

1 Peter

1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus the Messiah, to the refugees of those scattered throughout Pontos, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, chosen¹ **1:2** in accordance with the foreknowledge of God the Father, along with the setting apart by the Spirit, for obedience and the sprinkling by the blood of Jesus the Messiah—may grace and shalom be multiplied to you.²

1:3 Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, the One who has caused us to be born from above (again) according to His great *hesed* for a hope that lives in view of the resurrection from the dead of Jesus the Messiah,³ **1:4** i.e., for an immortal, undefiled, and unfading inheritance, that has been kept in the heavens for you,⁴ **1:5** who are being guarded by the power of God with belief for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last season,⁵ **1:6** because of which you exult, even though now, for a little while, if necessary, you are being made to grieve in the midst of various tests,⁶ **1:7** so that your approved belief, which is more valuable than destructible gold that has even been authenticated through fire, may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revealing of Jesus the Messiah.⁷

1:8 You love him, even though you have not seen him. In addition, even though you do not see him now but believe, you exult in him with joy that is unspeakable and that has been glorified,⁸ **1:9** in the light of receiving the goal of your belief, the salvation of your beings.⁹

1:10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who prophesied concerning the grace toward you, searched and inquired diligently,¹⁰ **1:11** searching out what kind of person or what kind of season the Spirit of the Messiah within them was declaring, as He was predicting sufferings for the Messiah and the glories after these.¹¹ **1:12** It was revealed to them that they were caring about these things not for themselves, but for you, things which have been announced in the present time to you through those who proclaimed the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which *angeloi* (ἄγγελοι) long to peer.¹²

1:13 Therefore, gird up the waists of your mind, be self-controlled, and hope completely in the grace being brought to you at the revealing of Jesus the Messiah.¹³ **1:14** As children of obedience, do not conform yourselves to the former evil desires that were dominant in the midst of your ignorance.¹⁴ **1:15** Instead, according to the Set Apart One who called you, indeed, be set apart yourselves in your whole way of life,¹⁵ **1:16** because it has been written,

Be set apart, for I am set apart <Leviticus 19:2>.¹⁶

1:17 Plus, if you call Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay,¹⁷ **1:18** knowing that you were not redeemed with destructible things, like silver or gold, from your futile way of life handed down from your ancestors,¹⁸ **1:19** but with precious blood, as that of a lamb, unblemished and spotless, of the Messiah.¹⁹ **1:20** He, on the one hand, was foreknown before the foundation of the cosmos, and, on the other hand, was manifested in the last of the times on

account of you,²⁰ **1:21** who, in view of him, are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your belief and hope are in God.²¹

1:22 Because you have dedicated your beings, in obedience to the truth, to an unhyprocritical brotherly love, earnestly love one another from a pure heart,²² **1:23** having been born from above [again], not from perishable seed, but imperishable, through the living and abiding message of God.²³ **1:24** You should love one another, because this message says,

All flesh is like grass,
and all its glory is like the flower of grass.
The grass dries up, and the flower falls off,²⁴
1:25 but the message of Yahweh abides into the age <Isaiah 40:6-8>.

This is the message that was proclaimed as good news to you.²⁵

2:1 Therefore, laying aside all evil—all dishonesty, hypocrisy, envy, and all speaking ill of others—²⁶ **2:2** like newborn infants, earnestly desire the rationally genuine, unalloyed milk, so that you may grow with it toward salvation.²⁷

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

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

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

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

2:8 And

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

They stumble because they disobey the message, to which also they were appointed.³³

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

2:11 Beloved, I exhort you as strangers and refugees <Genesis 23:4> to refrain from natural human desires which wage war against your very beings.³⁶ **2:12** Hold fast to your good way of life among the Gentiles, so that, because of that which they speak evil of you as evil doers, because of your good deeds, even though they have observed them, they may glorify God in the day of oversight.³⁷

2:13 Comply with every human authority system on account of the Lord, whether with a king who is in authority,³⁸ **2:14** or with governors as the ones sent by him for the purpose of meting out justice to evil doers and praise to those who do good.³⁹ **2:15** For thus is the will of God defined—by your doing good to silence the ignorance of foolish men.⁴⁰ **2:16** As free men but not holding your freedom as a pretext for evil, but as slaves of God,⁴¹ **2:17** honor all men, love the brothers, fear God, honor the king.⁴²

2:18 Slaves, comply with your masters with all respect, not only with those who are good and gentle, but also with those who are unscrupulous.⁴³ **2:19** For this is grace, if, on account of an understanding of God, someone endures sorrows while suffering wrongly.⁴⁴ **2:20** For what glory is there if, when you do what is wrong and are punished for it, you endure? But, if, when you do what is right and suffer, you endure, this is grace from God.⁴⁵

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

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

2:23 While being insulted, he did not insult in return. While suffering, he uttered no threats, but he continued handing himself over to Him who judges rightly.⁴⁸ **2:24** He himself has born our wrongdoings in his body on the cross, so that we may have no part in wrongdoings and live with respect to what is right. You were healed by his wounds,⁴⁹ **2:25** because you were wandering aimlessly like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your beings.⁵⁰

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

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

3:7 Likewise, husbands, coexist with your wives according to knowledge as with respect to a weaker feminine vessel,⁵⁷ while also granting her honor as a coheir of the grace of life, in order to prevent your prayers from being hindered.⁵⁸

3:8 The bottom line is this—everyone be like-minded, feeling with one another, brotherly loving, tenderhearted, humble,⁵⁹ **3:9** paying back neither evil for evil nor insult for insult, but, instead, asking God to grant special favor to them, because you were called to this, in order that you may inherit a special favor.⁶⁰

3:10 As for the one who desires to love life and to see good days,
let him stop his tongue from speaking evil and his lips from speaking deceit.⁶¹

3:11 Instead, let him turn away from evil and let him do good.
Let him seek shalom and pursuit it,⁶²

3:12 because the eyes of the Lord are on the upright,
and His ears are toward their prayers.
But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil <Psalm 34:12-16>.⁶³

3:13 Indeed, who is there to harm you if you become zealous for what is good?⁶⁴ **3:14**
Nevertheless, even if you suffer on account of morality, you are blessed.

Do not fear what they fear, and do not succumb to inward turmoil.⁶⁵

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

the Messiah, in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you for a statement concerning the hope that is in you,⁶⁶ **3:16** yet with gentleness and respect, because you have a good understanding, so that, in the thing in which you are insulted, those who malign your good manner of life in the Messiah may be put to shame.⁶⁷

3:17 It is better, if the will of God desires, to suffer for doing good rather than for doing evil,⁶⁸ **3:18** because, indeed, the Messiah suffered once and never again on behalf of wrongdoings, the morally perfect for those who are not perfect, in order to lead us to God, on the one hand having been put to death with respect to his flesh, on the other hand having been made alive with respect to his spirit,⁶⁹ **3:19** by which he also went and announced to the spirits in prison,⁷⁰ **3:20** who formerly were disobedient when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were rescued in the midst of the water.⁷¹ **3:21** The copy, baptism, indeed now saves you, not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but the appeal to God from a good understanding in view of the resurrection of Jesus the Messiah.⁷² **3:22** He is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, since angels (ἀγγέλων), authorities, and powers have become subject to him.⁷³

4:1 Therefore, because the Messiah suffered in his flesh, you also, arm yourselves with the same intent, because the person who suffers in the flesh has ceased from evil,⁷⁴ **4:2** in order to live out the remaining time in the flesh no longer on the basis of the strong desires of men, but on the basis of the will of God.⁷⁵ **4:3** Sufficient time has gone by to accomplish the intent of the Gentiles, while you conducted yourselves in the grip of sensualities, strong desires,

episodes of drunkenness, going on binges, drinking parties, and unseemly idol worship.⁷⁶ **4:4** In this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excess of reckless immorality, and they verbally abuse you.⁷⁷ **4:5** They will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.⁷⁸ **4:6** For this purpose, the good news has been proclaimed to the dead, in order that, on the one hand, they may be judged with respect to their flesh according to men, and, on the other hand, they may live with respect to their spirit according to God.⁷⁹

4:7 The goal of all things has come near. Therefore, think rightly, and be sensible in your prayers.⁸⁰ **4:8** Above all, hold on to a persevering love for one another, because love covers a multitude of immoral actions <Proverbs 10:12>.⁸¹ **4:9** Be hospitable towards one another without grumbling.⁸² **4:10** Just as each one has received a gift for yourselves, serve with it as good stewards of the diversified grace of God.⁸³ **4:11** If someone speaks, let him serve with the instructions of God. If someone serves, let him serve out of the strength which God supplies, in order that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus the Messiah, with respect to whom is the glory and power into the ages of the ages. Amen.⁸⁴

4:12 Beloved, do not be astonished at the painful experience among you that has occurred in order to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.⁸⁵ **4:13** Instead, rejoice according to your having a common experience of the sufferings of the Messiah, so that you may also rejoice by exulting greatly at the revealing of his glory.⁸⁶ **4:14** If you are insulted because of the name of the Messiah, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.⁸⁷ **4:15** Therefore, let not anyone of you suffer as a murderer, thief, evil-doer, or a meddler in other people's affairs.⁸⁸ **4:16** However, if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but instead let him glorify God because of this name,⁸⁹ **4:17** because the season exists in order for judgment to begin with the household of God, and if first with us, what is the end of those who disobey the good news of God?⁹⁰

4:18 Indeed, if the upright man is saved with difficulty, how will the godless and immoral man be made to shine <Proverbs 11:31>?⁹¹

4:19 Thus, indeed, let those who suffer according to the will of God entrust their lives to the faithful Creator in the midst of doing what is good.⁹²

5:1 Consequently, I, a fellow elder, a witness of the sufferings of the Messiah, and a participant in the future glory that is to be revealed, exhort the elders among you,⁹³ **5:2** shepherd the sheep of God among you by caring for them, not grudgingly, but willingly according to God, and not out of self-aggrandizement, but freely,⁹⁴ **5:3** and not by being masters of those allotted to you, but by being examples to the flock.⁹⁵ **5:4** The result will be that you receive the unfading crown of glory when the chief shepherd is revealed.⁹⁶

5:5 Likewise, youngers, comply with the elders.

And all of you put on humility towards one another, because

God is opposed to the proud,
But He gives grace to the humble <Proverbs 3:34>.⁹⁷

5:6 Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that He will lift you up in the season,⁹⁸ **5:7** as you throw all your anxiety upon Him because He cares for you.⁹⁹

5:8 Stay under control, remain alert. Your enemy, the adversary, prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.¹⁰⁰ **5:9** Stand against him, strong in belief, knowing that the same kinds of sufferings are being fully experienced by your brothers in the world.¹⁰¹ **5:10** And the God of all grace, who called you into His eternal glory because of the Messiah Jesus, while you suffer a little bit, will Himself prepare you, strengthen you, reinforce you, and provide you with a firm foundation.¹⁰² **5:11** To Him be the sovereignty into the ages. Amen.¹⁰³

5:12 Through Silvanus, the faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand in it.¹⁰⁴ **5:13** She who is in Babylon, chosen with you, sends you greetings, as does Mark, my son.¹⁰⁵ **5:14** Greet one another with a kiss of love. Shalom to all of you who are in the Messiah.¹⁰⁶

¹ Πέτρος ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκλεκτοῖς ἑταίροις διασπορᾶς Πόντου, Γαλατίας, Καπαδοκίας, Ἀσίας καὶ Βιθυνίας – Pinning down exactly what Peter means by certain terms in this letter is rather simple if he was writing to only Jews, because these terms are used in the OT to refer to God’s chosen people, the nation of Israel. However, if Peter is writing to Gentiles, then interpreting this letter is not quite so straightforward. It would seem at first glance that Peter *is* writing to Jews—specifically because of the OT terminology. However, two clues may indicate that he is actually writing to Gentiles.

1) One is the fact that Silvanus is his secretary, who is doing the actual writing. If this is the Silvanus who is also known as Silas in the NT, then this is the man who was a faithful traveling companion of the apostle Paul. Silas was his Jewish name and Silvanus was his more Roman name as attested by Paul’s use of the latter in his letters to Gentile Christians in Corinth and Thessaonica (2 Corinthians 1:19; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1). Therefore, it makes more sense to conclude that Peter is writing to Gentiles, not Jews. Otherwise, he would have used the Jewish name Silas to identify his secretary, Silvanus. In addition, if the writing of this letter takes place after many, if not all, of Paul’s missionary journeys, then perhaps Silvanus, who obviously happens to be in the same location as Peter, suggests to Peter as a prominent apostle to the Jews to write a letter to the Gentile Christians who came to faith by means of Paul and who live in the area of modern day Turkey. Such a letter from Peter would add just that much more encouragement for these Gentile Christians to persevere in belief in the Jewish Messiah. However, Peter, a resident of Jerusalem, is so used to using OT language in his discussions with Jews, particularly Christian Jews, that he uses this same terminology in this letter to Gentiles. Indeed, as probably acknowledged by Silvanus to Peter, Paul and his associates more than likely would have taught these Gentile Christians the very OT theology to which Peter is referring. Therefore, Peter could know that the OT language of this letter would not be confusing or unfamiliar to his readers.

2) The second clue that may indicate that Peter is writing to Gentiles is that he comments in 4:3 on the past lifestyle of his readers that included drunkenness and idol worship. It makes more sense to conclude that his readers are not Jews who were following the Mosaic Covenant before becoming believers in Jesus as the Messiah, but Gentiles who were former pagans, living the lives of typical Roman Empire pagans.

It could be that Peter is writing to a group of Christians made up of both Jews and Gentiles and that they are supposed to discern when he is addressing one particular ethnic group vs. the other in the different parts of his letter. However, the flow of the letter and the two previous clues mentioned lead more toward interpreting him as writing to Gentiles. If this really is the case, interpreting the OT language that Peter uses becomes quite interesting and a bit unusual, though not impossible to understand.

