

COMMENTS ON 1 PETER

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Designed to help study or review
Peter's First Epistle

Is Peter's First Epistle for You?

Yes, it is, if (a) you are a genuine Christian, one who has submitted yourself to obey Jesus Christ; but (b) you sometimes feel like an alien or stranger on earth **because of your faith in Him**. For example:

- You often cannot accept or affirm the moral standards of your culture.
- You receive fewer invitations to some activities.
- You feel guilty if you do participate.
- You often dream about a better and godly world with Jesus as Ruler.
- You postpone some pleasures until He comes.
- You spend time studying God's Word (the Bible) alone or with others.
- You have great confidence in God but little in yourself.

If these describe you, God designed 1 Peter to help you.

Comments on First Peter

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Unless otherwise stated, biblical quotations are from the New American Standard Bible. I often add bolding and substitute Messiah for Christ. Gr. means Greek.

No serious Christian doubts the enormous importance of the apostle Peter. You see him every time you turn a corner in the Gospels or early church history. What a blessing to study this little book universally acknowledged to be Peter's product in his mature years! He wrote it not for scholars but for all Christian "pilgrims" in this world that is not our home.

As you study any Bible book, there is no substitute for actively reading it many times. My first suggestions will address such readings directly. All my comments are intended to encourage you in your own study and make it meaningful.

As you can see on my website (www.kingdominbible.com), my special concern is to show how Bible writings are geared to God's coming kingdom. That kingdom had a past history starting in the Exodus and described in the Old Testament. It will have a future, glorious restoration as promised through the prophets and Messiah Himself. It is the underlying theme in the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles, which often refer to it. Peter's writings perfectly harmonize with a proper understanding of it.

Active Readings. Become familiar with a Bible book before you begin reading commentaries about it. You can read 1 Peter aloud in about twenty minutes. Read it in different versions. Each time you read, it is usually helpful to look for and mark or list information. Below I suggest some of the items you can look for in 1 Peter. As an example I have listed some possible results for one such search in "Appendix C: Analogies for the Christian Life" (p. 31).

- Circumstances of writing (by whom, to whom, where, when?)
- Messiah's names, titles, and descriptions
- Messiah's sufferings (why, how, so what?)
- Messiah's resurrection
- The hope of believers
- Figures of the church (e.g., a building)
- Analogies for the Christian life (such as, aliens scattered, children born again)
- Why believers suffer (justified and unjustified reasons)
- Help for believers in suffering
- The love of believers
- Exhortations for believers
- God's grace and mercy
- Divine judgment

After a few readings, divide 1 Peter into paragraphs as you see it. A paragraph is usually several sentences—probably two to five verses—dealing with one aspect of a larger subject. As paragraphs in the first half of the first chapter, for example, I suggest verses 1–2, 3–5, 6–9, and 10–

12. After you study each section of the book, I will ask you to summarize or restate each of its paragraphs in your own words. Right now try summarizing 1:1–2. Then compare your summary to the title and summary that follow.

1:1-2 Greeting. The apostle Peter writes to God’s people scattered as aliens in Asia Minor, chosen according to God’s purpose and set apart by His Spirit to obey Messiah.

The Author, Simon Peter

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Messiah” (1:1). In every biblical list of the original apostles, Simon (Peter) is first, indicating his prominence. Matthew 10:2 even calls him “first.” Since He was not the first in time to follow Jesus, it is evident that Matthew refers to his leadership. Many passages show Simon’s developing understanding, character, and importance. I will comment on seven such passages: John 1:35–42; Luke 5:1–11; Matthew 16:13–19; Matthew 17:1–9; Luke 22:31–32; Acts 2; and Acts 10:1 to 11:18. Read them first, then my suggestions how they can affect the interpretation of 1 Peter. The underlying theme of each is the coming kingdom.

1. **John 1:35–42** explains some key terms. It relates some dialogue when Simon became one of Jesus’ first disciples. Apparently he had already been a disciple of John the Baptist, whose ministry and teachings are related in all four Gospels. An honest study of the Gospels and Epistles must include John the Baptist. Simon’s brother Andrew was one of “two disciples” of John who left him to follow Jesus (1:35, 37). Andrew “found first his own brother Simon.” From the next verses we learn (a) that the titles *Messiah* and *Christ* have the same meaning, and (b) the source of Simon’s name *Peter*.

- a. *Christ* has the same royal meaning as *Messiah*. In verse 41 Andrew’s testimony was “We have found the Messiah.” The Gospel immediately explains, “(which translated means Christ [Gr. *crastos*]).” What a big fish Andrew caught with this simple testimony! *Messiah* was an Aramaic title for the promised king godly Jews were expecting (Dan. 9:26). The equivalent title in Greek was *Cristos* (see Luke 23:2).¹ Both terms mean “Anointed [One],” referring to God’s gift of His Spirit to the king (Isa. 11:1–2). There is no good reason to think that in the New Testament *Cristos* ever ceased to be a title with this royal meaning. Thus, it always alluded to the kingdom promised to Him through earlier prophecies and His own prophecies. It is important to remember that meaning when we read New Testament books, such as Peter’s writings. One method to help remember it is to substitute *Messiah* for *Christ*.

¹ John’s account of the first witnesses for Jesus reminds us that their native language was Aramaic (John 1:40–41). So Andrew naturally used *Messiah* instead of its Hebrew equivalent in the Old Testament, *Mashiach*. *Mashiach* means and is translated *Anointed [One]*. It described historic kings like Saul and David (1 Sam. 26:9, 11, 16; 16:12–13), also the promised Ruler of the future (Ps. 2:1–3). In Psalm 2 as elsewhere, its translation into Greek was *Cristos*, which also means “Anointed [One].” This Greek version of the title is also used often in the New Testament. However, most English versions do not translate it there but simply say it in English (*Christ*). In other words, *Christ* is a transliteration, not a translation, of Greek *Cristos*. Partly because of that practice, in English we have generally lost the royal meaning of *Cristos* and its connection to the Old Testament.

- b. From this dialogue in John 1 we also learn that Jesus would give Simon the new name *Cefas* (Aramaic) = *Peter* (Greek for “[man of] rock”). He did so in Matthew 16:17–18.
2. **Luke 5:1–11** shows Simon’s spiritual insight and repentance when Jesus called him to full-time discipleship. Simon realized that Jesus’ perfect knowledge of the sea and the fish implied perfect knowledge of him too, “a sinful man” (v. 8). This experience made it easier for him to leave his business for full-time discipleship, to learn to “catch men” (v. 10).
3. **Matthew 16:13–19** shows Simon’s basic conclusion about Jesus. It also illustrates his spiritual leadership as spokesman for the apostles. He led in confessing, **after the evidence was in**, that Jesus is the Messiah.² In response Jesus blessed Simon by renaming him and promising to build His church on “this rock.”³ Next, He promised to give Simon Peter “the keys of the kingdom of heaven.” “Keys” refers to authority (Isa. 22:22). Authority where? In “the kingdom of heaven.” This was a common Jewish title for the kingdom God had promised in scores of prophecies.⁴ Not in heaven but on earth. The God of heaven would send a kingdom from heaven to fill the earth. He would establish, in place of the earthly kingdoms symbolized by the statue in Daniel 2, His own eternal kingdom.

A rock was cut out, but not by human hands. It **struck the statue** on its feet [and] **became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth...the God of heaven will set up a kingdom** that will never be destroyed...but it will itself endure forever.
(Daniel 2:34–35, 44, NIV)

Therefore, the authority Jesus promised Simon Peter in Matthew 16 will be exercised in the predicted kingdom. Not in heaven nor in the church but in Jesus’ own future rule on a glorified earth. Will Peter sit at Jesus’ right hand to rule over all others? That is not for Jesus to determine (Matt. 20:23).⁵ Therefore, we should conclude that the promise in Matthew 16 of

² Matthew adds to the confession another title, “the **Son of the living God**” (16:16). According to common interpretation nowadays, this title *Son of God* would imply Jesus’ deity. If so, it affirms a greater relationship than *Messiah*. Indeed, Jesus is divine. But *Son of God* rarely means that in the Bible—and could hardly do so on this occasion. If it had, Mark or Luke would have included it in their reports of this confession. Instead, as usual, *Son* emphasizes Jesus’ **right to inherit as Messiah** (Ps. 2:7–8; Rom. 8:17).

³ Jesus deliberately paired His revelation, “You are Peter,” to the Father’s revelation, “You are the Messiah.” He was recognizing the new, rock-like Simon. That man would in some sense be the bedrock where Jesus would build His *ekklesia*. That blessing did not keep Simon’s old weakness and misunderstanding from surfacing again in the next verses (16:21–23).

⁴ The phrase *kingdom of heaven* is used over thirty times, but only in Matthew. Matthew was apparently designed mostly for believing Jews, who used and understood that term. But the parallel passages in other Gospels use *kingdom* or *kingdom of God*, meaning the same as *kingdom of heaven* but less confusing to non-Jews. For example, starting at Matthew 4:17, Jesus preached that “the kingdom of heaven” had drawn near. The same message in Mark 1:15 and Luke 10:9, 11 concerned “the kingdom of God.”

