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Barnes' Notes on the Bible

Volume 17 -

1 Peter

By A. Barnes

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1 PETER

INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

The First Epistle of Peter has never been doubted to be the production of the apostle of that name. While there were doubts respecting the genuineness of the Second Epistle (see the introduction to that Epistle, Section 1), the unvarying testimony of history, and the uniform belief of the church, ascribe this Epistle to Peter. Indeed, there is no ancient writing whatever of which there is more certainty in regard to the authorship.

The history of Peter is so fully detailed in the New Testament, that it is not necessary to go into any extended statement of his biography in order to an exposition of his Epistles. No particular light would be reflected on them from the details of his life; and in order, therefore, to their exposition, it is not necessary to have any further information of him than what is contained in the New Testament itself. Those who may wish to obtain all the knowledge of his life which can now be had, may find ample details in Lardner, vol. vi. pp. 203-254, ed. London, 1829; Koppe, Prolegomena; and Bacon's Lives of the Apostles, pp. 43-286. There are some questions, however, which it is important to consider in order to an intelligent understanding of his Epistles.

SECTION 1. THE PERSONS TO WHOM THE FIRST EPISTLE WAS ADDRESSED

This Epistle purports to have been addressed "to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." All these were provinces of Asia Minor; and there is no difficulty, therefore, in regard to the places where those to whom the Epistle was written resided. The only question is, who they were who are thus designated as "strangers scattered abroad," or strangers of the dispersion, (παρεπιδημοις <3927> διασπορας <1290>). Compare the notes at 1 Peter 1:1. In regard to this, various opinions have been held:

(1) That they were native-born Jews, who had been converted to the Christian faith. Of this opinion were Eusebius, Jerome, Grotius, Beza, Mill, Cave, and others. The principal argument for this opinion is the appellation given to them, which it is supposed is language which would be applied only to those of Hebrew extraction.

(2) a second opinion has been that the persons to whom it was sent were all of Gentile origin. Of this opinion were Procopius, Cassiodorus, and more recently Wetstein. This belief is founded chiefly on such passages as the following: 1 Peter 1:18; 2:10; 4:3 — which are supposed to show that they who were thus addressed were formerly idolaters.

(3) a third opinion has been that they were Gentiles by birth, but had been Jewish proselytes, or "proselytes of the gate," and had then been converted to Christianity. This sentiment was defended by Michaelis, chiefly on the ground that the phrase in 1 Peter 1:1, "strangers of the dispersion," when followed by the name of a pagan country or people, in the genitive case, denotes the Jews who were dispersed there, and yet that there is evidence in the Epistle that they were not native-born Jews.

(4) a fourth opinion has been that the persons referred to were not Jews in general, but those of the 10 tribes who had wandered from Babylon and the adjacent regions into Asia Minor. This opinion is mentioned by Michaelis as having been entertained by some persons, but no reasons are assigned for it.

(5) a fifth opinion has been that the persons referred to were Christians, converted from both Jews and Gentiles, with no particular reference to their extraction; that there were those among them who had been converted from the Jews, and those who had been Gentiles, and that the apostle addresses them as Christians, though employing language such as the Jews had been accustomed to, when speaking of those of their own nation who were scattered abroad. This is the opinion of Lardner, Estius, Whitby, Wolfius, and Doddridge.

That this last opinion is the correct one, seems to me to be clear from the Epistle itself. Nothing can be plainer than that the apostle, while in the main he addresses Christians as such, whether they had been Jews or pagan, yet occasionally makes such allusions, and uses such language, as to show that he had his eye, at one time, on some who had been Jews, and again on

some who had been pagans. This is clear, I think, from the following considerations:

(1) The address of the Epistle is general, not directed particularly either to the Jews or to the Gentiles. Thus, in 1 Peter 5:14, he says,

> "Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus."

From this it would seem that the Epistle was addressed to all true Christians in the region designated in 1 Peter 1:1. But no one can doubt that there were Christians there who had been Jews, and also those who had been Gentiles. The same thing is apparent from the Second Epistle; for it is certain, from 2 Peter 3:2, that the Second Epistle was addressed to the same persons as the First. But the address in the Second Epistle is to Christians residing in Asia Minor, without particular reference to their origin. Thus, in 1 Peter 1:1,

> "To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

The same thing is apparent also from the address of the First Epistle: "To the elect strangers scattered throughout Pontus," etc.; that is, "to the strangers of the dispersion who are chosen, or who are true Christians, scattered abroad." The term "elect" is one which would apply to all who were Christians; and the phrase, "the strangers of the dispersion," is that which one who had been educated as a Hebrew would be likely to apply to those whom he regarded as the people of God dwelling out of Palestine. The Jews were accustomed to use this expression to denote their own people who were dispersed among the Gentiles; and nothing would be more natural than that one who had been educated as a Hebrew, and then converted to Christianity, as Peter had been, should apply this phrase indiscriminately to Christians living out of Palestine. See the notes on the passage. These considerations make it clear that in writing this Epistle he had reference to Christians as such, and meant that all who were Christians in the parts of Asia Minor which he mentions 1 Peter 1:1 should regard the Epistle as addressed to them.