παρεπίδημος – This word is used in the LXX to translate עַרְוִי in Genesis 23:4 where Abraham refers to his status on the land of Canaan where he has been living and where his wife Sarah just died. He says that he is a stranger (עַרְוִי) (παρόικος) and a sojourner, i.e., temporary resident alien (עַרְוִי) (παρεπίδημος), even though God had promised the land to him and his descendants, the Jews. In Psalm 39, David is commenting on his transient existence as a human being on earth, and he says that he is a stranger with God (עַרְוִי אֶנִּי) (παρόικος ἐγὼ εἰμι παρὰ σοῦ), i.e., a stranger on earth because of his association with God (cf. Leviticus 25:23, “The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently,

for the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me (רַבֵּי אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי וְאַתֶּם זְרָבִים וְתוֹרְגְמֵי אִתִּי) (διότι προσήλυτοι (from προς and ἔρχομαι, literally one who comes to something from the outside, a proselyte) καὶ πάροικοι ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐναντίον μου.)” David says also that he is a sojourner like his fathers (רַבֵּי אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי וְאַתֶּם זְרָבִים וְתוֹרְגְמֵי אִתִּי) (παρεπίδημος καθὼς πάντες οἱ πατέρες μου), i.e., a man who is living like a resident alien among others who refuse to recognize his God, just as his forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, lived in the land of Canaan.

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

Certainly, there were Jews who were scattered from the land of Israel during the Assyrian exile around 700 B.C. and whose descendants were now living in Pontos, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia which are all in modern day Turkey. But it makes more sense in the light of the clues in this letter that Peter is addressing Gentile Christians who are living in these areas as resident aliens, because they are eventually going to live permanently in the eternal Kingdom of God. Thus, they are like Abraham and David who saw themselves in a similar light while they were on earth and even living on the land of Israel. In other words, all Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, can consider themselves as resident aliens and scattered, regardless of where on earth they live. This earth is not their permanent “home,” and they have not been “gathered” into the eternal Kingdom of God.

² [ἐκλεκτοῖς] κατὰ πρόγνωσιν θεοῦ πατὴρ ἐν ἀγιασμῷ πνεύματος εἰς ὑπακοὴν καὶ ῥαντισμὸν αἵματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη πληθυνθεῖη – God formulated the entire story of human history prior to Genesis 1:1, and He picked which people whom He would inwardly change to become authentic believers in Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. The purpose of God’s inner work in people is their proper obedience to Him, even though they are still morally depraved, and, using Old Testament language, eternal forgiveness by understanding the meaning of Jesus’ death that qualifies him to be their advocate at the judgment. Thus, Peter states that his Gentile Christian readers are such people, even though they are Gentiles.

³ Εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ κατὰ ὄτὸ πολὺ ἄουτου ἔλεος ἄναγεννήσας ἡμᾶς εἰς ἐλπίδα ἣς ὄσαν δι’ ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκ νεκρῶν – Peter extols God, who is the source of the Messiah’s sonship, that makes him not only the ruler of all creation within the creation, but also the instrument of moral depraved human beings’ obtaining God’s eternal mercy at the final judgment, a role for which Jesus qualified by his death and of which God approved by raising him from the dead. All of this was based upon God’s faithfulness to His promises to Abraham and to Israel, which gives even those Gentiles who are inwardly changed by God a sense of the certainty of their eventual entrance into eternal life. This is the “hope that lives,” i.e., the expectation that Peter’s readers can have, that will certainly come true, of an existence of *living* in the permanent and eternal Kingdom of God where death will never be a possibility.

⁴ εἰς κληρονομίαν ἀφθαρτον καὶ ἀμίαντον καὶ ἀμάραντον, τετηρημένην ἐν οὐρανοῖς εἰς ἡμᾶς – Peter switches from the 1st person plural “us” to the 2nd person plural “you” in order to comment more specifically on the difficulties that his readers are experiencing due to their belief in Jesus as the Messiah. The indestructible and eternal Kingdom of God will not experience any decay or degeneration as the current realm does. Perhaps it already exists now as a parallel universe to the one in which we live, or there is a definite plan for such a universe that God has guarded in His mind in order to bring it about in His own sweet time. Either way, Peter’s readers can know that God’s goal is to reserve, so to speak, the kingdom for them. It awaits their entering into it after the final judgment.

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

⁶ ἐν ᾧ ἀγαλλιάσθε, ὀλίγον ἄρτι εἰ δέον ὅ[ἐστιν] λυπηθέντες ἐν ποικίλοις πειρασμοῖς – Peter presumes that his readers, with genuine biblical belief, understand the value of God’s promise of eternal mercy and life, so that it appropriately affects them by moving them to rejoice at its prospects in the midst of enduring the pain of temporary suffering due to their association with Jesus as the Messiah in the present realm. The purpose of this temporary suffering is to test and prove out the authenticity of their belief.

⁷ ἵνα τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως πολυτιμότερον χρυσοῦ τοῦ ἀπολλυμένου διὰ πυρὸς δὲ δοκιμαζομένου, εὐρεθῆ εἰς ἔπαινον καὶ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν ἐν ἀποκαλύψει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ – The permanent purpose of the testing of people’s belief is so that the proving out of it over the course of their lives and throughout the hardships of their lives will result in God’s expressing His admiration for the perseverance of their genuine belief (cf. Romans 2:5-10). He will also honor them with moral perfection for all of eternity in the Kingdom of God. This will all occur when Jesus is “revealed,” that includes not only his second coming and setting up the temporary Kingdom of Israel on earth but also and most especially his advocacy at the final judgment that results in eternal salvation for morally depraved human

beings (cf. vs. 4,5,9). Peter compares the value of their belief to the value of gold. The latter is certainly valuable in the present realm as the means to live a more comfortable life, physically speaking. However, its longevity will terminate with the destruction of the present realm, while the longevity of authentic, biblical belief is eternal. Thus, belief is more valuable, because, through genuine biblical belief, residence in the eternal Kingdom of God becomes a reality that is clearly more valuable than any amount of comfortable living in the present realm made possible by gold and wealth.

⁸ ὄν οὐκ ἰδόντες ἀγαπᾶτε, εἰς ὃν ἄρτι μὴ ὁρῶντες πιστεύοντες δὲ ἄγαλλιᾶσθε χαρᾷ ἀνεκκλήτῳ καὶ δεδοξασμένῳ – Peter acknowledges that his readers know of Jesus of Nazareth through only word of mouth. They never actually saw him in person while he was on earth. Nevertheless, because of their knowledge and understanding of him, they both love him and believe in him as the Jewish Messiah. In addition, their joy in the certain expectation of God’s mercy and eternal life is ineffable, because they are so struck with how wonderful this promise from God is. Nothing and no one in the present realm is more satisfying to the soul than the thought of God’s gracious promise of eternal mercy and life. In addition, Peter says that their joy is as good as eternally verified, because he implies that he is convinced that they really will achieve their goal of eternal life and salvation (cf. vs. 4,5,9).

⁹ κομιζόμενοι τὸ τέλος τῆς πίστεως [ὑμῶν] σωτηρίαν ψυχῶν – Peter explicitly says that their great joy is in the light of the certainty of their receiving God’s mercy and eternal life through Jesus’ intercession at the judgment. Thus he implies that God will faithfully complete the process of the perseverance of their belief in the present realm so that it results in their eternal salvation.

¹⁰ περὶ ἧς σωτηρίας ἐξεζήτησαν καὶ ἐξηραύνησαν προφηταὶ οἱ περὶ τῆς εἰς ὑμᾶς χάριτος προφητεύσαντες – The OT prophets were very curious about the Messiah and the time of his appearance within human history that would result ultimately in God’s kindness and love being granted freely to people who heard about the Messiah and believed in him.

¹¹ ἐραυνῶντες εἰς τίνα ἢ ποῖον καιρὸν ἐδήλου τὸ ἐν αὐτοῖς πνεῦμα Ὁ Χριστοῦ προμαρτυρόμενον τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα καὶ τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας – Of course the OT prophets, who spoke of the Messiah, wanted to know as much as they could about him and his role along with the effects that would be marvelous for all involved, especially because his role involved enduring great suffering in order to qualify to be the Messiah and the king of the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of God, both of which would bring him great acclamation. They also wanted to know exactly when the Messiah would carry out his whole role, perhaps wondering if it would be during their lifetimes. Apparently, God made it clear to them that their proclamation of the truth about the Messiah, that would eventually coincide with his existence in human history, was for a future generation of Jews (and, therefore, Gentiles) and not for them.

¹² οἷς ἀπεκαλύφθη ὅτι οὐχ ἑαυτοῖς ὑμῖν δὲ διηκόνουν αὐτά, ἀ νῦν ἀνηγγέλη ὑμῖν διὰ τῶν εὐαγγελισσαμένων ὑμᾶς [ἐν] πνεύματι ἀγίῳ ἀποσταλέντι ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ, εἰς ᾧ ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἄγγελοι παρακύψαι – While theoretically the OT prophets could have been talking about the suffering that believers in the Messiah would experience in their own lifetimes, they realized that these difficult experiences for believers would occur later on after they themselves had died. In addition, just as no one can properly embrace the apostolic message of Jesus as the Messiah without the inner work of the Holy Spirit, so also no one can properly proclaim the message without the inner work of the Holy Spirit. Here *angeloi* refers to conventional angels, who, like the earthly human prophets, are fascinated by God’s project of revealing the Messiah and establishing an eternal kingdom of people who acquire salvation from God’s condemnation by His grace and mercy. They, also like the prophets, are not privy to all the details but are looking forward to seeing them displayed in God’s timing.

¹³ Διὸ ἀναζωσάμενοι τὰς ὀσφύας τῆς διανοίας ὑμῶν νήφοντες τελείως ἐλπίσατε ἐπὶ τὴν φερομένην ὑμῖν χάριν ἐν ἀποκαλύψει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ – Probably from personal experience, Peter knows that it takes great concerted effort by human beings to persevere in belief in the biblical message in the midst of extreme earthly hardships, especially because the payoff is not until a person enters the next and eternal realm. Thus, Peter exhorts his readers to do all they can to hang on to their belief in God’s graciously producing eternal life and mercy for them through Jesus’ actions as the Messiah as their advocate when God reveals him to be such at the final judgment.

¹⁴ ὡς τέκνα ὑπακοῆς μὴ συσχηματιζόμενοι ταῖς πρότερον ἐν τῇ ἀγνοίᾳ ὑμῶν ἐπιθυμίαις – Because Peter’s readers are the spiritual offspring of God and therefore oriented toward obeying Him by means of His inner work in their hearts, Peter exhorts them not to take the easy route in the midst of their suffering and return to the kind of lives that so naturally dominated them before they became Christians because of their moral depravity and that was due to their lack of understanding God’s purposes. Regardless of how tempting a return to their previous behavior might be under the present difficult circumstances in order to avoid persecution, Peter wants them to continue moving forward in their obedience to God as they look forward to His eternal kingdom.

¹⁵ ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸν καλέσαντα ὑμᾶς ἅγιον καὶ αὐτοὶ ἅγιοι ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ γενήθητε – Peter’s argument is that they should pursue being different from the world which is in rebellion against God because God, who Himself is different from the world, is the One who has inwardly moved them to believe in the truth of Jesus as the Messiah and final Davidic king. Cf. Isaiah 1:4 – “Alas, sinful nation, people weighed down with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the LORD [Yahweh], they have despised the Holy One of Israel (יְהוָה הַקָּדוֹשׁ) (τὸν ἅγιον τοῦ Ἰσραηλ), they have turned away from Him.”

¹⁶ διότι γέγραπται ὅτι ἅγιοι ἔσεσθε, ὅτι ἐγὼ ἅγιός εἰμι – Peter borrows an appropriate verse from the Mosaic Covenant to emphasize his point that those who have been inwardly changed by Yahweh should pursue a life that is like Yahweh’s, i.e., that reflects moral perfection as much as possible and that is different from the world which is

hostile to God and His truth and therefore dominated by evil and rebellious desires. Cf. Leviticus 19:2, “Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘You shall be holy, for I the LORD [Yahweh] your God am holy (קְדָשׁוּן אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם תְּהִיוּ קַי קְדָשׁוּן) (‘Αγιοι ἔσεσθε, ὅτι ἐγὼ ἅγιος).” Thus, Peter uses Jewish OT language to encourage his Gentile Christian readers to be morally different from the world of unbelievers, even though Peter must know that Gentiles are not required to live exactly like Jews under the Mosaic Covenant. They are free from any obligation to the Mosaic Covenant *per se* (cf. Romans and Galatians).

¹⁷ καὶ εἰ πατέρα ἑπικαλεῖσθε τὸν ἀπροσωπολήπτως κρίνοντα κατὰ τὸ ἐκάστου ἔργον, ἐν φόβῳ τὸν τῆς παροικίας ὑμῶν χρόνον ἀναστράφητε – Peter, in addition, exhorts them to tremble appropriately at the reality of their facing God at the final judgment and the possibility of incurring His anger and justice that would result from disparaging the death of the Messiah, the most “valuable” event in all of human history when Jesus qualified to be our high priest at the judgment. If people ignore the significance of this event, God will condemn them eternally for their rebellious hearts and consequent actions, i.e., their “works” of living a life that does not take into account properly the death of the Messiah with its meaning. For Peter’s readers, because they grasp what it means for God to be their Father, i.e., the One who has birthed them metaphorically into being persons of authentic, inward belief, then it is only right that they pursue a life of obedience to God until they meet Him at the judgment and then enter into the eternal Kingdom of God by means of Jesus’ advocacy and God’s gracious mercy. The only other use of παροικία in the NT is by Paul in Acts 13:17 when speaking to Jews in the synagogue in Psidian Antioch, “The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt (ἐν τῇ παροικίᾳ ἐν γῆ Αἰγύπτου), and with an uplifted arm He led them out from it.” Therefore, Peter is implying that his readers’ existence on earth is temporary, like that of the Israelites in Egypt.