⁵ Jesus Himself will not assign places of highest honor in His kingdom. “To sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father.” (Matt. 20:23, NIV)

the keys was not merely personal. It was not to Peter as an individual but as spokesman for all in the future who confess that Jesus is Messiah.⁶ Not just a few but all of God's "servants ...will reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:4–5).

4. **Matthew 17:1–9** emphasizes Simon's participation (with two other disciples) in the Transfiguration. In it he saw, as the Lord had promised days before, a preview in miniature of "the Son of Man coming in his kingdom" (16:28; cf. 2 Peter 1:16–18). Notice what the Lord accomplished by this promise and this event. He (a) emphasized the fact that His kingdom **had not come yet**, and (b) confirmed His disciples' Jewish understanding—obtained from Scripture—that His kingdom would be on earth and glorious. He emphasized the same points in such promises as the following: "In the regeneration [NIV, at the renewal of all things], when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28).

An opposing view grew up centuries later and has become quite common—that the kingdom already began in Jesus' ministry on earth. Some teach that it began when Jesus ascended to heaven. Such views find no adequate support in Acts or in Peter's sermons or writings.⁷

5. **Luke 22:31–32** recalls Jesus' prediction that Simon would deny Him but be restored to leadership (see John 21:15–17). His renewed ministry would still aim toward the future kingdom, which the Lord had just promised again to the apostles (Luke 22:29–30).
6. **Acts 2** narrates the events of Pentecost, including Peter's explanatory sermon.⁸ That entire sermon had the same purpose as most of the sermons in Acts. It was designed to show that Jesus has been designated king of the coming kingdom. Consider some of the clear references and allusions to that kingdom in Peter's sermon.
- a. Peter explains why King David in Psalm 16 predicted "the resurrection of the Messiah" (2:31). It was because "he [David] was a prophet and knew that God had promised him

⁶ As the Bishop of Rome accrued power over the centuries, Romanism twisted the meaning of Matthew 16. They now thought that the church was the promised kingdom, ruled by their bishops. Peter, they now said, as foundation had absolute jurisdiction over other bishops. In Rome, they said, Peter had successors to continue his jurisdiction. Matthew 16 they appropriated as Rome's charter of authority. But that meaning cannot be proved by Jesus' words or early church history. See especially Lesson 8 of my "[Matthew Self-Study Guide](#)."

⁷ On my website the "[Index of Passages & Topics](#)" has links to many discussions of key passages about the kingdom. Look under "kingdom..." for example, or under a key reference. One link under "Acts 2" is "[The Four Gospels: the Kingdom Offered & Postponed](#)" (see Appendix A in that writing).

⁸ See other sermons and actions of Peter's in Acts 1–12—and my writings on Acts. To me the modern preaching seems misguided, even brazen, that avoids the themes emphasized then.

on oath that he would place one of his [David's] descendants **on his [David's] throne**" (2:30).⁹

- b. After being resurrected, Jesus has been "exalted to the right hand of God." From that position He has received and poured out the promised Holy Spirit (2:33). How long will He sit there? The Lord His Father limits it, "**until I make your enemies a footstool** for your feet" (2:34–35). This statement clearly implies a time when He will begin to reign (the same promise as in Ps. 2:5).
- c. The conclusion to Peter's sermon is that "God **has made this Jesus**, whom you crucified, both **Lord and Messiah**" (2:36). The obvious meaning of these terms is that God has designated Jesus as master over all (Lord) and king of the promised kingdom (Messiah).

7. Acts 10:1 to 11:18 narrates the story and sequel of Peter's opening the door of faith to the Gentiles. His sermon on that occasion makes the same points as at Pentecost. See especially its conclusion: God has "appointed [Jesus] as judge [ruler] of the living and the dead" (10:42–43). The outline of Peter's sermon is identical to that of the Gospel of Mark.¹⁰

The Circumstances

Time and Place. Probably Peter wrote both 1 and 2 Peter from Rome, which many early Christians code-named "Babylon" (1 Peter 5:13). The date of 1 Peter was about A.D. 63; of 2 Peter, A.D. 66. The Neronian persecution began in Rome in A.D. 64, then spread to provinces such as those listed in 1 Peter 1:1. The apostles Peter and Paul were both martyred in Rome about A.D. 67.

The Addressees of both epistles were God's same "chosen" ones in five Roman provinces where Turkey is now (1 Peter 1:1; 2 Peter 1:10; 3:1). Listed in a clockwise route, these provinces began with Pontus on the southeast shore of the Black Sea and ended with Bithynia on its southwest shore. The most likely interpretation of 1 Peter 1:14, 18 and 4:3 is that these believers were Gentiles. When and how were they evangelized and converted? For most of them the Bible does not say. Acts 2:9, however, lists representatives from their provinces at Pentecost. Although Paul and Barnabas had agreed to "go to the Gentiles, and [Peter] to the circumcised" (Gal. 2:9), what is known of the history of each is full of ministry to both groups.

⁹ Historically and in prophecies David's throne has always been on earth and over the nation Israel (Luke 1:32–33). The Bible nowhere hints that it has been or will be transferred to God's throne in heaven. In Revelation 3:21 Jesus distinguishes the two thrones: "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on **my throne** just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on **his throne**." See ["The Kingdom Will Come As the Prophets Predicted: A Critique of Waltke's Case for Amillennialism,"](#) Part C3.

¹⁰ There is strong tradition that Mark's Gospel is a record of Peter's evangelistic preaching. Not everything about the apostle Peter in the Acts period is positive, however. See Galatians 2:11–21, in which Paul had to reprimand Peter for not acting in accordance with the great change made in Acts 10.

Peter's Secretary? "Through Silvanus" (5:12) refers to the same Silas who accompanied Paul in Acts 15:22-23, 40, etc. and joined in writing 1 Thessalonians (1:1) and 2 Thessalonians (1:1). He either helped Peter compose 1 Peter or delivered it, or both. He may be partly responsible for the polished Greek of 1 Peter.

After you have read 1 Peter several times, read also the following comments. By chapters and verses they clarify some of the main themes and difficult matters in 1 Peter.

1 Peter Chapter 1

In other books there are several passages parallel to various parts of 1 Peter. To chapter 1, for example, compare the phrases from 2 Thessalonians 2:13–14 listed in the following table.

Parallels in 2 Thessalonians 2:13–14 to 1 Peter 1	
Phrases in 2 Thess. 2:13–14	Parallel Thoughts in 1 Peter 1
chosen...for salvation	chosen, v. 5; salvation, vv. 9, 10
through sanctification by the Spirit	by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, v. 2
faith in the truth	protected...through faith, v. 5 proof of your faith, v. 7 you believe in Him, v. 8 outcome of your faith, v. 9 believers...faith...in God, v. 21 obedience to the truth, v. 22
Called through the gospel	preached the gospel to you, vv. 12, 25 in obedience to the truth...purified, v. 22 born again...through the...word, v. 23

1:1–2 As noted before, these verses are Peter’s greeting. Like nearly all the epistles they combine a typical Greek wish (for grace) with a Hebrew wish (for peace, wellbeing).

1:1 “Peter, an apostle.” The greeting in Peter’s second letter to the same people (2 Peter 1:1; 3:1) adds his original Aramaic name, “Simon.” Whether “Simon” is included or not does not seem significant.

“chosen [elect] aliens” (Greek). In Greek the word for “chosen” heads up the designation of the addressees. However, some translations, including NASB, move it to the end of verse 1 or beginning of verse 2. This shows, probably rightly, that verse 2 modifies mostly or only that word. The fact that God elects believers is a common and important teaching in the Bible. For example, that theme permeates the great doxology in Ephesians 1:3–14. Election is not just to service for God but for salvation (2 Thess. 2:13, “chosen you...for salvation”).¹¹ How can I know if I am elected? By the great changes God produces in my life (1 Thess. 1:4–10).

“those who reside as aliens [temporary residents, Gr. *parepidemois*].” The time they (we) spend in this present world is called their (our) “**stay upon earth**” (*paroikia*, v. 17).

¹¹ Election was based on God’s purpose (Rom. 8:28–30; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11) and took place “before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4). It was “not because of works but because of Him who calls” (Rom. 9:11), “not...on the man who wills or the man who runs but on God who has mercy” (Rom. 9:16).

“scattered throughout [Gr., of a dispersion, *diasporas*].” *The Dispersion* was a well-known term for Israel as scattered worldwide (John 7:35). James 1:1 uses it to designate Jewish believers: “to the twelve tribes **who are dispersed abroad** [*en te diaspora*].” But Peter mentions no twelve tribes (and has no article before “dispersion” in the Greek). Apparently he applies the term to all believers in Jesus as Messiah, though they are mostly Gentiles.¹² Like the Jews, they are temporary residents scattered in the world—an analogy with many aspects dealt with throughout 1 Peter.

