of mankind since its beginning, but it was nonetheless used, and has continued to lie exactly where it was placed by God.

but chosen by God and precious,

God's view of this stone was quite different from the Jewish rulers who rejected it as worthless. God considered this stone to be "elect:"

eklektos lit. signifies "picked out, chosen" (*ek*, "from," *lego*, "to gather, pick out"), and is used of (a) Christ, the "chosen" of God, as the Messiah, Luke 23:35 (for the verb in 9:35 see Note below), and metaphorically as a "living Stone," "a chief corner Stone," 1 Peter 2:4,6;..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1588

"eklektos... picked out, chosen... 2. choice, select, i.e. the best of its kind or class, excellent, preeminent..." (Thayer, NT:1588)

Since these plans go back into eternity, and God then chose the best methods and plans, for His purposes, this was the perfect stone. Like a miner looking for precious stones and finding a diamond see it as precious, God, who needed someone to prepare His children for eternity, saw Jesus exactly in this way. He was also "precious."

éntimos ... , adj. from *en* (1722), in, and *time* ... (5092), honor, esteem, price. Honored, estimable, dear (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT: 1784)

entimos lit., "in honor" (*en*, "in," *time*, "honor": 1), is used of the centurion's servant in Luke 7:2.

"dear" (RV marg., "precious... or honorable"): of Christ, as a precious stone, 1 Peter 2:4,6..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1784)

To the Father this wonderful living stone was held in honor and greatly prized. Jesus was precious and honorable to God. He was dear and valued very highly. He was the beloved Son in whom He was well-pleased. In God's sight this living stone, which was the chief cornerstone of the entire building was specially chosen and prized. They rejected Him, disallowed and did not meet their expectations, but to God He was the very best.

5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house,

Just as Jesus is the living chief cornerstone, those who have come to Him are "as" living stones.

hos... adverbial form of the relative pronoun *hos*, *he*, *ho*, which is used in comparison, *as*, *like as*, *even as*, *according as*, *in the same manner as*, etc. ... When thus used *hos* refers a. to the manner ('form') of the action expressed by the finite verb, and is equiv. *to in the same manner as*, *after the fashion of*; ...c. *Hos* makes reference to a similarity or equality... d. *hos* so makes reference to the quality of a person, thing, or action, as to be equiv. *to such as*, *exactly like*, *as it were*" (Thayer, p.

680-682; 5613)

Spiritually, we are “just as, like as, in the same manner” and “exactly like” living stones. The life came when we obeyed the gospel after being baptized into Christ. Paul explained exactly how this was done in Ephesians.

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ... 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ— 11 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— 12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ... 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, Eph 2:1, 4, 11-13, 19-20

Before we obeyed we were dead in our trespasses, but God made us alive together with Christ. Prior to that moment, as Gentiles, we were separated from, and alienated from the commonwealth. But when God made us alive, we became fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God. It was then that as living stones we were built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

In Romans and Colossians, Paul speaks of the exact moment this occurred.

Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. Rom 6:3-7

In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, Col 2:11-13

Peter simply adds one more figure. Not only were we born again and made alive from the dead, but we also came to Him, a living stone, and we became “just as, like as, in the same manner” and “exactly like” living stones! Not only were we born again, alive from spiritual death, but as regards to the temple that God is building, we are exactly like the living stones in that temple.

According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. 11 For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each man’s work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work. 14 If any man’s work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man’s work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire. 16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are. 1 Cor 3:10-17

Hence, not only are we the temple of the living God, but we are also to see ourselves “exactly as” those precious stones Solomon was inspired to use in building the first temple. By the manner we choose to live, we determine the type of stone we become. By grace we are living stones, but by our own efforts, we become stones of gold, silver or precious stones, or stones of wood, hay and stubble. The choice is ours.

It is this temple that God promised through Haggai to Zerubbabel that this new temple that Peter and Paul are speaking of would have far more glory than the first that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed.

4 Yet now be strong, Zerubbabel,’ says the Lord; ‘and be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the

high priest; and be strong, all you people of the land,' says the Lord, 'and work; for I am with you,' says the Lord of hosts. 5 'According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remains among you; do not fear!' 6 "For thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; 7 and **I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,**' says the Lord of hosts. 8 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the Lord of hosts. 9 '**The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,**' says the Lord of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the Lord of hosts." Hag. 2:4-9

When Paul returned to this truth that we are the temple of the living God, in the Second letter to the Corinthians He then tied it to another prophesy.

Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For **we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.** 2Cor. 6:16

When God revealed the sanctuary to Moses and had him built it according to the pattern, God explained exactly how he and the rest of Israel were to view it. After it's consecration, God would dwell with them in the midst of that holy tabernacle and be their God.

the **tabernacle** of meeting before the Lord, where I will meet you to speak with you. 43 And **there I will meet with the children of Israel,** and the **tabernacle** shall be sanctified by My glory. 44 So I will consecrate the **tabernacle** of meeting and the altar. ... 45 **I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God.** 46 And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them up out of the land of Egypt, **that I may dwell among them.** I am the Lord their God. Ex 29:42-46

After the destruction of the first temple and sanctuary, Ezekiel prophesied of the days when "David My Servant will be king over them." During these days, all would walk in God's judgments and keep His statutes and do them. God would then have made a covenant of peace and will set His sanctuary in their midst forevermore.

"David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. ... My servant David shall be their prince forever. 26 Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. 27 My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 28 The nations also will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore." Ezek. 37:24-28

Remember that God's sanctuary was first the tabernacle with the Holy and Most Holy place. This portion of the tabernacle was placed within the temple and continued to be called the sanctuary.

Then **he built the twenty-cubit room at the rear of the temple, from floor to ceiling, with cedar boards; he built it inside as the inner sanctuary, as the Most Holy Place.** 17 And **in front of it the temple sanctuary was forty cubits long.** 18 The inside of the temple was cedar, carved with ornamental buds and open flowers. All was cedar; there was no stone to be seen. 19 And **he prepared the inner sanctuary inside the temple, to set the ark of the covenant of the Lord there.** 20 The **inner sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high.** 1Kings 6:16-20

We are the stones of the temple, yet we also have access to the sanctuary within that temple. We will address this more fully when Peter speaks of our priesthood:

But **Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.** 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but **with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.** Heb 9:11-12

Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but **the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.** 24 For **Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;** Heb 9:23-25 NKJV

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith,

having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Heb 10:19-23

So at the same time we were born again, made alive and joined to Christ, we were also being built up a spiritual house. The term “built up” is defined:

“oikodomeo... to build a house, erect a building; a. prop. (a) to build (up from the foundation)... (b) contextually l. q. to restore by building, to rebuild, repair... (bb) Since both a Christian church and individual Christians are likened to a building or a temple in which God or the Holy Spirit dwells... the erection of which temple will not be completely finished till the return of Christ from heaven, those who, by action, instruction, exhortation, comfort, promote the Christian wisdom of others and help them to live a correspondent life are regarded as taking part in the erection of that building, and hence are said oikodomein, i.e. (dropping the figure) to promote growth in Christian wisdom, affection, grace, virtue, holiness, blessedness: absol. ... pass. to grow in wisdom, piety, etc. ... univ. to give one strength and courage, dispose to...” (Thayer, p. 439-440; 3618)

This is a rich NT term. Along with its two synonyms it captures the entire idea of the edification or building up of the members of the church. Here it is used of the NT temple which each member is built into. In God’s view, this is what they have become as a result of their coming to Christ. They are living stones, connected to the living corner stone and built up into a spiritual house for God to dwell in. Hence God’s temple is still built upon the earth. It is the church of Jesus Christ. Those who are members of the Church of Jesus Christ are the living stones of God’s temple today. No longer sitting in one city, it now spans the entire earth, and each member of the church no matter where they are is a living stone in this temple. It is no longer built of physical materials, but of spiritual ones.

a holy priesthood,

As noted above, the figure of the outside building of the temple can only carry the rich spiritual reality so far. Now Peter introduces another part of the picture. Not only are individual Christians the precious stones of God’s New Testament temple, but they are also the priesthood, who have the right to enter the sanctuary.

Under the Old Law, every aspect of work in the tabernacle and sanctuary was the domain of the Levites. The three sons of Levi were given to Aaron (who was also a Levite), and they were to “attend to His needs,” and “do the work of the tabernacle.”

These are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Ex. 6:16

“Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may serve him. 7 And they shall attend to his needs and the needs of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of meeting, to do the work of the tabernacle. 8 Also they shall attend to all the furnishings of the tabernacle of meeting, and to the needs of the children of Israel, to do the work of the tabernacle. 9 And you shall give the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they are given entirely to him from among the children of Israel. Num 3:6-10

In the beginning the work was divided into moving the tabernacle, and helping the High Priest and the priests who worked at the altar. In our age, Jesus is the High Priest, and we are doing the work of the Levites. God had prophesied through Jeremiah, that David would have a man on the throne and the Levites would always minister before him. This is where Peter is now moving.

*And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, 20 “Thus says the Lord: **‘If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season, 21 then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers. 22 As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.’” Jer 33:19-22***

We are a royal priesthood, because this is exactly what God meant and how He has multiplied both the descendants of David and the descendants of the Levites. Just as we, like Isaac are children of promise and Abraham’s seed, we are also the descendants of the Levites and of David.

So while the priesthood had been the exclusively domain of the offspring of Aaron, we are now a kingdom of priests.

1 "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ... 4 And they shall rebuild the old ruins, They shall raise up the former desolations, And they shall repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations. ... **6 But you shall be named the priests of the Lord, They shall call you the servants of our God.** You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, And in their glory you shall boast. Isa 61:1, 4, 6

and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, 6 and **He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father;** to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. Rev 1:5-7

And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, 10 **and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.**" Rev 5:9-10

Just as the priests and Levites under the Old Covenant were the only ones who could approach the tabernacle of God and minister to Him, today only Christians can do that. They alone could offer sacrifices to God, they alone could enter into the holy place of the temple, they alone had the right to a close access to God.

Now this has been changed. All Christians are priests. All Christians can seek forgiveness and offer up praise and thanks to God directly. He does not need to go anywhere special because wherever he is in God's temple. He does not have to seek for a priest for wherever he is there is a priest. No matter where he is he can offer prayers and petitions for forgiveness and wherever he is he can offer sacrifices. What great privileges and honors Peter here outlines as a Christian's possession through Christ.

to offer up spiritual sacrifices

Peter introduced an "eis" to express the purpose for being a stone in the temple and a holy priesthood. All Christians have been made priests for the purpose of (eis) "offering" spiritual sacrifices.

anaphérœ; , from *aná* (303), up, and *phérœ* (5342), to carry, bring, bear. To carry, bring up. ... (I) To carry or bring up (Matt 17:1; Mark 9:2; Luke 24:51; Sept.: 1 Sam 17:54; 1 Chr 15:3,12,14; 2 Chr 5:1,3,4; 29:31). ... (II) To offer sacrifices by bringing them up to the altar (Heb. 7:27 [cf. James 2:21]; Sept.: Gen 8:20; Lev 6:26; 14:19; Num 23:2; Judg 11:31; 2 Chron 1:6). Spiritually (Heb 13:15, referring to spiritual sacrifices which Christians are to offer in and through Him; 1 Peter 2:5). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT: 399)

In order to appreciate the depth of meaning of "offering" consider it's use elsewhere:

who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. Heb. 7:27

so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation. Heb. 9:28

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. 1Pet. 2:24

This is the term for the offering up of a sacrifice. It was used of the High Priest's offering up an animal in sacrifice for his sins and the sins of others. It was also used of Jesus offering his own body as the sacrifice for our sins. Now it is use of our offering up "spiritual sacrifices." The first one is the willing sacrifice of our own body:

I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Rom 12:1-2

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. 1 Cor 6:19-20

And also the things that God has directed us to do with our bodies:

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name 16 And do not neglect doing good and sharing; for with such sacrifices God

is pleased. Heb. 13:15-16

And you yourselves also know, *Philippians*, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; 16 for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs 17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. 18 But I have received everything in full, and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. Phil. 4:15-18

acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

These sacrifices are acceptable, yet the term generally means "a very favorable acceptance. *eu-pros-dektos* a still stronger form of No. 1, signifies a "very favorable acceptance" (*eu*, "well," *pros*, "towards," No. 1), Rom 15:16,31; 2 Cor 6:2; 8:12; 1 Peter 2:5. ... *dektos* ... denotes "a person or thing who has been regarded favorably," Lk 4:19,24; Acts 10:35; 2Cor 6:2 ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:2144),

Yet Peter is emphatic, these sacrifices are well pleasing because they have been offered through Jesus Christ.

Though the priesthood has been abolished, the need for a high priest to mediate between us and God has not. Jesus is our mediator Only by going through Him can we offer up anything that will be "well-received" and "acceptable" to God.

This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony borne at the proper time. 1Tim. 2:3-6

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. Jn. 14:6

6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture,

"Therefore" is the conjunction "*dioti*, which means "on this account" "that," "because..." What Peter has just written is now validated and proven true by the Scripture penned by Isaiah many centuries earlier.

Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed. Isa 28:16

This Scripture, written over 700 years earlier, was written by Isaiah, and is a classic example of what Peter had written in the previous chapter:

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, 11 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. 12 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. 1 Pet 1:10-12

God gave to Isaiah the right to prophesy of the latter days in a way that no other prophet either before or after did. He would have been the best example of what Peter wrote above.

"Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious,

With the term "behold" God calls attention to His action:

"idou, a demonstrative particle... found in the NT esp in the gospels of Matthew and of Luke, used very often in imitation of the Hebr.... and giving a peculiar vivacity to the style by bidding the reader or hearer to attend to what is said: behold! See! Lo!.... the simple idou is the exclamation of one pointing out something... and calling attention... in other places it is l.q. observe, or consider..." (Thayer, 2400)

This prophecy was given in Isaiah's day. God promised to lay a cornerstone. A cornerstone was wonderful for two different reasons. First, When it is selected and constructed, great care had to be taken. It must be of the right material. Sandstone would be easier to square, but would soon crumble and fall apart. Granite or marble would be much more difficult to smooth and square, but would be much more enduring. The quality of the stone, its beauty in appearance, its size, shape, squareness would all go into the assessment of its value.

It was essential that this stone be carefully chosen. All the building was affected by the angles of

this stone. If it is not square on all sides, and placed exactly where it needs to be, grave affects would be seen in the building. If it would not lie flat, and the walls could not be laid upon it, if it was not square, then the walls would not meet at the corners. Thus the cornerstone was selected with great care. It had to be just perfect to fit the need of the builder.

Because of its great precision and strength, it was an expensive stone. The second value is the promise it makes when it is laid. It is symbolic of a promise that something wonderful is about to be built. It is the promise that there will be a building. It is the promise that whatever that building is designated to do will soon be accomplished. If it is a hospital, a post office, a school, the promise of better health, of mail, and of the education of children is offered. If it is a store, or a factory, then the promise of jobs and commodities is offered. Nothing more surely manifests the intention of the builder to build than the laying of the cornerstone.

This is not the original Zion which was one of the hills Jerusalem was built upon, but the spiritual Zion and the heavenly Jerusalem.

*But you have come **to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem**, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. Heb. 12:22-24*

*For **these are the two covenants**: the **one from Mount Sinai** which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar — 25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and **corresponds to Jerusalem which now is**, and is in bondage with her children — 26 but **the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.** Gal. 4:24-27*

This is also a prophesy in Isaiah.

***In that day the Branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious**; And the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and appealing For those of Israel who have escaped. 3 And it shall come to pass **that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy — everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem.** 4 When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, 5 then **the Lord will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night.** For over all the glory there will be a covering. 6 **And there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain.** Isa 4:2-6*

and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.”

Those who put their trust and confidence in and do all things through him, making him the chief cornerstone in their life and allowing themselves to be built upon Him into a beautiful and valuable spiritual temple will never be shamed.

“kataischuno... 1. To dishonor, disgrace... 2. To put to shame, make ashamed... pass. To be ashamed, blush with shame... by a Hebr usage one is said to be put to shame who suffers a repulse, or whom some hope has deceived...” (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 331; 2617)

When someone bases their whole life on something, sacrificing and putting forth effort and then finds out that it was all in vain, they would be bitterly disappointed in the end, and only feel shame that they had done so because it ended in folly. No one who trusts completely in Jesus will ever find this happening to them. Though Isaiah used the word haste, the author of both books (The Holy Spirit) explained that the haste in Isaiah would be their running away in shame.

7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious;

With the repetition of “*oun*,” from 2:1, some other things are now going to follow necessarily from this prophesy.

“oun... a conj. indicating that something follows from another necessarily; ... it is used in drawing a conclusion and in connecting sentences together logically, then, therefore, accordingly, consequently, these things being so...” (Thayer, p. 463-464; 3767)

Because things are exactly as described in the previous verses, a very important conclusion must be drawn. The contrast began with the “*living stone*” that was rejected by men, but which by coming to Him, God’s elect have also become living stones in His new spiritual temple and

spiritual priests sons, sons of both Levi and David. He will now return to those who rejected the stone so we can see that God knew this was going to happen and had already decreed what would happen to those who rejected Him.

Because God had said in the previous prophesy that He would lay in Zion this chief cornerstone and that chief cornerstone had been laid, but it had indeed been "*rejected by men*," there are some absolutes that follow and must be true. For those who now believe, have accepted the chief cornerstone and have been built upon Him, there is a "*preciousness*." The difficulty here is where the preciousness is bestowed. It can be the preciousness of the cornerstone, or the preciousness of those who, connected to the cornerstone are also made precious. Both are true, and the grammar will allow both. The NKJV and NIV select the preciousness of the cornerstone (Jesus) and the ASV, NASU, ESV) select those who believe. The grammar will support either translation, and both are stated in this section of Scripture.

(1) *Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious (NKJV)*

(1) *Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. (NIV)*

(2) *For you therefore that believe is the preciousness: (ASV)*

(2) *This precious value, then, is for you who believe; (NASU)*

(2) *So the honor is for you who believe, (ESV)*

The term precious is used in a lot of different ways throughout the NT. It can be price and estimating the price on the one hand, but primarily, it is the honor and amazement that comes when one realizes the fullness of the value. It can also be reverence and veneration when the person is of much higher value than we realized.

"time...(fr. tio, to estimate, honor,...)... (a valuing, rating)... 1. a valuing by which the price is fixed; hence the price itself: of the price paid or received for a person or thing bought or sold... 2. honor which belongs or is shown to one: the honor of one who outranks others, pre-eminence... veneration, ... deference, reverence..." (Thayer, p. 624; 5092).

Those who believe will receive high honor because of their relationship to the cornerstone, and because of the great transformation of themselves by God prior to being placed as a stone in the temple. This is how God views us. Hence in the eyes of our Creator and God Jesus is precious for becoming the chief and precious cornerstone and we are precious and held honor because we have done the calculations and valuations and fully believing God, see Jesus as precious.

but to those who are disobedient,

The second thing that follows from this prophesy is that those who reject and are disobedient to the truth are going to face some serious consequences. Since God laid the cornerstone all who reject if are disobedient to Him. The term "*disobedient*" or "*unbelieving*" comes either from "*apisteo* or *apeitheo*," but there is no real difference in the way it is translated. Both terms have as their root meaning one who refuses to believe. The difference is in perspective, the latter refuses to even be persuaded, while the former simply withholds belief. Once belief is withheld, since belief is commanded, they also become disobedient.

apisteo "to be unbelieving" (*a*, negative, *pistis*, "faith"; cf. *apistos*, "unbelieving"), is translated "believed not," etc., in the KJV (except in 1 Peter 2:7, "be disobedient"); "disbelieve" (or "disbelieved") in the RV, in Mark 16:11,16; Luke 24:11,41; Acts 28:24; "disbelieve" is the best rendering, implying that the unbeliever has had a full opportunity of believing and has rejected it; some mss. have *apeitheo*, "to be disobedient," in 1 Peter 2:7; Rom 3:3, (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:569)

apeitheo *apeitheia*... lit., "the condition of being unpersuadable" (*a*, negative, *peitho*, "to persuade"), denotes "obstinacy, obstinate rejection of the will of God"; hence, "disobedience"; ... "*peitho* and *pisteuo*, 'to trust,' are closely related etymologically; the difference in meaning is that the former implies the obedience that is produced by the latter, cf. Heb 3:18-19, where the disobedience of the Israelites is said to be the evidence of their unbelief Faith is of the heart, invisible to men; obedience is of the conduct and may be observed. When a man obeys God he gives the only possible evidence that in his heart he believes God. Of course it is persuasion of the truth that results in faith (we believe because we are persuaded that the thing is true, a thing does not become true because it is believed), but *peitho*, in NT suggests an actual and outward result of the inward persuasion and consequent faith." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:543; 544)

The vast majority in Israel refused to give Jesus faith and trust and since it was required became disobedient. This was also true of the builders or leaders in Israel who refused to build anything with Him. Peter then quotes the prophesy that teaches exactly this truth.

“The stone which the builders rejected

As noted above, this passage is found in Psalms 118:22 and is quoted verbatim.

The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner stone. 23 This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. 24 This is the day which the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Ps 118:22-24

There is no doubt that the builders were the Jewish rulers living when the Messiah came. Both Jesus and Peter accused them of exactly that. The rulers along with the vast majority of all the people looked Jesus over and decided He was not for them.

*Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the Scriptures, **‘The stone which the builders rejected, this became the chief corner stone; this came about from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?** 43 **“Therefore I say TO YOU, the kingdom of God will be taken away FROM YOU, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it. 44 “And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.” 45 And when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that HE WAS SPEAKING ABOUT THEM. 46 And when they sought to seize Him, they feared the multitudes, because they held Him to be a prophet. Mt. 21:42-46***

As did Peter during the trial after healing the lame man.

*This is the **'stone which was rejected BY YOU builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'** Acts 4:11-12*

When the word became flesh and dwelt among us, Jesus was sent by God, and John the Baptist was sent before Him to confirm it. After the confirmation Jesus began all the preparations that were necessary for Him to “*build my church.*” He had the plans from God that had been drawn up in eternity, (Eph 3:6-11) and came to prepare the builders who would complete the project after His death and sitting on the throne.

In order to truly see the fulness of this passage, we must compare it with other passages that speak of the same time. After Solomon's temple was destroyed, they waited seventy years for it to be rebuilt, but those men who had seen the first temple were greatly dismayed and disappointed with the rebuilding because the size and splendor were greatly disappointing. These people wept because the physically rebuilt temple was far smaller and inferior to Solomon's.

*But **many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers' houses, old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Yet many shouted aloud for joy, 13 so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard afar off. Ezra 3:12-13***

Both Haggai and Zechariah were instrumental in motivating the builders (the elders of the Jews) to rebuild this temple.

*So **the elders of the Jews built, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they built and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the command of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. 15 Now the temple was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius. Ezra 6:14-16***

But God had witnessed their weeping and commented on it later through Haggai, who was the contemporary of Zechariah, promising them that the size of the temple meant nothing! He would be with them as He had promised when they came out of Egypt and that was the true purpose for the temple. If God was satisfied with it, they should not be bitter and weeping like this.

*In the seventh month, on the twenty-first of the month, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying: 2 **“Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying: 3 ‘Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, is this not in your eyes as nothing? 4 Yet now be strong, Zerubbabel,’ says***

the Lord; 'and be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all you people of the land,' says the Lord, 'and work; for I am with you,' says the Lord of hosts. 5 'According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remains among you; do not fear!' Hag. 2:1-5

God then promised that there would be another temple and another builder who would far surpass the glory, not only of this rebuilt one, but also are greater than the one Solomon had built.

Take the silver and gold, make an elaborate crown, and set it on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. 12 Then speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, saying: "Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, And He shall build the temple of the Lord; 13 Yes, He shall build the temple of the Lord. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both."' Zech. 6:11-13

In Haggai, God further elaborates that this new temple would also be filled with the glory of the nations (those Peter was speaking to in this letter), who would fill this new temple with glory. When God said "The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former," He was revealing that it would be greater even than Solomon's

"For thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; 7 and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the Lord of hosts. 8 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the Lord of hosts. 9 'The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the Lord of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the Lord of hosts." Hag. 2:6-9

When the writer of Hebrews explained this prophesy more fully, He revealed that the shaking would not only bring the Gentiles into this temple as noted above, but that it would end with the shaking and removal of all material things. He then equated the temple with the kingdom.

whose voice then shook the earth; He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." 27 Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire. Heb. 12:26-29

This was the explanation of what He had just revealed about the great difference between what was done on Sinai and the building of the tabernacle, and what was done when Jesus came and build the tabernacle within the temple.