¹⁸ εἰδότες ὅτι οὐ φθαρτοῖς, ἀργυρίῳ ἢ χρυσίῳ, ἐλυτρώθητε ἐκ τῆς ματαίας ὑμῶν ἀναστροφῆς πατροπαραδότου – While it may sound as though Peter is addressing Jewish believers who had learned from their forefathers and practiced the pharisaical/rabbinic manner of obeying and focusing on the Mosaic Covenant, he is more likely referring to Gentile believers who inherited the pagan idolatry of previous Gentiles. Cf. Robert Louis Wilken’s book *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* that presents the fact that Gentile pagans were critical of Christianity because it lacked a basis in traditions that had existed for generations. Also, while human beings are very familiar with obtaining things in the present realm through the exchange of materials like gold and silver as money, things that will not survive into the eternal realm, Peter reminds his readers of the significance of their being able to obtain entrance into the Kingdom of God through God’s mercy by “exchanging” the death of the Messiah Jesus for it. He qualified to be their advocate at the judgment, so that his death becomes the means for them to obtain eternal life. Therefore, he and his blood, so to speak, will not be destroyed at the end of the present realm, but he will remain permanently in existence into the eternal Kingdom of God. In other words, “destructible” here refers to lack of eternal longevity, because certainly Jesus’ blood could be destroyed like gold also. Therefore, the difference between gold and Jesus’ blood is that the existence of the former ends at the destruction of the present realm, while the existence of the latter endures into eternity. Cf. [Is. 46:6](#) “Those who lavish gold from the purse and weigh silver on the scale hire a goldsmith, and he makes it into a god; they bow down, indeed they worship it.” Thus, Peter may be referring to the fact that his Gentile readers had to pay for their gods on whom they counted to “redeem” them from the difficulties of life. In addition, if Peter were writing to Jews, it would make more sense for him to refer to destructible bulls and goats that were sacrificed according to the Mosaic Covenant and that became the tradition of the Jews.

¹⁹ ἀλλὰ τὴν τιμὴν αἵματι ὡς ἀμνοῦ ἀμώμου καὶ ἀσίπλου Χριστοῦ – Another incentive for pursuing authentic obedience to God is that He has made available His eternal mercy through some other means besides even the most valuable yet mundane of earthly metals like silver and gold that Peter’s readers either would long to own to make themselves wealthy or are certainly used to using for acquiring the necessities of life. Human beings must take seriously the death of the Messiah, because God had planned it as part of His process of completing His project of bringing about the eternal Kingdom of God. Thus, Jesus’ death becomes so much more valuable than gold and silver because it becomes the necessary step for Jesus’ advocacy at the final judgment for acquiring the most valuable commodity available to human beings, God’s mercy and entrance into the eternal Kingdom of God. Peter’s calling Jesus a lamb is most likely in reference to the Passover lamb and sin offering lamb of the Israelites in Exodus 12 and Leviticus 4:32 respectively. Thus, Jesus becomes the offering to God by God for the means to escape His eternal condemnation and to obtain His eternal mercy and forgiveness.

²⁰ προεγνωσμένου μὲν πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου φανερωθέντος δὲ ἐπ’ ἐσχάτου τῶν χρόνων δι’ ὑμᾶς – Peter states that God’s actions for bringing the Messiah into existence and using him as the means to eternal mercy for morally depraved human beings was not an afterthought on His part. Indeed, the events that involve Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah are the very focal point of creation history, so that it can be said that the creation exists for the sake of Jesus of Nazareth. Thus, it has always been His eternal plan to introduce one human being into cosmic history who will serve as the king of the creation for the sake of those who believe God to have done this for the sake of their eternal destinies. Thus, Peter can say that it has been, from a chronological standpoint, because of those who believe in Jesus *after* he had come into existence as the Messiah that God has done this. Consequently, it is belief in God’s plan and this human being, Jesus of Nazareth, along with his role, that is required by God to avoid His condemnation. Such belief in the historical Jesus does not exclude those who lived before Jesus and those who even live after him who have never heard of him from receiving God’s mercy and eternal life. Peter just desires to emphasize the importance to his readers,

especially because they are Gentiles and who have actually heard the NT message of Jesus' Messiahship, that Jesus' coming into existence was just as much for their sake as any other authentic believer's sake, whether Jew or Gentile. Also, by saying that Jesus was revealed and came into existence "in the last of the times," Peter shows that he views the first coming of Jesus to be at least the start of the end of the present realm leading up to the temporary and earthly Kingdom of Israel and the final judgment with the eternal Kingdom of God (cf. Hebrews 1:1,2). We now know in the 21st century that the last of the times and the last days have been going on for two millenia, a long time from a human standpoint but a short time from God's perspective (cf. 2 Peter 3). If the traditional view of the trinity were true, why does Peter not say, "who existed as the second person of the trinity before the foundation of the cosmos," since this fact, according to the trinitarians, would be the most important fact for Peter's Gentile readers to embrace and believe?

²¹ τοὺς δι' αὐτοῦ πιστοὺς εἰς θεὸν τὸν ἐγείραντα αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν καὶ δόξαν αὐτῷ δόντα, ὥστε τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν καὶ τὴν ἐλπίδα εἶναι εἰς θεόν – God's raising of Jesus from the dead was a clear sign of His eternal intent and purposes that demand a response of acknowledgement and belief on the part of human beings who live after him and are confronted with the historical news of his existence, whether Jews whose Messiah he is ethnically or Gentiles who follow the Jewish Messiah while living lives that are quite Gentile, because they are not obligated to the Mosaic Covenant. Thus, God is not to be trifled with as though He is someone who can be ignored. In addition, this verse highlights the importance of a person's believe and worship of the transcendent God and Father of Jesus as the Son the God, thus indicating for us that the focus in modern Christianity on Jesus through the songs and prayers that are used with almost a complete ignoring of the Father is rather misguided.

²² Τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν ἡγνικότες ἐν τῇ ὑπακοῇ τῆς ἀληθείας τῆς εἰς φιλαδελφίαν ἀνυπόκριτον, ἐκ [καθαρᾶς] καρδίας ἀλλήλους ἀγαπήσατε ἐκτενῶς – ἀγνίζω in the LXX is used to translate various words, including שָׂרַף, נָחַם, אָשַׁף, all of which can refer to setting oneself aside both inwardly and outwardly for a fully committed life to God. Peter says that his readers have made the choice to believe the truth of Jesus as the Messiah, thus inwardly dedicating themselves to obeying God according to the message of grace and mercy of Jesus as the Messiah. The result should be that they pursue obedience to God in the form of loving one another as Christians. If his readers were Jews, the implication would be that, while pursuing obedience to God according to the Mosaic Covenant but in a Pharisaical manner, their love for their fellow Jews would just be an act whereby they were merely following a script by means of the moral depravity. Instead, Peter's Gentile readers can and should also genuinely demonstrate their love for the one true God, because He has changed their hearts, by their loving one another. This, of course, is also in line with the "greatest commandments" of the Mosaic Covenant, to love not only God but also one's neighbor (cf. Deut 6:4; Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:35ff.).

²³ ἀναγεγεννημένοι οὐκ ἐκ σποράς, φθαρτῆς ἀλλὰ ἀφθάρτου διὰ λόγου ἑζῶντος θεοῦ καὶ μένοντος τῆς – This verse contains the only use of σπορά as "seed" in the NT. Normally "seed" is σπέρμα. But notice that Peter's reference to his readers being "scattered" in 1:1 is διασπορα (diaspora). The point that Peter is making is that the origin of his reader's biblical belief and their being God's children with authentic inwardness is not found in the destructible elements of the created reality but in the indestructible element of God Himself—that the Spirit of God, operating within the created reality, miraculously caused their new spirituality in the midst of their hearing the NT message of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. Thus, the origin of their belief is not even themselves. It is God and God alone.

²⁴ ἰδίῳτι πᾶσα σὰρξ ὡς χόρτος καὶ πᾶσα δόξα ἡ αὐτῆς ὡς ἄνθος ὁ χόρτου ἐξηράνθη ὁ χόρτος καὶ τὸ ἄνθος τῆς ἐξέπεσεν – Peter supplies a biblical reason for their pursuing genuine love of one another—the eternal endurance of the NT message (Isaiah 40:8 – כִּי כִּי־יָבֵשׁ הָעֵשׂוֹבָה וְהָעֵשׂוֹבָה, τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ) vs. the temporary nature of the created reality. The eternal perseverance of something implies its having value and worth that is greater than anything else that is only temporary. Paul uses this argument in Hebrews to point out the fact that the eternal Son of God is greater in status than the temporary theophanies of God, i.e., the *angeli* of God in that context. Even though the theophanies were God, they did not play as important a role within the created reality as the eternal Davidic king, Jesus of Nazareth.

²⁵ τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα κυρίου μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦτο δὲ ἐστὶν ὁ ῥῆμα τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν εἰς ὑμᾶς – The apostles have continued the proclamation of the biblical message that involves the eternal elements of God's project and that contains both Old Testament elements and New Testament elements. They have especially made public the information about the eternal and permanent king of the Kingdom of God. Peter reminds his readers that this is the message that constitutes the best news and information that they have ever heard and that they have believed.

²⁶ Ἀποθέμενοι οὖν πᾶσαν κακίαν καὶ πάντα δόλον καὶ ὑποκρίσεις καὶ φθόνους καὶ πάσας καταλαλίαις – If Peter truly is addressing Gentile Christians who have come out of a pagan background and culture, then he is referring to the manner of their conducting themselves in that culture. It involved a natural dishonesty that avoids the real moral problems inside a person, that ends up creating and following a religious script, even of paganism, in order to hide inward immorality, that nurses a quiet envy and jealousy of others, and that looks for opportunities to criticize others as part of a strategy to deflect attention from one's personal immorality. Of course, this could be applied just as easily to Jewish Christians, who have been focused on a Pharisaical following of the Mosaic Covenant, such that their legalistic perspective would measure their spirituality strictly on the basis of external religious actions and doctrines, and they would not care about genuine, humble inwardness.

²⁷ ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα ἐπιποθήσατε, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ αὐξηθῆτε εἰς σωτηρίαν – In line with the metaphor of his readers' being born again, Peter exhorts them to continue their pursuit of learning the biblical message that he has talked about at the end of chapter 1 and that goes on into eternity, i.e., the genuine and pure biblical

message of Jesus as the Messiah that incorporates all that the OT has to say about the Jewish Messiah. Certainly, the former pagan idolatry of Peter's readers was filled with error because of its basis that took no stock in the Bible. And the Jewish Pharisaism of Peter's day was a mixture of truth and error. In stark contrast, the NT message of Jesus as the Messiah was and is only truth as it interprets the OT correctly and incorporates it into itself. This is the message that Jesus taught to his apostles and that they proclaim.

The KJV translates τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα as “the sincere milk of the word.” This is probably why the more modern translations followed suit with much the same, e.g., NASB 95, “the pure milk of the word.”

²⁸ εἰ ἐγεύσασθε ὅτι ἡ χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος – χρηστὸς is used to translate צָדִיק (= good) in the Old Testament; cf. Psalm 25:8 – Good and upright is Yahweh (יְהוָה צָדִיק וְיָשָׁר) (χρηστὸς καὶ εὐθὴς ὁ κύριος). This word includes the idea of God's being merciful to those who are humble and contrite in their inwardness. Thus, Peter is saying that if his readers have genuinely grasped the eternal attractiveness of what Jesus means to morally depraved human beings, that they will receive God's mercy through his advocacy at the judgment, then they understand what is good about Jesus.

²⁹ πρὸς ὃν προσερχόμενοι λίθον ζῶντα ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων μὲν ἀποδοκιμασμένον παρὰ δὲ θεῶ ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον – When rebellious human beings consider Jesus to be good, then they come to him and believe in him as their King and High Priest regardless of the fact that others deem him to be unworthy of their attention. They also come to him because God certainly looks at him as the one whom He has chosen to be the valuable cornerstone of the building comprised of the bricks that are believers, i.e., that Jesus is the most important element of the creation (cf. v. 5). This is the first of five meanings given to the word “stone” in this passage.

³⁰ καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος πνευματικὸς εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον ἀνεύγκαι πνευματικὰς θυσίας ἐμπροσθέντες τῷ θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ – This is such a radical statement by Peter, that all of his Gentile believing readers are priests. However, God had told the Jews that their entire ethnic group were priests, in spite of the fact that He would soon set the tribe of Levi apart to carry out the specific function of priests for the rest of the nation—Ex. 19:1 In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. Ex. 19:2 When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain. Ex. 19:3 Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel: Ex. 19:4 ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself. Ex. 19:5 ‘Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; Ex. 19:6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (שָׂרְיָהוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִיְיָהוּ) (βασιλείον ἱεράτευμα καὶ ἔθνος ἅγιον).’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.”—Thus, Peter is telling his Gentile readers that they, like the people of Israel and the Levites specifically, function as those who bring offerings and sacrifices to God. In other words, under the New Covenant, every believer is his own mini-priest in the light of Jesus' high priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek (cf. Hebrews 5-10 & 13:10ff.). Therefore, first of all, Peter's Gentile readers are each of “stone” of a “temple,” with Jesus as the cornerstone of this temple. This is the second meaning given to the word “stone” in this passage. Secondly, his readers are also the priests of the temple who bring their own offerings to God in the light of the fact that Jesus is their high priest at the final judgment. Likewise, Jewish believers, whether from the tribe of Levi or not, are also each a priest in the temple of God, the community of believers in Jesus as the Messiah that is made up of both Jews and Gentiles. Their offerings consist simply of their “obedience to the truth” as they continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah and “earnestly love one another from a pure heart” (cf. 1 Peter 1:22).

³¹ διότι περιέχει ἐν γραφῇ ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον ἀκρογωνιαίον ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ καταισχυνθῇ – Peter quotes from Isaiah 28:16 where God told both the northern Kingdom of Israel and the southern Kingdom of Judah around 722 B.C. that the Davidic Covenant that they were not trusting in will nevertheless become the cornerstone of the building comprised of His people, the authentically believing Jews. Thus, the Davidic Covenant is the third meaning given to the word “stone” in this passage. Isaiah 28 is also referring to the fact that the Israelites had made a covenant with foreign empires to protect them from harm. However, God had already and will continue to make and keep the Davidic Covenant with the nation of Israel, which is all that they need for protection from their enemies. Therefore, Peter is alluding to the fact that his Gentile readers are these same kind of people, because they have abandoned their “covenant” with pagan idolatry and placed themselves within the Davidic Covenant by believing in the final, Jewish Davidic king, Jesus of Nazareth.