1:2 “the **foreknowledge** of God” (see verb in v. 20). The way this term is used often shows that it is more than mere intellectual awareness and includes the thought of choice. For examples, see Acts 2:23; Romans 8:29; and the cognate verb in Romans 11:2. The background for this meaning is a special use of the Hebrew verb *know*, as in “The man **had relations with** [knew] his wife Eve” (Gen. 4:1) and “You only have I **chosen** [known] ...” (Amos 3:2; see also Psalms 1:6; 37:18).

“be sprinkled with His blood.” The background for this figure is in Exodus 24:4–8. There the people were sprinkled with the blood of animals when the first covenant was inaugurated. Now, as Hebrews discusses (e. g., Heb. 9:11–14; 22–23; 10:22, 29; 12:24; 13:20), it is the blood of Messiah and the eternal new covenant. The sprinkled blood means the application to us of His death, which inaugurates that covenant with us.

“that you may obey Jesus Messiah.” Compare “obedience to the truth,” v. 22, and “obedient children,” v. 14. Every believer obeys Him. This obedience begins with initial faith but goes beyond that step; it characterizes the entire life. “By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments” (1 John 2:3). In fact, this truth is so important that “obey” can substitute for “believe in”: The Son “became to all those who **obey** Him the source of eternal salvation” (Heb. 5:8–9).¹³

Peter’s purpose in writing becomes obvious as we reread his epistle. He states it in one form in 5:12b (“exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!”).

1:3–12 is one long sentence in Greek, like the similar blessing/doxology in Ephesians 1:3–14. The two doxologies should be compared. Each of them emphasizes our firm hope for the future, which is the Lord’s coming kingdom.

1:3 “be born again” (also in 1:23; cf. 2:2). Although the terminology is slightly different, this great change was predicted in the Old Testament. See, for example, Ezekiel 36:26–27.

¹² Applying to the church a term appropriate for Israel (here, *Dispersion*) does not mean the church has taken Israel’s place! The term *Israel* is used sixty-seven times in the New Testament—and the word for *Israelite* nine times. These always refer to physical descendants of Jacob, never clearly including Gentiles. Although Israel rejected the Messiah, the apostle Paul carefully shows in Romans 9–11 that God has not rejected them and will ultimately save them (see [A Survey of Romans](#), Appendix I.) That nation is eternal and has divine promises that will be fulfilled (see Acts 1:6; Romans 11:25–26). However, it will not be separate from Messiah’s final assembly (the *ek-klesia* predicted in Matthew 16:18) but part of it.

¹³ In Acts 5:32 Peter spoke of “the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who **obey** Him.”

As the teacher of Israel, Nicodemus should have known from such Scriptures about the new birth (John 3:10). No one can see or enter the coming kingdom (to inherit it) without being born again.

“a living hope” (also vv. 13, 21). Hope always pertains to the future, in this case, to the coming kingdom. See Romans 8:12–25; 1 Thessalonians 5:8–9. Titus 2:13 means the same thing: “while we wait for **the blessed hope—the glorious appearing** of our great God and Savior, Jesus Messiah” (NIV).¹⁴

“by the resurrection of Jesus Messiah from the dead.” Jesus’ miraculous works showed that He can bring the glorious new world. His resurrection showed that He will do so! Read His promises of such glory in Matthew 13:43; 19:29; and 25:34.

1:4 “to obtain an inheritance.” The inheritance of believers is always future in the New Testament, though the Holy Spirit is “a pledge of our inheritance” (Eph. 1:14). Several passages make it specific that our inheritance either **is** the coming kingdom or **is in** that kingdom: Ephesians 5:5; 1 Corinthians 6:9; James 2:5; Galatians 5:21; Matthew 19:28–29; 25:34, 46. Peter could have used the same words.

1:5 “protected...for a **salvation ready to be revealed** in the last time.” This is the first use of the word *salvation* in 1 Peter. *Save* and *salvation* often designate God’s past, present, or future grace for believers. Here and throughout 1 Peter it is used for the future, for God’s kingdom that believers will inherit. Many other passages have that same meaning: for example, Isaiah 12:2, 3; Romans 5:9–10; 1 Thessalonians 5:8–9; Hebrews 1:14; 9:28; 10:39; especially 12:28. In this life believers have only a minuscule sampling of salvation compared to the unlimited riches that will be revealed. Salvation is the key theme in 1 Peter 1:1 to 2:10.¹⁵ Peter emphasizes the wonderful future awaiting these “aliens”: “praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Messiah” (1:7). See the same combination of salvation and glory in the promised kingdom in Isaiah 24:23 and 25:6–9.

1:6 “You **greatly rejoice**, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials.” Rejoicing even when suffering. That thought is repeated in 3:14, 17; James 1:2–3; and elsewhere. Such statements reflect the Lord’s repeated promise in the last beatitude (Matthew 5:10–12). In fact, all the promises of “blessing” in the

¹⁴ The syntax of Titus 2:13 could be understood to distinguish between the “blessed hope” and the “glorious appearing.” But NIV is right in taking them as the same thing (a hendiadys). Several passages clearly refer to the Lord’s glorious appearing as our hope. For an example, see 2 Thessalonians 1:5–10. Some interpret 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 to refer to a separate coming not seen by most of the world. If that were so, it would be a hope quite distinct from the public one the Lord promised in Matthew 24 and 25.

¹⁵ Stan Toussaint (in classnotes) calls “Salvation” the first division of this epistle, 1:1 to 2:10. After that he suggests divisions II. Subjection (2:11 to 3:12) and III. Suffering (3:13 to 5:14).

beatitudes will be fulfilled “in the kingdom of heaven” (5:3, 10)—that is, when heaven comes to earth.¹⁶

1:7 “that the **proof** [Gr., *dokimion*] of your faith...may be found to result in **praise and glory and honor** at the revelation of Jesus Messiah.” This result is the reason we can rejoice when suffering (just as in Rom. 5:3–11 and James 1:2–3, 12). The word translated “proof” is not the usual word for “proof” (*dokimos*) and may mean “genuineness” (that is, the result of proof, also in James 1:3). In other words, the phrase may refer to tested faith rather than the process of testing it. The general meaning would be about the same: testing faith or tested faith is far more important than testing gold or tested gold, and brings greater benefits. The “praise,” etc., will not be for Messiah alone (see v. 11) but for those with faith, as 5:1, 4 make evident (also Romans 2:7, 10). This honor will be given not at our death but at Jesus’ glorious coming to rule (2 Thess. 1:6–10, “when the Lord Jesus **shall be revealed** from heaven...**when He comes to be glorified**...and to be marveled at”). This same honor designed for us and the same timing is referred to in 1 Peter 5:10: “after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Messiah, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.”

1:8–9 “greatly rejoice...**obtaining** as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.” This translation of verse 9 is misleading. (See my separate discussion in Appendix A, p. 24.) “Obtaining” has instead a futuristic meaning, referring to taking the prize after a competition is finished. The New Living Translation shows that meaning: “The reward for trusting him will be the salvation of your souls.” As you have seen, the context preceding verse 9 exhorts us to rejoice in “the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (v. 5) and the glory to appear “at the revelation of Jesus Messiah” (vv. 7–8). The next verses also look ahead, to a “salvation” revealed to the prophets as following Messiah’s sufferings (vv. 10–12). After this doxology Peter will exhort us to think constantly about that coming time when the kingdom will finally start: “Fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Messiah” (1:13).

1:11 “the sufferings of Messiah and the glories to follow.” The prophets did not understand that Messiah must come twice. This was revealed through the parables the Lord taught and explained to those who had spiritual “ears” (Matt. 13:9, 16). After His resurrection He further explained the same two comings (Luke 24:25–27). Even before His death, He had assigned His “glory” to His second coming (Matt. 19:28; 25:31). The apostle Paul makes the same assignment (2 Thess. 1:9–10; Titus 2:13; et al.).

1:12 “things into which angels long **to look.**” The Greek verb translated “to look” combines two ideas as seen (with the same verb) in John 20:11: “she **stooped down and looked**

¹⁶ As seen under “The Author,” Matthew 16:13–19, *kingdom of heaven* referred to the predicted kingdom from heaven, not a kingdom in heaven.

into the tomb.” Compare Ephesians 3:10. Angels realize better than we do, what amazing feats are accomplished in Messiah’s building the church.

Verses 3–12 have been a doxology mostly praising God for the new confidence He has given us. In terms such as *hope, inheritance, salvation, revelation of Jesus*, and *glories*, Peter has reminded us pilgrims of our wonderful future. Now **summarize in your own words each of the paragraphs** in this doxology. I suggest verses 3–5, 6–9, 10–12.¹⁷

Next, Peter begins a long series of commands continuing to 5:11.

1:13 “keep sober.” This attitude in view of the Lord’s coming again is commanded in Matthew 24:42–44 and parallel passages (and cf. 1 Thess. 5:6, 8 about “the day of the Lord”). See also my comments above on 1:8–9.

“grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Messiah.” “Grace,” found ten times in this epistle, is God’s unmerited favor for us. God “gives grace to the humble” (5:5, quoted here and James 4:6 from Prov. 3:34). This grace is the same as the glory to be granted “when the Chief Shepherd appears” (5:1, 4).