For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, 19 and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. ... 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. Heb. 12:18-19; 22-24

What a terrible loss to those who refused to help Jesus who was sent to build and graciously allowed men to help Him. But they did not want to help Him so they rejected Him. Yet God still made him the head of the corner and used "unlearned and ignorant men" to become the builders.

Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. Acts 4:13

These unlearned and ignorant men, inspired by the Holy Spirit, helped lay and became a part of the foundation and also helped shake the nations and bring the glory into this temple.

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built

together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. Eph 2:19-22

how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: ... 8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; 10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord Eph. 3:3-4; 8-11

The Jewish rulers should have accepted Jesus and allowed Him to lead guide and direct them to build the glorious temple God had promised. Instead, Jesus was forced to work with the unlearned and ignorant men who were fishermen. The Jewish leaders, like Saul of Tarsus should have been the apostles, but they rejected and killed him. They would not build anything with Him, instead they sought to destroy Him.

Paul explained the who process in great detail. Israel sought for something that it could not obtain because they would not humble themselves and seek it by faith. When God sent them something different from what they wanted, they stumbled over the stumbling stone. Although Paul had a great desire for them to be saved, he knew from prophesy and personal experience that their zeal for God, which was not according to knowledge would lead them to forever reject God's offer.

but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.

32 **Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.** 33 As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God Rom 9:31-33; 10:3

As Paul continued, he explained that Israel as a whole including the builders had not and never would obtain what they were seeking. But those who did proved themselves to be chosen and elect. Once again their own desires had blinded them and led them to stumble. Yet through that fall God was still able to build and bring the cast off Gentiles back into His plans. Paul still felt as though if it were possible to bring them back in as builders that it would be a great blessing to the church. Think of what it would have been like if there had be 10 or 100 men like Paul?

What then? **Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.** 8 Just as it is written: "God has given them a spirit of stupor, Eyes that they should not see And ears that they should not hear, To this very day." 9 And David says: "Let their table become a snare and a trap, A stumbling block and a recompense to them. 10 Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see, And bow down their back always." 11 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. 12 Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! 15 For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? 16 For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. Rom 11:7-12; 15-16

has become the chief cornerstone,"

Jesus, who was dwelling on an equality with God and emptied himself to become a bond servant was highly exalted by God sitting Him at His right hand. He was a beloved Son who kept all God's commands and was therefore the perfect and only chief cornerstone.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is

above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil. 2:5-11

He was perfect to be made "head of the corner" (literal Greek as the ASV) which is their idiom for our "chief cornerstone."

made the **head of the corner** ASV become the **chief cornerstone** NKJV
become the **cornerstone,** **THE VERY CORNER** stone," NASU ESV

What man assessed and cast away as worthless God saw as having the greatest value. What Jesus brought to Israel was spiritual royalty, forgiveness, and eternal life. What fleshly Israel wanted was political power and dominion which only lasts while this life endures.

8 and "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense."

The Spirit now selects another passage from Isaiah to draw His final thought out on this matter.

"It is the LORD of hosts whom you should regard as holy. And He shall be your fear, and He shall be your dread. 14 "Then He shall become a sanctuary; but to both the houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over, and a snare and a trap for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 15 "And many will stumble over them, then they will fall and be broken; they will even be snared and caught." 16 Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. Isa. 8:13-16

The stone that to others is the chief cornerstone upon which we seek to be joined as living stones is to others simply a stone for "stumbling."

"*proskomma... A stumbling-block... i.e an obstacle in the way which if one strike his foot against he necessarily stumbles or falls;... stone against which the foot strikes...*" (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 547; 4348)

"*proskomma... "an obstacle against which one may dash his foot" (akin to *proskopto*, "to stumble" or "cause to stumble"; *pros*, "to or against," *kopto*, "to strike"), is translated "offense" in Rom 14:20, in v. 13, "a stumblingblock," of the spiritual hindrance to another by a selfish use of liberty (cf. No. 1 in the same verse); so in 1 Cor 8:9. It is used of Christ, in Rom 9:32-33, RV, "(a stone) of stumbling," and 1 Peter 2:8,..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4348)*

It describes an object left in the smooth path of the road that becomes an obstacle. If you are walking at night, or just not paying attention, that you could strike your foot against it and stumble over. At it's worst this stumble could lead to broken bones which if one falls the wrong way could lead to death. It is used spiritually here to describe the fall of the Jewish leaders into spiritual blindness and folly. John the Baptist came to build a highway. He would fill in the valleys and bring down the mountains for a smooth path. God then set the chief cornerstone into the entrance of that highway. Those who rejected Him fell over this obstacle and never entered the path.

There will be a highway for the remnant of His people Who will be left from Assyria, As it was for Israel In the day that he came up from the land of Egypt. Isa 11:16

A highway shall be there, and a road, And it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, But it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road, although a fool, Shall not go astray. No lion shall be there, Nor shall any ravenous beast go up on it; It shall not be found there. But the redeemed shall walk there, 10 And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, And come to Zion with singing, With everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, And sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isa 35:8-10

"A voice is calling, 'Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the rough ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley; 5 Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, And all flesh will see it together; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'" (Isa 40:3-5 - NASB)

For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace, And for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, Until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, And her salvation as a lamp that burns. 2 The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, And all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, Which the mouth of the Lord will name. 3 You shall also be a crown of glory In the hand of the Lord, And a royal diadem In the hand of your God. Isa. 62:1-3

Go through, Go through the gates! Prepare the way for the people; Build up, Build up the highway! Take out the stones, Lift up a banner for the peoples! 11 Indeed the Lord has

proclaimed To the end of the world :"**Say to the daughter of Zion, Surely your salvation is coming; Behold, His reward is with Him, And His work before Him.**" 12 And they shall **call them The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord; And you shall be called Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.** Isa. 62:10-12

The term "offense" is similar to the one above. It also describes something that one would stumble over, but this time it can also mean the trigger that brings a snare or trap into action.

"skandalon... prop. the movable stick or trigger of a trap, trap-stick; a trap, snare; any impediment placed in the way and causing one to stumble or fall.... [a stumbling block, occasion of stumbling]..." (Thayer, P. 577; 4625)

"skándalon ... The trigger of a trap on which the bait is placed, and which, when touched by the animal, springs and causes it to close causing entrapment. The word and its deriv. belong only to biblical and ecclesiastical Gr. always denotes an enticement to conduct which could ruin the person in question. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT: 4625)

The life and death of Jesus were both so far below the expectations of the Jews (and of the Gentiles) that they just could not accept it. In the act of rejection they fell spiritually with no possibility of rising again unless they changed their mind about Him. I Cor 1:18-25 gives some insight into this. God created man to be a humble, kind, and loving child. Those who refused this reasonable demand became not only rebellious, but also hateful and malicious. God could not tolerate such in his kingdom. If they could not be changed then there was nothing further to be done with them.

For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside." 20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since in the wisdom of God **the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.** 22 For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; 23 but **we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block (skandalon), and to Gentiles foolishness,** 24 but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. I Cor 1:18-24

They stumble, being disobedient to the word,

They fall over the very thing that God sent to save them. Mk. 16:15-16 says the same thing in different words. Go and preach to all. Those who listen and obey will be saved, those who listen and reject will be condemned. When the saving grace of the gospel is rejected, it shows the evil and wicked heart of the one rejecting it. God has then done all He can. Nothing further can be done when one stumbles over the very thing God gave to save. They are being disobedient. The Spirit introduces the alternative word given in the Textus Receptus, and possible the reason why it was placed there.

"apeitheo... not to allow one's self to be persuaded; not to comply with; a. to refuse or withhold belief... b. to refuse belief and obedience..." (Thayer, p. 55; 544)

apeitheia "the condition of being unpersuadable" (a, negative, peitho, "to persuade"), denotes "obstinacy, obstinate rejection of the will of God"; hence, "disobedience"; Eph 2:2; 5:6; Col 3:6, and in the RV of Rom 11:30,32 and Heb 4:6,11 (for KJV, "unbelief"), speaking of Israel, past and present. (Vines # 544)

These people refused to allow themselves to be persuaded. Peter took this up in his first sermon in Acts 2. God approved of Jesus by mighty works, wonders, and signs, but they killed Him. They refused to be persuaded by God's testimony of Him or by His teaching. They either would not consider the evidence, and refused to be persuaded even after hearing it. Because of this they did not obey the word God had sent to them. This is the position that all who persecute Christ and His church are in.

to which they also were appointed.

Peter uses eis to describe the purpose to which they were appointed. This was the end result of their deeds.

"eis,... a preposition governing the Accusative, and denoting entrance into, or direction and limit: into, to, towards, for, among. ... 3. it denotes the end; and a. the end to which a thing reaches or extends, i.e. measure or degree... b. the end which a thing is adapted to attain... c. the end which

one has in view, i.e. object, purpose;... d. the end by which a thing is completed, i.e. the result or effect... (Thayer, NT:1519).

Because they were rebellious and refused to be persuaded God found a different use for them. Peter spoke of this in his first sermon and in his comments after they were arrested and threatened. They thought they were the victors, that they had fought against Jesus and won. But like all who fight against the infinitely wise God, He already knows everything we are going to do and has already set it up so that we only end up doing exactly what He wanted done. That is exactly what Peter said happened to these Jews who stumbled and fell.

Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; 24 whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. Acts 2:23-25

"For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28 to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. Acts 4:27-28

Paul also spoke of this in a universal sense. There are two types of men here on the earth at any given moment, those who seek God, want to do His will whom He calls "vessels of mercy" and there are those who hate God and all He stands for whom He calls "vessels of wrath."

For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth." 18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens. 19 You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" 20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?" 21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor? 22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? Rom 9:17-26

Paul then used the same Scripture Peter will use in the next verse to make his application.

As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, And her beloved, who was not beloved." 26 "And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' There they shall be called sons of the living God." Rom 9:17-26

All of this is captured in "appointed," which means to place set or put something down. When God does that, it is fixed, absolute and permanent.

"tithemi... 1. to set, put, place, ... hence a. to place or lay... of the dead laid to rest somewhere, ... Mid. to have one put or placed...b. to put down, lay down... c. to set on(serve) something to eat or drink... d. to set forth, something to be explained by discourse... 2. to make... Middle to make (or set) for one's self or for one's use... to make one one's own... to make one a friend... to appoint one to (destine one to be) anything, ... Middle to appoint for one's use... to appoint one to one's service... to appoint with one's self or in one's mind... 3. to set, fix, establish, ... a. to set forth... b. to establish, ordain..." (Thayer, p. 622-623; 5087).

Those who walk through this life with their eyes closed to the rock will inevitably fall over it. The rock is there, lying across the path of every human who will ever live. Each one of us, as Israel before us has the opportunity to take the rock God used as the chief cornerstone and make it a part of our lives. If we do this we will be built upon that stone and enter the highway of holiness. But if anyone refuses to accept Jesus as the Christ, they will fall over Him. Just as those who believe are appointed for salvation and eternal life, so also those who reject it are appointed to fall and to be destroyed.

In order to keep a clear view of the context, we must remember their circumstances. They are being prepared for severe persecution, loss of liberty and even death. (1Pet. 1:7-8; 4:12-19). Rome's persecution of the church, and the destruction of the Jewish nation is now just a few short years away. Life as these people have known it is about to be ripped from them. Whether they are Jew or Gentile, upheaval is soon to begin. Their citizenship as a Jew or in the Roman empire was about to undergo some very drastic changes.

Satan would seek to use these circumstances as the means of destroying the faith and peace of

God's people. Either their faith in God or their patriotism was about to be torn from them. God will now prepare them for the loss of their nation by reminding them of the true nation they have now become citizens.

1Peter 2:9-11

9 But you are a chosen generation,

Peter has been drawing a contrast between those who reject the stone and those who come to the stone:

Those who Came	Those who Rejected Him
Coming to Him as to a living stone (2:4) Chosen by God and precious , (2:4) You also, as living stones (2:5) Being built up a spiritual house , (2:5) A holy priesthood , (2:5) To offer up spiritual sacrifices (2:5)	Rejected indeed by men (2:4) To those who are disobedient (2:7) The stone which the builders rejected (2:7) A stone of stumbling (2:8) And a rock of offense (2:8) They stumble , being disobedient to the word (2:8) To which they also were appointed (2:8)
Acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (2:6) In Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious (2:6) To you who believe, He is precious (2:7)	

Since Peter last contrasted in 2:7-8 those who rejected Jesus caused Him to become a “stone of stumbling,” a “rock of offense,” to them, they did indeed stumble! They became disobedient to His word just exactly as the prophecy had proclaimed and God had determined to treat them. Now Peter begins with a new section and prefaces it with a term that would lead them to see the return to those on the left side of the chart above. This is a distinctive “*but*” that leaves the disobedient behind and returns again to those who have chosen to believe and obey Jesus.

“*de...* a particle adversative, distinctive, disjunctive, *but, moreover...* It is used 1. univ. by way of opposition and distinction; it is added to statements opposed to a preceding statement...” (Thayer, NT:1161)

Just as Jesus as the living stone was chosen by God to be elect and precious, those who come to Him as living stones are also chosen, elect and precious. Each of these descriptions is a quotation of something God initially said about Israel. It is based on Jesus statement to the builders after they rejected Him.

*Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'? 43 "Therefore I say to you, **the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.** Mt 21:42-44*

Everything Israel had been given by God as part of the blessings of being the offspring of Abraham was removed from the physical portion who rejected Him, but given again to those who accepted the stone and allowed God to build with them through their obedience.

The term “*generation*” was translated as *generation* (KJV; NKJV) and as *race* (ASV; ESV; NASB). The definition tends to lean more toward race, as do the Scriptures that this passage has been taken from.

“*genos...* race, stock, family, ... from Ithaca I am by race, ... to be of his race, ... II. offspring, even a single descendant, a child, Lat. genus, 2. collectively, offspring, posterity, III. a race, in regard to number, a clan or house, ... at Athens as a subdivision of the *phratia*... a tribe, as a subdivision of *ethnos* ... a caste, of animals, a breed, 2. a race in regard to time, an age, generation,...” (Liddell and Scott, Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:1085)

"For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. 7 The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; 8 but because the Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Deut. 7:6-8

Many centuries later, God was still speaking to them in exactly the same way.

"Yet hear me now, O Jacob My servant, And Israel whom I have chosen. 2 Thus says the Lord who made you And formed you from the womb, who will help you: 'Fear not, O Jacob My servant; And you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. 3 For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring; 4 They will spring up among the grass Like willows by the watercourses.' Isa. 44:1-4

Paul also described how the kingdom was removed from fleshly Israel and given to the spiritual

Israel, the church. He uses the type and shadow of Abraham's two sons as the symbolic means to explain how all who enter the kingdom through the new birth of baptism, and immediately added to Abraham's offspring just like Isaac was.

*For it is written that **Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.** 23 **But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise,** 24 which things are symbolic. **For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar —** 25 **for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children —** 26 **but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.** 27 **For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children Than she who has a husband."** (from Isa. 54:1)" 28 **Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.** 29 **But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.** 30 **Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."** 31 **So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.** Gal. 4:22-31*

Paul had already explained to those in Galatia how they become the children of the freewoman and the children of the Jerusalem from above. We truly are the like Isaac, born of promise and not of the flesh.

*Therefore **know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.** 8 **And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."** 9 **So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.** 26 **For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.** 27 **For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.** 28 **There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.** 29 **And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.** Gal. 3:7-9; 26-29*

Paul also explained this to the Romans. First, Paul revealed that Abraham is the father of all who have his faith, not the father of those who have his blood. Only those in Israel who shared his faith were the children God intended to bless. If we have the faith of Abraham, then it doesn't matter who nation we are from. We are all made his children, just as God promised him.

*Therefore **it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all** 17 (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed — God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; Rom 4:16-18*

As Paul addressed those who had been cast off, Paul made it clear just as he did to the Galatians that Abraham was taken by God and allowed to have Isaac as a son of promise, so that when the church was established, all those who were born again could become just like Isaac and also be the children of promise.

*But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For **they are not all Israel who are of Israel, 7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called."** 8 **That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.** Rom 9:6-9*

It was Jeremiah who revealed that there would be another covenant with the house of Israel that would be fundamentally different from the one given at Sinai. This change would allow everyone entered into the new covenant to immediately know God. This was a major difference between the covenant at Sinai and the one from Jerusalem. Under the first covenant, the covenant was entered at the moment of circumcision, and then the children as they grew to maturity were taught the Law and to know the Lord. This created a serious problem as the vast majority of those in this "covenant" never did grow up to know the law or keep His law. Since all that was necessary was a genealogy that tied them to fleshly Abraham and circumcision, multitudes grew up who never knew the Lord.

God promised this would change. Under the new covenant, all would know Him. There would not be anyone in this covenant that did not know God and have His laws written in their hearts.

This is the new “elect” or “chosen” “race” that Peter is now speaking to.

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 11 None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. 12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." 13 In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. Heb. 8:10-13

Paul revealed more about this new covenant and how the laws would be written in hearts.

You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; 3 clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart. ... 5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, 6 who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. 18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Cor 3:2-6, 18

So while those who refused to believe Him would stumble over Him (2:8), those who believe are given the right to join themselves to the cornerstone and become living stones in the temple. As living stones, they are also priests who minister spiritual sacrifices to the Lord. But because this figure does not completely describe the fulness of what those who believe in Jesus become, the Holy Spirit now adds this term.

Their connection to the elect and precious cornerstone has allowed God to make them the “choice” and “select” and “elect” group. Thus what God felt about His Son, He now feels toward those who have accepted Him. All who truly believe in Jesus Christ and are living a life of obedience to the gospel as revealed by the apostles and prophets have become choice and select to God. All who are baptized and continue faithful have joined the ranks of those mentioned in Hebrews 11. Their faith and trust in God having led them to be like their father Abraham, this is sealed the very moment they are baptized and receive the new birth. As we continue to put our full confidence in Christ and His resurrection, the same righteousness that was imputed to Abraham is imputed to us.

And therefore 'it was accounted to him for righteousness.' 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, 24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25 who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification. Rom. 4:22-25

With Abraham as our father and Christians now the recipients of all the promises God gave to Abraham, we truly are the chosen and elect race. Just like Isaac was are all children of promise. All that Israel could have been but rejected has now been given to the church.

a royal priesthood,

Although Peter has already revealed that those living stones who come to Jesus are a holy priesthood, Peter now adds the term “royal” as a further description of nature and quality of this priesthood.

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. 1 Pet 2:5

“basileios... royal, kingly, regal... much oftener in ... plur. The royal palace...” (Thayer, P. 98; 934)

There are two ways that we can take this idea. The first is a prophecy given by Jeremiah. Here, just as David will not lack a son on the throne (Jesus), the number of descendants of David and of the Levites will be like the host of heaven or the sand of the sea. Hence, all Christians are Levites and descendants of David. This would truly make us a royal priesthood as we now have the role of both David (Judah) and the Levites (Levi). Thus we are to see ourselves as both of royal lineage and of priestly lineage.

15 'In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David A Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. 16 In those days Judah will be saved, And Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.' 17 "For thus says the Lord: 'David shall never lack a man to sit on the

throne of the house of Israel; 18 nor shall the priests, the Levites, lack a man to offer burnt offerings before Me, to kindle grain offerings, and to sacrifice continually." Jer 33:15-18

The other means of understanding this would be in the same sense as anything connected to a palace where there is a king would be considered royal. The royal servants are not themselves kings, but because they are connected to a king. It may be that our royalty as priests is more from our service to the King of kings and Lord of lords.

*I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, 14 that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, 15 which He will manifest in His own time, **He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power.** Amen. 1 Tim 6:13-16*

This would follow the same line of reasoning found in Hebrews. Jesus was a priest of the tribe of Judah sitting on His throne only because of a change in the Law (Heb 7:7-14) and the priesthood.

*For **the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.** 13 For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. 14 For it is evident that **our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.** 15 And it is yet far more evident if, **in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest** 16 who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. 17 For He testifies: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." Heb. 7:12-17*

Now, because of this change in the law, the temple had changed, the priesthood changed and the tribe of royalty changed. Christians have all the benefits of the royalty that the tribe of Judah conferred on David, and all the benefits of the priesthood that the tribe of Levi conferred on Aaron. All Christians (both male and female) have these benefits. All of this because of our relationship with Jesus Christ. All that the priesthood and the royalty meant to those living under the Old Covenant has now been offered to all those who are members of the church.

For the word we do as royal priests attending to our king, refer back to the comments in 1 Peter 2:5.

a holy nation,

The term "holy" introduced in the first chapter is now developed again. Earlier in the book, the Holy Spirit spoke of the holiness we must work to gain by our own efforts.

but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." 1Pet. 1:15-16

Yet that effort will never bring us to the holiness God demands. So through the death of Jesus and the shedding of His blood, true holiness is offered by grace.

*Do you not know that **you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?** 17 If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For **the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.** 1 Cor 3:16-17*

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love** Eph 1:3-4*

This is the perfected holiness that God gives by grace. It is a great comfort that we are a holy nation not based on our efforts, but upon God's grace. Yet God demands that we work as hard as we possibly can and never rely on His grace alone. We should be giving our bodies as a living sacrifice and putting forth all our efforts to do so. Paul described exactly what God expects us to do.

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that **you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God,** which is your reasonable service. 2 And **do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,** that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Rom 12:1-2*

The great nation promised to Abraham did not end with the destruction of Jerusalem. It was moved to the spiritual nation. From the first sermon Peter preached until the end of the age, the holy nation will continue to grow and thrive all over the world.

Eph 2:11-13

Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh — who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands — 12 that **at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.** 13 **But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.** ... 16 and that He might **reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.** 17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. 18 **For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.** 19 **Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,** 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, Eph 2:11-20

Jesus had already revealed that this was exactly what God had planned.

“And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.” John 10:16

When each obeyed His voice through the preaching of the apostles (Mt. 28:18-20), whether the recently cast off Jews or the long ago cast off Gentiles, all became fellow citizens with the saints.

Christians are now the holy nation producing the fruit of the kingdom. This is the wonderful gift God had given to the church. Because they are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus being the chief cornerstone, they are now all the Israel had been meant to be. Our new King Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords. He reigns over all the nations of the earth. Since no one can enter this kingdom without being washed and cleansed (John 3:3-5), and since only God does the placing of each person into the kingdom this nation can only be filled with holy people.

And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved. Acts 2:47

He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. Col. 1:13-14

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 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. Phil. 3:20-21
But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. Heb. 12:22-24

His own special people, / a people for (God's) own possession(ASV)

Peter's final description of the living stones built upon God's precious chief cornerstone are now God's "people."

“laos... people; 1. A people, tribe, nation, all those who are of the same stock and language... the people whom God has chosen for himself, selected as peculiarly his own...” (Thayer, P. 372; 2992)

They were the tribe, nation, and people of the same stock and language. Their heritage came through Adam, Seth, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all the way through to Jesus Christ. (Lk. 3:23-38). All share the same spiritual language, customs etc. All belong to God. The term “for” is the preposition “eis” which offers the reason and purpose for why we are a people. We are a people “for the purpose of” God's own “possession.”

“peripoiesis, (peripoieo); 1. A preserving, preservation.... to the preserving of the soul... Heb 10:39...

2. Possession, one's own property... 1 Pet 2:9; Eph 1:14... 3. An obtaining... 1 Th 5:9; 2 Th 2:14...” (Thayer, P. 504; 4043)

peripoiesis, lit., "a making around" (peri, "around," poieo, "to do or make"), denotes (a) "the act of obtaining" anything, as of salvation in its completeness 1 Thess 5:9; 2 Thess 2:14; (b) "a thing acquired, an acquisition, possession," Eph 1:14, RV, "(God's own) possession" [some would put this under (a)]; so 1 Peter 2:9,..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4047).

Peter will fill in the details of this possession in the next passage. They had not been God's possession, but they now are God's possession, only because God took the initiative to

purchase. He bought us with the blood of his son and now we belong to Him.

*Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd **the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. Acts 20:28** Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and **you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. 1Cor. 6:19-20***

It is very important for Christians to understand this truth. Christians are God's special possession. Out of the entire creation, when everything in the material has been dissolved, and the souls of the wicked are eternally separated from Him, what remains are His own purchased possession.

that you may proclaim the praises of Him

"*That*" is a conjunction that generally connects a previous thought to the next one by emphasizing the purpose and design of the previous thought to bring about the end and goal of the succeeding one.

"hopos (fr. pos and the relat. ho) with the indicative, relat. adverb but, like that Lat. UT, assuming also the nature of a conjunction... I. as an Adverb; as, in what manner, how; once so in the N. T. ... II A Conduction, ... that ... 1. It denotes the purpose or end, in order that; with the design or to the end that; that; ... 2. As in the Grk. writ. also ... hopos with the subjunctive is used after verbs of praying, entreating, asking, exhorting, to denote what one wishes to be done..." (Thayer, p. 450; 3704)

Since this term expresses both the purpose and the end result. God has made us stones in the temple, a holy priesthood, and his own possession in order that all would proclaim His praises.

to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. Eph 1:6** to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be **to the praise of His glory. Eph 1:12

*who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, **to the praise of His glory. Eph 1:14***

God has only one expectation of His children. It is much the same as that which we expect from our own children. We raise them in hopes that they will have a good life and that they will love honor and praise us for the good we have done them. Parents ask no more than this of their children and God expects no more than this from His. We are to "*proclaim*" His praise:

"exaggello... properly, to tell out or forth... to declare abroad, divulge, publish... with Hebraistic emphasis, to make known by praising or proclaiming, to celebrate... 1 Pet 2:9..." (Thayer, P. 220; 1804)

"exaggello... "to tell out, proclaim abroad, to publish completely" (ek, or ex, "out," angello, "to proclaim"), is rendered "show forth" in 1 Peter 2:9; (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1804)

In going into all the world to preach the gospel, we are also to declare abroad and publish to all who will listen the "excellencies" or "praises" of our God. This is a broad term used in two different ways. The first way is of our own excellence in seeking to be the very best we can be in every possible way. Second, as here, it is our understanding of all the things that make God excellent and the very best in every possible way. He deserves our greatest awe, reverence and respect, because in every way that we could compare, He is far greater. This is what we should be proclaiming out to all who will hear.

"arete,...a word of very wide signification in Grk. writ.; any excellence of a person (in body or mind) or of a thing, an eminent endowment, property or quality. Used of the human moral goodness... 2. any particular moral excellence, as modesty, purity; ... Used of God, it denotes A. His power... b. In the plur. His excellences, perfections ..." (Thayer, p. 73; 703).

arete ... properly denotes whatever procures preeminent estimation for a person or thing; hence, "intrinsic eminence, moral goodness, virtue," (a) of God, 1 Peter 2:9, "excellencies" (KJV, "praises"); here the original and general sense seems to be blended with the impression made on others, i. e., renown, excellence or praise..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:703)

There are so many things to extol about God. His creative genius in the physical creation. His grace, mercy and love in the spiritual realm. His promises, His power, His compassion and patience. All that can be said about God and what He has done for us and with us!

Bless the Lord, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name! 2 Bless the Lord, O my

soul, And forget not all His benefits: 3 Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, 4 Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, 5 Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. Ps. 103:1-5

The Lord is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. 9 He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever. 10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor punished us according to our iniquities. 11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; 12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. 13 As a father pities his children, So the Lord pities those who fear Him. 14 For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. Ps. 103:8-14

What is there about God that we could not speak abroad as a special quality that motivates us to serve Him?

who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

When Jesus came into the world, He found sin and darkness. Yet He came to shine a light into this darkness and offer those who were God called all His people from out of the darkness of death and despair.

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. Jn. 1:4-7

Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. 36 While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." Jn. 12:35-36 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. 6 **For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.** 2Cor. 4:3-6

God called us from a terrible spiritual state of blindness. With God, with great power and wisdom, crafted the words of the gospel that would call all who would listen to leave the state of darkness and bring them into the light. The term "call" described the loud call such as a mother or father might use to bring their children in for dinner, or which any one of us might use to warn another of some danger they can escape if they are made aware of it.

"kaleo... to call... a. to call aloud, utter in a loud voice... with gen of place, l. q. to call out, call forth from metaph. to cause to pass from one state into another... b. to invite... (... everywhere in the N. T. Epp. only those who are spoken of as called by God who have listened to his voice addressed to them in the gospel, hence those who have enlisted in the service of Christ..." (Thayer, p. 321-322; 2564)

God made this call through the preaching of the gospel.

14 And it was for this **He called you through our gospel**, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2Th. 2:14

Whenever the gospel is preached, God is calling to that individual to leave the darkness and come to the light. Peter focuses more on the darkness here because it reveals the terrible nature of where we were compared to the wonderful blessings of where we are now. This is the fourth time he has done this

not conforming yourselves to **the former lusts**, as in your ignorance; 1:14

your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 1:18

you have purified your souls in obeying the truth 1:22

The darkness from which we came was the vile and corrupting darkness of ignorance, sin and rebellion.

"skotos ... a neuter noun, ... (a) of physical darkness... (b) of intellectual darkness, ... (c) of blindness, ... (d) by metonymy, of the place of punishment... (e)... metaphorically, of moral and spiritual darkness, ... (f) by metonymy, of those who are in moral or spiritual darkness, Eph. 5:8, (g) of evil works, ... (h) of evil powers that dominate the world, ... (l) of secrecy... with the exception of secrecy... darkness is always used in a bad sense. ..." (Vine, Expository Dictionary Vol 1 p. 267-

269).

Without God and the teachings of Jesus, man is shrouded in the deep and impenetrable shadow of intellectual darkness and moral blindness. Those who were in “moral or spiritual darkness.” Only God can call out of darkness and only God can lead us back to the light. God therefore called us out of the darkness (*eis-* for the specific purpose that we might enter into) His light. Yet it is not simply called the light, but a “marvelous” light!

“thaumastos... wonderful, marvelous; i.e. a. Worthy of pious admiration, admirable, excellent: 1 Pet 2:9... b. Passing human comprehension... c. Causing amazement joined with terror; Rev 15:1,3... d. marvelous i.e extraordinary, striking, surprising... Jn 9:30...” (Thayer, NT:2298)

This is the adjective of the noun that described Jesus miracles as “wonders” and the verb that described the “amazement, admiration, and awe” that were created when we see such amazing things. This light that God has created has much about it to be admired and held in amazement! It has all the wonderful qualities of physical light.

“phos... light... 1. prop. a. univ... b. by meton. anything emitting light: a heavenly luminary (or star, ... fire, because it is light and gives light,... a lamp or torch... c. light i.e. brightness (Lat. splendor), ... 2. phos is often used in poetic discourse, in metaphor, and in parable; a. The extremely delicate, subtle, pure brilliant quality of light has led to the sue of phos as an appellation of God, i.e. as by nature incorporeal, spotless, holy, ... b. by a fig. freq. in the N. T. ... phos is used to denote truth and its knowledge, together with the spiritual purity congruous with it... the saving truth embodied in Christ and by his love and effort imparted to mankind... c. By a fig. borrowed from daylight phos is used of that which is exposed to the view of all:... openly, publicly... D. reason, mind; the power of understanding esp moral and spiritual truth...” (Thayer, p. 663-663; 5457)

What the sun, moon, and stars do in the heavens and flashlights and electrical lights do in our homes, God’s truth does for the soul. The truth of God’s word is the light for our feet.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Ps. 119:105

God has also put spiritual light into the gospel. A marvelous light that grows lighter and lighter with the passing years.

But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines brighter and brighter until the full day. 19 The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know over what they stumble. Pr. 4:18-19

10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God,

This is an obvious allusion to the prophesy spoken through Hosea the prophet. God had asked him to name his children “no mercy” and “not my people.” Yet after so naming them, he then promises that the time will come when once again God will have mercy on Judah and will make those who had not been God’s people to become His sons.

And she conceived again and bore a daughter. Then God said to him: “Call her name Lo-Ruhamah, for I will no longer have mercy on the house of Israel, but I will utterly take them away. 7 Yet I will have mercy on the house of Judah, will save them by the LORD their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword or battle, by horses or horsemen.” 8 Now when she had weaned Lo-Ruhamah, she conceived and bore a son. 9 Then God said: “Call his name Lo-Ammi, for you are not My people, and I will not be your God. 10 “Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not My people,’ there it shall be said to them, ‘You are sons of the living God.’ Hosea 1:6-10

When God cast off Israel (the ten tribes who went to Assyria) and Judah (the remaining two tribes who went to Babylon), they were not His people and no longer had His mercy. They had become as cast off as the Gentiles had been. God did call a small remnant back, but after they crucified Jesus and proclaimed “we have no king but Ceasar,” God rejected and took the kingdom from them. During that fifty day period from the Passover to the Pentecost was a bleak period in human existence, but on the day of Pentecost, God called and multitudes came out from the darkness and back into the light. At the same time those who were not my people, became His people, and those who had no mercy, received mercy. Peter was given a great role in all this as he is the one who first called back Israel in Act 2, and when he preached to Cornelius’ household, he was again calling to those who were not God’s people (Gentiles) to become God’s people (Acts 10). In this way Peter used the keys of Christ’s kingdom(Mt 16:19),

and fulfilled Hosea's prophesy.

23 "And I will sow her for myself in the **land. I will also have compassion on her who had not obtained compassion, and I will say to those who were not My people, 'You are My people!' And they will say, 'You are my God!'" Hos. 2:23**

Paul carefully explains the full nature of this.

24 **even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.**

25 **As He says also in Hosea, "I will call those who were not My people, 'My people,' And her who was not beloved, 'beloved.'" 26 "And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, 'you are not My people,' There they shall be called sons of the living God." Rom. 9:24-**

26

After the crucifixion and ripping of the temple veil, there were no people. The Jews had rejected their King and the Gentiles had been cast off. They were between covenants. All had to hear and obey the gospel to once again return to covenant relationship with Him. That is what all those reading this letter had done. They had not been God's people, now they are!

This is the strong contrast that man needs to see to appreciate the blessings we have received. What a privilege to be a member of the church! A living stone in the temple, a royal priesthood, etc. At a time when they were separate from Christ, living in darkness with no hope and no promises, God had preached the gospel to them. What a wonderful change in fortunes had occurred.

Only when this is fully explored can they appreciate what they have. Those who are not God's people live in the darkness. They have no instructions from God regarding how to live their lives to the fullest, they have no power to keep themselves from being enslaved to sin and ungodliness. They have no hopes to look forward to after death. They have nothing. But now they have all of that. Their praise ought to be sincere indeed. Their thanksgiving, and joy should be above language to describe.

who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Before coming to Christ they had not obtained mercy. There is no "mercy" outside of Christ.

*"eleos... mercy; kindness or good will towards the miserable and afflicted, **joined with a desire to relieve them;**..." (Thayer, P. 203; 1653)*

*"eleos is the **outward manifestation** of pity; it **assumes need on the part of him who receives it, and resources adequate to meet the need** on the part of him who shows it." (Vines Expository Dictionary 1656)*

The Elements/Ingredients of Mercy:

1. Feelings of pity, sympathy, empathy and compassion in the heart

*"In Greek, **eleos**(mercy) is a **pathos**(strong emotion), ...the emotion roused by contact with an affliction which comes undeservedly on someone else. ... in the face of the unfortunate this emotion is an **eleein** which includes the elements of both awe and mercy... in this sense of mercy, sympathy is very common. (Kittel Vol 2 p. 477-487)*

Mercy begins with *"the emotion roused by contact with an affliction which comes undeservedly on someone else."* The Greeks called these emotions *pathos*(Latin *passio*-) because all afflictions create a powerful sense of loss and anguish. When we are afflicted, these emotions come without any conscious thought or effort. When we suffer a death in the family, a terrible accident, illness, or financial setback, *our* heart fills with strong emotions of sorrow and grief. Because we have all felt such emotions, we know exactly how others feel when similar things happen to them. When we hear of *their* anguish and sorrow(*their pathos/passio*), one of three things will occur. We will feel it with them(sympathy), we will feel as though we are inside them(empathy), or we will refuse to feel anything(apathy). These terms were copied directly from Greek into English(the prefix modifying the stem *pathos*):

Empathy – (em-pathos) – "em" – "in" pathos – strong emotion – "to feel strongly within"

Sympathy – (sum-pathos) – "sum" – "with," pathos – (Latin: com- passio) – "to feel strongly with"

Apathy – (a-pathos) – "a" – negates (alpha-privative) pathos – "to feel nothing"

When the Priest / Levite passed the robbed, stripped, half dead man, they either felt nothing (*apathy*) or the emotions were not strong enough to move them. So they left him there. When the Samaritan saw him, he was moved with compassion and this compassion (*latin: com - passio*) moved him to be merciful. Thus the first component/ingredient of *mercy* is “*feeling with*” or “*feeling as inside*” another. When we feel unmoved or unmotivated by their plight, we are “*apathetic*,” and “*apathy*” is the greatest enemy of the *merciful*. If we see *their* suffering as *their* own problem to be resolved with *their* own resources we will have no mercy. Even if we did help them it would not be mercy. We could do it because of the expectations of others and the shame it might create within us if they saw we did not help. We might do it “*to be seen by men*” hoping for their praise (Mt 6:1-4). But though they may move us to do something, neither shame nor pride can move us to *mercy*. Mercy begins when we feel within our own hearts the strong emotions surging within theirs (*empathy*) and continue to suffer with them (*sympathy*). When *empathy* and *sympathy* become “*natural affections*” we will always be ready to show mercy. If we want to grow in mercy we must cultivate “*the emotion roused by contact with an affliction which comes undeservedly on someone else.*” Whenever we hear of troubles in the lives of others and we must learn to go beyond just hearing about it. We must seek to understand what they are feeling. Then with understanding we can feel it with them, then seek to work with them to find a solution. Mercy is doing for others in their troubles what we would want others to do for us in our own.

All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets. Mt. 7:12

The Holy Spirit summed up the different emotions / attitudes that will help us with tender mercy: *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. Col 3:12-15*

What an amazing blessing that our God naturally feels this mercy because of His righteousness and *agape* love. God feel sorrow and love for all men (Jn. 3:16). He wants all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. But the desire to relieve the afflicted is limited by His righteousness that demands fairness and equity. Thus we can feel mercy toward the victim and the criminal, but the victim deserves full mercy, while the criminal must be punished though again with mercy. Yet God was able to create a gospel that would take criminals and pay for their crimes so they could receive the mercy of the victim. This too was the promise through Hosea to all who had been cast off. While they were in the darkness there was no mercy. They were still cast off. But when they entered God’s marvelous light, they were given mercy. Now that they are in the light, they have this mercy.

“*nun...* adv. now ... 1. adv. of Time, *now*, i. e. at the present time; a. so used that by the thing which is now said to be or to be done the present time is opposed to past time. b. opp. to future time... used to distinguish this present age, preceding Christ’s return, from the age which follows that return...” (Thayer p. 430; 3596)

To appreciate the nature of this mercy we now have think of what it would be like to know God but to have it revealed that there is no mercy. It is this that gives the power to Jesus promise that we will find rest to our souls (Mt. 11:28-30).

1 Peter 2:11-12

Introduction:

This passage is the introduction to a series of exhortations, Peter will make concerning our relationships. He begins with three general principles that God's people are to keep foremost in their mind.

First, All faithful servants of the Lord must master their fleshly lusts. They make war against the soul and one or the other will be destroyed. If the soul is to be saved, the lusts must be destroyed,

Second, Letting our light shine must be a high priority in the lives of all who are interested in converting as many as possible. If we want them to ask about the reason for the hope that is in us, we have our conduct honorable among them.

Third, As they see our good works, they will glorify God in the day of visitation.

Hence the battle over fleshly lusts must be decisively won. Our soul and the honor of our God and His Son, are important things for Christians to work upon. Peter then speaks of five areas where this will occur. These are things where our fleshly lusts will be most prominently observed. First, we must be in complete submission to civil government. Second, we must be exemplary in our work ethics as we serve either an employee or a master. Third, our marriage relationship as husbands and wives must be conducted as the Lord decreed and not as the aimless conduct passed down from our fathers. Finally our relationships in the church as brethren in Christ. Summing up:

1. We must abstain from fleshly lusts which war against our soul.	<u>2:11</u>
2. We must keep our conduct honorable among the Gentiles.	<u>2:12</u>
3. They must see our good works.	<u>2:12</u>
i. We must submit to every human institution.	<u>2:13-17</u>
ii. Servants must submit to their masters.	<u>2:18-25</u>
iii. Wives must submit to their husbands.	<u>3:1-6</u>
iv. Husbands must live with their wives according to knowledge.	<u>3:7</u>
v. Christians must be of one mind, etc.	<u>3:8-12</u>

11 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims,

Although Peter has addressed these people in a variety of different ways, this is the first he has used a term of expressing his feelings toward them. After Jesus washed the disciples feet and after he identified Judas as the traitor and Judas left, Jesus told them:

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one (agapao) another; as I have loved you (agapao), that you also love (agapao) one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love (agapé) for one another. Jn. 13:34-35

The term Peter used here is the adjective *agapétos* which takes all the different elements of *agapé* and makes them into an attribute. Thus a person who exercises to get strength is strong and a someone who studies to gain knowledge and wisdom is a "wise" person. In this case, because they have become all of these things, they have made themselves beloved.

<u>1:1</u> Pilgrims	<u>1:22</u> Obeying Truth	<u>2:9</u> Chosen generation,
<u>1:2</u> Elect	<u>1:23</u> Born again.	<u>2:9</u> Royal priesthood,
<u>1:3</u> Begotten again	<u>2:2</u> Newborn babes	<u>2:9</u> Holy nation,
<u>1:14</u> Obedient children	<u>2:5</u> Living stones	<u>2:9</u> Own special people.
<u>1:15</u> Holy	<u>2:5</u> A Spiritual House.	<u>2:9</u> Called out of darkness
<u>1:22</u> Purified in soul.	<u>2:5</u> Holy Priesthood	<u>2:10</u> Obtained mercy

Because of all these things, they are now the "beloved," both to God and to one another.

"agapetos, ... beloved, esteemed, dear, favorite... (opposed to ethros, enemy Rom 11:28): is applied to Christians as being reconciled to God and judged by Him to be worthy of eternal life... But

Christians bound together by mutual love, are *agapetoi* to one another... (Philem 16; 1 Tim 6:2); hence, they are dignified with this epithet very often in tender address, both indirect (Rom 16:5,8; Col 4:14; Eph 6:21, etc.) and direct (Rom 12:19; 1 Cor 4:14; (Philem 2, Rec.); Heb 6:9; James 1:16; 1 Peter 2:11; 2 Peter 3:1..." (Thayer p. 4-5; NT"27)

While here on earth, several times, God spoke of Jesus as His beloved son. His service to God had endeared Him to God. Just as God looking down upon Jesus and seeing His faithful service and righteousness called Him a beloved son, by grace we are all now beloved.

*And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My **beloved** Son, in whom I am well pleased." Mt 3:17*

Jesus revealed exactly how this occurred.

*"As the Father loved (**agapao**) Me, I also have loved (**agapao**) you; abide in My love (**agapé**) (**agape**) . 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love (**agapé**) , just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love (**agapé**) . Jn. 15:9-10*

Jesus made the same promise to all of us. If we will keep His commandments we will abide in His love in exactly the same way He did with God. Paul spoke in a similar manner to Philemon about his runaway slave Onesimus.

*I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, 11 **who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.** ... 15 For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might receive him forever, 16 **no longer as a slave but more than a slave — a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you,** both in the flesh and in the Lord. Philm. 10-11; 15-16*

Those who have been joined to God's temple and built next to the chief corner stone are now as beloved to God as His Son was. God sees us as His beloved children and He esteems us very highly. We are His dear and special people. Yet Peter not only refers to the relationship they now have with God, but also the relationship that also brings to each other. Peter also felt they were beloved. Since we are God's dear children, we are all beloved brothers and sisters in Christ. Peter draws from this closeness to build the rapport that will make his next command.

I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims,

While the newer translations have "urge" (NASB, ESV, NIV), and "beg" (NKJV), the older translations have beseech (KJV, ASV). and the Yet this is more than a command, it is a special encouragement offered to those he loves. This is also brought out by the term "beg:"

*"parakaleo... I. **to call to ones side, call for, summon:**... II. **to address, speak to;**... which may be done **in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, etc. hence result a variety of senses...** 1. **to admonish, exhort;**... 2. **to beg, entreat, beseech;** ...3. **to console, to encourage and strengthen by consolation, to comfort;**...4. **to encourage, strengthen;**...5. it combines the ideas of *exhorting* and *comforting* and *encouraging;*... 6. *to instruct, teach...*" (Thayer, p. 482-483; 3870)*

parakaleo "to call to a person" (**para**, "**to the side,**" **kaleo**, "**to call**"), denotes (a) "to call on, entreat"; see BESEECH; (b) to admonish, exhort, to urge one to pursue some course of conduct (always prospective, looking to the future, in contrast to the meaning to comfort, which is retrospective, having to do with trial experienced), translated "exhort" ..." BESEECH: *parakaleo* ... the most frequent word with this meaning, lit. denotes "to call to one's side," hence, "to call to one's aid." It is used for every kind of calling to a person which is meant to produce a particular effect, hence, with various meanings, such as "comfort, exhort, desire, call for," in addition to its significance "to beseech," which has a stronger force than *aiteo* (see ASK). (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:3870)

This term, made up of "*para*" and "*kaleo*" is used well over 100 times in the New Testament. It has a variety of uses, but the root idea of the term is "...*to call to ones side...*" It carries the idea

of closeness. As a parent, wanting to comfort a child, will call them to their side and put their arm around them. This is a term generally used in the New Testament, even when the context requires a rebuke of admonishment to express the care and concern of the writer or speaker. Though they could command or instruct, they choose to call to their side. Hence there is emotion in the term. Most often the emotion of love. It is therefore most often translated with terms like “*admonish, exhort, beg, entreat, beseech, console, encourage, strengthen, comfort, strengthen.*” Peter seeks to use words that will give as much motivation as possible to his words.

Again Peter reminds them of what they are. He called them “pilgrims” in 1:1. He now repeats that word with the addition of “sojourners.” Both these terms emphasize the same thought:

parepidemos an adjective signifying “sojourning in a strange place, away from one’s own people” (*para*, “from,” expressing a contrary condition, and *epidemeo*, “to sojourn”; *demos*, “a people”), is used of OT saints, Heb 11:13, “pilgrims” (coupled with *xenos*, “a foreigner”); of Christians, 1 Peter 1:1, “sojourners (of the Dispersion),” RV; 2:11, “pilgrims” (coupled with *paroikos*, “an alien, sojourner”); the word is thus used metaphorically of those to whom Heaven is their own country, and who are sojourners on earth. (Vine’s Expository Dictionary NT:3927),

“*par-oikos*... 1. in Class. Grk. *dwelling near, neighboring*. 2. in the Scriptures *a stranger, foreigner, one who lives in a place without the right of citizenship... one who lives on earth as a stranger, a sojourner on the earth.*” (Thayer p. 490; 3941)

In the NT *paroikos* occurs 4 times, *paroikia* twice, *paroikeo* twice; ... The close connection with ideas present in the OT may be seen in the fact that in all the NT references there is either quotation of the OT or allusion to it. In the introduction to his address at Pisidian Antioch Paul in Acts 13:16-17 recalls the *paroikia* of Israel in Egypt: ... Of the remaining passages Heb. 11:9 is particularly important. Among the great heroes of faith in the OT Abraham is mentioned because on the basis of Gen 23:4 ... Because he will one day be a citizen of the heavenly city, he is a resident alien on earth. Cf. Heb 11:13, What is true of ancient Israel is applied by the apostle to the new Israel, the *hagioi* ... in relation to the earth, on which they still wander, and to the *sarx*, in which they still live. Hence they can be admonished in 1 Peter 2:11: ... The NT Church is *ekklesia* and *paroikia*, or, more accurately, as *ekklesia* it is also *paroikia*. The character of the Church as *paroikia* comes out particularly clearly in Heb 13:14, which says: “For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.” In this respect the fact of the dispersion of Israel takes on particular significance. (Kittel, TDWNT; NT:3941)

As we read through these definitions one thing comes out crystal clear. As Israel lived as a stranger in Egypt, and Abraham as a sojourner in the land of Canaan, so do we on earth. We can’t share in their customs or culture. We have a heavenly mandate that means if they so require it, we must obey God rather than men.