³² ὑμῖν οὖν ἡ τιμὴ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, ἁπιστοῦσιν δὲ λίθος ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες, οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας – The “stone” that becomes the “cornerstone” in Psalm 118 is the truth that the psalmist himself is laying out for his readers within the psalm, truth that, by definition, either in whole or in part pertains to the biblical message. This is the fourth meaning given to “stone” in this passage. In Psalm 118, the Davidic Covenant, which is part of the biblical message, is certainly part of the “stone”/“cornerstone” to which the psalmist is referring. In fact, it may be the main part and therefore the “cornerstone” *per se*. Therefore, Peter is highlighting the fact that the honor of becoming a brick in the building of the biblical truth, the Messiah, and the “spiritual house” (1 Peter 2:5) is only for those who embrace Jesus as the Messiah, while those who reject Jesus as the Messiah are also rejecting the truth of God and, therefore, God Himself.

³³ καὶ λίθος προσκόμματος καὶ πέτρα σκανδάλου οἱ προσκόπτουσιν τῷ λόγῳ ἁπειθοῦντες εἰς ὃ καὶ ἔτέθησαν Peter quotes from Isaiah 8:14 where God is telling the Jews of both the northern Kingdom of Israel and the southern

moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me (אֲנִי אֵלֹהֵי הָאֲדָמִיּוֹת וְאַתֶּם אֲרָמִים וְגֵרִים בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא בְּאֵימָנִי) (διότι προσήλυτοι καὶ πάροικοι ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐναντίον μου).” Even though God has given the land of Israel to the Jews, it ultimately belongs to Him, so that they should consider themselves as foreigners who are living on the land only for a short time. In other words, they should never become so possessive of the land that they think that the right to live on it is inherent within them or because of their actions, as though they deserve to live on the land. They are merely caretakers of it. These words were also used to refer to Abraham in the land of Canaan that he never fully possessed (Genesis 23:4, “I am a stranger and a sojourner (בְּשׂוּרֵי אֲרָם) (πάροικος καὶ παρεπίδημος) among you; give me a burial site among you that I may bury my dead out of my sight”) and to the Israelites as strangers in Egypt before Moses led them out (Deuteronomy 23:7, “You shall not detest an Edomite, for he is your brother; you shall not detest an Egyptian, because you were an alien (גֵר) (πάροικος) in his land).” Therefore, Peter is using these ideas to convey to his Gentile believing readers that they are simply strangers on earth in the present realm, because they have a different fundamental desire from that of the non-believers who both are enslaved to their desires to rebel against God and fundamentally committed to making the present realm as secure and homey a place for them to exist as heaven will be for believers. This earth is not the permanent home of believers and our longing for safety and security that is both permanent and complete should never govern and rule our choices and decisions (cf. 1 Peter 1:1). Thus, while Abraham was a refugee in his own land, the land of Canaan, all Christians are refugees on the earth, waiting to go home, so to speak, to the eternal Kingdom of God, which certainly was also Abraham’s longterm desire (cf. Hebrews 11:9,10). Instead, Peter’s readers’ desire should be to obey God in the midst of their moral depravity and to receive His mercy in the eternal Kingdom of God, regardless of their insecurity and suffering in whatever circumstances they find themselves. The result should be that they fight tooth and nail not to give in to their natural born immoral desires that are a part of only the present realm and will disappear in the eternal realm. These desires are also contrary to the fundamental orientation inside them that exists because of God’s gracious work within them, to which Peter refers by using the word ψυχῆς. This word here means their very beings, which includes the changed inwardness that God has brought about through the work of His Spirit (cf. Peter’s use of this word in 1:9,22; 2:25; 3:20; 4:10).

³⁷ τὴν ἀναστροφὴν ὑμῶν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἔχοντες καλήν, ἵνα ἐν ᾧ καταλαλοῦσιν ὑμῶν ὡς κακοποιῶν ἐκ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων ἔποπτευόντες δοξάσωσιν τὸν θεὸν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπισκοπῆς – The pagan worshipers in the Roman Empire were more respectful of the Jews as strict monotheists and followers of long standing traditions than they were of Christians who assigned the status of deity to a man, Jesus of Nazareth, and also introduced something completely new into the religious culture of the empire. Thus, the Gentiles, as pagan worshipers, were critical of Christians and not Pharisaical Jews as evil doers. Consequently, it makes more sense to conclude from this letter that Peter is writing to Gentile believers and not to Jewish believers. Here, Peter encourages his believing Gentile readers to persevere in their belief with the result that pagan idolaters will incur God’s condemnation, which will be the way that they glorify God when He completes His judgment of all human beings at the end of the existence of the present realm. As Peter said in 2:8, they have been appointed to suffer God’s condemnation and eternal destruction.

In this way, Christians good behavior in the midst of fighting against their inner moral depravity will be a fitting contrast to unbelievers’ evil behavior that will be judged and condemned by God.

³⁸ Ὑποτάγητε τῷ πάσῃ ἀνθρώπινῃ κτίσει διὰ τὸν κύριον, εἴτε βασιλεῖ ὡς ὑπερέχοντι – Now Peter lists several ways that Christians should demonstrate doing good in the midst of unbelievers’ claiming that they are doing evil. Each of these ways involves a human authoritative structure. It is interesting that God has embedded in the fabric of reality in both the present, temporary realm and the future, eternal realm situations where a human being leads/rules over other human beings who follow/obey him. Peter mentions in this letter and in this order the government/citizen, master/slave, husband/wife, and, at the end of the letter and not really related to the previous three examples, the elder/“younger” relationships. In the future, eternal Kingdom of God, it will obviously be Jesus as the human being who is the icon of God whom all other human beings will follow. He will be the ultimate human leader for all of eternity. And it is probably because of both God’s relationship with all human beings who are obligated to follow Him as their transcendent Creator and Jesus’ relationship with the citizens of the eternal Kingdom of God who will be obligated to follow him as the King of the eternal realm that God designed the present realm in such a way that it includes examples of a human authoritative structure. In a sense, we get to practice submitting to human beings in this realm as we ready ourselves for submitting to Jesus in the Kingdom of God.

In the present realm where all human beings are morally depraved, the absence of especially the government/citizen relationship of leaders/followers would lead to anarchy and chaos. If every person did exactly what he wanted to do at every moment of his morally depraved life, the result would be tremendous hurt, pain, and suffering—even more than what has existed in human history. However, in the future realm where all human beings will be morally perfect, theoretically there will be no need for a human leader, because God, the transcendent Creator, and His moral commandments will be everyone’s leader. Nevertheless, God has designed into the Kingdom of God a king, His proxy and unique representative Jesus of Nazareth, who is basically God within the creation. And because Jesus is the central figure of all creation for all eternity, he will also be the ultimate human leader.

Thus, one of the most obvious ways in which Christians demonstrate goodness in the face of critical unbelievers is by willingly submitting to governmental authorities—while Christians also submit to the eternal king, Jesus of Nazareth, as their Messiah, who will be their advocate before God and secure His eternal mercy for them at the final judgment. Therefore, following various authorities, including Jesus, becomes an offering to God by Christians as priests (2:5,9),

while always keeping in mind that God is the ultimate sovereign Ruler and is a morally perfect Leader. Even though this seems contradictory, obeying Jesus as king while also obeying those who reject Jesus as king, Peter will explain that this is actually “the will of God” (2:15). It can hardly go unnoticed that morally depraved human leaders in history have perpetrated unspeakable evil and suffering on their followers, including on Christians who, by their pursuit of biblical morality and by their willingness to proclaim the good news of God’s eternal mercy through Jesus, are constantly presenting the one, true explanation of reality to the world. But it is precisely this explanation of reality to which ALL human beings, left to themselves, are hostile, which means that ALL rulers, as even implied by Peter in this letter, tend towards expressing great disdain towards the biblical message. Yet, Peter is also saying the Christians are morally obligated to comply with leaders who are hostile towards them and their God while these very same Christians are morally obligated to comply with their ultimate human leader, Jesus, who himself complied with governmental leaders who were so hostile towards him that they murdered him!! Peter will add this element to his argument in this letter starting in 2:21.

As a bit of an aside, on the one hand, the Mosaic Covenant forbids Jews to submit to or “make alliances” with “foreign” powers. Nevertheless, in light of the circumstances in Peter’s day where the Jews cannot have their own completely independent government on the land of Israel, it makes sense to the apostles, perhaps partly because Jesus himself submitted to both the Jewish and Roman authorities when he was on earth, to comply with the Roman government until God sees fit to return the Jews to their land and establish them as an independent nation, which will occur when He fulfills His promise to Abraham at the 2nd coming of Jesus to make of them a “great nation” (cf. Romans 13). Therefore, complying with the Roman government would be true for especially the Gentiles who have no formal obligation to the Mosaic Covenant. In addition, the Gentile believers could have easily concluded that they, like the Jews, have no formal obligation to authorities in the present realm, because their ultimate destiny is the eternal realm, and their ultimate ruler is the king of the eternal Kingdom of God, Jesus. They could think that their citizenship in the eternal Kingdom of God releases them from responsibility to follow governments in the present realm. However, Peter is teaching them that part of what it means to be a follower of the Jewish Messiah—for the sake of one’s eternal salvation—is to submit humbly and honestly to earthly authorities (just as Jesus did! Cf. 2:21ff.).

Indeed, the idea of Christians’ submitting to another king, Jesus, eventually became a major complaint among the Romans and the reason for great persecution towards Christians. This characteristic of Christianity was even used by unbelieving Jews as a criticism of Christians, hoping to land them in trouble with the Roman authorities. Cf. Acts 17:6,7 – When [the hostile and unbelieving Jews] did not find them [Paul and Silas], they began dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, “These men who have upset the world have come here also. Jason has welcomed them, *and they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus* (emphasis mine).” Of course, the irony is that Jews are supposed to be looking for the Messiah as predicted by OT, and this Messiah will be “another king,” standing opposed to “Caesar” or to an other ruler who would reject him as *their* king. Therefore, the Jews in Acts 17 were rejecting their own OT theology in their efforts to criticize Christians and cause the Roman government to punish the Christians for treason.

³⁹ εἶτε ἡγεμόσιν ὡς δι’ αὐτοῦ πεμπόμενοις εἰς ἐκδίκησιν τῶν κακοποιῶν ἢ ἔπαινον δὲ ἀγαθοποιῶν – Peter is saying that, in general, the purpose and the intent of all governments are to do what is right with respect to divine justice—to punish criminals and show approval for those who do good within society, in order to encourage all their citizens to pursue goodness and shun evil. Peter, like Paul in Romans 13, is certainly not naïve as to think that governments may not succumb to such evil residing in their leaders that very harsh, cruel, and oppressive circumstances will occur for their citizens, as in the case of the Spanish Inquisition, the German Holocaust, the Turkish genocides, American slavery, etc. However, Peter is putting forth a general principle to which Christians should abide. As a result, all Christians need to think through exactly what biblical wisdom would call them to do in very harsh circumstances. The same goes for situations involving evil masters (cf. 2:18-20) and unbelieving (and oppressive?) husbands. It seems to me that, because the Bible calls us to respect the individuality of each person who must wrestle with his own personal issues and circumstances before God, no one has the right to tell another person what to do any of these difficult circumstances, i.e., whether to flee or stay, or something in between. This is to say that no pastor, elder, therapist, or even friend should ultimately decide what another individual Christian should do in difficult circumstances that involve a leader in this Christian’s life. It is only the individual Christian who has ALL the data that is necessary to make a good decision in such situations, and, therefore, it is only the individual Christian who has the right and the responsibility to make such a decision. Others may offer their perspective but can never claim to know the situation well enough to decide for the person what he or she must do.

It also seems, as I mentioned above, that Peter is setting forth a general truth to the effect that leader/follower environments will tend towards being oppressive towards the followers—because of the moral depravity of the leaders. Even though Peter does not put the elder/younger relationship of a Christian community directly in the same context as the other three leader/follower relationships, it eventually became true that Christian communities became oppressive for the followers of Jesus after the death of the apostles in the 1st century of the Roman Empire. Notice in 5:3 that Peter warns Christian leaders about becoming heavy handed towards their Christian followers, thus revealing that he recognized that even Christians can do so because their continued, inherent moral depravity. Unfortunately, Christian leaders have historically granted themselves much more authority, basically apostolic authority, than they should have. The most obvious example has been the overweening and excessive confidence that they have exhibited with respect to

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

⁴⁰ ὅτι οὕτως ἐστὶν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ἀγαθοποιούντας ἡμιούνη τὴν τῶν ἀφρόνων ἀνθρώπων ἀγνωσίαν – Foolish men = pagan Gentiles, especially those in positions of authority within the Roman government, who refuse to embrace Jesus as their king and Messiah. Thus, Peter states that it is even more important for his Gentile Christian readers to comply with the divine plan of the government as a way to give unbelievers no reason to complain about them and the fact that their religious beliefs are contrary to the socially accepted norm within the Roman Empire. Pagan religious people believed that adherence to the longstanding traditions of the Roman Empire’s various religions was vital to the survival of the empire in that their religious performances kept the gods happy and gracious towards its inhabitants. Christianity, even more than Judaism, because the latter at least had a track record of centuries old established traditions, could therefore potentially upset the gods. However, Peter is saying that if Christians do all they can within society to comply with its moral commandments, then they can reduce to a minimum the objections to their esoteric religion. In addition, people, who are fundamentally hostile to the biblical message, will always look for ways to criticize Christianity and Christians. Therefore, acting well within society will at least reduce the possibility of criticizing Christians for the wrong reasons. However, we know from history, that Christians’ pursuit of good, honest, biblical morality never eliminated the option of unbelievers’ criticizing them. In fact, it is true that sometimes Christians’ moral behavior actually exacerbates (increases!!) the hostility towards them by unbelievers by exasperating (annoying to an extreme degree!) these unbelievers.