1:14 “do not **be conformed** to the former lusts.” The same verb is used in Romans 12:2 and means “do not **shape your behavior to fit**.”

“the former lusts...**in your ignorance**.” This spiritual ignorance was normal for Gentiles. Jews, in contrast, were confident they could guide the blind because they had “in the law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth” (Rom. 2:19-20).

1:15 “like the Holy One who **called** you, be holy.” The basic idea of *holy* is *separated*, with a corollary of *pure*. As usual in the epistles, God’s call referred to here is effectual, not general. In other words, all believers, and only believers, are called. Their calling is a divine and successful invitation “**into His own kingdom** and glory” (1 Thess. 2:12; cf. Rom. 8:17, 18–30; 1 Cor. 1:2, 9, 24, 26).

1:16 “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” This quotation is from Leviticus 19:2, a book which constantly appeals to the nation Israel to be separated to God. In their case holiness included their diet and ritual purity of the body, as well as moral living. In our case it considers everything that God asks of us.

1:17 “the One who impartially judges according to each man’s work.” Even believers will be judged according to and with reference to their works. One reason for judging believers will be to show the evidence that God has produced good in their lives (see Romans 2:6–

¹⁷ Compare your summary of 1:6–9 to the following: Various trials do not dim our joy because we know they will enhance our future salvation. They will result in more glory when we finally see at His coming the Savior we love.

11; 2 Thess. 1:5–7). Notice that the present tense (“judges”) again refers to the future, as “obtaining” did in v. 9.

“conduct yourselves in **fear**.” See also Hebrews 10:26–31; 12:28–29. This fear refers to awe, includes wonder, humility, and grateful reverence aroused by God’s mercy. It does not include cringing fright (1 Peter 3:6, 14).

“stay upon earth” (*paroikia*). See verse 1. The noun form used here in v. 17 is also in Acts 13:17—the patriarchs lived as aliens in Egypt.

1:18 “futile way of life inherited from your forefathers.” Likely Peter would say this about Gentiles but not Jews. See also 4:3–4.

1:22 “obedience to the truth.” Same thought as “obey the gospel” (2 Thess. 1:8), “receive the love of the truth so as to be saved” (2 Thess. 2:10), “believe the truth” (2 Thess. 2:12), “faith in the truth” (2 Thess. 2:13), “becoming obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7).

“sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another.” Peter has already discussed faith and hope (vv. 3, 7, 9, 21), which—as in many passages—are completed by love. Love is God’s crowning purpose and will never pass away (1 Cor. 13).

1:23–25 “not of seed which is perishable but imperishable...the living and abiding word of God.” Anything will be permanent only as it is united to God’s permanent word.

1 Peter Chapter 2

2:1 This description of previous attitudes is similar to that in Titus 3:3 and longer passages, such as, Ephesians 4:17–32. Also see 1 Peter 4:1–5. “Malice” (used also in 2:16) is a desire to harm. “Guile” is deceit (Acts 13:10). “Hypocrisy” is acting, pretending to be good (Matt. 15:7–8). “Slander” is speaking disparagingly of someone.

2:2 “pure milk of the word.” Instead of “of the word,” many versions have “spiritual.” The word so translated (Gr. *logikon*, used in Rom. 12:1 modifying “service”) means “genuine, true to its real nature.”

2:3 “if [assuming that] you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.” Adapted from Psalm 34:8. “Kindness” is used of good wine in Luke 5:39, meaning “good-tasting.”¹⁸

2:4 “a living stone (*lithon zonta*).” The word *lithos* is used for a cut stone of any size, whether a jewel or—as here—in building. See my comments on 2:6–7.

“stone...choice...precious.” These are three of the words from Isaiah 28:16, which will be quoted in verses 6 and 8 (along with extracts from Ps. 118:22 and Isaiah 8:14). The apostle Paul quotes from the same Isaiah passages, with the same words, in Romans 9:32–33.

¹⁸ 1 Peter 2:3 echoes the Psalm 34:8 invitation to “taste and see that the LORD [*Yahweh*] is good.” However, Peter proceeds to identify “the Lord” we taste not as God the Father but as Messiah, the Son: We “come to him, the living stone” (1 Peter 2:4).

Likely Peter and Paul were quoting from a Christian hymn, a form in which early believers memorized much Scripture and theology (see Phil. 2:6–11; Col. 1:15–20; 1 Tim. 3:1). That practice still continues in some (especially third-world) countries.

2:5 “You also, as living stones.” In this verse believers are called by the same term as Messiah in verse 4. The same is true in Ephesians 2:20, where Messiah is the “corner stone” but “the apostles and prophets” are also in the foundation. Variations of this analogy are common in the New Testament. We must refrain from forcing every usage of it into the same mold.¹⁹

“a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Messiah.” Here the figure changes from believers as stones to believers as priests. We not only constitute God’s temple but we minister in it. No New Testament text pictures a separate order of priests to which we are subject—but pictures all believers as priests for the world. Our “spiritual sacrifices” begin with our body (Rom. 12:1) and include “praise to God” and “doing good and sharing” (Heb. 13:15–16).

2:6–10 has, as was anticipated in verse 4, several quotations from the Old Testament:

- Verses 6–8a use Isaiah 28:16; Psalm 118:22; and Isaiah 8:14.
- Verse 9 uses Isaiah 43:20 and mostly Exodus 19:5–6.
- Verse 10 uses Hosea 1:9–10 and Hosea 2:23.

In each case what originally applied to Israel is here applied to the church. The new applications to the church do not cancel the promises to Israel.

2:6–7 “in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone.” Although Messiah is not presented as the only stone in this building, He is the most important (also in Eph. 2:20–22). Jesus accused the leaders of Israel of rejecting this stone; so did Peter in Acts 4:11.

2:8 “disobedient to the word.” See also 1:2, 14, 22; 3:1; and my notes for each.

2:9 This verse quotes from Exodus 19:5–6, God’s key promise regarding the covenant He was about to make with Israel at Mt. Sinai. His purpose has not basically changed with the church. We should memorize such an important promise.

“But you are...a royal priesthood.” See 2:5.

“proclaim the excellencies.” Using the approach of Isaiah 43:21, this summarizes God’s purpose.

¹⁹ It is misguided to interpret Matthew 16:18 by the similar figures in 1 Peter 2:7–8, Ephesians 2:20, or even 1 Corinthians 3:11. In Matthew 16:18 the “rock” for the future *ekklesia* is not the foundation but the bedrock (Gr. *petra*). Furthermore, Messiah there pictures Himself not as that bedrock but as the builder. The picture of Him is different in both 1 Peter 2 and Ephesians 2; He is one among many stones. In 1 Corinthians 3:11, indeed, He is the only “foundation”—but not for the universal church but for ministry. On it a minister can build with lasting and honorable materials or unworthy materials that will be burned up. What he builds cannot mean the church, which cannot be burned up!

2:10 applies words from Hosea 1:10 and 2:23 to the church. Both passages originally referred to the nation Israel and will be fulfilled for that nation when “all Israel will be saved” (Rom. 11:26). The dissolution of God’s kingdom took place in two stages: first, the ten northern tribes often called Israel, later, Judah. But all prophets showed that in the restored kingdom the twelve tribes would be reunited.²⁰

Before continuing, review 1:13 through 2:10 by making your own **summary of each of Peter’s paragraphs** in this section. I suggest 1:13–16, 17–21, 22–25; 2:1–3, 4–8, 9–10.²¹

2:11 through 3:12 These paragraphs spell out how to be considerate (usually willingly submissive) in different relationships.

- 2:11–17, submission to government
- 2:18–25, submission to masters
- 3:1–6, submission to husbands
- 3:7, love for wives
- 3:8–12, love for all believers

2:11 “aliens.” Non-citizens, same root as in 1:17. If this world is not our home, will we fly away to a home in heaven? “Our citizenship is in heaven” (Phil. 3:20). But it is a big mistake to think that God will cancel His plans for man (us) to rule the earth (Gen. 1:26–28; Ps. 8; Heb. 2). Jesus will be given “the nations as [His] inheritance and the very ends of the earth as [His] possession” (Ps. 2:8–9); “His kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:33). And with Him His saints “shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev. 22:5). We are aliens in the present world but will be at home in the “new heavens and...new earth” (2 Peter 3:13). The new Jerusalem will come down and bring heaven to earth forever (Rev. 21:1–3).

2:12 “behavior...among the Gentiles.” Contrast this life style to that of Qumran, where partisans withdrew from society and its conflicts. In contrast believers, in Asia Minor as elsewhere, stayed in the middle of the spiritual conflict. Combatants opposing them could

²⁰ Hosea ministered during the last forty years for the ten-tribe nation called Israel, house of Israel, or sons of Israel (see Hosea 1:1, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11). God required Hosea to take back his own unfaithful wife and have children such as “Lo-ammi,” that is, “not My people” (1:9a). This illustrated God’s relationship with the nation (1:9b); He “put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel” (1:4) and let their enemies take them into captivity. But He promised to someday reverse that treatment and restore them as “sons of the living God” (1:10). In a more detailed prophecy of the same story, he promised to “have compassion on her who had not obtained compassion and...say to those who were not My people, ‘You are My people’” (2:23). These promises clearly referred to ethnic Israel, but Peter applies the same language to the mostly Gentile church.