Regarding the perversions in Egypt and Canaan, God warned them they must be strangers to them and never become a part of that culture.

*Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘I am the Lord your God. 3 **According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do; and according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances.** 4 **You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I am the Lord your God. Lev. 18:2-4***

After listing the abominations, God explained some very important things.

‘Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. 25 For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. 26 You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, ... 28 lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you. 29 For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit them shall be cut off from

among their people. Lev. 18:24-29

When the world goes against God's moral and righteous standards, Christian who are not of this world must stand aloof and reject that lifestyle. So we have seen in our own culture. We must stand aloof from abortion, fornication, adultery, homosexuality, and all that adheres to them in entertainment, jokes, and conversations. We are strangers and sojourners!

"Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you." 18 *'I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty."* ... 7:1 *Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* 2 Cor 6:17-18; 7:1

Those who have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light are now God's people. By seeking to live as God's holy nation and chosen generation they will no longer be able to live as those in this world. Of necessity they must become strangers and sojourners to this world. They live in the world as in a foreign country and they must refuse to take on the customs of the natives. Every Christian must learn to view themselves in this manner.

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. Phil 3:20-21

Christians are no longer citizens of this world. They cannot speak, think, dress and act the way others in the world who are not restrained by the will of God often act. They must be guided by Jn 2:15-17, while cautiously applying the words of Romans 12:1-2. Like Abraham our father left family and friends to go to the land God offered him and sojourned there, so now do we in this world. The elect must be different or cease to be elect. Holiness demands sanctification and consecration, setting oneself apart for God's use. We will therefore always be different. The things the world relishes we turn from in disgust. We cannot enjoy their lusts. We cannot live for the things they live for. Instead we must abstain from them.

abstain from fleshly lusts

The term "abstain" is defined:

apecho "to hold oneself from" (*apo*, "from," *echomai*, the middle voice of *echo*, "to have," i. e., to keep oneself from), in the NT, invariably refers to evil practices, moral and ceremonial, Acts 15:20,29; 1 Thess 4:3; 5:22; 1 Tim 4:3; 1 Peter 2:11; (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:568)

"apecho ... 1. trans. a. to hold back, keep off, prevent... 2. intrans. to be away, absent, distant... 3. Mid. apechomai ... to hold one's self off, abstain..." (Thayer p. 57; 567)

The basic idea of this verb is we have or might have a possession, (*echo - I have or hold in possession*), but we keep ourselves away (*apo - from*) it. As noted above God demands that His chosen people must hold themselves back from, keep off of and be absent and distant from those lusts and evil desires to which the world has given itself completely. Just as He commanded Israel as they prepared to enter the promised land, He now tells us who are waiting to enter a better promised land.

There are certain desires, cravings and longings, which we have no right to possess, or rather there are certain things we might desire, crave and long for which we have no right to gain. They do not belong to us and we would have to violate righteousness (equity and fairness that allows people to keep what they have and not to try and take it away from them. Equally bad would be the violation of agape love (in which we want what is best for others), and instead use them for our own ends. The term "lust" is not the problem, but what it is directed toward:

"epithumia...desire, craving, longing... the desire directed towards... spec. desire for what is forbidden, lust..." (Thayer, p. 238-239; 1939)

epithumia, NT:1939) denotes “strong desire” of any kind, the various kinds being frequently specified by some adjective (see below). The word is used of a good desire in Luke 22:15; Phil 1:23, and 1 Thess 2:17 only. Everywhere else it has a bad sense. In Rom 6:12 the injunction against letting sin reign in our mortal body to obey the “lust” thereof, refers to those evil desires which are ready to express themselves in bodily activity. They are equally the “lusts” of the flesh, Rom 13:14; Gal 5:16,24; Eph 2:3; 2 Peter 2:18; 1 John 2:16, a phrase which describes the emotions of the soul, the natural tendency towards things evil. Such “lusts” are not necessarily base and immoral, they may be refined in character, but are evil if inconsistent with the will of God. (Vine’s NT:1939)

epithumia epithumeo ... are derived from *thumos* first “spirit, courage, wrath, sense” (Frisk, Wörterbuch I, 693), then also “passion, passionate desire,” in which the formation of the word is based on the motif of desire and striving in *thumos* ... (Exegetical Dictionary of NT NT:1939)

Every disciple has such desires they long for a crave. Some of them are lawful. As Jesus wanting to eat the Passover and prepare the disciples to take the Lord’s Supper in the kingdom of God. As Paul who lusted to depart and be with Christ, and longed to see the face of those he had baptized in Thessalonica.

Then He said to them, “With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16 for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” Lk. 22:15-16

For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. 24 Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. Phil 1:23-24

But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire. 1Th. 2:17

But it is not of these that Peter writes. He writes about the fleshly lusts. God has coined the term “fleshly” or “carnal” to describe those desires and cravings that man has developed since the fall into sin that are completely outside of the spiritual realm. God created man upright, and His law reflects the upright use of emotions and desires. Man has sought out many devices and schemes.

Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, But they have sought out many schemes.” Eccl. 7:29

He has taken those things God has forbidden as sinful and selfish and begun to crave and take great relish in them. God therefore calls these types of desires based upon their origin. They are fleshly lusts.

“sarkikos... fleshly, carnal... 1. having the nature of flesh, i.e. under the control of the animal appetites(see sarx ,3) Rom 7:14 Rec. (see sarkinos, 3) governed by mere human nature(see sarx, 4) not by the Spirit of God... having its seat in the animal nature or roused by the animal nature... i.q. human: with the included idea of weakness... with the included idea of depravity... 2. pertaining to the flesh, i.e. to the body(see sarx, 2): relating to birth, lineage, etc...” (Thayer p. 569; 4559)

sarkikos [4559], sarkinos [4560]. ... Words with the termination in -inos ... designating, as they most frequently do, the stuff of which anything is made ... are common in the N. T.; thus thuinof of thiyne wood (Rev 18:12), hualinos of glass, glassen (Rev 4:6), ... One of these is sarkinos ... well rendered ‘fleshy’; that is, having flesh for the substance and material of which it is composed. I am unable to affirm that the word ‘fleshen’ ever existed in the English language. If it had done so, and still survived, it would be better still; for ‘fleshy’ may be ‘carnosus,’ ... while ‘fleshen’ must mean what sarkinos means here, namely ‘carneus,’ or having flesh for its material. The former existence of such a word is not improbable, many of a like form having once been current, which have now passed away; as, for example, ‘stonen,’ ‘hornen,’ ‘hairen,’ ‘clayen’ (all in Wiclif’s Bible), ‘threaden’ (Shakespeare), ‘tinnen’ (Sylvester), ‘milken,’ ‘breaden,’ ‘reeden,’ with many more (see my English Past and Present, 10 th edit. p. 256). ... ‘fleshy,’ ‘fleshy,’ and ‘fleshen,’ would have been none too many; as little as are ‘earthly,’

‘earthy,’ and ‘earthen,’ for each of which we are able to find its own proper employment. ... ‘Fleshly’ lusts (‘carnal’ is the word oftener employed in our Translation, but in fixing the relations between *sarkikos* and *sarkinos* it will be more convenient to employ ‘fleshly’ and ‘fleshy’) are lusts which move and stir in the ethical domain of the flesh, which have in that rebellious region of man’s corrupt and fallen nature their source and spring. ... **the man is *sarkikos* who allows to the *sarx* a place which does not belong to it of right.** It is in its place so long as it is under the dominion of the *pneuma* and receives a law from it; but becomes the source of all sin and all opposition to God so soon as the true positions of these are reversed, and that rules which should have been ruled. **When indeed St. Paul says of the Corinthians (1 Cor 3:1) that they were *sarkinoi* he finds serious fault indeed with them; but the accusation is far less grave than if he had written *sarkikoi* instead. ... He does not charge them in this word with being antispiritual, but only with being unspiritual, with being flesh and little more, when they might have been much more.** He goes on indeed, at ver. 3,4, to charge them with the graver guilt of allowing the *sarx* to work actively, as a ruling principle in them; and he consequently changes his word. They were not *sarkinoi* only, for no man and no Church can long tarry at this point, but *sarkikoi* as well, and, as such, full of “envying and strife and divisions.” (Trench’s Synonyms of the NT)

This term, stresses more the origin of these desires. They find their in the flesh. The Holy Spirit moves us away from this by teaching us the good that we could do, so we will hate the evil that we do not want to do.

*I say then: **Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.** 17 **For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another,** so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 **But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.** 19 **Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control.** Against such there is no law. 24 **And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.** Gal. 5:16-25*

This passage makes clear that only those who are not yet sojourners and pilgrims are still allowing the flesh unreigned in freedom. The flesh lusts are contrary to the Spirit. How could they not be? All lusts that the Spirit approves us are not under consideration. Only those lusts that have been created and formed since the fall and work and operate only in the flesh of men are condemned. But it is these lusts that see sexual activity in fornication and adultery as more preferable than that of marriage. It is these lusts that would covet and steal what they could work for and gain in their own right. Every lust must be carefully assessed and if it is not authorized by the Spirit it is of the flesh and contrary to the Spirit.

such and the general term for flesh it is derived from is used over 150 times in the New Testament. It is a term that encompasses the carnal fleshly nature of man that seeks to live as though this world is all there is and all desires of the flesh should be indulged in whenever and however we please. This part of our being spawns strong desires that the Spirit of God demands we abstain from. As strangers and sojourners, we must look to our God for permission to give in to our desires. As strangers and sojourners, we must suspect all emotions and desires until they are proven by the Word of God to be righteous and holy and pure. This is the very heart of Paul’s exhortation to the Romans:

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Rom 12:2

No servant of God can simply do what they have always done. Once they become a Christian, they must recognize that they are no longer citizens here and can no longer act as those around them. They must stop imitating and conforming to what is done in this world and must instead begin the process of metamorphosis by being transformed. They must start using their minds

and emotions as God determined and created them to be used. We must distance ourselves from the strong desires that are forbidden by the LORD. Fleshly desires often require unlawful means to be fulfilled. The desires themselves therefore are sinful, and must be destroyed. The Spirit now give the reason why it is so important to destroy these desires. They war against the soul.

which war against the soul,

This is a very important revelation. These fleshly lusts that seem so innocent when we feel them and only seek for fulfillment to be satisfied and then recede until they are incited again. They appear to be isolated acts of sin. But they are not. They are much more than simple isolated enticements to succumb to something God calls sin. They are actually acts of war in which the flesh seek to conquer and destroy the soul.

The term here translated “war” can be translated by the soldiers who fight it or the plans and strategies that are set forth to win it.

“strateuomai... an encampment, an army); from Herodotus down; to make a military expedition, to lead soldiers to war or to battle (spoken of a commander); to do military duty, be on active service, be a soldier”; in the N.T. only in the middle (Greek writings use the active and the deponent middle indiscriminately)... to fight... (Thayer p. 590; NT:4754)

“strateia... an expedition, campaign; military service, warfare:...” (Thayer, p. 590; 4752)

This is such an important concept to grasp that it is wise to ponder other Scriptures to fully understand it. There is a battle inside of each of us. The flesh and its desires and the spirit and what it seeks. Since the flesh came first, and is very powerful, the battle within the flesh feels normal and is very difficult to discern. The more we allow the Holy Spirit to write God’s commands in our hearts, the stronger the battle and the more often the our spirit will gain the victory.

*What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that **wage war** in your members? James 4:1*

*But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For **the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh**; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. Gal 5:16-18*

*I find then the principle that **evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good**. 22 For I **joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man**, 23 but I see a **different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members**. Rom 7:21-23*

*For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For the mind set on the flesh is **death**, but the mind set on the Spirit is **life and peace**, 7 because **the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God**; for it **does not subject itself to the law of God**, for it is **not even able to do so**; 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Rom 8:5-8*

There is a great war continually being waged within us. The dual nature of our being is here clearly set forth. There is a fleshly material body that seeks for its desires to be fulfilled and there is a spiritual being within this body seeking to direct and mold it. When these two things clash over a goal then the war for mastery begins, for in the midst of these two warring citizenships and desires lies the freewill of man. The flesh craves, whines, rationalizes and seeks to gain its end.

The spirit seeking to fulfill the will and law of God tries to keep the body in submission to the righteous limitations God has imposed. In each of these conflicts our freewill decides who will be the victor. Either the flesh is denied and forced to die, or the flesh wins and commits an act of

sin that leads to the death of the soul. We must recognize that each time the flesh seeks for the mastery it is all out war, and our soul is being threatened.

The soul is the very essence of our being. Yet it is made clear here that the *soul* can be influenced by both the *flesh* and the *spirit*. Whether the *spirit* is dead because of sin, the soul can still function without its life. But when the flesh and the spirit are both seeking life, the soul is the object of the war. God makes a clear distinction between the soul and the spirit.

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. Heb 4:12-13

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1Th. 5:23

The following definitions give a good overview, but it will take many Scriptures and years to ponder to get the full significance of the word "soul."

"*psuche*... fem. noun from *psúchō* (5594), to breathe, blow. Soul, that immaterial part of man held in common with animals. One's understanding of this word's relationship to related terms is contingent upon his position regarding biblical anthropology. Dichotomists view man as consisting of two parts (or substances), material and immaterial, with spirit and soul denoting the immaterial and bearing only a functional and not a metaphysical difference. Trichotomists also view man as consisting of two parts (or substances), but with spirit and soul representing in some contexts a real subdivision of the immaterial. This latter view is here adopted. Accordingly, **psuche is contrasted to *sōma* (4983), body, and *pneúma* (4151), spirit** (1 Thess 5:23). The *psuche*, no less than the *sárx* (4561), flesh, belongs to the lower region of man's being. Sometimes *psuche* stands for the immaterial part of man made up of the soul (*psuche*) in the restrictive sense of the life element), and the spirit *pneúma*. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:5590)

"*psuche*... 1. **breath**... i.e. a. **the breath of life; the vital force** which animates the body and shows itself in breathing... b. **life**... 2. **the soul**... a. **the seat of the feelings, desires, affections, aversions (our soul, heart, etc.)** b. **the (human) soul in so far as it is so constituted that by the right use of the aids offered it by God it can attain its highest end and secure eternal blessedness, the soul regarded as a moral being designed for everlasting life**... c. **the soul as an essence which differs from the body and is not dissolved by death**..." (Thayer, p. 677; 5590)

The soul of our being is the life force, but since it is fused with the eternal spirit God gave to Adam when He made him in His image and after His likeness, it leaves the body at death, maintains our life throughout the years until the second coming and then will be restored to the new body at the resurrection. It is where the seat of the feelings, the vital force, designed for eternal life.

Putting this portion of our being at risk when giving in to the fleshly lusts is therefore a very frightening thing, but is truly is exactly what we do if we give in to a fleshly lust. Fleshly lusts war against this part of our being. They put on a campaign to conquer and rule over each godly Christian. They seek to rule. Each time we give in to them we place ourselves under their dominion and face the possibility of never coming out from under them. This is a great battle and the only way to win is to allow our spirit as bolstered by the Holy Spirit to completely dominate this war. Cain was warned about this in Gen 4:7.

"If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." Gen 4:7

12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles,

Peter here gives a second reason why we must abstain and hold ourselves aloof from fleshly lusts. By conquering them, our conduct will be honorable. What is completely destroyed and removed from the inside, can not come out into the light of day. "Conduct" is the outward act of

an inner desire.

*“anastrophe... (fr. the pass. **anastreophomai**, see **the preceding word***), prop. `walk' i. e. *manner of life, behavior, conduct...* Hence *life* in so far as it is comprised in conduct, ...”* (Thayer, p. 42; 391)

***the preceding word is: “anastrepho... 3. to turn hither and thither** pass. reflexively, *to turn one’s self about, sojourn, dwell...* b. like the Hebr. ... to walk, of the manner of life and moral character, *to conduct one’s self, behave one’s self, live...* simply *to conduct or behave one’s self, “walk”* ... “ (Thayer, p. 42; 390)

anastrophe to turn up, to move about. A turning about. In the NT, mode of life, conduct, behavior, deportment (Gal. 1:13; Eph. 4:22; 1Tim. 4:12; James 3:13; 1 Peter 2:7; 3:11); life, as made up of actions (Heb. 13:7; 1 Peter 1:15)....” (The Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:391)

From the literal “turning hither and thither,” it came to mean what one does while they are “*turning hither and thither.*” Hence, manner of life, conduct or behavior. So this is the word that would be used to sum up the nature and quality of our life. Essentially, it is the entirety of the judgment day, where we will be judged by what we have done while moving hither and thither in this life.

The difference between the Greek and Hebrew culture and that of our own in regards to how we describe conduct is the difference between living and walking. They primarily used the word “*walk*” to discuss lifestyle and conduct. We primarily use the word “*live*.” Where do you live would become where do you walk. To live a wild life is the walk on the wild side.

The Holy Spirit used the term “*walk*” throughout the Old Testament to describe the lifestyle. Enoch walked with God and God took him (Gen. 5:22, 24), Noah walked with God (Gen. 6:9). Abraham was commanded to walk before Him (Gen. 17:1), and the Psalms and Proverbs are filled with the way we should walk.

Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. Ps 1:1-2

Where we walk and how we walk describe our lifestyle and behavior. This is one of the reasons the Bible often speaks of the path or way. Our conduct follows the path of righteousness or the way of sin. We must choose between the broad way that leads to destruction or the narrow way that leads to life. Thus path, conduct, walk, and behavior must be honorable among the Gentiles. They must be able to see that our path and walk is different from theirs. That it measures up to the demands of the gospel. We do not need the charge of hypocrisy hurled upon us. The term honorable comes from a very broad term for what is good, wholesome, beautiful and pleasing.

“kalos... Sept for ... beautiful, but much oftener for ... good; beautiful, applied by the Greeks to everything so distinguished in form, excellence, goodness, usefulness, as to be pleasing; hence (act. to the context) i.q. beautiful, handsome, excellent, eminent, choice, surpassing, precious, useful, suitable, commendable, admirable;... a. beautiful to look at, shapely, magnificent:... b. good, excellent in its nature and characteristics, and therefore well-adapted to its ends: ... c. beautiful by reason of purity of heart and life, and hence praiseworthy; morally good, noble... d. honorable, conferring honor....” (Thayer, p. 322; 2570)

This is a superlative term for things that are of the highest quality and usefulness. Peter wants the Gentiles to see a conduct that is “*excellent, eminent, choice, surpassing, precious, useful, suitable, commendable, and admirable.*” All the activities we engage in must be “*excellent in its nature and characteristics, and therefore well-adapted to its ends.*”

Since our behavior is what others see us doing, the things that God’s children must get involved in are those things that have a moral and ethical beauty and excellence to them. It is taking thought for things honorable in the sight of all. This is exactly what Paul described when

preparing to take the money to Jerusalem and bringing many witnesses from different congregations to show there was not graft of evil done.

avoiding this: that anyone should blame us in this lavish gift which is administered by us — 21 providing honorable things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. 2Cor. 8:20-21

All outward activities must be based upon the moral and ethical purity of God's will. What we speak and what we say in the presence of others is therefore of the greatest importance to God.

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Col 3:17

The most seemly Christians, those whose conduct and lifestyle are respected by all, are those whose inner victories manifest themselves on the outside. When rage is calmly dealt with and set aside, it is an excellent achievement. When children are obedient and submissive to their parents in a strained situation, when grave difficulties and sorrowful situations arise and a Christian takes them in stride and deals with them in a wholesome and good way, then others know that there is something on the inside making that happen. When persecution rages, and one stands firm till death, others know that there is pure sincerity within. But none of this happens until fleshly lusts are removed and true sojourning begins. Christians are different, on the outside, and on the inside.

that when they speak against you as evildoers,

Although there are many other reasons for these words about abstaining from fleshly lusts and having one's conduct honorable among the Gentiles, Peter focuses on one specific "purpose" here.

"hina... II a final conjunction (for from local direction, indicated by the adverb, the transition was easy to mental direction or intention)denoting purpose and end: to the intent that; to the end that, in order that;... it is used 1. prop of the purpose or end;..." (Thayer, 2443)

As a "final conjunction," Peter is winding down this section and is ready to move to the specifics of the type of conduct that will be honorable. But the intent, end and purpose of the above center on the persecution they endure.

There is nothing that God's people can do when those in the world have heard and rejected the gospel and have decided on the "kill the messenger" defense. Remember what they said about Jeremiah.

Then they said, "Come and let us devise plans against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come and let us attack him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words. Jer. 18:18

But it did not start with Jeremiah, it started with Cain and Abel, then moved to Lot, and all the righteous and the prophets, finally culminating with Jesus and now continues with those who serve Him.

Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, 35 that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Mt. 23:34-36

Therefore the wisdom of God also said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute,' 50 that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, 51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Lk. 11:49-51

"You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as

your fathers did, so do you. 52 **Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers,** 53 who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it.” Acts 7:51-53

So many of God’s people have been charged with the very crime of those who are persecuting them. Both Jesus and Paul were called evil doers by those who were doing evil.

Pilate then went out to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this Man?” 30 They answered and said to him, **“If He were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you.”** Jn. 18:29-30

Remember that **Jesus Christ**, of the seed of David, was **raised from the dead according to my gospel, 9 for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains;** but the word of God is not chained. 10 Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. 2Tim. 2:8-10

Jesus warned His disciples that this would be a very normal circumstance for them to face.

Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 “Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me. 12 “Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Mt 5:10-12

The term “speak against” takes in all that Jesus described above. It is casting insults and saying all kinds of evil against them.

katalaléo, from *katá* (2596), *against*, and *laléo* (2980), *to speak*. To speak against, to speak evil of (James 4:11; 1 Peter 2:12; 3:16). ...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2635)

“*katalaleo*, “to importune someone with speeches,” “to prattle something to someone.... “to blurt out”... esp. “to speak against, to accuse, someone,” with a suggestion of the false and exaggerated: “to calumniate”... in the LXX ...”to scorn,” “to mock at”... “to revile” “to calumniate” the main emphasis is on the hostility denoted by *kata-* whether against God, his servant Moses, or frequently ones neighbor... In the NT... the only emphasis and content of the group is that of speaking evil against one’s neighbor... The essence of the matter is probably to be sought in the *kata-*, i.e., in the hostility and malice of speech directed against one’s neighbor.... uncharitableness rather than its falsity...” (Kittel, Vol 4 p 3-4; NT:2635)

They speak against even Jesus, who was the sinless Son of God as one who is actually doing “evil.”

kakopoiós, adj. from *kakós* (2556), *evil*, and *poiéo* (4160), *to do or make*. Pernicious, injurious, evil, behaving in a bad way. As a subst., an evildoer, malefactor. Used in John 18:30; 1 Peter 2:12,14; 3:16 in a moral sense, corresponding to behaving in an evil way or doing evil. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2555).

They actually saw Jesus as one who does evil and who behaved in a bad way. This was how Sodom saw Lot. For them, his attempt to save the men from their wicked schemes made him far worse than they were because he was acting as a judge.

And they said, “Stand back!” Then they said, “This one came in to stay here, and he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them.” So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door. Gen. 19:9

The world will hate, speak evil and speak against Christians as evil-doers simply because they hate Christ and Christians are still letting His light shine.

“If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word,

they will keep yours also.” Jn. 15:18-20

The reason they hate Jesus Christ and the reason they hate us as we serve Him is due to the light that shines through Him and is reflected by us. When Christians let their light shine, they will also be hated for the same reason.

“And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.” Jn. 3:19-21

There is also an aroma of death about the Christian that the world can sense. Their only recourse if they refuse to repent is to fight back against it.

For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. 16 To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things? 2Cor. 2:15-17

For all these reasons all Christians who live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer such persecution (2Tim. 3:12). But though they will be spoken of as evildoers, it must not be true! There must not be any real evil doing. Peter will elaborate more on this later in the book (1Pet. 3:16-17; 4:14-16). The greater the light shines, the greater the defensive reviling will become. Hence the more pure and clean a life they preach that God expects people to live, the greater the persecution and evil speaking they will endure.

they may, by your good works which they observe,

It is imperative that the Christian live above these charges. The only thing that wicked people should see from Christians are good works. We must abstain from all fleshly lusts in order to keep these worldly persecutors from having something evil to say about it. Paul spoke to Titus about this same thing.

in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, 8 sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you. Titus 2:7-8

This is exactly what happened with Jesus. They sought to find witnesses to prove He was an evil-doer, but the witnesses could not agree. The best they finally got was when they asked Him if He was the Christ and He told them the truth.