⁴¹ ὡς ἐλεύθεροι καὶ μὴ ὡς ἐπικάλυμμα ἔχοντες τῆς κακίας τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἀλλ’ ὡς θεοῦ δούλοι – Yes, Christians are free from the pagan gods and any cultural/political obligation that they may feel to them, but this does not give Christians the right to act any way that they want. Instead, they have an even greater moral obligation to the polis of their culture, i.e., to submit to the governing authorities. Therefore, what comes with a commitment to the Jewish Messiah is an obligation to extend one’s moral behavior beyond the community of believers to the community of unbelievers, indeed, to the whole Roman Empire and its leaders.

⁴² πάντα τιμήσατε, τὴν ἀδελφότητα ἡγαπάτε, τὸν ἑαυτοῦ θεὸν φοβείσθε, τὸν βασιλέα τιμᾶτε – see above

⁴³ Οἱ οἰκέται ὑποτασσόμενοι ἐν παντὶ φόβῳ τοῖς δεσπόταις ἡ, οὐ μόνον τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς καὶ ἐπιεικέσιν ἀλλὰ ὡκαὶ τοῖς σκολιοῖς – This is the first way that the Christians can “honor all men” (v. 17) and the second way that Christians can “hold to a good way life among the Gentiles” (cf. 2:12). These slaves could be Jews, but at this point in Roman history, it seems more likely that they are Gentiles who were prisoners of war after Rome conquered another nation or people. And perhaps the Gentile slaves have concluded that their eternal destiny and enslavement to the eternal Master, the Jewish Messiah, no longer obligates them to their earthly masters, especially to those who mistreat them. However, Peter is pointing out that an important element of Christianity is that it does obligate its followers to treat those in authority over them with respect and obedience, even if it is clear that the latter, by their outward behavior, are dishonest and evil. Peter is saying that this is true even for those in the Roman Empire who have lost their freedom and right to live as they want, i.e., for slaves. These verses are not a moral argument or evaluation of slavery *per se*, but simply an exhortation to submit to earthly masters, even in the unfortunate situation of slavery, *if it exists*.

⁴⁴ τοῦτο γὰρ χάρις ἡ εἰ διὰ συνείδησιν θεοῦ ὑποφέρει τις λύπας πάσχω ἀδίκως – The respect and deference given to immoral leaders who treat their subjects/followers/slaves unfairly and immorally is an important example to human beings of God’s grace and mercy that is freely given to Christians who are granting the respect and deference, because the whole circumstance has not only been planned from eternity by the transcendent Creator and Storyteller, but also involves the sustaining of the authentic believer’s belief in the Jewish Messiah in the midst of intense difficulties that could potentially crush the person’s belief. Thus, the circumstance also includes humility for the believer that is based upon an understanding of God’s sovereignty and His project of using the present, evil realm as a springboard to the future, eternal realm. Therefore, a slave should be willing to put up with the junk in his life, while humbly and graciously waiting for God to complete His plans for him and move him into the eternal Kingdom of God.

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

⁴⁵ ποῖον γὰρ κλέος εἰ ἀμαρτάνοντες καὶ κολαφιζόμενοι ὑπομενεῖτε; ἀλλ’ εἰ ἀγαθοποιούντες καὶ πάσχοντες ὑπομενεῖτε, τοῦτο χάρις παρὰ θεῷ – Paul puts the point of v. 19 even more clearly by stating that it is only God’s

grace as it is granted to human beings who do nothing really wrong in society (here, as slaves obeying their masters) and yet are harshly treated and even punished as if they are committing great crimes, that causes an authentic believer to persevere in his belief and endure being unjustly punished.

⁴⁶ εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ ἵ ἐκλήθητε, ὅτι ὁ καὶ Χριστὸς ἔπαθεν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ὑμῖν ὑπολιμπάνων ὑπογραμμὸν ἵνα ἐπακολουθήσητε τοῖς ἵχνεσιν αὐτοῦ – It is important for understanding Peter’s argument regarding compliance with various leaders as part of the authoritative structure which God has embedded in reality to recognize that he is saying that the situation for Jesus was such that he did no wrong before men and submitted to being unjustly punished by the governments of the Roman Empire and the Jewish people. Indeed, this fits the whole context here in this portion of 1 Peter. Jesus submitted to the authorities of his day, even though they were acting illegally and immorally, especially by virtue of the fact that they were obviously rejecting and murdering God’s Messiah and king of the universe. Even though Pontius Pilate claimed that Jesus was innocent, he insulted Jesus by refusing to recognize him as God’s proxy and the Jewish Messiah who is king of the whole universe. Therefore, Pilate was equally culpable with the Jews in murdering Jesus on the cross. Yet, Jesus, because his role as the Messiah required that he die, complied with both the Roman leaders and the Jewish leaders, leaving all Christians an example to follow in the midst of their own circumstances of unjust, immoral, and anti-God treatment by leaders.

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

Indeed, as mentioned above, it seems that Peter and other NT authors assume that all human authorities do act to some degree immorally, so that the prime example of their immorality will be their hostile mistreatment of genuine believers in the Jewish Messiah. This only reveals their inherent corruption, because they refuse to submit to the Bible and its divine message about the nature of reality that features Jesus of Nazareth as the central character of human history and the eternal priest and king of those human beings who are willing to embrace him as such.

⁴⁷ ὅς ἀμαρτίαν οὐκ ἐποίησεν οὐδὲ εὗρεθῆ δόλος ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ – Probably the most difficult OT concept for the Jews to accept is that their own Messiah, who would free them from their enemies and God’s condemnation, had to be rejected by them and the current Roman government in order to fulfill his divinely given role. This is the message of Isaiah 53, which Peter quotes to the effect that Jesus suffered under his contemporary authorities, thus accepting God’s role for himself as the suffering Messiah.

⁴⁸ ὅς λοιδορούμενος οὐκ ἀντελοιδόρει, πάσχων οὐκ ἠπέλει, παρεδίδου ἁδὲ τῷ κρίνοντι ἁδικαίως – This is how Jesus “honored all men” and complied with the ruling authorities (2:13,17). By refusing to defend himself when he was being unjustly treated by the Romans and by his own people, the Jews, Jesus was demonstrating that he was willing to follow God’s eternal plans and purposes for him as the Messiah, who would suffer death on behalf of his people, both believing Jews and believing Gentiles. All the while, Jesus considered the fact that God the Father was evaluating even him, his choices, and his actions, so that he, the most important human being of all history, committed himself to desire fundamentally to obey God.

As he was confronted moment after moment with the rejection of his messiahship by both Gentiles and Jews, he simply kept handing himself emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually over to God and His eternal plans for him, thus never insisting that people treat him differently from the way that they were. Thus, he too was “holding fast to his good way of life among the Gentiles” and the Jews (cf. 2:12) as an example for all Christians.

⁴⁹ ὅς τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν αὐτὸς ἀνήνεγκεν ἐν τῷ σώματι αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον, ἵνα ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις ἀπογενόμενοι τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ ἵζησώμεν, οὐ τῷ μῶλωπι ἵιάθητε – cf. Isaiah 53:5, “But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed (וְנִלְכָּחֵנוּ בְּחַטֹּאתֵינוּ וְנִשְׁלַחַתְנוּ בְּחַטֹּאתֵינוּ) (τῷ μῶλωπι αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς ἵαθημεν).” Peter, like Isaiah, is referring to the judicial mercy that his

Christian readers will receive at the final judgment through Jesus’ advocacy. In this sense, Jesus has “born our wrongdoings in this body” and “healed” us, by suffering death which he did not deserve but that we deserve. Thus, Jesus’ death at the hands of the governing leaders should move us intellectually to renounce immorality because of its heinous and death-deserving nature, and embrace morality, both in the present realm and certainly and perfectly in eternal life. Switching metaphors, Jesus’ death also produces a cure of sorts for our immorality by intellectually leading us towards obedience to God that, if done perfectly, would not deserve death. All this assumes the miraculous inward change of fundamental commitments that Peter’s readers have received from God. This change exists even while natural born rebellious passions wage war against their fundamental desires and even overwhelm them at times. Yet, they also miraculously pursue goodness and morality, that will result in complete moral transformation and perfection in the eternal Kingdom of God, after they have first received God’s mercy at the judgment. And all this, Peter is arguing, should take place within the context of difficult to follow leaders—kings, governors, masters (and later, husbands and, by extrapolation, Christian leaders after the death of the apostles).

⁵⁰ ἵτε γὰρ ὡς πρόβατα ἁπλανώμενοι, ἀλλὰ ἐπεστράφητε νῦν ἐπὶ τὸν ποιμένα καὶ ἐπίσκοπον τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν – ἐπιστρέφω is used in the LXX to translate שׁוּב. For example, Deuteronomy 4:30, “When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days you will return (שׁוּבֶנָּה) (ἐπιστραφήση) to the LORD your God and

listen to His voice (יְהוָה שׁוֹמְרֵי) (καὶ εἰσακούσῃ τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ).” Notice that ἐπιστρέφω and שׁוֹמְרֵי are synonymous with properly obeying God, presumably from a changed heart that is characterized by authentic belief. Thus, Peter uses this OT and Jewish terminology to describe the embracing of the one true God by his Gentile readers. They, too, in a sense have “returned” to God as His creatures, the one who would shepherd and care for them just as much as He does for the Jews and who will oversee their lives at the final judgment (cf. 1 Peter 2:12). In other words, when a Gentile becomes a believer in the Jewish Messiah, he is “returning” to God just as much as an unbelieving Jew would be doing so, because God is his creator and the one true God for all of humanity, whether Jew or Gentile. Thus, Peter can call God the Overseer of the Gentile believers’ “beings” (ψυχῶν).

If Peter were writing to Jews, he would be telling them that they have returned to the God of the Abrahamic promise who has always been their Shepherd in theory because He called them to be His people for the sake of the earthly Kingdom of Israel.

⁵¹ Ὁμοίως [αἱ] γυναῖκες, ὑποτασσόμεναι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν, ἵνα ‘καὶ εἴ τις’ ἀπειθοῦσιν τῷ λόγῳ, διὰ τῆς τῶν γυναικῶν ἀναστροφῆς ἄνευ λόγου κερδηθήσονται – This is the second way that the Christians can “honor all men” (2:17) and the third way that Christians can “hold to a good way life among the Gentiles” (cf. 2:12). Peter has been referring to a “natural” leadership structure within certain relationships between human beings. Clearly, slaves follow their masters, just as citizens follow their governmental leaders. The opposite simply does not make sense, even if, in the case of slavery, it is morally wrong. Similarly, wives are to follow their husbands, and Peter is saying, even if the husbands are not believers in Jesus as the Messiah. Peter then includes a practical cause and effect reason for this, that it could be that God will use the obedience of the wives to convince the husbands to become believers in Jesus as the Messiah.

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

⁵³ ὧν ἔστω οὐχ ὁ ἕξωθεν ἔμπλοκῆς ὀτριχῶν καὶ περιθέσεως χρυσίων ἢ ἐνδύσεως ἱματίων κόσμος – Peter realizes that women enjoy paying attention to their physical beauty. He urges his female readers to be even more concerned about their biblical moral beauty that stems from authentic inwardness.

⁵⁴ ἀλλ’ ὁ κρυπτός τῆς καρδίας ἄνθρωπος ἐν τῷ ἀφάρτῳ τοῦ ἵπτατός καὶ ἡσυχίου πνεύματος, ὃ ἐστὶν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ πολυτελής – Peter points out that the display of the biblical message in a person’s life begins with inwardness, that itself is hidden from the sight of others, but that becomes manifest through the “spirit” of the person, which includes, like Jesus, an entrusting and handing over of ones’ life and experiences to the sovereign and merciful God (cf. 2:23). Thus, this inner characteristic of biblical belief with single-minded waiting for eternal life, which diminishes the need to get agitated about the things of the present life, manifests a certain morality that itself reveals the biblical message to those who come in contact with this person. Peter is NOT saying that the woman should have a quiet mouth, but instead a quiet SPIRIT, i.e., a worldview and psychological condition that is convinced of God’s eternal plans, purposes, sovereignty, and mercy—all of which are in operation in the person’s life at every moment. Therefore, this quiet spirit willingly and humbly submits to God’s eternal plans and purposes that are being worked out in the woman’s life, so that she is not uncontrollably disturbed by the negative circumstances in her life, including those of having an unbelieving husband.

⁵⁵ οὕτως γὰρ ποτε καὶ αἱ ἅγαι γυναῖκες αἱ ἐλπίζουσαι εἰς θεὸν ἐκόσμουν ἑαυτὰς ὑποτασσόμεναι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν – Peter alludes to women in the OT who followed their husbands, even when the latter were disobedient to God.

⁵⁶ ὡς Σάρρα ὑπήκουσεν τῷ Ἀβραάμ κύριον αὐτὸν καλοῦσα, ἧς ἐγενήθητε τέκνα ἀγαθοποιῶσαι καὶ μὴ φοβούμεναι μηδεμίαν ἰπτόσην – An example of a husband’s disobedience and a wife’s following him was Abraham and Sarah. There is no explicit instance in the story of Abraham where Sarah calls him “Master” in the midst of his disobeying God. Therefore, Peter is referring to her overall attitude and treatment of him, that certainly included her compliance with his misguided ideas to tell the Pharaoh of Egypt (Genesis 12:10-20) and Abimelech, the king of Gerar (Genesis 20:1-18), that she was his sister, which resulted in some negative repercussions for the two kings. These were rather “terrifying” experiences for Sarah, but her considering that God knew what He was doing by having given her Abraham with his stupid ideas sustained her belief through them.

⁵⁷ ὡς ἀσθενεστέρῳ σκευεῖ τῷ γυναικείῳ – This is the third way that the Christians can “honor all men” (2:17) and the fourth way that they can “hold to a good way of life among Gentiles” (cf. 2:12). The husbands are to treat their wives well as what Peter calls “a weaker feminine vessel,” which, in this context, it makes the most sense to interpret as the fact that the wife is in a position of lesser authority than the husband. The husband is obligated to lead his wife, and, ultimately, this should be by instructing her in the apostolic message, while the wife has less authority and yet must obey the apostolic message. Paul makes this clearer in Ephesians 5:15-31. We can assume that this exhortation by Peter to husbands must be obeyed even if their wives lack genuine belief (to match the situation that Peter described in 3:1ff. regarding believing wives complying with their unbelieving husbands).