²¹ Compare your summary of 2:1-3 to the following: Now we should put away hurtful or deceptive attitudes and nourish our new lives through the spiritual resources the Lord provides.

carefully “observe” them and learn their morality (2:12, 15), their true motives and norms of behavior (4:12–16), and the reason for their hope (3:15). As a result, many got converted.

“they slander you as evildoers.” Most unbelievers prefer to stay away from our light, light that reveals their wickedness (John 3:19–21). But though some voice their opposition to us, some will get converted.

“the day of visitation” refers to the Lord’s coming to judge.

2:13 “Submit yourselves.” To this verse and paragraph compare Titus 3:1–3, which is very similar.

“every human *institution*.” The Greek noun can mean anything that is created, including the state or the family.

2:14 “governors as sent by him.” This referred to Roman proconsuls or procurators. Such governors’ main concerns were (a) to suppress crime and (b) to promote the deference of subordinates to their elders and betters. God ordained human government to provide such order. Thus, the general Christian duty is to obey rulers (see Romans 13, especially vv. 3–4) and pray for them (1 Tim. 2:1–2).

2:16 “free men...as bondslaves of God.” See also verse 24. Possibly this echoes Jesus’ rule in Matthew 17:26. In regard to the temple tax He says, “the sons are exempt. But, lest we give them offense,” we should pay it. Romans 6 also says that every believer is free—freed from sin to be God’s slave.²²

2:18–23 This section aimed at the many converted slaves presents Messiah as the great example of suffering for doing right.

2:18 “Servants.” Household servants, probably slaves. In the New Testament, only 1 Corinthians 7:21 seems to recommend for slaves to become free if possible. Elsewhere, they are told to obey their masters as representing the Lord.

2:19–20 twice says, “finds favor,” the word translated “grace” in the greeting (1:2). See the note at 1:13. This emphasizes God’s interest in those who suffer.

2:21–25 Note the connections to Isaiah 53, summarizing Jesus’ innocence, attitude, and purpose in suffering.

2: 25 “Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.” These titles refer to the same person, stressing two aspects of his work. In Ezekiel 34:11–31 God promised that He and a later “David” would do those things for Israel. In John 10 Jesus claimed to fulfill that promise. Elders

²² As finite creatures, we are all tied to something or someone. One psychologist used to say that “freedom is the length of the rope to the stake to which you choose to tie yourself.”

have those same functions for the sheep in local churches. 1 Peter 5:2 uses the verb forms (“shepherd...exercising oversight”) that correspond to the same two titles. The apostle Paul applies the same Greek word roots to the elders of Ephesus in Acts 20:28. Elders are divinely appointed to shepherd and oversee the local church. Whoever scorns or neglects this mandate does so at his own peril (Heb. 13:17).

1 Peter Chapter 3

- 3:1 “Wives, **be submissive to** your own husbands.”²³ Getting converted does not erase the divinely created hierarchy in marriage, discussed in more detail in Ephesians 5 and 1 Corinthians 11:2-16. “disobedient to the word.” See 2:8. This describes an unbeliever; whereas, believers characteristically obey (1:2, 14, 22). When only one spouse gets converted, he or she is not authorized to divorce unless the unbeliever insists on it (1 Cor. 7:11–16).
- 3:2 “**observe** your...**respectful** behavior.” This is not momentary but continued observation, as in 2:12. “Respectful” is literally “in-fear” but not cringing, as explained in verses 6 and 14.
- 3:3 “let not your adornment be *merely* external.” “Merely” is added correctly because the prohibition is stated as absolute (**no** external adornment) but has a relative meaning (**not only** external).²⁴ There are many biblical descriptions that favor a woman’s being externally adorned when suitable.²⁵ But inward adornment is far more important.
- 3:7 “a weaker vessel, since she is a woman.” This implies that both husbands and wives are vessels. Men generally have greater overall physical strength. They are also stronger in leadership; they are usually more capable than women of isolating their thinking from their emotions. But if they do not learn how to respect their wives, their marriage will suffer from lack of God’s answers to prayer.
- 3:8–9 Similar lists of proper Christian attitudes are common in the Epistles. See Ephesians 4:32; 1 Corinthians 4:12.

²³ In 3:1, as in 2:13; 3:7; et al., Peter uses a form of Greek grammar uncommon in the New Testament but effective: a participle as an imperative.

²⁴ Absolute for relative is a common figure of speech in the Bible. (Also common, but less so, is the converse: relative for absolute.) Consider what would be prohibited if 1 Peter 3:3 were wrongly taken as absolute: “braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on **dresses**.” The last word would prohibit clothes, for that is its literal meaning.

²⁵ Adornment is proper, especially for brides. Consider some examples. (a) Abraham sent a gold nose ring and gold bracelets for his son’s future wife, Genesis 24:22, 30, 44. (b) God dressed up young Jerusalem with costly garments and adorned her, Ezekiel 16:10–13, 17. (c) By custom a bride’s adornment included jewels, Isaiah 61:10; 49:18; Jeremiah 2:32. (d) The King’s bride will have embroidered garments interwoven with gold, Psalm 45:13–14 (cf. Rev. 21:2).

3:9 “not returning evil for evil...but giving a blessing instead.” This was the same standard the Lord set in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:43-48), often reiterated (e.g., Rom 12:14, 17).

3:10–12 These verses come from Psalm 34:12–16.

Before continuing, review by making your own **summary of each paragraph** just studied. I suggest 2:11–12, 13–17, 18–20; 21–25; 3:1–6, 7, 8–12.²⁶

Peter will next return to the subjects of suffering and Messiah’s example. *Suffer* is used twelve times in 1 Peter,²⁷ *suffering*, four times (neither word in 2 Peter).

3:13–14 “Who is there to harm you?...but even if you should suffer.” These verses and verse 17 seem to show doubt whether the readers would suffer for their faith. Surely Peter did not really doubt it, since Jesus promised that the world would hate us (John 15:18–21; 16:33). Perhaps Peter refers to severe persecution or simply (and ironically) draws attention to the persecutors’ injustice.

“You are **blessed**.” In Greek this is the same word that begins the Psalms and is used repeatedly in Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (nine times in Matt. 5:3–11). It means “fortunate, well off.” As seen in Matthew 5, most of the blessing will be in the coming kingdom.

“do not fear **their intimidation**.” Can mean “do not fear what they fear” (NIV), “do not be terrified of them” (NET), or “don’t...be afraid of their threats” (NLT).

3:14–16 Lists proper responses when we are persecuted: no fear, readiness to testify, good conscience. Another list is at 4:7–19 (see my comments), especially 10–11 (giving and receiving ministry).

3:18–22 This is one of the most difficult passages in the whole Bible. We should respect its evident purpose to encourage suffering believers with Jesus’ example and God’s reward to Him (as summarized in 3:22). See Appendix B (p. 27) for more detailed comments and some possible meanings. Here I will only give summaries regarding its two biggest problems.

Problem A: When, where, and what did Jesus go and preach?

When? After He was “put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.” “In the flesh” (which means more than “in the body,” NIV) is probably the sphere of normal

²⁶ Compare your summary of 3:1–6 to the following: Believing wives should be submissive to their husbands and adorn themselves primarily with a gentle and quiet spirit of confidence in God.

²⁷ Peter uses “suffer” four times in 2:19–23, the other eight times in 3:14 to the end. This counts 3:18 as saying “Messiah also **suffered** for sins,” which is more likely than “**died** for sins.” (NLT has “Christ suffered for our sins, once for all time.”) See the discussion at NET Bible for 3:18.

human existence, the same as “the days of his flesh” (lit.) in Hebrews 5:7. “In the spirit” is probably “in the spiritual state,” referring to His condition after death but even before His resurrection.

Where? He went to the world of the dead, Hades, and “made proclamation” to some spirits there. These were people or angels or both, who had been disobedient before the flood.

What? He probably proclaimed His victory about to be completed in His resurrection.

Problem B: What “baptism now saves us” and why?

What? It is water baptism, which the Lord designated as the rite by which the church makes disciples (Matt. 28:19). Acts gives repeated examples of the church baptizing in accordance with this commission. But notice that in doctrinal discussions (such as, Rom. 6:3–5) this rite is looked at **as a package** with its inner reality.

Why can baptism (the rite and its reality) save? Because (a) it is the soul’s “appeal to God for a good conscience,”²⁸ to which (b) the risen Messiah responds with all His authority (vv. 21–22).

1 Peter Chapter 4

This chapter, like Romans 6, shows some results from our being joined to Messiah in dying and living again. The implications are both ethical (4:1–4) and eschatological (4:5–6 and 7–19).