So must it always be with His disciples. Christians must not be evil doers and though they closely “observe” and attentively view in hopes of seeing evil, they cannot find it because it is not there. But that does not keep them from continually looking for it. The witness just like an attentive spectator watching, noting and looking, and evaluating.

epopteuo from *epi*, “upon,” and a form of *horao*, “to see,” is used of “witnessing as a spectator, or overseer,” 1 Peter 2:12; 3:2. (Vine’s Expository Dictionary NT:2029)

epopteuo, *etoptes* ... The noun *etoptes* has first the sense of “one who sees and notes something.” “observer,” “(attentive) spectator,” In the NT *epopteuo* occurs only at 1 Peter 2:12; 3:2. The verses are related... The Gentiles take note (Matt 5:16) of the walk of Christians or Christian couples, and cannot fail to see the *kala erga* (good works) (2:12)...This observing thus includes an evaluation and persuasion ...” (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:2029)

Yet the more attentively they watch the Christian, the more they can only see only good works. This was the problem they had when trying to destroy Daniel. They came to learn that Daniel was a man of integrity and honor. There was no fault in him. So, they sought to find a law of God that would go contrary to the laws of men. In this case they sought a law in the Bible and crafted a law of men that would lead him to violate it.

So **the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him.** 5 Then these men said, **“We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God.”** Dan 6:4-5

That is exactly what Rome did when they demanded that everyone proclaim that only Caesar was God and king. Since the Christian could not assent to this, they too were evildoers. Yet only by controlling our lusts and keeping our conduct honorable, they will only see good works. This is the path to letting our light shine before them.

“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” Mt 5:16

In Titus, Paul explained to those Christians who were slaves that if they did continual good works in the sight of their master, they would be adorning the doctrine of God.

Exhort bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back, 10 not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. Titus 2:9-10

While in 1 Timothy, he explained that those who did not honor their masters and do good works before them would have the doctrine and the name of God blasphemed.

Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed. 1Tim. 6:1

There are grave consequences to those who cannot control their lusts and who give in to them in the presence of the wicked. So Nathan told David would be the result of his sin with Bathsheba.

“However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die.” 2 Sam 12:14

Christians must be certain that their conduct perfectly mirrors the gospel’s demands, that they confess their sins (a good work!) when they fall short in their presence. They must never forget that those in the world are attentively watching for sincerity and conviction as well as for insincerity. God wants the former because it can lead to conversion.

glorify God in the day of visitation.

There are two Scriptural views of this day of visitation. One centers on God’s coming in wrath and the other in mercy. Is this the visitation of the last day? If it is then it is to come in wrath, but it is difficult to see how they would glorify God on that day, unless it is to agree with God they had no valid reason for their hatred. The other is that the day of visitation is the day of salvation and that some who observed Christians would be influenced to obey it. This is exactly what Peter will tell the wives of unbelievers in the next chapter.

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, 2 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. 1Pet. 3:1-3

It should be noted that Peter is not here affirming that this will always work or even often work. Only that it could work. Our purpose is that we might gain some of them. This was what Paul told the Gentiles in Rome was the part of the basis of his work with the Gentiles. Even though he knew that only a remnant of the Jews would be saved. It was his hope that the conduct of the Gentiles would bring about the conversion of some. Even one would be worth it all!

For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, 14 if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them. ... 30 For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy

through their disobedience, 31 even **so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy.** 32 For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all. Rom 11:13-14; 30-32

Who better than the former persecutor and blasphemer who was influenced by the Christians he persecuted to write this!

So Peter is opening a whole new vista for Christians to contemplate and consider. Not only can Christians worship, honor, and glorify God through their personal conduct, but by living a godly life among the Gentiles, they may turn an enemy of the cross into a friend. This is the real meaning of Jesus words to the still persecuting Saul of Tarsus *"It is hard for you to kick against the goads"* Acts 9:5. The hope is that when the day of visitation comes, some who had persecuted the church up to that time might then repent, change, and begin to glorify and praise God.

A good example of a day of visitation would be the earthquake in Philippi which turned the jailor who had previously placed Paul and Silas, whose backs were beaten and bloodied on the cold floor of the basement in chains into a man who washed their stripes and was baptized(Acts 16:22-34).

Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. 27 And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. 28 But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." 29 Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Acts 16:26-30

This seems the most logical and scriptural of the two choices for when God might visit some among the Gentiles will would then glorify Him. There are many days of visitation that put the fear of God into the hearts of men. Not just the earthquake, but storms, wars, pestilence, etc. can bring fear into the hearts of men and if they have been touched by the godly conduct of the righteous, they might turn to God as the jailor in Philippi.

Moses spoke along similar lines when describing the death of Korah and Dathan as the ground was about to open and destroy them "in the day of their visitation."

And Moses said, **Hereby ye shall know that Jehovah hath sent me to do all these works; for (I have) not (done them) of mine own mind. 29 If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then Jehovah hath not sent me. 30 But if Jehovah make a new thing, and the ground open its mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down alive into Sheol; then ye shall understand that these men have despised Jehovah.** Num. 16:28-30

It was to be hoped that this visitation would bring repentance as they could clearly see the good works of Moses and the evil works of Korah. Sadly it was not to be, and in the case of multitudes of those who persecute God's people it will be the same, but since we never know when it might be the Philippian jailor, we must so live as to make it possible, if it can be made possible.

A day of visitation does not always have to be something evil. It can also be a good thing. But good or bad, when God visits, it can bring about something good.

Gen 21:1
Gen 50:24
Ex 3:16
Ex 20:5
Ex 32:34

The Lord *visited* Sarah and bare Abraham a child.
God will *visit* the Jews in Egypt and bring them out.
God had *visited* and seen their affliction.
God will *visit* the iniquity of the fathers on the children.
When I *visit* I will visit their sin upon them.

Ps 106:5

Visit me with thy salvation.

Amos 4:6-13

Prepare to meet your God O Israel.

When a drought, famine, pestilence, or other calamity strikes a nation, and the people are on their knees in fear and dread, some may remember the good deeds of a Christian they once persecuted and turn to God. When something very good happens to someone and they see the need to glorify God, then also they may come to us if we have shown them good works.

1Peter 2:13-18

We can now sum up the previous passages with three questions we must be asking ourselves as we prepare to interact with all who we have relationships with in our lives

- (1) government authorities (2:13-17) (3) wives & husbands (3:1-7)
(2) masters & employees (2:18-25) (4) congregational relationships (3:8-12)

- Is what I am about to do I abstaining from fleshly lusts that war against my soul?
- Will this be viewed in an honorable way among the Gentiles?
- Will this decision I am making allow give opportunity speak evil about me in the future?

13 submit yourselves to every creation of man

The term "*submission*" will be used three times in this section:

Servants, be **submissive** to your masters with all fear, 2:18

Wives, likewise, be **submissive** to your own husbands 3:1

holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being **submissive** to their own husbands 3:6

The main focus of this term is "*to submit to orders or directives*" as would be expected in the "*military*." Whether it be "ordinances of man," "*masters*" or "*husbands*," this idea doesn't vary.

"hupotasso... to arrange under, to subordinate; to subject, put in subjection... mid. to subject one's self, to obey; to submit to one's control; to yield to one's admonition or advice... to obey [R.V. subject one's self...] ... obey, be subject ..." (Thayer, p. 645; 5293)

hupotassomai ... hupotage ... : to submit to the orders or directives of someone - 'to obey, to submit to, obedience, submission.' 'slaves are to obey their masters' Titus 2:9..." (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:5293)

hupotasso ... primarily a military term, "to rank under" (hupo, "under," tasso, "to arrange"), denotes (a) "to put in subjection, to subject," (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:5293)

By submitting to the authority of man's ordinances, we can fulfill the three questions set forth above. Willingly subordinating and submitting ourselves to another's will is not easy for those under the grip of the pride of life. But it is something we must force ourselves to do for two very important reasons. First, because it is in the *imperative* mood, it is a command from Christ.

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. Mt. 28:18-20

on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest. 35 And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all." Mk. 9:34-35

those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. 44 And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. Mark 10:42-45

The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' 26 But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. Lk. 22:25-26

As citizens of heaven (Phil. 3:20-21), and under the authority of Christ our king, greatness is accounted to those who serve and are in submission. To be first of all, we must become the slave of all. This command simply extends and gives further instructions on exactly how we are to "serve" and "be a slave to all." While this appears demeaning to those in this world, we must

cultivate a very different attitude toward submission.

Jesus willingly submitted His parents (Lk. 2:51), Christians voluntarily submit to other Christians in their different relationships (Eph. 5:21), wives submit to her own husband (Eph. 5:22-24), a slave will yield his will to his master (Titus 2:9), a citizen will obey civil authorities (Rom. 13:1-7; Titus 3:1).

It pleases God when His servants manifest their ability to control of their lusts and keep their conduct honorable by their voluntary submission. The term "*all*" is the inclusive term "*pas*" used to describe either "*all or any of the class indicated.*" Or "*any and every, of every kind.*" (Thayer, NT: 3956).

By using this term, there is no way to misunderstand this. God wants us to submit to any and every kind of authority or relationship man "*creates.*" While the older translations KJV/ASV/ and the NKJV use the term "*ordinance,*" it is the only place in the NT where the term "*ktisis*" is translated like this. What exactly does the term here translated "*ordinance*" or "*institution*" actually mean?

ktisis primarily "the act of creating," or "the creative act in process," has this meaning in Rom 1:20 and Gal 6:15. Like the English word "creation," it also signifies the product of the "creative" act, the "creature," as in Mark 16:15,..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:2939)

In the NT *ktizo* and derivatives are used only of God's creation. *ktistès* , "to create"; *ktisès*, "creator," occurs only at 1 Peter 4:19, since the NT, like the Heb. and older parts of the LXX, prefers a participle to the noun (Rom. 1:25; Col. 3:10; Eph. 3:9; cf. Luke 11:40; Acts 4:24; 17:24; Rom 9:20; Heb 3:2) or uses a relative clause (Rev. 10:6; cf. Acts 14:15). *ktisma*, "creature," the individual creature, 1Tim. 4:4; James 1:18; Rev. 5:13; 8:9; *ktisis* a. "creation" as an act, Rom. 1:20; b. the "creature," Rom. 8:39; 2Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Col. 1:15; Heb. 4:13; 1 Peter 2:13 c. "creation," i.e., the totality of all created things as a comprehensive term, Heb 9:11: *hou tauthes tes ktisis*; Rev 3:14; cf. also Mark 10:6; 13:19; 2 Peter 3:4: ..." (Kittel, TDWNT NT: 2937)

As can easily be seen by this definition, it is always translated "*creation*" or "*creature.*" This is the definitive word for the creation as it came from the creator. What do we do with that term here in Peter? While most of the translators chose "*ordinance,*" Kittel goes on to say that there are some objections that could be made.

Special difficulties are created by 1 Peter 2:13: ... The main proposal is that *ktisis* here means "order" with special reference to the order of the state ... Thus far, however, **this usage is not supported by any examples from secular Greek, the LXX, or the Rabbins ... An attempt should first be made to explain the verse in Peter in terms of known usage.** In this respect, exposition of the context of the verse is of decisive importance. The *pas* without article (*pasa anthropine ktisis*) = every kind of human *ktisis*) points to wider connections. It is also plain that the slogan *hypotassesthai* is often deliberately adopted in a broader context, 2:18; 3:1; what is said to husbands in relation to their wives in 3:7; what is said comprehensively to all in 3:8 f., i.e., the admonition to serve one another, which implies a kind of free subjection to others. **In this light 2:13 might well be the title of the whole section 2:13-3:9. If this is so, it is a mistake to construe *ktisis* as the order of the state or any other order or ordinance.** The reference is not to an order; it is to men... *anthropinos* is added here to ensure that the phrase is correctly understood in the Greek — speaking world. **Peter's admonition to the congregations is that they should be subject to men of every sort.** He works this out in terms of the **subjection of free men to authority, of slaves to their masters and of wives to their husbands, and also in terms of the regard that husbands should have for their wives and of the readiness of all humbly to subordinate themselves to one another,** to be *tapeinophrones* — *humble* (3:8), which implies **mutual subordination** even to the point of blessing enemies who curse, cf. the fact that Paul in Phil 2:3 uses as an exact parallel the phrase *te tapeinophrosune allelou hegoumenoi hyperexontas heauton...* (in *lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than himself.* (Kittel, TDWNT)

As we can see from these definitions, from the many different views of the various commentaries, and even the divergence in our translations, there is more than one way to understand this phrase.

The KJV/ASV/NKJV use "**every ordinance of men,**" yet as Kittel points out there is not a single place anywhere else in the Scriptures, in all the Greek writings, anywhere in the Greek translation of the Hebrew OT (Septuagint) or in any of the writings of the Rabbis like Josephus

or others in the time period from the Septuagint to the days of Christ that would justify this as it's translation. Clearly the translators were thinking that since the context that follows centers on government authorities, and since these authorities create ordinances for men to submit to, it is a fair translation. Yet its placement in the verse makes it a possibility, but not a certainty. The NASB and ESV decided upon "**every human institution**," which is a little closer to the original term as it infers something humans have devised, but gives it more room, since it is now not just the ordinances, but all the ways man has created to dispense authority.

Translators must be consistent. Since the word "*ktisis*" always means creation or creature. It is used of the entire creation God created. It is used of a smaller portion of the creation, such as men (*preach the gospel to the whole creation*) or to the true disciples of Jesus (*if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation*). Why translate it "ordinance" here when "creation" would simply take a little more effort on our part to grapple with it, but would be much more consistent? If it was translated "*every human creation*." That would be the consistent translation, but what would it mean?

So there are three possibilities, two stretch the word definition into an area it doesn't fit, but do fit the context and are consistent with other scriptures. We are commanded to obey all civil authorities and keep all their commands.

Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, Titus 3:1-2

Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor. Rom 13:7

But as Kittel points out, there is a more consistent use to this term. Just as Jesus told us to preach the gospel to the whole creation, we are to be in submission to the whole creation. But what would that mean? If we look at what he finished saying about abstaining from lusts, and having our conduct honorable among the Gentiles, this could be the general statement regarding submission in all the various ways we are commanded in the Scriptures. There are so many different types of relationships that are not mentioned here. Relationships to a teacher, coach, police officer, doctor, dentist, grocery store clerk, HOA, building department, machanic, etc. and etc. Every relationship requires submission (we might call also call it respect, deference, civility or politeness). It is the foundation of turning the other cheek or going the second mile and "*why not rather be defrauded?*" (Mt. 5:39-42; 1Cor. 6:7-8). In all the relationships in this creation, we are to see ourselves as being a servant and being submissive. Regardless of the relationship, and whether are in a position of authority or in the position of the servant, there is always a way we can be in submission.

If this is the true meaning then it follows the same reasoning Paul did in Ephesians. Paul began his section on submission in exactly this way. All submission is reciprocal. Whether we are the one appointed by God to be in authority, or the one in submission, we are still under God and cannot use that authority beyond the limits God has prescribed. We must use righteousness, fairness and equity as God defines it in all these relationships. We must use *agape-love*, with all its care and concern for the needs of others whether we are the servant or the master. There is no relationship among Christians where the servitude of *righteousness and agape-love* does not impact our conduct.

submitting to one another in the fear of Christ. Eph. 5:21

Whether wives and husbands, parents and children, or, servants and masters as God has created them, there is submission in all of them. The wife's submission is outlined and specified, but then the husband is told to love as Christ loved and serve as Jesus served when He gave up His life for the creation. Paul does the same with parents and children and with masters and servants.

It is possible and even probable that Peter is doing the same thing here. Note how the passage could be read if it followed the same pattern as Paul did in Ephesians.

Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 12 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. 13

Therefore submit yourselves to every creation of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, 14 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. 15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men — 16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bond servants of God. 17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. 1Pet. 2:13-14

The “creation of man” would include the “the king,” and the “governors,” but then would also include: “as free yet not using liberty” “as bond servants of God,” leading to “honor all people,” “love the brotherhood,” “fear God,” “honor the king.”

However we choose to understand the word “*ktisis* - creation,” either universally or only concerning civil government and man’s ordinances, the main point the main point centers on submission. We must be in submission. Either to government institutions, government ordinances or all the relationships in the creation of men.

for the Lord’s sake,

Once again as Paul did in Ephesians, the motivation is not based on the one who is in authority and their worthiness. There are many who use the authority of their position in selfish and cruel ways. Many have had cruel taskmasters as Israel did in Egypt. There have been so many governments like China, Russia, Iran or Venezuela.

Then I returned and considered all the oppression that is done under the sun: And look! The tears of the oppressed, But they have no comforter — On the side of their oppressors there is power, But they have no comforter. 2 Therefore I praised the dead who were already dead, More than the living who are still alive. 3 Yet, better than both is he who has never existed, Who has not seen the evil work that is done under the sun. Eccl. 4:1-3

These people have not earned submission, many crooked masters/employers and selfish husbands don’t either. Christians submit to such people “*in the fear of Christ,*” or “*for the Lord’s sake.*” We do it so we can answer the questions properly.

- Is what I am about to do I abstaining from fleshly lusts that war against my soul?
- Will this be viewed in an honorable way among the Gentiles?
- Will this decision I am making allow give opportunity speak evil about me in the future?

Peter chose the Greek “*dia* — “*the ground or reason on account of which anything is or is not done*” (Thayer, NT: 1223). The reason and basis of submitting to this command is for our Lord’s sake, not necessarily theirs.

Once again, as noted above, even if we do not respect the law or the government we live under, we still are to submit because the Lord asked us to. Hence it no longer matters whether the king or governor is a righteous or good man (most of the Roman emperors were very wicked men, and many of the governors sent out by them were no better). Nor are we to assess the laws and if we do not like them or consider them to be unfair, refuse to keep them. We may have no respect for the leaders or their laws, but we still have to show respect and keep their laws because the one above them demands it of us. The quality or wisdom of the law is not the issue, the issue as outlined above is the way the world will view Christians. Remember, the Holy Spirit wants us to view this as a means of resisting fleshly lusts (arrogance and rebellion), have our conduct honorable (by being a law keeper), and showing good works by being a good citizen.

whether to the king as supreme, or to governors

The terms “whether” and “or” are actually the same term and in Greek, force the reader to keep the two joined. It is a “*multiple marker of condition*” generally translated “*whether ... or*” or “*if ... if*” *eite ... eite*: a double or multiple marker of condition (equivalent in meaning to *ei*) — ‘if ... if, whether ... or.’ ‘if we are in difficulty ... if we are encouraged’ 2 Cor 1:6; ... ‘whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death ...’ 1 Cor 3:22; (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT: 1535) *eite* whether . . . or; if . . . if There are 65 occurrences in the NT, ... As a disjunctive conjunction *eite ... eite* separates statements from each other in order to hold them together at the same time...” (Exegetical Dictionary of the NT:1535)

Thus the supreme ruler and all those who are under and sent by him are tied together with this “disjunctive conjunction.” By using this term, both of them are given the same position in regard

to the submission of the Christian, even though one is much greater than the other. The king and those sent by him are a part of the submission we give to *men's creations*. He begins with the "*king as supreme*." The term "*king*" has a very specific meaning today, which it did not have in the times when the New Testament was written. It was a generic term for leader. In the NT, the emperor, Pharaoh, Herod and others were all called by this name in the realm of civil government. Jesus and God are also called by this term. Any leader, including today's prime minister and president would all be included.

"basileus... leader of the people, prince, commander, lord of the land, king..." (Thayer, p. 98; 935)

The NT has 115 occurrences of *basileus* ... a) As in the LXX, references to the secular ruler predominate with 72 occurrences ... b) 38 occurrences refer to Jesus ... c. God is referred to as *basileus* in Matt 5:35; 1 Tim 1:17 (in a hymnic text); 6:15; Rev 15:3. d) Christians are referred to as kings in Rev 1:6 5:10 ..." (Exegetical Dictionary of the NT: 935)

"basileus... one who has absolute authority within a particular area and is able to convey this power and authority to a successor (though in NT times, certain kings ruled only with the approval of Roman authorities and had no power to pass on their prerogatives) - 'king.' (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon Based NT:935)

The term "*supreme*" is always used of the one who is the highest, superior in rank and authority. *"huperecho,... 1. to have or hold over one... 2. to stand out, rise above, overtop,... metaph. a. to be above, be superior in rank, authority, power... b. to excel, to be superior ... substantively the prominent men, rulers..."* (Thayer, NT:5242)

huperecho ... d: to exercise continuous control over someone or something - 'to control, to restrain.' ... 'submit yourselves' ... to the king who is the one who controls' 1 Peter 2:13. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:5242)

This is thus the supreme leader, whatever name he might be given. Whether chief, emperor, president, prime minister, pharaoh, dictator, etc. He is the single most powerful individual in that nation, rising above everyone else. When this individual makes law, Christians must submit to it. The laws of the land and its leader must be respected and willingly submitted to by God's children. Because reverence and patriotism for one's country and its laws are such a powerful concept, Christians must show complete reverence and respect for them. A valid charge of being a traitor or an evil doer because one violates the laws of kings and governors must not be laid at the feet of God's people. All the good one might accomplish in a lifetime can be undone by being caught breaking a the law of the land. There are no laws that are too insignificant to apply. Any and every law must be obeyed. Even if the law is unfair or the people who are making the laws are evil. All who are in power were placed their by God and must be obeyed in order to be submissive to God.

Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. Rom. 13:1-2

14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him

This is the second part of the tie given by "*eite*." these are not separate entities. They are sent out by him and also given the authority to make law. They are "*as to those*" is literally, as through ("*dia* — "*the preposition 'through' – the portal or means*). This is how the leaders under him were placed into this position. Because of this close connection, the obedience should be the same.

As noted above, these Greek terms for leaders have a different meaning for us as they did at the time of writing. It was used in many different ways in the governments over the centuries.

"hegemon... a leader of any kind, a guide, ruler, prefect, president, chief, general, commander, sovereign; in the NT. Spec. 1. A 'legatus caesaris,' an officer administering a province in the name and with the authority of the Roman emperor; the governor of a province... 2. A procurator... 3. First, leading, chief, so of a principal town as the capital of the region..." (Thayer p. 276; 2232)

This was a name referring to all those in a position of power under the king. In every nation these people are given different titles. But they refer to all who have been given authority by the King to rule over the citizens in the land. In America this would include the executive, judicial and the legislative branches of the federal government, the governor and legislature of the states, the county laws and the city ordinances.

It would also include the police and sheriff on the local level, those the state have appointed to administer its laws, and the officers of the federal government. God wanted His people to be in full submission to all of these offices, manifesting respect for the office and the people who are in it.

for the punishment of evildoers

“For” is the term “*eis – the end which a thing is adapted to attain, object, purpose.*” The purpose and object of rulers and all who are in authority is to punish evil. This is reason why God created them and the role they are to play. They may or may not be good at what they do, but the purpose of God must be respected by his people.

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. 4 For he is God’s minister to you for good.

But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Rom 13:3-4

God has made kings and those sent by kings His ministers to punish, avenge, and execute wrath on those who practice evil. The term “*punishment*” could also be translated “*revenging*” or “*vengeance.*”

“ekdikesis... a revenging; vengeance, punishment... to vindicate one from wrongs, accomplish an avenging of, ... the punishment of one, I Pet. 2:14; ... to inflict punishment on, [render vengeance to] one, II Th. 2:8...” (Thayer p. 194; 1557)

ekdikeo... ek, "from," dike, "justice," i. e., that which proceeds from justice, means (a) "to vindicate a person's right," (b) "to avenge a thing." With the meaning (a), it is used in the parable of the unjust judge, Luke 18:3,5, of the "vindication" of the rights of the widow; with the meaning (b) it is used in Rev. 6:10 and 19:2, of the act of God in "avenging" the blood of the saints...” (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1557)

God wants evil-doers to be punished. He wants vengeance to be taken upon them, and he wants to victims to be avenged. This is the role that civil authorities hold. Even before God created the nations after the tower of Babel, he wanted all victims of murder to be avenged.

Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man. 6

"Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man. Gen. 9:5-6

30 Whoever kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death on the testimony of witnesses; but one witness is not sufficient testimony against a person for the death penalty. ... 33 So you shall not pollute the land where you are; for blood defiles the land, and no atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it. 34 Therefore do not defile the land which you inhabit, in the midst of which I dwell; for I the Lord dwell among the children of Israel.” Num 35:20, 33-34

If civil government will not fulfill this function, then that blood will continue to cry out for vengeance. But it is not just murder, but for all the crimes that men commit against another. This is such a vital part of God’s plan, that even when the laws are unjust, if they do not force Christians to violate God’s laws, they must be obeyed.

Because civil government is God’s minister (*diakoneo*) for vengeance, when a Christian violates its laws then that government must become God’s minister to punish them. What a contradiction! What does this mean about Christians and civil disobedience? Can a Christian do evil that good may come? (Rom 3:8). Can a Christian break the law in order to change the law? Absolutely not! The only time a Christian can set aside the ordinances of men and not become an evil doer is if the ordinance violates God’s will. This does not happen often, and should not be used to justify civil disobedience in other realms.

and for the praise of those who do good.

Another function of civil government which falls under the “*eis - purpose/goal*” preposition is that it also commends and honors those who submit. Paul said almost exactly the same thing in Romans: “*Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.*”

epainos... Approbation, commendation, praise...” (Thayer op cit. 227; 1868)

Since positive reinforcement is just as important to the function of civil government as punishment, approbation and praise are given to those who do good just as punishment is given to evil doers. This is often done in the awards that are given to those who do good deeds to others. We make heroes out of those who risk their lives or selflessly serve others. God has designed civil government to give approbation and commendation to those who do "good:"

"agathopoios acting rightly, doing well... (Thayer p. 2; 17)

When people act right and do well, God wants civil government to approve of it. This is one of their primary roles. The ability of a nation to do these two things is the indicator of the nation's health and value to the Lord. It should be obvious to all Christians which of the two God would have His people gaining the notice of their nation.

15 For this is the will of God,

The preposition "for" reveals an additional reason why God's people must submit to civil authority.

"hoti... the substance or contents (of a statement), that; || the reason why anything is said to be or to be done, because, since, for that, for, ... added to a speaker's words to show what ground he gives for his opinion;... (Thayer p 458-460; 3754)

Since God has placed civil government to praise the good and punish evil, and since His people are supposed to be among the good, they become the foundation of some things that must naturally follow. By being in submission, *"the will of God that by doing good we may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men"* will be fulfilled.

Whenever a Christian sees the phrase *"this is the will of God,"* the mind should become attentive and the heart focused on fulfilling it. It should be part of our prayers, and the primary focus of our lives, since it is the only reason we are even here.

Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Mt 6:10

"You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created." Rev. 4:11

By making the will of God the ground and substance for keeping all the laws of the land, Peter places powerful motivation before the devout and godly.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 1Jn. 2:15-17

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Mt. 7:21-22

Since it is God's will that we obey these laws so we can do good, we should focus on it.

that by doing good you may put to silence

It is God's will that His people be such exemplary citizens by their obedience to the laws of the land and their love and care that causes them to do good works that they can silence those who are "speaking against them as evildoers." There just isn't anything tangible they can say. They can speak in general terms against Christians, but when pressed for detail and facts, they simply have nothing to say. Peter makes an interesting paradox. Civil government in that era was seeking ways to speak evil of Christians, yet the very purpose of the Christian doing God's will is to do the same good that civil government was created to praise. When Christians are doing good, they put them to silence.

God wants our respectful obedience to civil government to be so pure and clean that no one can find any fault with it. He wants them to be "silenced" when asked for specific acts of wrong doing.

"phimoo... to close the mouth with a muzzle, to muzzle... to fasten, compress... metaph. To stop the mouth, make speechless, reduce to silence... univ. To be kept in check,..." (Thayer, NT: 5392)

phimoo ... "to close the mouth with a muzzle" (phimos), is used (a) of "muzzling" the ox when it treads out the corn, 1 Cor 9:9, KJV, "muzzle the mouth of," RV, "muzzle," and 1 Tim 5:18, ... (b) metaphorically, of putting to silence, or subduing to stillness, Mt. 22:12,34; Mk. 1:25; 4:39; Lk. 4:35; 1Pet. 2:15...." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:5392)

Wicked people can resort to slander and false charges, but it is God's will that His children give

them no real charge. A real charge means they deserve the punishment. Peter will return to this when speaking of slaves and their masters.

For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. 20 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. 1Pet. 2:19-20

This was the problem the Jews had with Jesus in the presence of Pilate. They had nothing specific so they were forced to generalize.

Pilate then went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this Man?" 30 They answered and said to him, "If He were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you." John 18:29-30

All Christians should live their lives in such a way that when asked for specific charges, all persecutors are forced to silence. They are muzzled and reduced to silence because all devout Christians are living in such a way that there is nothing to charge them with.

the ignorance of foolish men

Blunt and to the point, the Holy Spirit reveals the true nature of all persecution and the rejection of God's word. It is ignorance and folly. Those who seek to harm the salt of the earth and the light of the world, who in love and mercy seek to save the souls of the lost and to love their neighbor as themselves are only manifesting "ignorance."

"agnosia ... denotes "ignorance" as directly opposed to gnosis, which signifies "knowledge" as a result of observation and experience (a, negative, ginosko, "to know"; cf. Eng., "agnostic")... (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:56

"agnosia ... the state of lacking knowledge - 'to lack knowledge, to have no knowledge, ignorance.' 'some have no knowledge about God' 1 Cor 15:34 'to silence the talk of foolish people who have no knowledge of the good things you do' 1 Peter 2:15. In 1 Peter 2:15, agnosia may involve lack of understanding (Lou & Nida Greek-English Lexicon NT 56)

They don't understand, but they don't want to understand. They are in the darkness, and when the light intrudes upon them, out of ignorance, they lash out. It is due to this lack of knowledge that prejudice takes over and misinformation and slander are spoken.

God calls the people who do such things foolish and senseless:

aphron signifies "without reason" (a, negative, phren, "the mind"), "want of mental sanity and sobriety, a reckless and inconsiderate habit of mind" (Hort), or "the lack of commonsense perception of the reality of things natural and spiritual... or the imprudent ordering of one's life in regard to salvation" (G. Vos, in Hastings' Bible Dic.); it is mostly translated "foolish" or "foolish ones" in the RV; ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:878)

It is the will of God that all the foolish ideas of such ignorant prejudiced people be put to silence and become muzzled by good conduct that proves it wrong. They cannot be debated out of this folly, but at the very least their folly must not be validated by the hypocrisy of God's people. To keep this from happening all the laws of the land must be obeyed.

16 as free,

The term "free" is generally used to describe those who do not have boundaries. They can go where they please. They are not bound by any obligations in regard to whatever is being described.

"eleutheros... prop. One who can go whither he pleases... free; 1. freeborn; in a civil sense, one who is not a slave... of one who ceases to be a slave, manumitted... 2. Free, exempt, unrestrained, not bound by an obligation ... free from i.e. no longer under obligation to, so that one may now do what was formerly forbidden by the person or thing to which he was bound..." (Thayer p.204; 1658)

In the context of civil government, how are Christians free? First, God did not devise civil government and civil law to bind His elect. They are bound by a higher and greater law. The Christian does not need civil law at all, since it has been written for evil-doers. Christians have a higher, more noble, and gracious law. Jesus himself addressed this with Peter.

And when they had come to Capernaum, those who collected the two-drachma tax came to Peter, and said, "Does your teacher not pay the two-drachma tax?" 25 He said, "Yes." And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do

the kings of the earth collect customs or poll-tax, from their sons or from strangers?” 26 And upon his saying, “From strangers,” Jesus said to him, “Consequently the sons are exempt. 27 “But, lest we give them offense, go to the sea, and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a stater. Take that and give it to them for you and Me.” Matt 17:24-27

The point of this section is not to remove from the Christian the dominion God has given to Him through the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ. The reason that civil government must be respected and obeyed even when their rules are restrictive and possibly even wrong has nothing to do with Christians being in bondage. They have been liberated by the Lord and are now the sons of God. Never is the Christian to lose sight of the fact that he is free, and he does what God asks him to do because it is God’s will that he do so. Peter understood this and through the Holy Spirit made it clear that when civil government and God’s law clash, Christians are free to set aside that law.

But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: 20 for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard. Acts 4:19-20

yet not using liberty as a cloak for evil,

Yet freedom always brings danger. Christians are free, but they are to be very careful with the “liberty” this freedom brings. The only difference between this word and the one above is that this is a noun and the previous word freedom is an adjective. Yet the both mean essentially the same thing.

eleutheria... freedome, liberty... in the N.T. a. liberty to do or to omit things having no relation to salvation... freedom from the dominion of corrupt desires, so that we do by the free impulses of the soul what the will of God requires...” (Thayer p. 204; 1657)

The extent of this liberty is seen when Peter speaking to the civil authorities who were seeking to make a law that would keep the apostles from doing God’s will, told them that they did not have the right to do this.

But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: “We ought to obey God rather than men. Acts 5:29

The liberty of the Christian is very clear. He is directly under God and should civil government make a law that would hinder his service to God, then he would have the right to set that law aside. But though we all have this “liberty,” it must never be used to as a cloak for vice. The term “cloak” is used literally to describe a covering or veil, and it is used figuratively of a pretext or cloak in which we seek to deceive.

“epikalumma... I.e. covering, veil... metaph. I.q. a pretext, cloak...” (Thayer, P. 239; 1942)

“epikalumma ... is "a covering, a means of hiding" (epi, "upon," kalupto, "to cover"); hence, "a pretext, a cloak, for wickedness," 1 Peter 2:16. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1942)

The danger here is very real and ought to be carefully pondered. To see it more clearly, put it into the context of what they were facing. The emperor was about to make Christianity illegal. They were not to assemble on the first day of the week and they were not to have Jesus as their Lord. They had the freedom to set aside these laws because the laws were invalidated by God’s higher laws.

After several years of this, perhaps the civil government passes another law that the Christian does not like, but which does not hinder true service to God. He is now faced with the danger Peter here described. God wants us to obey all laws (except those that keep us from serving Him).

It is using freedom as a “cloak of evil” if we set aside any other law but those extreme circumstances where civil government hinders our service to God. Anything else is a pretense to give in to vice, which in this context is “wickedness that is not ashamed to break the laws.” Any Christian who breaks a law of man just because he does not feel obligated to keep it is succumbing to evil and wickedness. This is a broad term that sometimes simply means malice, but other times takes on broader sense of vice or an evil habit of mind.

“kakia... 1. malignity, malice, ill-will, desire to injure... 2. wickedness, depravity... wickedness that is not ashamed to break the laws,... evil, trouble ... kakia denotes rather the vicious disposition...”

(Thayer, Joseph Henry; P 320; 2549)

It would be a mistake to regard *kakia* in the N. T. as embracing the whole complex of moral evil. In this latitude no doubt it is often used; thus *arete* and *kakia* are virtue and vice (Plato, Rep. 444 d); *aretai kai kakiai* virtues and vices ... In the N. T., however, *kakia* is not so much viciousness as a special form of vice. We must therefore seek for it a more special meaning; and, comparing it with *poneria* we shall not err in saying that *kakia* is more the evil habit of mind, ..." (Trench's Synonyms of the NTNT:2549)

It is the danger any freedom takes. It will bring us right up to the edge of good and evil, but any vice or wickedness left within us from fleshly lusts will seek to push us over into whatever vestiges of evil still remain within us. We have to be so careful with freedom. Because the flesh will always seek to use it to take us too far. Better to refrain from using the freedom unless absolutely necessary and clearly required.

but as bondservants of God.

At all times the role of the Christian is that of a bond servant to God. As God's children created in His image, we give ourselves up wholly to his will. This is the strongest term for servitude found in the Greek language. This is a slave that has been bought and is wholly under the will of his master.

"*doulos*... 1. a slave, bondman, man of servile condition... a. properly... b. metaph. aa. one who gives himself up wholly to another's will... gg. *doulos tinos* devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests..." (Thayer p. 157-158; 1401)

This is what we must always keep foremost in our minds whenever we are faced with a freedom like this. The attitude Peter seeks to bring about in our hearts is now clear. We are slaves to God and it is His will that we live to do.

We keep all the laws civil government because it is His will that we keep them. Should they pass a law that hinders our service, then we "*must obey God rather than men.*" But in no way does this set up an attitude of civil disobedience. Our loyalty to God remains intact and our attitude of servitude never removed. As the elect race and holy nation of God, we submit to Him first, and to all the commands of the nation in which we live is just an extension of that submission.

17 Honor all people.

As those who "*submit yourselves to every creation of man*" as "*bondservants of God*, we must place these four new obligations in our hearts. This is the first of the four.

God wants us to feel the sense of greatness with which all (*pas – every class or kind*) of those we meet should hold to us. Every human being is created in the image and likeness of God and regardless of how marred that image, deserve to be treated with "*honor.*"

"*timao*... 1. to estimate, to fix the value; mid. to fix the value of something belonging to one's self... 2. to honor, have in honor, to revere, venerate..." (Thayer, p. 624; 5091)

"*timé, timáo* ... 1. The "worth" one ascribes to a person, i.e. "satisfaction," "compensation," "evaluation," "honour"... 2. "Value," "honour," usually ascribed to an exalted personage, "regard" or "respect" paid to another, similarly *timao* means a. active "to value," "to show honour,"... b. passive "to be deemed worthy of an honour." ..." (Kittel Vol 8 p. 169 NT:5091)

"*timao* ... to pay honour to, hold in honour, to honour, revere, reverence, ... absol. to bestow honours, to be held worthy of honour, of things, to hold in honour, value, prize, c. to estimate, value or assess at a certain price, (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:5091)

"*timao* from the *time* (5092), honor, price. (l) To esteem, honor, reverence, with the acc. (A) Generally (1 Tim 5:3); especially of parents (Matt 15:4,6; 19:19; Mark 7:10; 10:19; Luke 18:20; Eph 6:2; Sept.: Ex 20:12; Deut 5:16); everyone, kings (1 Peter 2:17); God and Christ (John 5:23; 8:49); of feigned piety toward God and Christ (Matt 15:8; Mark 7:6 quoted from Isa 29:13; Prov 3:9). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT 5091)

After reading carefully through all these definitions, we come up with a composite. We are to consider each person with the soul given to them by God as having value and honor. God wants all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, and therefore we must recognize and treat everyone with that honor.

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Phil 2:3-4

Everyone is important. Some are more dangerous than others. Some are more wicked than others, some we have to be on guard more than others. But there is an intrinsic value to every soul and Jesus died for all of them. Railing bitterness or terms like “human debris” are completely inappropriate for a Christian. All curses, deprecations and expressions of contempt or disgust are direct violations of this command.

With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. 10 Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. James 3:9-10

Though cynicism is such an easy thing to acquire amidst an evil and corrupt generation, it will destroy all that is good and wholesome in our heart. Once a Christian passes prejudicial judgments against others because of their clothes, hair, language etc and refuse to give them the honor and respect as a fellow human that God demands here, their usefulness to Christ ends. How can we love our neighbor as ourselves if we do not respect their worth? How can we preach the gospel with the proper attitude toward those we despise or set at naught?

But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. Matt 5:22-23

God knew these people were going to be placed in positions where they were going to be severely tried here. The tendency to lose respect for a Nero, a murderer, rapist or other truly wicked person is great, but they were commanded not to do it.

Love the brotherhood.

God wants us to “love” our brethren. The importance of this thought is emphasized by the fact that this is the second time he has said it.

*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, 1 Pet 1:22*

The desire to be as helpful as possible to secure the welfare of all our brethren throughout the world ought to be overflowing our hearts. The term brotherhood carries one far beyond the local church to Christians all over the world.

adelphotes ... brotherhood; the abstract for the concrete, a band of brothers, i. e. of Christians, Christian brethren: 1 Peter 2:17; 5:9. (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:81)

God wants us to see the brethren in a very special light. This is especially true when we understand that Jesus is a brother and He considers everyone of His disciples a brother.

"Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' 40 And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' Mt. 25:37-40

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 saying: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You." Heb. 2:10-12

Fear God.

The term “fear” in both the Hebrew and Greek language has the same basic meaning that it does in English.

“phobos first had the meaning of flight, that which is caused by being scared; then, that which may cause flight, (a) fear, dread, terror, always with the significance in the four Gospels; ... (b) reverential fear, (l) of God, as a controlling motive of the life, in matters spiritual and moral, not a mere fear of His power and righteous retribution, but a wholesome dread of displeasing Him, a fear which banishes the terror that shrinks from His presence, Rom. 8:15 and which influences the disposition and attitude of one whose circumstances are guided by trust in God... “ (Vine Vol 2, p 84)

Under some circumstances it means terror, dread, foreboding, and even panic. It is used in this sense when our lives or welfare is threatened with destruction. This is the feeling one has toward God when they are not right with Him and He has come in judgement. Their destruction

is imminent, and there is nothing they can do. The other sense of the term fear is that of reverence, respect, and awe that we feel toward things that are far more powerful than we are but do not pose any threat. It is the latter sense that it is used here. God is a great and powerful Creator. He has the power of life and death both here and in the life to come in his hands. But this power comforts us because of His love, grace, mercy and compassion. He loves us so our fear of Him becomes respect, reverence and a desire to please Him under all circumstances.

Honor the king.

Since the term honor is the same term as that of “honor all men” at the beginning the verse, God expects us to give the same respect and regard to the office of king as we do to all men. There is a worth and a value to the office as God designed it and He expects us to treat that office with the respect it is due. Regardless of who holds the office and how worthy or unworthy they might be, God expects His children to respect it.

1 Peter 2:18-25

Introduction:

There is a stark difference between the attitudes of today's world and the world under the Roman empire regarding slavery and employment. Rome enslaved many in the nations they conquered. Slavery was tolerated in the Scriptures, but it was carefully regulated among the Jews. God allowed Israelites to sell themselves due to debt, but only until the year of Jubilee. God depicted slavery as an evil under some circumstances, as a judgment against sin or as a freewill choice in others.

God revealed to Abraham, Israel would be enslaved in Egypt, but God would punish them for it.

Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. 14 And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. Gen. 15:13-15

After God delivered Israel from Egypt, He made it very clear that they had been enslaved but should have learned some important lessons from it.

*And **remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt**, and the Lord your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day. Deut. 5:14*

*"When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What is the meaning of the testimonies, the statutes, and the judgments which the Lord our God has commanded you?' 21 then you shall say to your son: '**We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand; 22 and the Lord showed signs and wonders before our eyes, great and severe, against Egypt, Pharaoh, and all his household. 23 Then He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land of which He swore to our fathers. 24** And the Lord commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day. 25 Then it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to observe all these commandments before the Lord our God, as He has commanded us.' Deut. 6:20-25*

"You shall not pervert justice due the stranger or the fatherless, nor take a widow's garment as a pledge. 18 But you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this thing. Deut. 24:17-19

The ease with which Joseph was sold into slavery reveals the prevalence of slavery in that part of the world and in that age.

*And they sat down to eat a meal. Then they lifted their eyes and looked, and there was a company of Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead with their camels, bearing spices, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry them down to Egypt. 26 So Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? 27 **Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites**, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh." And his brothers listened. 28 Then Midianite traders passed by; so the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and **sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver**. And they took Joseph to Egypt. Gen. 37:25-29*

*Now **Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there.***

Gen. 39:1-2

While God regulated the selling of those in Israel due to debt, he also allowed Israel to purchase slaves from other nations.

*'And if one of your brethren who dwells by you becomes poor, and sells himself to you, you shall not compel him to serve as a slave. 40 As a hired servant and a sojourner he shall be with you, and shall serve you until the Year of Jubilee. 41 And then he shall depart from you — he and his children with him — and shall return to his own family. He shall return to the possession of his fathers. 42 **For they are My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves. Lev. 25:39-43***

And as for your male and female slaves whom you may have — from the nations that are around you, from them you may buy male and female slaves. 45 Moreover you may buy the children of the strangers who dwell among you, and their families who are with you, which they beget in your land; and they shall become your property. 46 And you may take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them as a possession; they shall be your permanent slaves. But regarding your brethren, the children of Israel, you shall not rule over

one another with rigor. Lev. 25:44-46

We just don't have enough information to really understand the circumstances and events done thousands of years ago. We know that God is a God of love mercy and compassion. We know He is a God of justice and righteousness. The unfairness of slavery is the antithesis of justice and love. But we can't see the whole picture. All slavery is considered a great evil today in our modern world, but God sometimes revealed it as an evil and other times as an accepted practice. We don't have enough facts about the circumstances in that age to really understand (Deut. 29:29).

Sometimes enslavement is the consequence of a judgment of God. Yet those who were enslaved considered it a better alternative than being killed.

*Then Joshua called for them, and he spoke to them, saying, "Why have you deceived us, saying, 'We are very far from you,' when you dwell near us? 23 **Now therefore, you are cursed, and none of you shall be freed from being slaves — woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God.**"* Josh. 9:22-23

There are also circumstances where God condemned and destroyed nations for selling people into slavery.

*Thus says the Lord: "For three **transgressions of Gaza**, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, Because **they took captive the whole captivity To deliver them up to Edom.** ... 9 "For three **transgressions of Tyre**, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, Because **they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, And did not remember the covenant of brotherhood.** 10 But I will send a fire upon the wall of Tyre, Which shall devour its palaces." Amos 1:6, 9-10*

Jesus sent His apostles to teach us all things He commanded them. Slavery is addressed to the churches in the first century as it existed at that time. Paul revealed it as something that Christians had no control over, and as something that did not carry any stigma to God. God had factored slavery into the gospel as a means by which service of God could be measured. So those slaves who could not become free were to see themselves as free in the eyes of the Lord. While those who are free should see themselves as slaves to the Lord.

*Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. 21 Were you called while a **slave (doulos)**? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it. 22 For he who is called in the Lord while a **slave (doulos)** is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's **slave (doulos)**. 23 You were bought at a price; do not become **slaves (doulos)** of men. 24 Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called. 1Cor. 7:20-24*

It was also revealed that once baptized, all social status regarding slaves and free were not to be allowed into the church. They were all one in Christ.

*For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, whether **slaves (doulos)** or free — and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 1Cor. 12:13 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither **slave (doulos)** nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Gal. 3:27-29*

As the apostles were called upon to discuss the relationship between a master and a slave in that age, there were no commands to free slaves, but rather to treat slaves with dignity and respect. The slave was to treat his master (even if a Christian) with respect and submission and the master was to treat his servant with the same respect, using his authority like the husband and father for the best interests of the servant.

***Bondservants (doulos)**, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; 6 not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as **bondservants (doulos)** of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, 7 with good will doing **service, (douleuo)** as to the Lord, and not to men, 8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a **slave (doulos)** or free. 9 And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him. Eph. 6:5-8*

***Bondservants (doulos)**, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. 23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the*

inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality. Col. 3:22-25

*Let as many **bondservants (doulos)** as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed. 2 And those who have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather **serve (douleuo)** them because those who are benefited are believers and beloved. Teach and exhort these things. 1Tim 6:1-2*

*Exhort **bondservants (doulos)** to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back, 10 not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. Titus 2:9-10*

Though the Scriptures do not address our style of working, it is obvious that the principles that apply to a slave/master relationship would also be apply to an employer/employee relationship. The only difference is what happens at night when the job is over. During the period of time in which the agreement to work and be paid for that work is in affect that person has the same responsibilities as slave working for his master.

Though a slave is sold permanently, has no time off and no hope of quitting, the general responsibilities have not really changed. As a matter of fact, most working people cannot just quit either. They need the job and the money to fulfill their obligations and keep their children fed. They are therefore often locked into their jobs nearly as tightly as a slave would be. These general principles ought to be the general guideline for how any Christian who works for another, whether for an hour, a day, a week, or a lifetime should treat them.

18 Servants, be submissive to your masters

Peter selects a word for “servant” that is only used a three other times in the NT. While the general term for slave “*doulos*” and “*douleuo*” are used 182.

Words with the *doul-* stem appear a total of 182 times in the NT. Most of these occurrences are of *douleuo*, be a slave, serve (25 occurrences) and *doulos*, slave, servant (124). (Exegetical Dictionary of the, NT:1398)

Since Paul only used “*doulos*” and “*douleuo*” in all his admonitions and exhortations, it leads to at least some question why Peter would use a different word. The other uses in the NT appear to lead toward the conclusion that there may be a closer relationship between this master-servant relationship.