⁵⁸ Οἱ ἄνδρες ὁμοίως, ‘συνοικοῦντες κατὰ γνώσιν’ ὡς ἀσθενεστέρω σκεύει τῷ γυναικείῳ, ἀπονέμοντες τιμὴν ὡς καὶ ‘συγκληρονόμοις ἡμετέροις ζώης’ εἰς τὸ μὴ ἐγκόπτεσθαι ‘τὰς προσευχὰς’ ὑμῶν – Here, Peter assumes the husbands whom he is addressing are actual believers. Indeed, he connects a husband’s salvation with his treatment of his wife. If he commits himself to treating her well, as a fellow human being who will also gain eternal life because of her belief, then he is properly demonstrating authentic belief. Peter also connects the husband’s belief with his prayers to God. If the husband is praying for God to cause his belief to persevere so that he may obtain mercy and eternal life, then God will always answer in the affirmative—if his belief is authentic and he is treating his wife as someone who will also be granted mercy. However, if the husband lacks authentic belief and falls short of properly treating his wife, then no amount of appeal to God for mercy from a heart of unbelief will result in God’s granting him eternal life. Thus, Peter is speaking absolutely, as though describing a thoroughly authentic heart which God will commend vs. a thoroughly rebellious heart which God will judge and condemn. Cf. 3:12 and the quote from Psalm 34.

With these exhortations to husbands, Peter is also implying that there is an eternal benefit to being a Christian government official or a Christian master of slaves. Granting one’s followers the respect of being either co-heirs of eternal life or potential co-heirs will temper the leader’s/ruler’s/master’s behavior towards his followers and make him treat his followers with due biblical respect.

⁵⁹ Τὸ δὲ τέλος πάντες ὁμόφρονες, συμπαθεῖς, φιλάδελφοι, εὖσπλαγχοι, ταπεινόφρονες – Here is the bottom line for how they should “honor all men,” etc. (2:17) and “hold to a good way of life among the Gentiles” (cf. 2:12). Peter indicates that the above exhortations that include those specifically to citizens, slaves, wives, and husbands can be summed up *for Christians* in a unified thinking about the apostolic message of Jesus as the Messiah, along with a sympathetic and humble caring for one another as fellow believers with the common goal of eternal salvation and life. In the next verse, he includes how these unified in thinking Christians should treat unbelievers, especially those in authority who mistreat them and insult them.

⁶⁰ μὴ ἀποδιδόντες κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ ἢ λοιδορίαν ἀντὶ λοιδορίας, τοῦναντίον δὲ εὐλογοῦντες ὅτι εἰς τοῦτο ἐκλήθητε ἵνα εὐλογίαν κληρονομήσητε – Peter includes treatment of hostile, non-believers (within the context of leaders/followers) in the logical summary of his exhortations. He wants his readers (as mostly in the category of followers, because they are all citizens in the Roman Empire who must follow their governmental leaders) to act in a gracious and giving way towards those who rule over them, asking God to grant them the special favor of mercy and eternal life from God, just as He has done so for them! Thus, God has called people who will receive His mercy at the final judgment to treat others, especially unbelieving and harsh leaders, with mercy in hope that God will treat them likewise at the judgment, even if it becomes clear at the judgment that they are not actual members of the “chosen people” of God (cf. 2:9). Just as Jesus did not insult those who falsely accused him, Christians should not insult their false accusers, including false accusers who are in positions of leadership within a particular human authoritative structure (cf. 2:23).

⁶¹ ὁ γὰρ θέλων ζῶην ἀγαπᾶν καὶ ἰδεῖν ἡμέρας ἀγαθὰς παυσάτω τὴν γλώσσαν ἵνα ἀπὸ κακοῦ καὶ χειλῆ τῷ τοῦ μὴ λαλήσῃσι δόλον – LXX of Psalm 34:12 – τίς ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος ὁ θέλων ζῶην ἀγαπᾶν ἡμέρας ἰδεῖν ἀγαθὰς . LXX of Psalm 34:13 – παύσον τὴν γλῶσσάν σου ἀπὸ κακοῦ καὶ χειλῆ σου τοῦ μὴ λαλήσῃσι δόλον.

⁶² ἐκκλινάτω ὁδὲ ἀπὸ κακοῦ καὶ ποιησάτω ἀγαθόν, ζητήσάτω εἰρήνην καὶ διωξάτω αὐτήν – LXX of Psalm 34:14 – ἐκκλινον ἀπὸ κακοῦ καὶ ποίησον ἀγαθόν ζήτησον εἰρήνην καὶ διώξον αὐτήν

⁶³ ὅτι ὀφθαλμοὶ κυρίου ἐπὶ δικαίους καὶ ὅτα αὐτοῦ εἰς δέησιν αὐτῶν, πρόσωπον δὲ κυρίου ἐπὶ ποιοῦντας κακά ἵνα – LXX of Psalm 34:15 – ὀφθαλμοὶ κυρίου ἐπὶ δικαίους, καὶ ὅτα αὐτοῦ εἰς δέησιν αὐτῶν. LXX of Psalm 34:16a – πρόσωπον δὲ κυρίου ἐπὶ ποιοῦντας κακά. Psalm 34 was written by David when he feigned madness before Abimelech who drove him away (?). In the Psalm, David expresses his trust in God who will be faithful to him and grant him life and protection from his enemies. Peter, likewise, can use David’s words to encourage his Christian readers that they will enjoy God’s protection of their authentic belief, so that they will acquire eternal life. They will see the “good days” that they desire in the eternal Kingdom of God—but only if they obey his exhortations to hold on to the apostolic message, to treat each other with humility and genuine care, and to be gracious and merciful towards people, including leaders whom they must obey, who currently are hostile to the truth and towards them, while asking God to change His mind towards the unbelievers and save them.

⁶⁴ Καὶ τίς ὁ κακῶσων ὑμᾶς ἔάν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἐζηλωταὶ γένησθε – This, indeed, is the bottom line theologically. People who are genuinely and humbly committed to pursuing biblical goodness in their lives cannot be touched or harmed eternally and in their inner being by the world, because God is the one who has changed their inwardness and maintains it by the work of His Spirit within them in accord with His choosing them and being gracious towards them. Indeed, Peter stated at the beginning of this letter that his readers and he “are being guarded by the power of God with belief for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last season (1 Peter 1:5).” If God is ultimately doing the “guarding” of their faith, then who is powerful enough to destroy their faith? No one—not even the ones, believers, who actually have faith. Thus, Peter uses “harm” to refer to someone’s robbing his readers of their belief and consequent citizenship in the eternal Kingdom of God. The implication of the rhetorical question is that no one can take their faith and their eternal salvation away from them. In addition, it is assumed by Peter that they will suffer to a degree, perhaps even by being killed for their faith, because of their pursuit of biblical morality with belief in Jesus as the Messiah in the midst of the hostility of the world and its leaders, thus following in the footsteps of the Messiah, who suffered at the hands of the Roman and Jewish authorities.

⁶⁵ ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ πάσχετε διὰ δικαιοσύνην, μακάριοι Ἦ. τὸν δὲ φόβον αὐτῶν μὴ φοβηθῆτε Ἐμὴδὲ παραχθῆτε\ – cf. Isaiah 8:12, “You are not to say, ‘It is a conspiracy!’ in regard to all that this people call a conspiracy, and you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it (יִצְרַחְתָּ אֲלֵי אֲרָרְתָּ אֶל־אֲרָרְמְתָא) (LXX – τὸν δὲ φόβον αὐτοῦ οὐ μὴ φοβηθῆτε οὐδὲ μὴ παραχθῆτε).” In Isaiah 8, God exhorts the prophet not to adopt the perspective of his fellow Jews in the southern kingdom of Judah, who were intimidated by the threats of Aram and the northern kingdom of Israel to come down and do battle against them. Instead, Isaiah trusted God for the Davidic Covenant and the survival of the Davidic kingdom in Judah. He did not succumb to the temptation to come unspooled emotionally and psychologically in the face of other people’s threats against God’s plans and purposes and against even his life.

After first stating that the happiest state of a human being comes from being inwardly changed by God and having genuine belief, even if this is in the midst of the most painful circumstances that people hostile to the truth could perpetrate on believers, Peter uses the beginning of the quote from Isaiah 8 to encourage his readers not to fear these hostile people. While Isaiah definitely had fellow Jews in his “community,” the Kingdom of Judah, who feared with unbelief their attackers, the kingdoms, i.e., governing authorities, of Israel and Aram, Peter’s genuine believers hopefully do not have anyone in their “communities,” the gathering of Christians in north and central Turkey, who fear with unbelief their attackers, the Gentile pagans, even the Roman authorities, masters, and husbands, who are hostile to the NT message of Jesus as the Messiah. In other words, the “they” of Isaiah 8:12 were the Jews in the Kingdom of Judah, who failed to believe God for His promise of the Davidic Covenant in the face of their authoritative attackers, while the “they” of the communities of Peter’s readers are hypothetical, because hopefully no one in their Christian communities are failing to believe God for His Messiah, Jesus, in the face of their attackers and persecutors—the present “leaders” of the three leader/follower relationships that Peter has listed. At least, never failing to trust God is what Peter seems to imply and is very much himself hoping for his Gentile, Christian readers, which is why he is writing this letter.

⁶⁶ κύριον δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀγιάσατε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν, ἔτοιμοι Ἦαὶ πρὸς ἀπολογία πάντι τῷ Ἰαῖτοῦντι ὑμᾶς λόγον περὶ τῆς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐλπίδος – cf. Isaiah 8:13, “It is the LORD of hosts whom you should regard as holy (יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִהְיֶה אֱלֹהֵינוּ) (LXX – κύριον αὐτὸν ἀγιάσατε). And He shall be your fear, And He shall be your dread.” Peter interprets God’s words to Isaiah as exhorting the prophet to adopt a fundamental perspective on God such that, inwardly, he considers God’s statements as more important than any human being’s. Thus, Isaiah should follow God, not man. Likewise, Peter uses this exhortation to Isaiah to exhort his readers to consider the Messiah’s statements as more important than anyone else’s. Because the Isaiah text says in Hebrew simply Yahweh of Hosts while Peter writes in Greek the Lord the Messiah, Peter is demonstrating the equality of authority of the transcendent Creator’s words and Jesus the Messiah’s words. It is the message of the Messiah that Peter’s readers have heard, so that they must follow him above anyone else (cf. 1 Peter 1:12). This biblical obsession with the message of the Messiah will allow Peter’s readers to speak of it to any unbeliever who may want or demand to hear about it, whether out of good or evil motivation. In fact, the context would seem to indicate that the latter is what Peter has in mind.

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

⁶⁷ ἀλλὰ μετὰ πραΰτητος καὶ φόβου, συνειδήσιν ἔχοντες ἀγαθὴν, ἵνα ἐν ᾧ Ἰκαταλαλεῖσθε Ἰκαταισχυθῶσιν οἱ ἐπηρεάζοντες ὑμῶν τὴν ἀγαθὴν ἐν Χριστῷ ἀναστροφὴν – Again, Peter points out the great value of having an accurate intellectual grasp of God and His plans and purposes (cf. 1 Peter 2:2,16; 3:21). He assumes that his readers understand that God would have them treat with gentleness and respect those who are hostile to the biblical message, even and maybe especially if they are in a position of leadership with respect to the Christians. If God does not choose to be gracious and merciful to those for whom Peter’s readers pray, then, by treating them in such a way as they humbly and graciously communicate the message of Jesus as the Messiah to them, Peter’s readers will add just that much more leverage to the error of their opponents when they endure the humiliation of being judged by God as rebels and being condemned by Him to eternal destruction. As Peter has already stated, the unbelievers will “glorify God in the day of oversight” because they will have observed the “good way of life” of the believers and, yet, will be eternally condemned by God. Their explicit rejection of what they have seen and know will actually demonstrate God’s own righteousness and justice in a marvelous manner that will bring honor to God.

⁶⁸ κρεῖττον γὰρ ἀγαθοποιούοντας, εἰ θέλοι τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, πάσχειν ἢ κακοποιούοντας – Peter informs his readers that there is a major discrepancy in the present realm. While the right thing is for goodness to be praised and evil to be punished, the opposite happens, especially with respect to the biblical message and those who develop the courage to embrace it and live it out in the context of authority structures where the leaders tend towards being hostile towards it. The moral makeup of human beings is such that they fundamentally rebel against the goodness of the biblical truth and its explanations and commandments regarding God, His purposes, and His requirements for human beings. Thus, Peter is saying that his readers can expect, even because this is part of God’s plan and desire, to be punished by the world for doing good, i.e., for embracing and living out the biblical message. But this is better, indeed radically more beneficial because of its eternal ramifications for them, than if the Christians do what is right and are punished by the world for it, than if they were to do what is evil and are punished by the world for it. The reason is that true, biblical goodness by a person results in eternal life, while a commitment to evil results in eternal condemnation and destruction.

⁶⁹ ὅτι Ἰκαὶ Χριστὸς Ἰπαξ Ἰπερὶ ἀμαρτιῶν Ἰπαθεν, Ἰδικαίος Ἰπερ ἀδίκων, ἵνα Ἰμᾶς προσαγάγῃ Ἰτῷ θεῷ Ἰθανατωθεῖς Ἰμὲν σαρκὶ ζῳοποιηθεῖς δὲ Ἰπνεύματι – Not only is it God’s plan for Christians to receive mistreatment

from the world for doing what is good and right, but the basis for their doing so includes the fact that Jesus experienced the same kind of treatment from governing authorities in order to fulfill his role as the Messiah. He endured death in order to qualify to “lead” us to God at the judgment, when he will appeal to the Father for eternal mercy on our behalf at his second coming. Consequently, after his death, God made Jesus’ spirit alive by means of raising him from the dead as a truly viable person. His body died, but his person lived on.