4:1–4 These are ethical implications. This passage lists sins in which the readers formerly lived but live no longer. In 1 Corinthians 6:9–11 and Galatians 5:19–21, the apostle Paul lists the same and similar sins. Then he adds that those who practice such things “shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

4:1 “since Messiah has suffered in the flesh.” This recapitulates what 3:18 said, in order to begin showing how it affects believers.

“he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.” By his willingness to so suffer, a person shows that he has made a break with sin, as seen in verse 2.

4:3–4 “carried out the desire of the Gentiles...abominable idolatries.” Both the general statement and the specific inclusion of “idolatries” point to Gentile readers.

4:4 “they are surprised...and they malign you.” Former friends cannot understand why believers will no longer join in sinful activities. They are angry and show it. “Malign” means they “heap abuse on” you (NET).

4:5–6 The first eschatological implication is to live in the light of the Lord’s coming judgment.

²⁸ Some translate “the **pledge** [*eperotema*] of a good conscience toward God” (3:21, Holman). Neither the noun *eperotema* nor the cognate verb *eperotao*, however, support that translation in the Bible. And a person being baptized is hardly described as already having a good conscience. See Appendix B.

4:5 “ready to judge the living and the dead.” This judgment embraces all aspects of His coming rule. The same thought was the climax to Peter’s first sermon to Gentiles (Acts 10:42).

4:6 “**the gospel has for this purpose been preached** even to those who are dead.”²⁹ This gospel was preached before they died, in order to convert them. Its “purpose” follows.

“that though they **are judged in the flesh as men**, they may live in the spirit.” The NET Bible interprets the time as past (“were judged in the flesh”) and the aspect as “by human standards.” It adds that “in spirit” refers “to the heavenly, eternal realm of existence,” as in 3:19.

4:7–19 These verses say more about the end-time implications of suffering with Messiah. Under the shadow of the end our responses should include love (vv. 8–9), the proper use of spiritual gifts (vv. 10–11), right attitudes when persecuted (vv. 12–16), and the expectation of judgment (vv. 17–20).

4:7 “The **end** [Gr. *to telos*; NET Bible, **culmination**] of **all things** is at hand [Gr., has drawn near].” That goal is still near but has not arrived. The end/culmination by no means implies that God will destroy the earth. Instead, He will fulfill His original plan and bring all things to their predicted purpose. The Greek word translated “end” here (*telos*) is “outcome” in 1:9 and 4:17, and means the last stage or final result. God will change all things as we know them and will make the same world new. It was that future new world that Jesus called “the regeneration [new birth] when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne” (Matt. 19:28). In other words, it will be His eternal kingdom.

Peter in Acts said the same thing: God will “send Jesus, the Messiah” for the “restoration of all things” (Acts 3:20–21). Centuries earlier, God through Isaiah had called the coming kingdom “new heavens and a new earth” (Isa. 65:17; 66:22). In his final epistle Peter referred to these passages in Isaiah: “according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells” (2 Peter 3:13).³⁰ That is the great hope for all people of faith.

4:8 “Love covers a multitude of sins” (from Prov. 10:12). Since “we all stumble in many ways” (James 3:2), we often need to forgive and be forgiven. That helps to make sin lose its power.

4:12 “Do not be **surprised**.” This is the same verb as in verse 4.

²⁹ The bolded words (“the gospel has been preached”) in 4:6 represent a single word (a verb) in Greek, different from the one in 3:19.

³⁰ The new heavens and new earth will begin when Jesus comes in glory. But there will be a thousand-year transitional period in which they will be perfected. See my website, www.kingdominbible.com, for more.

“the fiery ordeal...which comes upon you.” Refers to the process of refining by fire, which we cannot evade when it comes. This process had already begun: “do not be astonished that a trial by fire is occurring among you” (NET Bible).

4:13 “at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice.” As seen before, the Lord Jesus’ coming to rule will put an end to all sufferings and injustice.

4:14 “the Spirit of glory and of God.” This means “the Spirit of glory, who is the Spirit of God.” This emphasizes what is by no means obvious when we are treated wrong: that the Spirit who “rests upon” us will eventually bring great glory. The apostle Paul gave similar encouragement in 2 Corinthians 4:17–18.

4:16 “suffers as a *Christian*.” Believers were first called this in Antioch (Acts 11:26). It refers to a partisan of Christ (Messiah).

4:17 “judgment to begin with the household of God.” As it did when God put an end to His Old Testament kingdom (Ezek. 9–10; cf. Mal. 3:1–5; Matt. 21:12–13). This means that not even believers will escape judgment: “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Messiah” (2 Cor. 5:10). So how can we understand John 5:24, that the believer “does not come into judgment”? That we cannot be condemned (Rom. 8:1). However, God will reveal the righteousness His Spirit has produced in us., thus justifying us by works (James 2:21–26). He will also test our ministries and reveal their value (2 Cor. 3:10–15).

4:18 “If it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved.” Compare Luke 13:23–24. Apart from the grace of God, no one could be saved.

4:19 “entrust their souls to a faithful Creator.” This summarizes the proper response of a person persecuted for doing what is right. It is the same attitude of humbling ourselves and trusting God as enjoined in 5:6–7.

Before finishing, review by making your own **summaries of Peter’s paragraphs** in 3:13 through 4:19. I suggest 3:13–17, 18–22; 4:1–6, 7–11, 12–14, 15–19.³¹

1 Peter Chapter 5

5:1–4 Instructions to local church elders. Apparently several elders were quickly appointed to lead every New Testament church (Acts 14:23; James 5:14; Titus 1:5). This chapter and Acts 20 have much in common about the functions of elders. See my comments at 2:25.

³¹ Compare your summary of 4:7-11 to the following: Keep reminding yourselves that this wicked age is nearly over. Show love to other believers in order to bring glory to God. Use your spiritual gifts (whether speaking gifts or serving gifts) to do so.

5:1 “a **partaker** also of the glory that is to be revealed” (=“the unfading crown of glory” to be bestowed “when the Chief Shepherd appears,” 5:4). See 4:14. How easily New Testament writers could speak of the future as already guaranteed, even as present! It helps to memorize 1 Corinthians 3:21–23, which twice says, “all things belong to you” and in the list includes “death” and “things to come.” Peter emphasizes the fact that our coming glory is a share in Messiah’s coming glory. Ephesians shows that we inherit glory as members of Messiah’s body (Eph. 1:10–11, 22–23).

5:2–3 “**Shepherd** the flock of God among you, **exercising oversight**.” The verbs “shepherd” and “exercise oversight” summarize the main functions of elders. Acts 20:28 combines the same two functions. Consider the first one, which Jesus emphasized when He told Peter to shepherd His sheep (John 21:16). To do so, elders must give high priority to prayerfully studying God’s Word, then feeding it to the sheep (Acts 6:4). The noun form for the verb “to shepherd” can be translated “shepherd” or “pastor.” That title is used for elders only once in the New Testament (Eph. 4:11) but is used commonly nowadays.³²

Consider the other function, “exercising oversight.” Because of this function, New Testament elders are often called “overseers” (e. g., Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1; Titus 1:7). The title implies nothing about keeping an office going by administrative activities and decisions. Rather, overseers supervise, manage, protect, and care for the flock.³³

Peter mentions three wrong reasons and three right reasons for elders to exercise oversight.³⁴

Wrong Reasons for Elders to Oversee	Right Reasons for Elders to Oversee
• NOT “under compulsion”	BUT “voluntarily”
• NOT “for sordid gain”	BUT “with eagerness”
• NOT “as lording it over” the flock	BUT “proving to be examples”

Peter was an elder as well as an apostle (1:1; 5:1); so was John (2 John 1, 3 John 1). But not all elders were apostles; the offices were distinguished in Acts 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23; 16:4. Elders were overseers, sometimes misleadingly translated “bishops” (Titus 1:5, 7). Deacons helped elders in any way needed (1 Tim. 3:8).

³² A great many churches are unfamiliar with “elders” but quite aware of their “pastor.”

³³ Overseer is *episcopos*, from which we get *episcopal*. New Testament church government by elders quickly developed into the episcopal form, adding a hierarchy of bishops. Those accustomed to episcopal polity—like the King James translators—preferred to translate *episcopos* not as *overseer* but as *bishop*. That translation is misleading; it imposes a later development on the New Testament.

³⁴ NET Bible has a lovely start to 5:2: “Give a shepherd’s care to God’s flock among you, exercising oversight not merely as a duty but willingly under God’s direction.”

5:5–11 Here Peter concludes the exhortations he began in 1:13 (after the doxology). He emphasizes humility both toward others and God (5–7), sober resistance toward the devil (8–9), and confidence in “the God of all grace” (vv. 10–11). The latter expression means that God will give grace on every occasion as He takes us to the promised “eternal glory.” Our sufferings will be brief and useful as God will “perfect, confirm, strengthen, and establish” us.

perfect	make whole by mending (Matt. 4:21), training (Luke 6:40), reconciling, etc.
confirm	make stable in faith (v. 9; Luke 22:32)
strengthen	a synonym for “confirm,” to intensify the idea of making us able to cope
establish	lay a foundation or firm basis (Matt. 7:25, on rock; Col. 1:23, for belief or practice)

5:6-7 “Humble yourselves...casting all your anxiety upon Him.” To humble ourselves is not a passive attitude but a positive act. A proud person will insist on doing it his own way.