*“No **servant (oiketēs)** can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” Lk. 16:13*

Who are you to judge another’s servant (oiketēs)? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand. Rom 13:4

And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants (oiketēs) and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. 8 So when he had explained all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa. Acts 10:7-9

The definitions and its common use in Greek culture also lead to at least some indication that this is a household servant that would have nearly daily contact with his master. Since “*oikos*” is “a house” and *oikeo* is “to dwell” “*oiketēs*” has something to do with the home.

“*oiketēs* “a house servant” (*oikeo*, “to dwell,” *oikos*, “a house”), is translated “servant” in Luke 16:13 (RV marg., “household servant”); so Rom 14:4 and 1 Peter 2:18; in Acts 10:7, KJV and RV, “household servants.” (Vine’s Expository Dictionary NT:3610).

A deeper look into the definitions yields that conclusion that “*doulos*” is the general category for all servants, while this term is the specific category of a household servant. They do have the same basic meaning, but once again there would be daily contact with the master in the home as the household servant.

“*oiketēs* [NT:3610] designates a slave, sometimes being practically equivalent to *doulos* [NT:1401].

Usually, however, as the etymology of the term indicates, it means a slave as a member of the household, not emphasizing the servile idea, but rather the relation which would tend to mitigate the severity of his condition...” (Berry’s Synonyms of the NT:3610)

Trench takes this one step further, still revealing that this is a servant, but one that “*mitigates its extreme severity.*” Since “*he is one of the household,*” He was often treated like part of the

family.

oiketes is often used as equivalent to *doulos*. It certainly is so at 1 Peter 2:18; and hardly otherwise on the three remaining occasions on which it occurs in the N. T. (Luke 16:13; Acts 10:7; Rom 14:4); nor does the Septuagint (Ex 21:27; Deut 6:21; Prov 17:2) appear to recognize any distinction between them; the Apocrypha as little (Ecclus 10:25). At the same time *oikethes* (= 'domesticus') **does not bring out and emphasize the servile relation so strongly as *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; *oikogenes* is the word for this in the Septuagint (Gen 14:14; Eccl 2:7); 'verna,' identical with the Gothic 'bairn,' in the Latin; compare 'criado' in the Spanish; but one, as I have said, of the family; ... **the word being used in the best times of the language with so wide a reach as to include wife and children;** so in Herodotus (viii. 106, and often); while in Sophocles (Trach. 894) by the *oiketai* the children of Deianira can alone be intended. ..." (Trench's Synonyms of the NT)

It refers to a servant who lives in the same house with the master. It is possible that those receiving this letter had more household servants. It is also possible the household servants considered themselves to be absolved from the other commands to the "*doulos*" and this was written to correct it. Yet what the Holy Spirit intended by using this term is unknown to us. Those receiving the letter may have simply seen it as synonymous with "*doulos*" and made no distinction. Regardless of how it is understood then, today we would see it as those who are considered an employee (our term for a part time servant). Whether a "*doulos-servant*" or an "*oiketes-servant*" they all have the same command. They must all be "*submissive*." See the term fully defined under verse 13

The main focus of this term is "*to submit to orders or directives*" as would be expected in the "*military*." Just as all the "*creations of men*" were to be treated with submission, so also are the "*masters*" here and the "*husbands*," in 3:1.

They are submit to their control, yield to their admonition and advice and obey them. Those who obeyed the gospel and were slaves were to continue to be slaves and to become better than they were before conversion. This is how they would have their conduct honorable among the Gentiles. Every slave who became a better and more submissive slave after obeying the gospel is a clear indication of the power of the gospel to convert the heart into a better way of acting. When a master sees all the above in their newly converted slaves, they are going to understand what a powerful force for good Christianity has been. The term "master" denotes absolute ownership and uncontrolled power (Thayer p. 130; 1203). It comes from the Greek *despotes* from which we get the term despot. The master under Roman law had unlimited power over his slaves.

despotes one who has "absolute ownership and uncontrolled power," is translated "masters" in 1 Tim 6:1,2; Titus 2:9; 1 Peter 2:18; of Christ, 2 Tim 2:21; 2 Peter 2:1, RV (for KJV, Lord); in Jude 4, RV, it is applied to Christ "(our only) Master (and Lord, Jesus Christ)," (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1203)

As noted in the introduction, although we have abolished slavery in America and consider it an aberration and abhorred, this passage is still in affect for all employees. From the moment the clock begins the time for them to be working, everything about the slave-master relationship in that age would still apply. The employer should also see a difference in those who are Christians. They work and submit in exactly the same way.

with all fear,

This is the same term used in 1:17. Just like today, fear can mean either "terror" and "fright" or it can mean "reverence" and "respect." When one sees a tornado approaching and know it is going to miss them they feel reverence and awe, but if it is coming right at them they feel "terror."

phobos first had the meaning of flight, that which is caused by being scared; then, that which may cause flight, (a) fear, dread, terror, always with the significance in the four Gospels; ... (b) reverential fear, (l) of God, as a controlling motive of the life, in matters spiritual and moral, not a mere fear of His power and righteous retribution, but a wholesome dread of displeasing Him, a fear which

banishes the terror that shrinks from His presence, Rom. 8:15 and which influences the disposition and attitude of one whose circumstances are guided by trust in God... " (Vine Vol 2, p 84)
In order for their conduct to truly be honorable, servants (employees) must give their masters (employers) reverence and respect. Their service is to be such that it is obvious that they have these feelings toward them. By adding the term "*all — every class and every kind,*" there are no exemptions. While employed, the employee must give respect to those who are over them.

not only to the good and gentle,

Peter now brings up a consideration which might be offered as an objection to the above command. The good and gentle would refer to the best possible master that a slave could have. The term good is a broad term for the best anything can be. Some masters are "*good.*"

"*agathos... excelling in any respect, distinguished, good.* It can be predicated of persons, things, conditions, qualities and affections of the soul, deeds, times and seasons.... 1. *of good constitution or nature...* 2. *useful, salutary...* 3. *of the feeling awakened by what is good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy...* 4. *excellent, distinguished...* 5. *upright, honorable...* upright, free from guile, particularly from a desire to corrupt the people... pre-eminently of God, as consummately and essentially good... The neuter used substantively denotes 1. *a good thing, convenience, advantage,* ... 2. *what is upright, honorable, and acceptable to God...*" (Thayer p. 2-3; 18)

Like everything else in the world, there are good and bad masters. We know the difference between a good and bad apple, a good and bad car, or a good or bad computer. Essentially, the bad does not meet expectations for quality. While the good either meets or exceeds those expectations. So there are some masters who excel and are distinguished. A servant who has a master who treats them with the golden rule, and has care and concern for their well being would be a good master. Any one in authority who treats those under them with respect and sees their role as a leader to benefit those who are under them would be a good master. The Spirit adds "gentle" to this as either an additional thought or as an elaboration of good. In this case both are true. This was a big word for Greek speaking people. It is used in both lists of the qualifications of elders, because every leader who possesses this quality if going to be a good leader. It refers to someone who is not only "*equitable, fair moderate, forbearing,*" but also "considerate."

"*epieikes*, from *epi*, unto, and *eikos*, likely, denotes seemly, fitting; hence, not insisting on the letter of the law; it expresses that considerateness that looks "humanely and reasonably at the facts of the case"; ..." (Vine, Vol. 2, p 144-145; NT:1933)

"...Aristotle describes in full the action of *epieikeia*: 'to pardon human failings; to look to the law-giver, not to the law; to the intention, not to the action; to the whole, not to the part; to the character of the actor in the long run and not in the present moment; to remember good rather than evil, and the good that one has received rather than the good that one has done; to bear being injured; to wish to settle a matter by words rather than deeds'..." (Barclay, William, "Daily Study Bible Timothy Titus & Philemon," p 96)

Aristotle would describe such masters as those who "pardon human failings," "look to the intention" and not simply the action." They are fair, mild and equitable in the use of their authority. They do not abuse their position to force slave to do beyond his ability. They are kind and reasonable in their expectations and in their treatment. God has described such a master in the Proverbs.

He who pampers his servant from childhood will have him as a son in the end. Pr 29:21

They have consideration for their needs, they are controlled, they love and act in their best interests, they do not make unfair demands. Such a master would be easy to serve, easy to submit to as God demands here.

but also to the harsh.

But other servants will not be so fortunate. There are Christian slaves who have masters who are "harsh." This is not a nice word. While in inanimate objects it simply means "curved" or "crooked," or "crooked, bent or warped from dryness, such as wood." When it is applied to the hearts of men it is someone who is "crooked, perverse, or froward. Peter used it of the "crooked" generation all in Israel should save themselves from (Acts 2:40). A servant would be in a very difficult situation with such a master.

skolios ... “curved, crooked,” was especially used (a) of a way, Luke 3:5, with spiritual import (see Pr 28:18, Sept.); it is set in contrast to *orthos* and *euthus*, “straight”; (b) metaphorically, of what is morally “crooked,” perverse, froward, of people belonging to a particular generation, Acts 2:40 (KJV, “untoward”); Phil 2:15; of tyrannical or unjust masters, 1 Peter 2:18,...” (Vine’s Expository Dictionary NT:4646)

skolios, curved, winding, twisted, tangled, Lat. obliquus, Hdt., Eur., etc.: -bent sideways, ... metaph. crooked, i.e. unjust, unrighteous, Il., Hes., etc.; ... Hence *skoliotēs* (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:4646)

skoliós; ... adj. from *skéllæ* (n.f.), to dry. Crooked, bent or warped from dryness, such as wood. Of a way or parts of it (Luke 3:5 quoted from Isa 40:4; Sept.: Prov 2:15; Isa 42:16). Figuratively, meaning crooked, perverse, wicked (Acts 2:40; Phil 2:15; Sept.: Ps 78:8 Prov 22:5). Of masters, perverse, unjust, in contrast to *epieikeia* (1933), gentle, tolerant (1 Peter 2:18)...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4646)

These are masters that drive their servants beyond what they are capable, then beat them for not fulfilling what was impossible. Such people are never grateful and always demanding, making unfair and rude demands in a gruff way. Both master’s are to receive the same submissive honor from their Christian servants. One has to wonder if the master Jesus described in the parable is the good and gentle, or the *skolios*.

And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and sit down to eat’? 8 But will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink’? 9 Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. 10 So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’” Lk. 17:7-10

19 For this is commendable,

The Holy Spirit gives an additional reason for the difficulty of one of the most difficult and incomprehensible commands in the NT. He had already given three reasons. Now we can add three more.

- Is what I am must endure, abstaining from fleshly lusts that war against my soul?
- Will this be viewed in an honorable way among the Gentiles?
- Will this decision I am making allow give opportunity speak evil about me in the future?
- Will I suffer for doing good even in extreme cases to answer the above three questions properly?
- Since Jesus did this to saved us, is it unreasonable for us to do this in order for others to be saved?
- Since Jesus gave this as an example for us to follow and we **must** follow in His steps, will we?

With the conjunction “*for*” Peter adds this section as an additional “*reason and cause*” to do them.

“*gar*... a conjunction which acc. to its composition *ge* and *ara* (i.q. *ar*), is properly a particle of affirmation and conclusion, denoting *truly therefore, verily as the case stands*, ... the reason and cause of a foregoing statement is added, whence arises the causal or argumentative force of the particle, *for*... (Thayer, p. 109-110; 1063)

The reason and cause for acting like this is because it “*commendable*.” This is a very unusual way to translate this term. It is generally used of the grace of God and therefore brings out the depth of the very special term. While we generally think of grace a gift that we did not deserve to receive, but in this context we see that the word is much broader than this. It can refer to something that “causes joy to the beholder.” It is a gracious and beautiful thing and therefore something others enjoy seeing.

charis ... **connected with *charin* is first of all that property in a thing which causes it to give joy to the hearers or beholders of it**,... and then, seeing that to a Greek there was nothing so joy-inspiring as grace or beauty, it implied the presence of this, ... ***charis* after a while came to signify not necessarily the grace or beauty of a thing, as a quality appertaining to it; but the gracious or beautiful thing, act, thought, speech, or person it might be, itself**—the grace embodying and uttering itself, where there was room or call for this, in gracious outcomings toward such as might be its objects; **not any longer ‘favour’ in the sense of beauty, but ‘the favour’;**

(Trench's Synonyms of the NT:5485)

"*charis... grace*; Latin *gratia*: I. **outward grace or favour** (as we say *well* or *ill favoured*), *grace*, *loveliness*, Hom., etc.; II. *grace* or *favour felt*, whether on the part of the Doer or the Receiver: 1. **on the part of the Doer**, *grace*, *graciousness*, *kindness*, *goodwill*, ... *for* or *towards* one, ... 2. **on the part of the Receiver**, *the sense of favour received*, *thankfulness*, *thanks*, *gratitude*, ... *for a thing*, ... **to acknowledge a sense of favour, feel grateful**, ... to feel *gratitude* to one for a thing, ... (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT: 5485)

As we carefully consider the breadth of the term, two things come to the forefront. It is the "grace" or "favour" felt, **whether on the part of the Doer or the Receiver**. Both the giver and receiver of the grace are involved. It can describe the grace or favor felt by either the one giving or the one receiving. In this case, it is the grace and favor that God or others feel when they witness this act of continuing to do good and accept evil treatment in a humble and submissive way. This is exactly how Jesus used it and it is obvious after reading Jesus own words why Peter used it here. It must have struck him very powerfully and so he repeated it. Though the context is slightly different, the outcome is still the same.

"But if you love those who love you, what **credit (charis)** is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 "And if you do good to those who do good to you, what **credit (charis)** is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 "And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what **credit (charis)** is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. 35 "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 6:32-35

In other passages, Jesus broadens this out not only as God sees this as something that brings a sense of joy and favor by witnessing it, but also our fellow man.

First, it is such actions that lead us to be like our Father in heaven. When we treat others with kindness and respect even when their actions make them our enemy, we are acting exactly as God acts. When we act in the manner that Peter is describing here, we can become "perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect." There is no reward or recompense if we can't do this.

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, **love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,** 45 **that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.** 46 **For if you love those who love you, what reward (misthós; a recompense based upon what a person has earned and thus deserves.**" (Greek-English Lexicon NT:3408) *have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?* 47 **And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?** 48 **Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.** Mt. 5:43-48

Earlier in the same sermon, Jesus also spoke of the duty and responsibility to take wrong without retaliation and vengeance, which Paul later described as something that will have an impact on those who witness it.

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' 39 **But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.** 40 **If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also.** 41 **And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.** Mt 5:38-41
Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 **If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.** 19 **Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.** 20 **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."** 21 **Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.** Rom. 12:17-21

This is an act of kindness and good will that will manifest your true likeness to God. This is going far beyond what would normally be expected of human beings when mistreated. This is the truly a great opportunity for a Christian to abstain from fleshly lusts and have their conduct honorable among the Gentiles. There are so many good things that will follow such conduct. We are manifesting a God-like character, we are acting honorably that might lead others to Christ. By acting in the manner Peter described above, we are "heaping coals of fire on their heads,"

because if they have any goodness left in their hearts, our response makes them feel uncomfortable which might lead them ultimately to godly sorrow and repentance.

if because of conscience toward God

The etymology of the word “*con-science*” is exactly the same as the word in the Greek language. It gives the definition of the term within itself. Both the Greek and the English mean “*joint knowledge*” or a “*knowing with*.” The conscience is a difficult thing to define and understand, because it was given to us by God as something that works alongside of our minds as a separate entity. It oversees all our words, thoughts, and deeds, forcing us to assess whether we should have done them or not. Depending on what we have been taught about right and wrong, the outcome will be different in each person, but it always works exactly the same way. The conscience is the internal judge of all our activities, making us feel good when we do what we believe was right and feel bad when we do what we believe is wrong.

“*suneidesis*... [lit. ‘joint-knowledge’]... a. *the consciousness of anything*... b. *the soul as distinguishing between what is morally good and bad, prompting to do the former and shun the latter, commending the one, condemning the other; conscience...*” (Thayer p. 602-603; 4893) *suneidesis*, NT:4893), lit., “a knowing with” (*sun*, “with,” *oida*, “to know”), i. e., “a co-knowledge (with oneself), the witness borne to one’s conduct by conscience, that faculty by which we apprehend the will of God, as that which is designed to govern our lives”; hence (a) the sense of guiltiness before God; Heb 10:2; (b) that process of thought which distinguishes what it considers morally good or bad, commending the good, condemning the bad, and so prompting to do the former, and avoid the latter; Rom 2:15 (bearing witness with God’s law); 9:1; 1:12; acting in a certain way because “conscience” requires it, Rom 13:5; so as not to cause scruples of “conscience” in another, 1 Cor 10:28-29; not calling a thing in question unnecessarily, as if conscience demanded it, 1 Cor 10:25,27; “commending oneself to every man’s conscience,” 2 Cor 4:2; cf. 5:11. There may be a “conscience” not strong enough to distinguish clearly between the lawful and the unlawful, 1 Cor 8:7,10,12 (some regard consciousness as the meaning here). (Vine’s Expository Dictionary NT:4893)

The conscience is integrated into our heart and soul. When working properly, it makes us feel good when we do what we believe is right and it makes us uneasy, uncomfortable, or even in agony when we do what we believe is wrong. As Paul said, it either excuses or accuses us.

*For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, **their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them**, Rom. 2:14-16 (NAS)*

*I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, **my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit**, Rom. 9:1*

Now that the Holy Spirit has expounded more information for us to place into our minds. Our conscience toward God must be activated. All Christians reading this epistle have learned new things about what is commendable and right, along with what should make us feel bad as we now know it is wrong. After this, for the sake of our conscience, since we now know how God feels, we will have to fulfill them, in order for their conscience to continue to be good and clean. This is exactly what Paul did.

Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council, said, “Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.” Acts 23:1

From the moment that any servant becomes aware of these truths, the only way they can continue live before God in all good conscience is to do exactly what God has asked them to do. This is what Paul did and it is what we must do.

one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.

When someone has to endure something they do not deserve, it strikes them very powerfully as being unfair and they seek a way out or redress from a higher power. This is the reason why vengeance is kindled. Children often do this when mistreated by siblings as they rush to the parent (authority) to make them stop. This is exactly how a Christian feels when mistreated. They want God or civil government as His minister to deal with it. Many of the Psalms and prayers recorded in the OT have this as their theme.

*But in **my adversity they rejoiced And gathered together**; Attackers gathered against me, And I*

did not know it; They **tore at me and did not cease**; 6 With ungodly mockers at feasts They **gnashed at me with their teeth**. 17 Lord, how long will You look on? **Rescue me from their destructions**, My precious life from the lions. Ps. 35:15-17

Rise up, O Judge of the earth; Render punishment to the proud. 3 Lord, how long will the wicked, **How long will the wicked triumph?** 4 They utter speech, and **speak insolent things**; All the workers of iniquity boast in themselves. Ps. 94:2-4

O Lord, **how long shall I cry, And You will not hear?** Even cry out to You, **"Violence!" And You will not save**. 3 Why do You **show me iniquity, And cause me to see trouble?** For **plundering and violence are before me**; There is **strife, and contention arises**. 4 Therefore **the law is powerless**, And justice never goes forth. For **the wicked surround the righteous**; Therefore perverse judgment proceeds. Hab. 1:2-4

Under the best of circumstances these things do not happen, but when they do happen, God often looks on, because there is nothing He can do when He is being *"longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."* (2Pet. 3:9).

Hence, this is not going to happen until the day of judgment when this life is over. Until then, all Christians are going to be mistreated, and there will be some Christian slaves with terribly unfair masters, who cannot escape. They are here offered two choices. They can become bitter and sullen and act like Satan, or they can be forgiving and patient, acting as God. God has asked all Christians to do the latter. He knows we will suffer wrongfully! He asks us to *"endure"* it.

"hupophero... To bear by being under, bear up (a thing placed on one's shoulders trop. To bear patiently, to endure... (Thayer p. 645-646; 5297)

"hupo-phero... to carry away under, esp. to bear out of danger, II. to bear or carry by being under, to bear a burden, Xen.: metaph. to support, bear, endure, submit to, ..." (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:5297)

This is an unusual word for endure that is only used three times in the NT. Most notably, and best describing the context here is found written to the Corinthians.

*No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to **bear it**. 1Cor. 10:13*

It's basic meaning is slightly different from the common word for *"endure (hupo-meno - to abide under)"*. This term describes the bearing of a heavy load or burden, but instead of putting it down, it is continually borne. This is a very commendable decision. The worldly decision would be to lay this burden down by taking matters into our own hands. We might stop working as hard as a payback. We might begin to cheat or steal and justify it by their evil actions. Perhaps under the worst case scenario, we might take vengeance, paying them back ourselves. This burden is clearly revealed by Paul to the Romans.

There will always be interactions with people who cause grief and sorrow. Sometimes it is a chance encounter that is borne for the moment and then left behind. Other times it is long term issue with someone we can't get away from and must endure day by day by day. Such times will come leading us to must endure grief. There are many sorrows and pains that come from afflictions and annoying circumstances. Some create godly sorrow and others worldly sorrow. They can be pain in body or mind.

"lupe... sorrow, pain, grief... of persons mourning... objectively annoyance, affliction..." (Thayer p. 383; 3077)

God wants us to endure all these things patiently. When we do, God is pleased and our fellow man is amazed. Most men see such things as a time to retaliate or get even, but the Christian endures the grief because this is what God's will for him. The term *"suffer"* is the main word used throughout the scriptures to describe all that Jesus endured in order for our sins to be forgiven. Peter will use 12 times in this first letter.

"pascho... To be affected or have been affected, to feel, have a sensible experience, to undergo; it is a vox media - used in either a good or a bad sense... hence kakos pasein, to suffer sadly, be in bad plight, of a sick person ... eu paschein, to be well off, in good case... 1. In a bad sense of misfortunes, to suffer, to undergo evils, to be afflicted, ..." (Thayer p. 494; 3958)

"pascho, used from Homer on, means basically "to experience something" which comes from without and which has to be suffered: "something encounters me," "comes upon me" ... The use in

Homer shows plainly that its original sense was "to suffer evil." This was perhaps given with the etymology. Later, with appropriate additions, it could be used for experiencing anything that might come.... *pascho* is found 42 times in the NT. Most of the refs. are to the sufferings of Christ Himself and to the sufferings of Christians for His sake (Kittel TDWNT; NT:3958)

This term is primarily used when we must "*experience something*," "*causing suffering*." In the NT, it is used primarily, as it is here, "*to the sufferings of Christ Himself and to the sufferings of Christians for His sake*." Terrible and unfair events that lead us to suffer. They cause pain, suffering and sorrow, which is intensified all the more when they are unjustly done as they were first with Jesus and now us because we serve Him. This is hardest to be borne when it is "*unrighteous*." This is an adverb describing the present active participle for "*suffering*." The "*suffering one*" is in this position because of injustice and unfairness.

"*adikos*... Adv., *unjustly, undeservedly, without fault*..." (Thayer p. 12; 94)

The verb is much fuller and gives a larger breadth to the adverb. When we become the victims of injustice, wrong doing and wickedness. This mistreatment is the cause of the suffering.

"*adikeo*... 1. absolutely a. *to act unjustly or wickedly, to sin*... b. *to be a criminal, to have violated the laws in some way*...c. *to do wrong*... d. *to do hurt*... 2. *to do some wrong, sin in some respect*... b. *to wrong some one, act wickedly*... c. *to hurt, damage, harm*..." (Thayer, NT:91)

adikeo ... : to hurt or to harm, with the implication of doing something which is wrong and undeserved - 'to harm, to hurt.' ... to mistreat by acting unjustly toward someone - 'to act unjustly toward, to mistreat.' (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT: 91)

God knows that those who are persecuted are never persecuted fairly. There will be afflictions and terrible events that are unjust and cause intense suffering. That is what makes it special, only the most devout and committed will do have their conscience toward God activated to do it.

20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently?

The question Peter asks is prefaced with an interrogative pronoun that was most often used by the Jews against Christ "by what authority" He was teaching His new doctrines.

"*poios* "of what sort," is translated "by what manner of (death)" in John 21:19, ... in Acts 7:49, "what manner of (house)"; Rom 3:27, "what manner of law"; 1 Cor 15:35, "what manner of body." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4169)

"*poios*... *of what nature? of what sort?* Lat. *qualis?* used in questions: expressing surprise and anger,..." (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:4169)

What sort and kind of credit could they expect to receive if they do something evil and are beaten for it. This is the only time in the NT that the term translated "credit" or "glory" is used. It speaks of a reputation, rumor or report. In the common use, it can be a good rumor or a bad one. Peter clearly uses it in a good manner. This is a different word that *charis-grace* used above. This term captures the idea of a good reputation and even fame or renown. Thus Peter's question: "of what sort and kind of good reputation or good rumor do you expect to hear about yourself if you suffer for doing something evil?"