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

⁷⁰ ἐν ᾧ καὶ τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύμασιν πορευθεὶς ἐκήρυξεν – A few possibilities. 1) These were unbelievers during the building of the ark, and then they became believers as the rain began and it became clear that they were going to die. Thus, they are not in “prison” *per se*, that will result in eternal condemnation, but they are in the “watch of the night,” leading up to the Day of the Lord and the return of the Messiah, when they will finally receive God’s eternal mercy. 2) These were unbelievers during the building of the ark, and they remained such until the moment they died, so that they are in the “prison” of death and will experience God’s eternal condemnation at the judgment. 3) In line with 2 Peter 2:4, these are *angeloi* (angels) who exhibited their rebellion during the time of Noah and who are being kept separate from all other spiritual beings in a kind of prison.

⁷¹ ἀπειθήσασιν ποτε ὅτε ῥάπεξεδέχετο ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ μακροθυμία ἐν ἡμέραις Νῶε κατασκευαζομένης κιβωτοῦ εἰς ἣν ὀλίγοι, τοῦτ’ ἔστιν ὁκτὼ ψυχαί, διεσώθησαν δι’ ὕδατος –

⁷² ὁ καὶ ὑμᾶς ἀντίτυπον νῦν σφῶζει βάπτισμα, οὐ σαρκὸς ἀπόθεσις ῥύπου ἀλλὰ συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς θεόν, δι’ ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ – Peter calls the Christian ritual of water baptism a copy of Noah’s ark’s floating in the water of the flood of Genesis 6-9, such that both result in the rescue of people from death. In Noah’s day, the ark saved his family from physical death. In Peter’s day, contact with water through the ritual of baptism saves people from eternal death and destruction. Peter states that baptism is a declaration of allegiance to the Jewish God and particularly Jesus as the Messiah, which is intended to demonstrate an inward fundamental desire by the person for God’s mercy, a desire in fact that naturally leads to making an appeal to God for mercy that will be matched by Jesus’ advocacy at the final judgment, i.e., at his second coming. The latter can obviously take place because Jesus has been raised from the dead for this specific role at the judgment. For the fourth time, Peter mentions explicitly how valuable a proper grasp of the concepts of God and His plans and purposes are to the eternally bound morally depraved human being who believes in Jesus as the Jewish Messiah (cf. 1 Peter 2:2,19; 3:16). It is biblical understanding that is fundamental to a person’s being rescued by God from His eternal condemnation.

⁷³ ὅς ἐστιν ἐν δεξιᾷ [τοῦ] θεοῦ ἡ πορευθεὶς εἰς οὐρανὸν ὑποταγέντων αὐτῷ ἀγγέλων καὶ ἐξουσιῶν καὶ δυνάμεων – Peter mentions Jesus’ current position, metaphorically speaking. As the Davidic king, he is in place both to rule over the creation as the Son of God and to act as high priest for morally depraved humans who appear at the final judgment at his second coming (cf. Psalms 8 & 110; Hebrews 1-10). It is this that Peter’s readers have grasped that has led them to become believers in Jesus as the Messiah.

Thus, while Peter, in this letter, is encouraging people who are in positions of following leaders to do so willingly and humbly, ultimately, it is in order that they enjoy the leadership of the Messiah in the eternal realm, because all authorities and powers are in the process of becoming subject to him (notice here ὑποταγέντων αὐτῷ). The Christians to whom Peter is writing are obligated to comply with evil, human authorities in order to reach the time when they will comply with the only good, human authority in the creation, the Messiah.

⁷⁴ Χριστοῦ οὖν παθόντος σαρκὶ καὶ ὑμεῖς τὴν αὐτὴν ἔννοιαν ὀπίσασθε, ὅτι ὁ παθὼν ἡ σαρκὶ πέπαυται ἡ ἀμαρτία – Jesus’ existence on earth becomes the paradigm for Peter’s readers. He suffered physical death on the cross when he encountered the full hostility toward God of the human authoritative structure, and his followers will do similarly, suffer physically “if the will of God desires” (3:17), because they represent the same truth and message from God that he does. In this context, to “cease from sin/evil” is to be completely different inwardly as a morally depraved human being, so that one shuns evil and pursues good as much as possible while approaching the final judgment and entrance into the eternal Kingdom of God (cf. the next verse, 4:2). As Peter goes on to say in v. 2...

⁷⁵ εἰς τὸ μηκέτι ἀνθρώπων ἐπιθυμίας ἀλλὰ θελήματι θεοῦ τὸν ἐπίλοιπον ἐν σαρκὶ βιώσαι χρόνον – Peter states that the purpose of his readers’ having a changed inwardness and pursuing goodness is so that they may behave completely differently from the unbelieving world for the rest of their lives. By pursuing good, they will follow the moral commandments of God and believe the biblical message rather than being committed to succumbing to the evil desires and influences that are inherent in unbelieving morally depraved human beings and that lead people away from the truth of the Bible. Peter will be more specific about the actions that result from the “strong desires of men” in the next verses.

⁷⁶ ἀρκετὸς γὰρ ὁ παρεληλυθὼς χρόνος τὸ βούλημα τῶν ἐθνῶν κατειργάσθαι ἡπεπορευμένους ἐν ἀσελείαις, ἐπιθυμίαις, οἰνοφλυγίαις, κόμοις, πότοις καὶ ἀθεμίτοις εἰδωλολατρίαις – The moral intent of unbelieving Gentile human beings is no different from unbelieving Jewish human beings, but Peter mentions Gentiles specifically, because it is to Gentile believers to whom he is writing. Before they had become believers in the Jewish Messiah, they had accompanied their fellow Gentiles in rebelling against God by means of this list of actions that Peter provides. We notice that this list includes idol worship, which might be a way of referring to even the erroneous Judaism of Peter’s day, but it makes more sense in midst of the other items, especially drunkenness and drinking parties, to interpret as

actual pagan idolatry, which Gentiles, not Jews, would have practiced. This leads to the conclusion that Peter is writing to Gentiles and not to Jews.

Therefore, he is saying that the time to pursue this kind of behavior that is immoral and contrary to God's desires has ended, while the time to live as God would have these Gentile Christians do so has been since the time that they became believers. The implication, though, is that this will lead to mistreatment and insults from unbelievers, including from those in positions of authority over them.

⁷⁷ ἐν ᾧ ξενίζονται μὴ συντρεχόντων ὑμῶν εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν τῆς ἀσωτίας ἀνάχυσιν ἑβλασφημοῦντες – The other people in the communities inhabited by the Christians to whom Peter is writing and who have not embraced Jesus as the Jewish Messiah continue to rebel wholeheartedly against God. As a consequence, they cast aspersions and pour scorn on the Christians for changing their beliefs and their lives. In fact, it is shocking to the unbelievers that these Gentiles have adopted so different a belief system and lifestyle, when it was normal for people to change gods in the Roman Empires (as long as they upheld the actual Roman gods for the sake of the well-being of empire) and to pursue the same lifestyle as everyone else—abject immorality that included temple prostitution, etc. Certainly, Jews neither condoned nor engaged (at least openly) in this lifestyle. Instead, they had acquired a particular level of respect among even individual emperors, e.g., Tiberius, and were not expected to live as the pagan Gentiles did. But Peter's readers are former pagans, and it would be absolutely shocking to their unbelieving friends that they were switching religions, AND lifestyles, not to mention kings (the Messiah for Caesar, ultimately). Indeed, it is the change in lifestyles that is important to Peter (and Paul—cf. his letters) as clear, public validation of the authenticity of people's belief in Jesus. This is why Peter (and Paul) emphasize loving one another within the Christian community and treating outsiders with respect and grace.

Perhaps the verbal abuse is mainly because the Christians are no longer calling Caesar their Lord in the sense that they worship him as the greatest human being. Instead they call Jesus Lord and worship him as the greatest human being, indeed the very icon of God within the creation.

⁷⁸ οἱ ἀποδώσουσιν λόγον τῷ ἑτοίμως ἔχοντι κρίναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς – Peter does not exhort his readers to go out and preach at their immoral friends. Instead, he simply reminds them that their unbelieving friends will face God's judgment and will have to provide an adequate defense and explanation for their rebellion against Him. However, they will fail in doing so, because it is impossible to provide God with a sufficient rationale for one's inherent evil and immoral behavior that is contrary to His moral commandments. Cf. 2 Timothy 4:1 – I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom (Διαμαρτύρομαι ἑνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ μέλλοντος κρίνειν ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς, καὶ τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτοῦ).

⁷⁹ εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ νεκροῖς εὐηγγελίσθη, ἵνα κριθῶσι μὲν κατὰ ἀνθρώπους σαρκὶ ζῶσι δὲ κατὰ θεὸν πνεύματι – A few possibilities. 1) Because of the coming judgment, Jesus has announced his Messiahship to all those who have physically died before him (cf. v. 5), thus giving them the opportunity to believe in him after they have died, because they will be judged like all other people. 2) Because of the coming judgment, Jesus has announced his Messiahship to all those who have died before him (cf. v. 5) who were authentic believers, thus making them aware of their eternal salvation through him that will occur at the end of history when they will be judged like all other people, so that their hope of eternal life is drawing near “in the latter days” (cf. Genesis 49:1, מִן־הַיָּמִים הַהֵלֶךְ, ἐπ' ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν). 3) Similar to what Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 4:13,14, Peter is saying that the NT gospel has been proclaimed to people who went on to die before the return of the Messiah, so that they will be rescued from God's wrath and condemnation just as much as those who remain alive until the second coming of the Messiah. Just because people of died before the judgment of God has actually taken place does not mean that they miss out on the judgment of God, either to receive His eternal mercy through the Messiah or to be condemned eternally and destroyed.

⁸⁰ Πάντων δὲ τὸ τέλος ἤγγικεν. σωφρονήσατε οὖν καὶ νήψατε εἰς ἑπαινεῖς – Peter is aware of God's project of bringing about the eternal Kingdom of God in the new creation with the Messiah's ruling over it, and he says that the time for all this to come to fruition is close at hand. Therefore, he wants his readers to pray for the right thing, i.e., the perseverance of their belief, so that they survive the judgment and gain entrance into eternity with Jesus. In other words, he wants them to adopt the same understanding of reality as Jesus and his apostles, which is the message that they have received from the apostle Paul (see notes at 5:12) and others.

⁸¹ πρὸ πάντων ἑαυτοὺς ἀγάπην ἔκτενῆ ἔχοντες, ὅτι ἀγάπη καλύπτει πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν – Peter exhorts his readers to continue loving one another as an outward demonstration of their fundamental desire for mercy and forgiveness from God. In this manner, “love covers (so to speak) a multitude of immoral actions.” This is to say that it provides mercy and forgiveness in a context where people's hurtful actions actually deserve justice. Cf. Proverbs 10:12, “Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all transgressions (הַכְּזָה מְעַדֵּן לְכָל עֲוֹנוֹתַי) (πάντας δὲ τοὺς

μὴ φιλονεικοῦντας καλύπτει φιλία).”

⁸² φιλόξενοι εἰς ἀλλήλους ἀνευ γογγυσμοῦ –

⁸³ ἕκαστος καθὼς ἔλαβεν χάρισμα εἰς ἑαυτοὺς αὐτὸ διακονοῦντες ὡς καλοὶ οἰκονόμοι ποικίλης χάριτος θεοῦ – Peter, like Paul in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12, indicates that God has assigned each believer a particular role within the community of Christians, and each role results in everyone's loving his fellow Christians appropriately. Thus, believers carry out their intended purpose for the sake of their individual destinies and the health of the faith within the community.

⁸⁴ εἴ τις λαλεῖ, ὡς λόγια θεοῦ· εἴ τις διακονεῖ, ὡς ἐξ ἰσχύος ἢς χορηγεῖ ὁ θεός, ἵνα ἐν πάσιν ἡδοξάζηται ὁ θεός διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ᾧ ἐστὶν ἡ δόξα καὶ ἡ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἁπάντων αἰώνων, ἀμήν – Peter states that the ultimate purpose of the creation and its human creatures within it is so that God may manifest His greatness that includes His mercy, morality, and goodness. Thus, when believers in God’s Son, the Jewish Messiah, pursue morality because they want God’s mercy in the long run, this points to and manifests God’s greatness—which is the point!

⁸⁵ Ἀγαπητοί, μὴ ξενίζεσθε τῇ ἐν ὑμῖν πυρώσει πρὸς πειρασμὸν ὑμῖν γινομένη ὡς ξένου ὑμῖν συμβαίνοντος – Peter reminds his readers that every painful experience this side of eternity has a divine purpose in their lives. It is intended to test and prove out the genuineness of their belief in God and the Jewish Messiah Jesus. Even if the difficulties feel strange and unwelcome, they should be embraced and welcomed by believers because of their intended purpose by God. Thus, Peter mentions another reason for doing what is right in the face of hostile treatment by unbelievers, in order to pass the test of their belief, while also rendering the condemnation of unbelievers just that much more glorious for God (cf. 2:12).

⁸⁶ ἀλλὰ καθὼς κοινωνεῖτε τοῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθήμασιν χαίρετε, ἵνα καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ χαρήτε ἀγαλλιώμενοι – Peter wants his readers to rejoice and not be sad when they encounter suffering and hardship that is similar to that of Jesus, i.e., when they are mistreated by hostile unbelievers, including those in positions of authority and whom they must follow. The purpose of their rejoicing now in the pain they are experiencing is so that they may rejoice later when even the possibility of pain completely disappears at Jesus’ second coming, which is the transition to the eternal Kingdom of God where all immorality and its consequences will no longer exist. This will mean that they have suffered in a similar manner to Jesus, thus allowing them to rejoice together with Jesus in the perseverance of their belief in the face of hostile opposition.