5:9 “your brethren who are in the world” means “your brothers and sisters throughout the world” (NET Bible).

5:12–14 Peter’s conclusion (a) recognizes Silas’s help in writing or delivering this epistle,³⁵ (b) sends greetings from the church at “Babylon” (which became a code word for Rome) and from Mark, and (c) encourages them to show affection to one another. The “kiss of love” was cheek to cheek, men to men and women to women. It became a standard feature in meetings, after prayers, by the mid-second century.

5:13 “This is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!” Probably Peter refers to the content of the epistle. If anyone teaches differently, watch out!

“**She** who is in Babylon, chosen together with you.” Probably designates the church in “Babylon” (Rome?). Compare “the chosen lady” and “your chosen sister” in 2 John 1, 13.

Review this chapter by making your own **summaries of Peter’s paragraphs** in it. I suggest 5:1–4, 5–9, 10–11, 12–14.³⁶

Review the whole book by reviewing (and improving?) your summaries of all sections. Also, write at least one personal response, something you can do, in each chapter. For example, after your summary for 5:10–11 you might write: “In each difficulty I will remind the Lord that I belong to Him.”

³⁵ This may mean that Silas helped Peter as secretary. His help could explain why the Greek in 1 Peter is so polished and why so many expressions are like the apostle Paul’s. Silas had been with Paul a lot (Acts 15:27, 32, 34, 40). However, the NET Bible thinks it more likely that Silas delivered this epistle, as in Acts 15:22–23.

³⁶ Compare your summary of 5:10–11 to the following: A benediction to the God who will use our brief suffering to prepare us to share His glory.

Appendix A: “Obtaining...Salvation”—1 Peter 1:9

According to the NASB, 1 Peter 1:9 refers to “*obtaining* as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.” When does this happen, and what is the “salvation” obtained?

If we look at only verses 8c and 9 in this version, it seems that believers must be “obtaining salvation” in the present. Indeed, that is the most common way to translate the Greek structure seen here. “Obtaining” (Gr. *komidzómēnoi*) represents a Greek “present participle,” which is **not present in itself** but looks at an action or state as continuing. Most often a present participle agrees in time with the main verb it depends on.³⁷ The main verb here is “greatly rejoice” (*agalliaσthe*) in verse 8. Since that verb indicates present action, the participle is also translated as present (in the table below, see A for 1:9). If that translation were correct, the “salvation” would also be present. It would refer to initial justification or its many related blessings already flowing to believers. Notice in the table, however, that translation A does not harmonize with the verses before and after it. In those verses the hope is by no means a present salvation but a future one.

The Christian Hope in 1 Peter 1 (quoted from NASB except B form for 1:9)	
1:4	“an inheritance reserved in heaven for you”
1:5	“a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time ”
1:7	“praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Messiah ”
1:9	A. “obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls” OR B. “because you will receive the goal of your faith, the ultimate salvation of your souls” (Williams)
1:10	“ grace that would come to you” [time unspecified here, but see below]
1:13	“fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Messiah ”

So the immediate context of verse 9 does not support “obtaining” present salvation. Instead, the Christian hope is the future glorious inheritance (v. 4) of all believers. It is “salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (v. 5). It is “the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:13), that is, when He comes to reign. Since the final goal and salvation of believers are clearly future just before and after 1:9, they are probably future in that verse. That future hope is represented in 1:9 by Williams (B in the table), who translates the participle as futuristic.

³⁷ Nigel Turner, *Syntax*, Vol. III of *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, ed. by J. H. Moulton (reprint, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1963), 153.

Another way to say this is that the great goal for Christians is the coming kingdom.³⁸ Peter says it yet another way in 4:13: “To the degree that you share the sufferings of Messiah, keep on rejoicing; so that also **at the revelation of His glory**, you may rejoice with exultation.”

This elicits an obvious question: Can a Greek “present” participle be translated as futuristic? Certainly yes. It is by no means unusual to do so.³⁹ Such a participle (or an infinitive or a clause) often takes the place of a dependent future participle, which is very rare.⁴⁰ Look at the following examples of futuristic present participles, including some from 1 Peter:

- Matthew 26:25 (of Judas, who was to betray—*ho paradidoûs*—Jesus)
- John 17:20 (of those who would believe after Jesus’ prayer—*ton pisteuónton*)
- Luke 2:34 (a sign to be opposed later—*antilegómenon*)
- Luke 22:19, 20 (Jesus’ body to be given the next day—*didómenon*; His blood to be poured out on the same occasion—*enchunómenon*)
- Luke 1:35 (the Holy One to be born—*to gennómenon Hagion*)
- 1 Peter 1:13 (“fix your hope completely on *the grace to be brought to you*”—*ten fero-ménen humin charin*).
- 1 Peter 2:23 (“He...kept entrusting Himself to *Him who judges righteously*”—*to krínonti*)⁴¹

Think again about the participle “obtaining” in 1:9. You have already seen that the context of that verse and the meaning of salvation in Peter both suggest a futuristic meaning. Consider two further indications of the same thing.

1. The verb “obtain” (*komídzo*) is consistently used for receiving pay, wages, or reward **after finishing** work or competition. For examples, see 2 Peter 2:13 and Colossians 3:25 (“wrong” for wrongdoing), 1 Peter 5:4 (crown of glory for faithful leadership), 2 Corin-

³⁸ Salvation is future throughout Peter, always referring to the coming kingdom. The same is true in Hebrews (see Heb. 1:8, 11–12, 14; 2:3, 5, 10; 3:6, 14; 6:18–19; 9:28; 10:12–13, 36–37; et al.).

³⁹ When the principal verb is truly in the present tense (as here), the relative time of a “present” participle is ambiguous. It can either be present or future. That is true for *komidzómnoi* in 1: 9. However, if the principal verb is future, a dependent participle is definitely future. Selwyn (*First Peter*) says that may have been the case in 1:8–9. He says that “rejoice” was read as future by Irenaeus, Augustine, Bede, the Peshitta, and the Armenian version. That resulted in a contrast between the present (“**now**”) and the future (“you **will rejoice**”):

Though you do not see Him *NOW*,
but believe in Him,

you **WILL** greatly REJOICE

Perhaps such variations reveal attempts to make verse 9 agree with its context. But they are not needed for my argument.

⁴⁰ Nigel Turner, *Syntax* (op. cit.), 87.

⁴¹ Other examples include Acts 21:2 (“crossing over”); 21:3 (“to unload”); and 26:17 (“am sending”).

thians 5:10 and Ephesians 6:8 (for deeds); Hebrews 10:36 and 11:13, 39 (what God promised).

2. What is obtained is the “outcome” (*telos*) of faith. “Outcome” means the last stage or final result (1 Peter 4:7, 17). In 1:7 this final result of proved faith is described as “praise and glory and honor **at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**”

Several of these thoughts are paralleled in Romans 6:21–23, where the present tense again refers to what is clearly future: The outcome (*telos*) of slavery to sin **is** (= will be) death; but the outcome (*telos*) of “slavery” to God **is** (= will be) eternal life.

Probably the best parallel to 1 Peter 1:8c–9 is in Hebrews 12:26–28:

Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven...which denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken...in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, **since we receive** a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude....

In Hebrews 12:28 the Greek has both grammar and meaning like that in 1 Peter 1:9. A “present” participle (“since we receive”) depends on a principal verb in present time (“let us show gratitude”). “Receive” must be futuristic, however, because the unshakable kingdom has been defined throughout Hebrews as the future hope, that is, after the shaking (see 1:8, 11–12, 14; 2:3, 5, 10; 3:6, 14; 6:18–19; 9:28; 10:12–13, 36–37).

In conclusion about 1 Peter 1:8–9. We “greatly rejoice,” not because we have already obtained our goal but because we are sure to obtain it. Even “things to come” are already ours (1 Cor. 3:22). Each true believer can join the apostle in considering himself, before it happens, “a partaker...of **the glory that is to be revealed**” (1 Peter 5:1). Charles B. Williams has translated 1:8b–9 accordingly:

Because you do believe in Him, although you do not now see Him, you must continue to rejoice with an unutterable and triumphant joy, because you will receive the goal of your faith, the ultimate salvation of your souls.

Appendix B: Did Jesus Preach in Hades (1 Peter 3)?

18 For Messiah also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. 21 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Messiah, 22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

Purpose of This Passage. In 1 Peter this is the second passage in which the readers are encouraged by Jesus' example in suffering.⁴² He suffered for doing good, and God greatly rewarded Him. In 2:21–25 the subject was the cross only, based on Isaiah 53. In 3:18–22, however, the subject also includes His resurrection and ascension. His victory embraces all history back to the flood—and all reality, seen and unseen. Furthermore, the sequel to this second passage draws out implications that 2:24 barely mentions (“die to sin and live to righteousness”). Joined to Him in dying and living again, we have implications that are ethical (4:1–4) and eschatological (4:5–6 and 7–19.) We no longer live immoral lives but in regard to the future God will bring.