"*kleos*, good report, fame, renown, is used in 1 Pet. 2:20 The word is derived from a root signifying "hearing"; hence, the meaning "reputation." (Vine's Expository Dictionary Vol, 2 p. 154 NT: 2811).

"*kleos* ... a rumour, report, news, Lat. fama, Hom.; *son kleos* news of thee, ... the report of their coming, 2.-a mere report, opposed to certainty, ... we hear a rumour only, but know naught, II. good report, fame, glory, 2. in bad sense, ill repute, ... both senses combined ... of whom there is least talk either for praise or blame." (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT 2811)

Clearly, when someone breaks a law, and is then caught and punished, they have to take it. There is nothing honorable or praiseworthy about that. One has to take it patiently because they deserve it. No one is impressed with such a thing. It doesn't manifest a great character. When a man doesn't utter one word of anger when he is sentenced to being beaten for robbing someone will anyone be impressed? No, because almost every one does that. They got what they deserved. There is nothing special about it. The term "*faults*" is usually translated by the most common word for sin in the Bible. When it is before God it is a sin. When it is before others, we have missed the mark of their expectations. We made a mistake and violated something, either by not doing what should have been done, or doing something that should not be done.

"*harmartano*... *to miss the mark*, ... with gen. of the thing missed ... then *to err, be mistaken*; lastly to

miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honor, to do or go wrong... to miss one's aim in the literal sense. ...In the N.T. *to wander from the law of God, violate God's law, sin ... b. ... to commit(lit. sin) a sin ...*" (Thayer p. 30; 264)

When someone is beaten or punished after doing something wrong, it is exactly what they deserve. It is only when we are like Jesus who was "beaten" when He had done nothing wrong that there was any praise.

kolaphizo signifies "to strike with clenched hands, to buffet with the fist" (*kolaphos*, "a fist"), Matt 26:67; Mark 14:65; 1 Cor 4:11; 2 Cor 12:7; 1 Peter 2:20. ... " (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:2852) *kolaphizo* ... to strike or beat with the fist, either once or repeatedly - 'to strike with the fist, to beat with the fist.' ... 'then they spat in his face and beat him with their fists' Matt 26:67. ..." (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:2852)

This is the word that is contrasted to being beaten with an open hand.

Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands, 68 saying, "Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?" Matt 26:67-68

Thus the Holy Spirit, through Peter reveals that this is the very worst type of treatment. They are being struck with a closed fist. Yet if someone is "patient," when they are being beaten for doing something evil, there is nothing to be proud of or to hold up expecting praise. This time Peter chooses the common word for "endurance" and "patience."

hupomeno... 2. *to remain* i.e. *abide*, not recede or flee; troop. a. *to persevere*: absol. and emphatic. under misfortunes and trials to hold fast to one's faith in Christ... b. *to endure bravely, bear bravely and calmly*: absol., ill-treatment..." (Thayer, p. 644; 5278)

People are never amazed when evil-doers are being punished and they endure or accept patiently. That is what is expected. It is never something that is above or beyond. No one marvels when a thief takes his beating or jail time patiently.

But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently,

Peter used the strong adversative conjunction "*alla- but*" and the conditional conjunction "*ei - if*" to present the other side. Having shown that being beaten and mistreated for crimes that deserved it offers no benefit to taking it patiently. "*But if*" on the other hand, they are beaten for doing good, then there will be the exact opposite outcome. Those who do good would never expect to suffer for it, even among evildoers, this is an unexpected thing.

The term "*do good*" is repeated from verse 15, "*for the praise of those who do good*," which is the norm. When anyone does something that profits or does a favor to another, they are doing good. Like Dorcas and her good works and alms deeds. If after doing good in such a manner we are called upon because of our relationship to Christ, or even for something that is not even related to being a disciple, to suffer for, that will always stand out to those with the eyes to see. When Christians are doing the very best they can to serve a master, but the froward master cannot be pleased and is continually berating or even physically assaulting them and they take it patiently, they have fulfilled the conditions of this verse. Peter repeats all the same words from the previous verse. The only difference is if we are patiently suffering ill treatment for doing good or for doing evil.

this is commendable before God.

Peter now also repeated the term "*grace*" or "*favor*" from the previous verse. While we can't expect everyone among men to see it as an act worthy of thanks or even giving them credit for a beautiful action, God always does. This is why God highly exalted Jesus and gave Him a name above all names. When Jesus suffered wrongfully in order to save mankind, God saw it as highly commendable. Here He offers a similar honor to those of us who will follow Jesus's example and make His mind our mind. If Jesus could do that for us, then we ought to be ready and interested in doing it for others.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, Phil. 2:5-9

who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, 8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. 9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, Heb. 5:7-10 Paul saw this as an opportunity. By suffering wrongfully and taking it patiently, he hoped to gain some who might otherwise never have been reached.

I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church, 25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, Col 1:24-26

It is certainly not fair by human standards that a Christian worthy of eternal life should be mistreated by a human master and have to take it in the manner described. But the answer that comes back from God is that there are many things in this sin-cursed world that do not operate under the rules of fairness and equity. God seeks for people who are willing to sacrifice fairness and equity for His purpose.

There is such a short time for His people to make an impact on those around them. Things like the above are so strikingly different that they stand out. God wants His people to make sacrifices like this. To show the fairness and equity of this, Peter now reminds them of Jesus' sacrifice for all. What God is asking from us is no different than the footsteps Jesus walked in and left for us to walk.

21 For to this you were called,

This is the third time Peter has used (*gar* - "the reason and cause of a foregoing statement is added, ... to explain, make clear, illustrate"). This is a unit, giving one reason after another to explain, make clear and illustrate why servants with abusive masters should take it, along with why all Christians in any situation should respond in the same way.

19 FOR (GAR) *this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.*

20 FOR (GAR) *what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? BUT (ALLA) when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.*

21 FOR (GAR) *to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:*

19 For: *It is commendable (gracious and favored) toward God to endure grief suffering wrongfully.*

20 For: *It is commendable (gracious and favored) toward God to do good and suffer and take it patiently.*

21 For: *You were called because Christ suffered wrongfully for us, as an example to follow* Peter also adds (*eis-* denoting entrance into, or direction...*the end to which a thing reaches or is adapted to attain,...the result or effect*). So the entire purpose and reason we were called is because Jesus has already done this. We could never have been called out of darkness and into His marvelous light if Jesus had not done what these poor slaves were being asked to do.

There would have no gospel and no call. Every first day of the week we are called upon to remember this. If Jesus could bring salvation to each and every son or daughter of Adam and Eve because of this act on the cross, it has tremendous power. So when we have the opportunity to be mistreated for doing good, how can any slave / employee justify not being able to do the same?

This is the third time in Peter that he has referred to this call. First, "as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct," and "proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; then not a people with no mercy, now the people of God, who have obtained mercy. All of this was made possible by Jesus suffering wrongfully. This is the greatest and most powerful reason why every Christian who has to suffer wrongfully should take it patiently.

because Christ also suffered for us,

All of the above "because" Christ suffered.

"hoti... I. the substance or contents (of a statement), that; 1. joined to verbs of saying and declaring... II the reason why anything is said to be or to be done, because, since, for that, for, (a causal conjunct. ...) ... a. it is added to a speaker's words to show what ground he gives for his opinion;... b. hoti makes reference to some word or words that precede or immediately follow it..."

(Thayer p 458-460; 3754)

The only “*reason*” we could be called was “*because, since, for*” Jesus already did it. This also the **reason** why we should be willing to do it for Him. It is the **reason** why God asked them to do it, and it must become the **reason** they were willing to do it. The focus of Christ’s life exactly pictures God’s expectations. Jesus suffered shameful treatment for others.

He suffered in order to bring salvation to all men. God is only asking His people to suffer the same shame for the same reason. Although it is true that our own sacrifices will never have the magnitude and scope of His, but that is not really the aim or the point. If God so loved the world, wanting all men to be saved and none to perish, so should we. This puts things into proper perspective. The very least all slaves and employees can do is suffer ill treatment in hope that their example might lead others to salvation. Once again the term “*pascho*” was used to describe the emotions being seriously affected by outer circumstances of misfortune and evil. Jesus did this “for” us.

“*huper*... 2. i.q. Lat. *pro, for*, I. e. *for one’s safety, for one’s advantage or benefit*, (one who does a thing *for* another, is conceived of as standing or bending ‘over’ the one whom he would shield or defend...)... *to be for one* i.e. to be on one’s side, to favor and further one’s cause... after the idea of suffering, dying, giving up life, etc.:...of Christ dying to procure salvation for his own,... of Christ undergoing death for man’s salvation,... of God giving up his Son... Since what is done for one’s advantage frequently cannot be done without acting in his stead... we easily understand how *huper*, like the Lat. *pro* and our *for*, comes to signify 3. *in the place of, instead of*... Since anything whether of an active or passive character which is undertaken on behalf of a person or thing is undertaken ‘on account of’ that person or thing, *huper* is used 4. of the impelling or moving cause; *on account of, for the sake of, any person or thing*...” (Thayer p. 638-640; 5228)

“*huper* ... A. with genitive, I. of Place, over, above: 1. a state of rest, 2. in a state of motion, over, across, 3. over, beyond, II. metaph., from the notion of standing over to protect, for, for defence of, in behalf of, to fight for one's country, etc. 2. for the sake of a person or thing, 3. c. inf. for the purpose of, 4. for, instead of, in the name of, (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT 5228)

This term is used over 160 times in the NT. Many times as here, to describe the reason Christ’s suffered and died It was “*for our safety..., advantage... or benefit.*” He suffered “*in the place of,*” “*in behalf of*” or “*instead of*” us. No Christian can deny that the only reason Jesus suffered and died was for our benefit. He gained nothing personally from the suffering except to become our Savior and Redeemer, thus the gratitude of God’s children. But there was nothing He did to deserve the treatment He received.

Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 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. ... 12 Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors. Isa 53:4-5, 12

We remember this every first day of the week because it is the heart and soul along with the power of the gospel. What Peter wants to bring out is that it is also now an example to follow.

leaving us an example,

Jesus’ suffering and subsequent death has “*been left behind.*”

“*hupo-limpano*, to cause to continue to exist subsequent to some temporal reference point - 'to cause to remain after, to leave behind.' 'leaving behind for you an example in order that you might follow in his footsteps' (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon, NT:5277)

This is an interesting construction. Jesus death on the cross has been left behind. It has been allowed to continue to exist, long after it occurred. It is remember it every first day of the week as a direct command of Jesus. He left it behind as an “*example.*” This is the second word in this verse that is not used anywhere else in the Scriptures.

“*hupogrammos* 1. *A writing-copy*, including all the letters of the alphabet, given to beginners as an aid in learning to draw them... 2. *An example set before one*...” (Thayer p. 642; 5261)

hupogrammos is very rare. ... There is little doubt that what is in mind is a model or example, as more clearly ... where for the purposes of instruction a word is proposed (several examples are given) which contains all the letters of the alphabet in a form in which children can remember them,

so that a model is given which is called *hupogrammos* ... To this there corresponds the use of *hupografein* as an academic expression... is used for the drawing of lines by the elementary teacher in order to guide children who are learning to write. (Kittel, TDWNT; NT:5261).

Just as young children must be given a “writing copy” so they can perfectly learn to form each of the letter of the alphabet, Christians have been given the steps of Jesus. Each letter is an exact picture of what they must do as they practice writing them over and over again until everyone can recognize the characters they are writing. When they could exactly replicate all the letters of the alphabet, they had mastered writing the letters and were ready to begin writing.

The manner in which Jesus took all His suffering is now our writing copy. We are to take all the suffering in our life and seek to make it look exactly the same way as Jesus did.

This is a bitter pill for some Christians to swallow. Especially the proud, arrogant and macho, as well as the selfish and cowardly. But for true servants, it becomes an obligation to be shouldered and a goal to reach. When Jesus left this earth to reenter heaven, He left His example behind for us to follow.

that you should follow His steps:

Why did Jesus leave this example to be considered every first day of the week? Was it only to honor Him? Did the remembrance only infer remembering an historical event that had great import and power? With the term “*that*” Peter used (*hina* — “a final conjunction...denoting purpose and end: to the intent that; to the end that, in order that,”), God wanted it understood that these memories during the Lord’s supper are also just like the letters in the first grade class that line all the walls. They were left to for the purpose and toward the end and goal of following them as an example. They are like “*footprints*” in the sand.

ichnos means “footprint,” and may be used either for an individual impression on the ground or for a continuous line of such impressions, i.e., a trail. Even when the word is used metaphorically, i.e., with reference to the spiritual side of human life, the plastic conception remains. It is generally the trace left by someone’s conduct or journey through life. It is a trail for others to mark and follow.”

(Kittel, TDWNT NT: 2487)

When a hunter tracks an animal or the police track the footprints of a criminal they must closely follow each imprint or they will lose the trail. Peter will outline the specific steps he has in mind in the rest of the chapter. But each step of Jesus regarding suffering is a print and part of a track that we are meant “to follow.”

“*epakoloutheo*... to follow (close) upon, follow after; in the N. T. only metaph. ... to tread in ones footsteps, i. e. to imitate his example, ... to be devoted to good works, I Tim. 5:10; (Thayer p. 228; 1872)

“*epakoloutheo*, from *epí* (1909), upon, or an intensive, and *akolouthéœ* (190), to follow. To follow the steps of another,...” Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT 1872).

Jesus suffering unjustly has been imprinted (in the Scriptures) for all of us to intensely focus upon and seek to follow exactly. Figuratively, we seek to put our feet into the same spots or along the same narrow path.

22 “Who committed no sin,

We must not forget that Peter is an eyewitness to most of these things. Although he is quoting Isa 53:9 here, it is with a powerful emotional response, as it should be with us after considering it so many times. As it was proclaimed in prophesy, over 700 years earlier, so now it has been fulfilled. Jesus lived a perfect live and never failed to do exactly what God expected of Him. He always used His emotions and actions in exact accord with *agape-love* and righteous justice. He never sinned.

He never did anything that merited what He received. He was the very pinnacle of undeserved suffering. This is what God wanted us to imitate and to follow. Not only was His conduct exemplary, so also were His words.

nor was deceit found in His mouth”;

Jesus never used “deceit.”

“*dolos*... fr *delo* to catch with a bait...prop. *bait*... a lure, snare; hence *craft, deceit, guile*...” (Thayer p. 155; 1388)

dolos ... properly, a bait for fish, ... then, any cunning contrivance for deceiving or catching, as the

Trojan horse, the robe of Penelopé ... generally, any trick or stratagem, II.; wiles, 2. guile, craft, cunning, treachery, (Liddell & Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon, NT 1388)

Jesus never used craft, deceit or guile. He never used cunning methods to deceive or capture people to their own hurt. He never sought to give the wrong impression or harm anyone in His speech. No charge of misconduct in word or deed could be leveled against Him. He was a perfect man. This is what makes Him the perfect example. Everything He did and said was right. Peter could attest to this as the Holy Spirit was doing here by inspiring Peter to say these things.

23 who, when He was reviled,

This could be drawing from Isaiah 53:7 or could simply be a statement of fact about how Jesus handled all the reviling and wicked words of those who hated Him.

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. Isa 53:7

He was “reviled” in many different ways throughout His life.

“loidoreo... to reproach, rail at, revile, heap abuse upon...” (Thayer p. 382: 3058)

“loidoreo; loidoria; loidoros antiloidoreo ... A common Greek word group... with the unanimous sense “to reproach,” “insult,” “revile,” even “blaspheme,” though it is not a religious term. In public life in Greece insult and calumny played a considerable part... (Kittel TDWNT #3058)

The Jewish leaders were adept at twisting Jesus actions. They proclaimed His miracles came from Satan, He sought to become king of Israel. Thus both in His early ministry, at His trial and at His crucifixion He was called some very evil things. But in spite of all the reviling He endured, He blessed in return. Even on the cross He prayed “Father forgive them.”

did not revile in return;

“antiloidoreo... to revile in turn, to retort railing...” (Thayer p. 50; 486)

“antiloidoreo... to answer insults or slander with insulting or slanderous words - 'to insult in return.' (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:486).

He never gave it back to them. They spoke evil of Him and He kept silent. They called Him terrible names He took it. He never got angry and He never spoke back at them in any negative way. No matter how much they deserved a reviling in return Jesus never did it back.

when He suffered, He did not threaten,

Once again “*pascho*” is used. Here it encompasses the trials, the beatings, being spat upon, mocked, scorned and unjustly scourged, crucified, mocked even more, then left to die. Through it all He never “threatened:”

apeileo to declare that one will cause harm to someone, particularly if certain conditions are not met - 'to threaten, threat.' 'when he suffered, he did not threaten' 1 Peter 2:23. 'and stop threatening' Eph 6:9; 'take notice of the threats they made' Acts 4:29. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:546)

While Jesus suffered the agonies beginning in the Garden and ending on the cross, He never threatened, never stated things in an angry voice or even attempted to vindicate or warn them of the terrible things God would do to them if they did not stop.

but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

He left it all to God. He fully “committed” himself to God:

“*paradidomi*... to give over... 1. prop. to give into the hands(of another. 2. to give over into (one's) power or use... to deliver to one something to keep, use, , take care of, manage... (Thayer p. 480-481; 3860)

Jesus gave himself into the hands of God. He left it for God to repay and deal with all the injustices. Since Jesus, who received the worst injustices ever committed, could give it all to God, we can and must learn to do it too! We must learn to trust Him to take the proper vengeance for the injustices done. Our obligation is to love our neighbor as ourselves.

You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord. Lev. 19:17

Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. 20 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.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Rom. 12:19-21

God has created civil government to take vengeance on earth, but if they fail, He promises to do it perfectly.

For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Rom 13:4-5

Jesus knew that God would give each of these people the righteous judgment they deserved. God did not need His help in judging, but in saving. Just as Jesus did, so also must we! He spent His time doing God's will and left the details of punishment to God. We need to follow His footsteps in this matter. He believed the promise of God and left it in His hands. Vengeance belongs to God. He will give people exactly what they deserve when the proper time comes. This is how all Christians ought to live.

It is interesting that Peter makes this an object of faith and confidence. If we trust God to do this, then we can leave it to Him, but many have difficulty entrusting this to God. When we can't let go and continue to seek ways to get even or pay them back. When we never forget a wrong, because we want it paid, we are also reflecting a lack of faith. Jesus did not have a problem with this. He knew how fair, just and harsh God would be.

For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people." 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Heb. 10:30-31

24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree,

What Peter has been inferring and discussing about Jesus suffering wrongfully is now plainly stated. It took all that He did "bear" our sins:

"anaphero... 1. to carry or bring up, to lead up... (to bear sins upon on the cross, sc. In order to expiate them by suffering death... 2. to put upon the altar, to offer,... of presentation as a priestly act... " (Thayer p. 43; 399)

While they were reviling Him and He was not reviling back, He was also carrying our sins. Jesus made this sacrifice for mankind. Even for the very ones who were reviling and causing His suffering. He was sacrificing Himself for all so God could save them:

Surely our griefs He himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. 6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? 9 His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet He was with a rich man in His death, because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth. 10 But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand. 11 As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; by His knowledge the Righteous One, My servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; because He poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors. Isa. 53:4-12

In the midst of an admonition to slaves Peter revealed that Jesus was our slave and did what was necessary to save us. What an example we have to follow!

that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--

Peter again uses "*hina* — purpose and end: *to the intent that; to the end that, in order that.*" This is another purpose. Not only did he bear our sins on the tree by doing all the above, but He also wanted us to live for righteousness.

We died to sins at the moment we completed our obedience to the gospel in baptism. While buried in that water we died to sins with Him.

All the above occurred to the end that and for the purpose that we might die to sin and live for righteousness. Jesus did all this for us! He suffered, was reviled and committed himself to God so that we could have the ability to die to sin and live to righteousness. We all died to sin at

baptism:

Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, Rom. 6:3-11

We are all now to live for righteousness. What is just and fair as God revealed it to be.

"dikaios ... righteous, observing divine and human laws; one who is such as he ought to be...
1. in a wide sense, *upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God...*" (Thayer, p 148-149; 1342)

"dikaiosune... the virtue or quality or state of one who is dikaios; 1. in the broad sense, the state of him who is such as he ought to be, righteousness... b. integrity, virtue, purity of life, uprightness, correctness in thinking, feeling and acting..." (Thayer, p. 149; 1343)

tsedeq- justice, rightness, righteousness a) what is right or just or normal, rightness, justness (of weights and measures) b) righteousness ...5) used of God's attribute c) righteousness, justice (in case or cause) d) rightness (in speech) e) righteousness (as ethically right)

We died to sin at baptism we are separated from its power and control. God forgave the debt through Christ's blood thus making us free. We are now once again able to be servants of righteousness. Righteousness refers to living our lives in His image and after His likeness. It means that we can live the will of God on earth as it has always been lived in heaven.

Righteousness is the standard of life God has always lived and which he created man and angels to live. Through the sacrifice of our God's Servant Jesus, we can now be righteous.

by whose stripes you were healed.

What Jesus endured and suffered led to our being healed. The term "stripes" refers to bruises, welts, and wounds that trickle blood. The terrible mistreatment of Jesus led to our healing. His face was buffeted with fists, His head was torn with thorns, His back was opened with a scourge, His hands and feet were torn with nails, and His heart was pierced with a sword. This is what healed each of us. He suffered agony beyond description or ability to comprehend. This needs to touch our hearts deeply for the need may arise some day for us to act the same way for another and to suffer wrongfully. When that day comes let us hope and pray we can act as honorably as our Lord and Savior did.

25 For you were like sheep going astray,

Once again Peter uses (*gar* - "the reason and cause of a foregoing statement is added, ... to explain, make clear, illustrate) This is the reason why Jesus had to die for our sins. Before Jesus entered our lives we needed Him! Without the type of suffering Jesus willingly endured for the sake of those who were harming Him, we would all still be sheep going astray. The entire human race was without a shepherd, spiritually scattered throughout the world going in multitudes of different directions. Without protection and stumbling from one danger to the next. There was no protection, no safety, no hope. Under no guidance sheep rapidly go their own way. So do men. This was the condition of all who were then in the church prior to their call. This was a prophecy and promise God had made long ago.

"Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!" says the Lord. 2

Therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: "You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings," says the Lord. 3 "But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all

countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. 4 I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking," says the Lord. 5 "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, Jer. 23:1-5

Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Although I have cast them far off among the Gentiles, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet I shall be a little sanctuary for

them in the countries where they have gone." 17 Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord God: **"I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel."** Then **I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh,** 20 that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God. Ezek. 11:16-21

So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. 6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them." ... 11 'For thus says the Lord God: **"Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. 13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land;** Ezek. 34:5-6, 11-14

Jesus was the means by which all these prophecies were fulfilled.

but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

With another adversative (*alla - but*, in contrast to the opposite spoken of in the previous subject), Those who were scattered and wandering sheep are not scattered and wandering any longer. Now they have "returned"

"*epistrepho*... 1. transitively, a. *to turn to*... b. *to cause to return, to bring back*... 2. intrans. ... a. *to turn, to turn one's self*... b. *to turn one's self about, turn back*..." (Thayer p. 244; 1994)

Just as promised through Jesus suffering and death and the gospel based upon it, they have been brought back. Jesus cared enough about them to suffer the agonies of the cross for them, and then to send out the apostles and others into all the world to seek for them.

This final phrase powerfully makes the point God wants us to understand. Every single Christian at one time needed the suffering Savior to bring them back and then become a shepherd and overseer for their souls.

They now have this shepherd to guide, protect, water and feed them and an overseer who looks over the things others are doing to be sure they are being done properly. God wants us to succeed. Jesus suffered humiliation and sorrow to bring this about. All of this is directed to the slaves of surly and rude masters as encouragement to listen to God and do what He asks of them. They have a shepherd and bishop who is watching out for their souls. He has already done for them what God now asks them to do for their masters and it turned out very well indeed. They are still reaping the benefits of Jesus sacrifices, let them allow their master to reap the benefits of theirs.