⁸⁷ εἰ ὀνειδίξεσθε ἐν ὀνόματι Χριστοῦ, μακάριοι, ὅτι τὸ τῆς δόξης ἡ καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ πνεῦμα ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς ἀναπαύεται – Peter has already talked about the unbelieving Gentiles in these people’s community who scorn them for their embracing the biblical message. He repeats himself here by saying that it is a good thing to be treated in such a way and to be insulted because of choosing to be associated with the Jewish Messiah. The reason he gives in this verse is because God is at work through His Spirit in such people and they will receive the awesome experience of the eternal Kingdom of God. It is a great thing to be a human being who is targeted by the Spirit of God for His miraculous, internal work.

⁸⁸ μὴ γὰρ τις ὑμῶν πασχέτω ὡς φονεὺς ἢ κλέπτης ἢ κακοποιὸς ἢ ὡς ἄλλοτριεπίσκοπος – ἄλλοτριεπίσκοπος = revolutionist? As a negative exhortation, Peter reminds his readers that they are called by God to pursue morality and not immorality. Anything less would demonstrate a lack of commitment to the biblical message which will incur God’s condemnation.

⁸⁹ εἰ δὲ ὡς Ἰησοῦ Χριστιανός, μὴ αἰσχυνέσθω, δοξαζέτω δὲ τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τούτῳ – The greatest honor that a human being can experience in the present realm is to be maligned and insulted for being a follower of the Jewish Messiah Jesus.

⁹⁰ ὅτι ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ ἄρξασθαι τὸ κρίμα ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ· εἰ δὲ πρῶτον ἀφ’ ἡμῶν, τί τὸ τέλος τῶν ἀπειθούντων τῷ θεῷ εὐαγγελίῳ – Peter states that the proper logical basis for being willing to be mistreated because of being a Christian is the final judgment. No one will escape it, and only Christians will survive it into the eternal Kingdom of God. His mention of the fact that “judgment begins with the household of God” refers to Jesus’ return towards the earth with resurrected believers to meet living believers who rise up from off the earth and be with him always (cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18). After this, judgment will start to take place towards unbelievers, especially those on the Land of Israel, culminating in a final battle at the end of the millennium, during which Jesus rules the earth as king of all of God’s creation.

⁹¹ καὶ εἰ ὁ δίκαιος μόλις σώζεται, ὁ ἀσεβὴς καὶ ἁμαρτωλὸς ποῦ φανεῖται – cf. Proverbs 11:31 – “If the righteous will be rewarded in the earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner! (כִּי יִתֵּן אֱלֹהִים חַסְדָּם לְיִשְׂרָאֵל) (εἰ ὁ μὲν δίκαιος μόλις σώζεται, ὁ ἀσεβὴς καὶ ἁμαρτωλὸς ποῦ φανεῖται).” Peter quotes this verse in Proverbs to imply that, in spite of God’s grace, which makes it easy for people to be rescued from God’s condemnation, it is still hard for them to be saved, because they have to go through the judgment where the Messiah, who suffered the particular hardship of the crucifixion, will appeal for mercy to the Father on their behalf.

⁹² ὥστε καὶ οἱ πάσχοντες κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ πιστῶ κτίστη παρατιθέσθωσαν τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν ἐν ἁγαθοποιῶν – Peter has been making it clear that God’s plan for believers is that they suffer mistreatment in the present realm just as their Messiah Jesus did. But to become a follower of Jesus is also to be willing to entrust one’s existence and experiences to God, because He is orchestrating reality exactly as He desires. Thus, no mistreatment by unbelievers for those who fundamentally are pursuing morality and goodness because of their changed inwardness is ever unplanned by God or a surprise to God. Indeed, it is the exact opposite. God brings about the experiences of suffering for His chosen people, those whom He has miraculously led inwardly to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, according to His eternal plans and purposes.

⁹³ Πρεσβυτέρους ὅσιν ἐν ὑμῖν παρακαλῶ ὁ συμπρεσβύτερος καὶ μάρτυς τῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθημάτων, ὁ καὶ τῆς μελλούσης ἀποκαλύπτεισθαι δόξης κοινωνός – Peter indicates that there are leaders within the Christian communities to whom he is writing, and he says that he also is a leader of Christians. Of course he is. He is an apostle who personally was there when Jesus was crucified (and who was appointed an apostle by Jesus to proclaim the NT message with the same level of accuracy and authority as Jesus – cf. Luke 6:13; John 12-17). Peter will also be a citizen

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

The word “elder” is first used to refer to leaders of a community in Genesis 50:7, in regard to the leaders of Egypt (עֲלֵי־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם) (οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τῆς γῆς Αἰγύπτου) who accompanied Joseph to the land of Canaan to bury his father Jacob. Then, in Exodus 3:16, God commands Moses, “Go and gather the elders of Israel (עֲלֵי־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם) (τὴν γερουσίαν τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ) and say to them, ‘Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has appeared to me.’” The Greek word γερουσία is made up of γερ = old and οὔσια = being (nominative singular feminine present active participle of εἶμι. The Greek word πρεσβύτερος is first used to refer to the elders of Israel in Exodus 17:5 (עֲלֵי־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם).

⁹⁴ ποιμάνατε τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν ποιμνιον τοῦ θεοῦ [ἐπισκοποῦντες] μὴ ἀναγκαστῶς ἀλλὰ ἐκουσίως κατὰ θεόν, ἢ μὴδὲ αἰσχροκερδῶς ἀλλὰ προθύμως – Peter exhorts the leaders within these Gentile Christian communities to care for those who are following them in their belief and instruction of the biblical, apostolic message. Because of the tendency of morally depraved human beings to get frustrated with people who are difficult to deal with and to expect to be affirmed for anything they do for others, Peter also requires that the leaders to whom he is writing to carry out their responsibilities with as much grace as possible, i.e., with a willingness to act towards others simply because they are needed and not either easy to relate to or quick to pay them back in a manner pleasing to the leaders. Thus, the leaders would be as gracious towards those following them as God is with us!

⁹⁵ μὴδ’ ὡς κατακυριεύοντες τῶν κληρῶν ἀλλὰ τύποι γινόμενοι τοῦ ποιμνίου – Again, Peter knows that people who lead will tend to do so by exerting their power and influence in a heavy handed way, which, in turn, robs their followers of their freedom to be individuals who are personally responsible to God ultimately for their thinking and behavior. Leaders naturally make it seem as though people are responsible to them and not to God. Thus, Peter exhorts even the Christian leaders to whom he is writing to avoid any strong-arming or manipulative tactics to control their followers’ behavior, including how they think, which is Jacques Ellul’s very definition of propaganda in his book *Propaganda*. Jesus said to his apostles, “The kings of the Gentiles dominate them, and those who have authority over them are called ‘Benefactors’ [literally ‘do-gooders’], but it is not this way among you. ... Let the one who is the leader be like a servant” (Luke 22:25,26).

⁹⁶ καὶ φανερωθέντος τοῦ ἀρχιποίμενος κομείσθε τὸν ἀμαράντινον τῆς δόξης στέφανον – Is Peter saying that the “elders” of his readers will receive something special for their efforts and something different from what their followers will receive, a sort of bonus check for handling well their responsibilities as elders? No. This does not make sense in the light of the rest of the NT documents that declare God graces and gives to all morally depraved justified believers the same things—eternal life in the Kingdom of God, regardless of their “position” within the Christian community (cf. 2 Peter 1:1). Therefore, all believers are required to serve as they should, and their service becomes a part of the proof of their authentic belief and that to which God responds at the final judgment with the gift of eternal salvation. cf. **2Tim. 4:8** in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing. Cf. **James 1:12** Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

⁹⁷ Ὅμοίως τ, νεώτεροι, ὑποτάγητε πρεσβυτέρους: πάντες δὲ ἁλλήλοισι τὴν ταπεινοφροσύνην ἐγκομβώσασθε, ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοὶς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν – Peter uses the opposite word from that in 5:1, i.e., νεώτεροι vs. πρεσβύτεροι. Therefore, he does not mean younger men *per se*, but everyone else who is not an elder. He wants them to follow those who have been chosen by Paul and/or his associates and who, Peter assumes, still have a good grasp on the biblical message (and, yet, Peter is writing this letter to remind them of what is the apostolic message). Peter then quotes the verse from Proverbs and exhorts everyone in these Christian communities to adopt an attitude of humility, i.e. an attitude of lowliness in both status and prestige, knowing that they are unworthy of God’s grace, mercy, forgiveness, and the promise of eternal life. Cf. Proverbs 3:34, “Though He scoffs at the scoffers, yet He gives grace to the afflicted (יְהוָה יִסְחָק בְּהִצְחָק וְיִשְׂמַח בְּהִצְחָק וְיִשְׂמַח בְּהִצְחָק וְיִשְׂמַח בְּהִצְחָק) (κύριος ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοὶς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν).”

⁹⁸ Ταπεινώθητε οὖν ὑπὸ τὴν κραταιὰν χεῖρα τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα ὑμᾶς ὑψώσῃ ἐν καιρῷ ὦ – Peter gives his readers the bottom line, that they should adopt an attitude of lowliness of position, status, and prestige with an understanding of their being unworthy of God’s grace, mercy, forgiveness, and promise of eternal life. This will prevent them from fighting back when they are mistreated and help keep them focused on God’s granting them eternal life at the judgment, so that all the hardship will be worth it.

⁹⁹ πᾶσαν τὴν μέριμναν ὑμῶν ἐπιρίψαντες ἐπ’ αὐτόν, ὅτι αὐτῷ μέλει περὶ ὑμῶν – The key to enduring the suffering brought on by their association with Jesus is not only to focus on the outcome of their existence as authentic believers, which is eternal life (cf. 1 Peter 1:13), but also to grasp fully how much God cares for them, specifically how He cares about their acquiring eternal life. Therefore, if they need to vent, they should do so on God. He can handle it, and He is also the very one who is causing the circumstances in their lives that is producing so much pain. Thus, to vent on Him and humble themselves before Him is to cast their anxiety on the very one who can handle it properly. It is to hand themselves over to God as Jesus did (cf. 2:23).

¹⁰⁰ Νῆψατε, γρηγορήσατε. ὁ ἀντίδικος ὑμῶν ὁ διάβολος ὡς λέων ὠρνόμενος περιπατεῖ ζητῶν [τινα] καταπιεῖν – Peter states that it is important for his readers to stay on the defensive with respect to “Satan,” the adversary of and in the world of rebellious human beings where leaders tend toward demonstrating a great amount of hostility towards God. Satan’s purpose is to sabotage Christians’ belief and turn them back into unbelievers. It is not that this is actually theologically possible, but Peter warns them anyway, as a way of saying that it is possible to fake belief and therefore give it up later. For example, cf. 2 Peter and what he says to Jewish believers.

¹⁰¹ ὦ ἀντίστητε ἵστεροὶ τῇ πίστει εἰδότες ὅτι τὰ αὐτὰ τῶν παθημάτων τῇ ἐν ὁ[τῷ] κόσμῳ ὑμῶν ἀδελφότητι ἐπιτελεῖσθαι – In the midst of staying on the defensive against Satan, another good reason to be motivated to endure in their belief is the fact that they are not alone in their suffering in the world. Other Christians are experiencing the same kind of mistreatment from unbelievers and unbelieving leaders, so that they can be assured that God’s plan does not single them out for pain.

¹⁰² Ὁ δὲ θεὸς πάσης χάριτος, ὁ καλέσας ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον αὐτοῦ δόξαν ἐν Χριστῷ [Ἰησοῦ] ὦ, ὀλίγον παθόντας αὐτοῦ καταρτίσει, στηρίξει, σθενώσει, θεμελιώσει – Peter states that it is of course grace that comes from God that had worked within them to attract them to an eternal existence with Jesus as their king and will continue working within them to make sure that they have the proper intellectual and spiritual foundation that makes them adequately and powerfully prepared for participating in the eternal Kingdom of God.

¹⁰³ αὐτῷ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ὦ, ἀμήν – Peter acknowledges that no one else can make these things happen for all eternity. Only God can, and He will. Trust Him.

¹⁰⁴ Διὰ Σιλουανοῦ ὑμῖν τοῦ πιστοῦ ἀδελφοῦ, ὡς λογίζομαι, ὅτι ὀλίγων ἔγραψα παρακαλῶν καὶ ἐπιμαρτυρῶν ταύτην εἶναι ἀληθῆ χάριν ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ εἰς ἣν ἵστητε – Peter mentions explicitly the secretary of his letter, a person well-known to his readers as a traveling companion of Paul. Plus, he wants them to recognize clearly that what he has written is a description, albeit brief, of the “grace of God,” and he wants them to remain fully committed to it in their hearts. Cf. 2Cor. 1:19, “For the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who was preached among you by us — by me and Silvanus and Timothy — was not yes and no, but is yes in Him.” Also, 1Th. 1:1, “Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.” Also, 2Th. 1:1, “Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Also, Acts 15:22, “Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas — Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren...” Plus, there are 12 other verses in Acts where Silas’ name is mentioned in conjunction with Paul.

¹⁰⁵ Ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς ἡ ἐν Βαβυλῶνι συνεκλεκτὴ καὶ Μάρκος ὁ υἱός μου – Just as Peter has used OT and Jewish language to address these Gentiles, it would make sense that he is using OT and Jewish language to refer to Jerusalem, the hotbed of continued rejection of Jesus as the Messiah by God’s own chosen people, the Jews. Thus, “she” is the gathering of Christians in Jerusalem, the ἐκκλησία (f.) in that city. This would especially make sense if Peter wrote this letter after Paul had been arrested in Jerusalem in Acts 21 and was even possibly languishing in prison at Caesarea Maritima afterwards, so that Silvanus is in the area waiting for Paul to be released. Perhaps “Babylon” had become a nickname among Christians for the present day Jerusalem because of the large quantity of unbelief among the Jews, who were still following only the Mosaic Covenant and not accepting the New Covenant of Jesus as the Messiah.

¹⁰⁶ ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν φιλήματι ἀγάπης. Ἐιρήνη ὑμῖν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ ὦ. ὦ – Peter’s final words are to exhort his readers to love one another as the proper demonstration of their belief in the Jewish Messiah and to wish God’s peaceful and whole existence, i.e., what God has purposed for people who will obtain entrance into the eternal Kingdom of God, on them because of their association with the Messiah.