Probable Meanings. I will go verse by verse and phrase by phrase trying to determine the most likely grammatical and doctrinal meanings.

18 “put to death **in the flesh** [Gr. *sarki*, dative of *sarks*]

but made alive **in the spirit** [Gr. *pneumati*, dative of *pneuma*]...”

Here are two parallel dative words (“in the flesh” and “in the spirit”) after passive verbs.

They seem to indicate successive spheres (locations) in which Jesus' conditions changed when “He died [suffered] for sins.” The NET Bible defines the two spheres as follows:

Put to death in the flesh...made alive in the spirit. The contrast of flesh and spirit is not between two parts of Christ's person (material versus immaterial) but between two broader modes of existence: the realm of unregenerate earthly life versus eternal heavenly life. (NET Bible at 1 Peter 3:18)

⁴² Although NASB says “**died** for sins,” the verb is more likely “**suffered** for sins” (see NET Bible notes). Aside from this passage, 1 Peter uses the verb for “suffered” eleven times but the similar verb for “died” not at all.

In harmony with NET Bible, we could paraphrase: “put to death **in the sphere of normal human existence** but made alive **in the sphere humans enter at death.**”⁴³ NIV changes both members of this parallel: “He was put to death **in the body** but made alive **by the Spirit.**” It uses “body,” but *sarks* nearly always includes more than the body. It also changes to “Spirit” (God’s Holy Spirit), not indicating location (“in”) but divine agency (“by”).⁴⁴ This disrupts the parallelism for no good reason in the context (see the similar structure in 4:6).

Note that “the spirit” is not a completely immaterial sphere but an eternal sphere, into which Jesus came after He died but before He rose bodily. He became the first of “spirits of righteous men made perfect” (Heb. 12:23). On the third day He also reached the goal that being alive in the spirit leads to—His resurrection with a real but “spiritual” body. Like Him, all believers have their spirits made perfect at death but will receive their eternal bodies in the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:44–49; cf. 2 Cor. 5:1–4).

- 19 “In which (Gr. *en ho*) also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison...” When Jesus was “made alive,” He took a preaching trip—a real change of location. He went in the spiritual realm in which He was made alive. The same verb translated “He went” (*poreutheis*) is used in verse 23 for a later journey, all the way “into heaven.” On the first trip He went “to the spirits now in prison,” which must refer to the world of the dead, Hades. This was a widespread belief in the early church, mentioned by most if not all early writers, that Jesus “went” to Hades after He died but before He rose again. In the so-called “Apostles’ Creed” (at the end of this appendix), notice the relative position of His descent to “hell.”

A quite different interpretation is possible, especially if you change to Spirit in verse 18: “He was...made alive by the Spirit, through whom he went...” (NIV). In this view He went to Noah’s world **spiritually before** the flood and in His Spirit preached through Noah to the sinners who are now in prison.⁴⁵ This interpretation, however, does not seem to show how God honored Jesus **after** He suffered, the main point in Peter’s purpose.

⁴³ NIV gives “the days of His flesh” (literal) the same meaning in Hebrews 5:6: “the days of Jesus’ life on earth.”

⁴⁴ Though the NET Bible here sticks with “flesh” and “spirit,” it argues that such disruption is allowable:

The reference may not be to the Holy Spirit directly, but indirectly, since the Spirit permeates and characterizes the spiritual mode of existence. However, ExSyn 343 (n. 76) states “It is often objected that the Holy Spirit cannot be in view because the two datives of v 18 (σάρκι, πνεύματι [sarki, pneumatī]) would then have a different syntactical force (sphere, means). But if 1 Pet 3:18 is a hymnic or liturgical fragment, this can be no objection because of “poetic license”: poetry is replete with examples of grammatical and lexical license, not the least of which is the use of the same morpho-syntactic categories, in parallel lines, with entirely different senses (note, e.g., the dat. expressions in 1 Tim 3:16).”

⁴⁵ This would agree with Peter’s earlier comment that “the Spirit of Messiah within them” spoke through the ancient prophets (1 Peter 1:11).

Yet another possibility is that *en ho* (v. 19) refers to no noun (such as “spirit”) but is merely adverbial, as elsewhere in 1 Peter (1:6; 2:12; 3:16; 4:4). In that case it would indicate something like cause (“for which reason”) or time (“meanwhile” or—especially—“on which occasion”). That would still point to a visit by Messiah to Hades between His death and resurrection.

20 “who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark...” This identifies “the spirits now in prison” to whom Jesus went and preached. They were the entire civilization, the whole world, who had disbelieved Noah’s witness and had been killed in the flood. Now they were spirits being held until the coming judgment (to be executed by the Son, John 5:22–23). Human spirits, perhaps also angelic spirits. What did Jesus proclaim to them? Probably His victory about to be completed in His resurrection. He did not give them a chance to repent after death, an offer not suggested in any passage. The verb used here (from Gr. *kerusso*) is not the usual one for preaching good news (Gr. *euangelidzo*).

“the ark, in which a few...were **brought safely** [Gr., saved] through the water...” In these words Peter bridges from Jesus’ victorious preaching to compare two great salvations.

21 “**corresponding to that**, baptism now saves you.” The bolded words translate the Greek word for “antitype,” the reality prefigured by a type. The ark going through the waters of judgment was the type. So was the flood, whose waters carried those in the ark from the doomed old world to the cleansed new world. This prefigured baptism now taking a few of us to final salvation.

“not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience.” Baptism is the proper response to the gospel. “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:15). In the early years of the church, no one waited to get baptized. Consider the Philippian jailer. On the first night he believed, he “immediately... was baptized, he and all his household” (Acts 16:33). On Pentecost Peter directed, “Repent and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins” (Acts 2:38). “So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls” (2:41). Throughout Acts the church continued baptizing new believers, in accordance with the Lord’s commission.

Why can baptism save us? Not because the rite itself has power but because in it we call on the triune God. Baptism is **a package** with its inner reality; Scripture says the same things about both the rite and the reality (as in Rom. 6:3–5). Its power is twofold: (a) In it the soul requests God for a good conscience, and (b) to it the risen Messiah responds with all His authority.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ NASB and many other versions in 1 Peter 3:21 say that baptism is “**an appeal** to God for a good conscience.” In the New Testament the Greek noun translated “appeal” (*eperotema*, “**answer**” in the KJV and NKJV) is used only in this verse. The cognate verb is used very often, however, mostly in the Gospels, meaning “to question.” (For examples, see Matthew 22:23, 35, 41, 46.) But some favor a different meaning for the noun in 1 Peter, “a **pledge** to God proceeding from a clear conscience” (William Arndt and Wilbur Gingrich: *A Greek-English Lexicon*).

So did Jesus preach in Hades? The answer from 1 Peter 3:18-22 is yes. He preached there between His death and His resurrection, to former inhabitants of the “world [that] was destroyed, being flooded with water” (2 Peter 3:6). He proclaimed His assured triumph over death, the last and greatest enemy (1 Cor. 15:26, 54-57). This victory makes possible the final judgment and “new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells” (2 Pet. 3:13).

The “Apostles’ Creed” (2nd century)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
the Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:
Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He arose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic [universal] church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.

Amen

con of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature [Chicago: The Univ. of Chicago Press, 1957], 285). Holman Christian Standard Bible reads “the **pledge** of a good conscience toward God.” This is a less likely meaning for *eperotema*, however, and a doubtful description of one being baptized (who does not begin with a good conscience).

Appendix C: Analogies for the Christian Life in 1 Peter

A. Scattered aliens

- 1:1 Reside as scattered aliens.
- 1:13 on the move (cf. Luke 12:29–40)
- 1:17 our stay on earth
- 2:11–12 to be seen by Gentiles
- 3:13–17 as aliens, suffer for righteousness' sake
(cf. 4:7 the end is near)
- 5:10 called to share in God's glory

B. Born again, into God's family

- 1:3–4 born again to inherit
- 1:14 obedient children
- 1:15 called by the Holy One, to be holy
- 1:17 our Father and Judge; fear Him
- 1:22 in a household of love (also 2:17; 4:8–11)
- 1:23–25 born by the eternal word
- 2:1–3 newborn babies, who desire the word to grow
- 4:17 Judgment will begin at God's house.
- 5:14 Greet with a kiss of love.

C. Redeemed (from slavery) Also see F.

- 1:18–21 from a futile life
- 4:1–5 used to live for lusts, in dissipation

D. A spiritual building/house

- 2:4–8 in which we are living stones and priests, with Messiah the main stone
- 2:9 We are a royal priesthood.

E. God's nation

- 2:9–10 We were not a nation before.

F. God's slaves

- 2:16–24 We follow Messiah's example (cf. 3:1, 5, 6; 5:6).

G. God's sheep

- 2:25 We were straying but are now under the Shepherd and Guardian.
- 5:2 God's flock, shepherded by elders

H. Christians (partisans of Messiah)

- 4:16 Don't be ashamed to suffer as a Christian.