(2) yet there are some allusions in the Epistle which look as if a part of them at least had been Jews before their conversion, or such as a Jew would better understand than a Gentile would. Indeed, nothing is more probable than that there were Jewish converts in that region. We know that there were many Jews in Asia Minor; and, from the Acts of the Apostles, it

is morally certain that not a few of them had been converted to the Christian faith under the labors of Paul. Of the allusions of the kind referred to in the Epistle, the following may be taken as specimens:

> "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," <1 Peter 2:9>.

This is such language as was commonly used by the Jews when addressing their own countrymen as the people of God; and would seem to imply that to some of those at least to whom the Epistle was addressed, it was language which would be familiar. See also <1 Peter 3:6>. It should be said, however, that these passages are not positive proof that any among them were Hebrews. While it is true that it is such language as would be naturally employed in addressing those who were, and while it supposes an acquaintance among them with the Old Testament, it is also true that it is such language as one who had himself been educated as an Hebrew would not unnaturally employ when addressing any whom he regarded as the people of God.

(3) the passages in the Epistle which imply that many of those to whom it was addressed had been Gentiles or idolaters, are still more clear. Such passages are the following:

> "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in your ignorance," <1 Peter 1:14>.

> "This," says Dr. Lardner, "might be very pertinently said to men converted from Gentilism to Christianity; but no such thing is ever said by the apostles concerning the Jewish people who had been favored with the Divine revelation, and had the knowledge of the true God."

So in <1 Peter 2:9>, Peter speaks of them as "having been called out of darkness into marvelous light." The word "darkness" is one which would be naturally applied to those who had been pagans, but would not be likely to be applied to those who had had the knowledge of God as revealed in the Jewish Scriptures. So in <1 Peter 2:10>, it is expressly said of them, "which in time past was not a people, but are now the people of God" — language which would not be applied to those who had been Jews. So also <1 Peter 4:3>,

> "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries."

Though the apostle here uses the word "us," grouping himself with them, yet it cannot be supposed that he means to charge himself with these things. It is a mild and gentle way of speech, adopted not to give offence, and is such language as a minister of the gospel would now use, who felt that he was himself a sinner, in addressing a church made up of many individuals. Though it might be true that he had not been guilty of the particular offences which he specifies, yet in speaking in the name of the church, he would use the term we, and use it honestly and correctly. It would be true that the church had been formerly guilty of these things; and this would be a much more mild, proper, and effective method of address, than to say you. But the passages adduced here prove conclusively that some of those whom Peter addresses in the Epistle had been formerly idolaters, and had been addicted to the sins which idolaters are accustomed to commit.

These considerations make it clear that the Epistle was addressed to those Christians in general who were scattered throughout the various provinces of Asia Minor which are specified in 1 Peter 1:1, whether they had been Jews or Gentiles. It is probable that the great body of them had been converted from the pagan, though there were doubtless Jewish converts intermingled with them; and Peter uses such language as would be natural for one who had been a Jew himself in addressing those whom he now regarded as the chosen of God.

SECTION 2. — THE TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING THE EPISTLE

On this point also there has been no little diversity of opinion. The only designation of the place where it was written which occurs in the Epistle is in 1 Peter 5:13:

> "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you."

From this it is clear that it was written at Babylon, but still there has been no little difference of opinion as to what place is meant here by Babylon. Some have supposed that it refers to the well-known place of that name on

the Euphrates; others to a Babylon situated in Lower Egypt; others to Jerusalem or Rome, represented as Babylon. The claims of each of these places it is proper to examine. The order in which this is done is not material.

(1) the opinion that the "Babylon" mentioned in the Epistle refers to a place of that name in Egypt, not far from Cairo. This opinion was held by Pearson and Le Clere, and by most of the Coptic interpreters, who have endeavored to vindicate the honor of their own country, Egypt, as a place where one of the books of Scripture was composed. See Koppe, Prolegomena, 12. That there was such a place in Egypt, there can be no doubt. It was a small town to the northeast of Cairo, where there was a strong castle in the time of Strabo, (i. 17, p. 807,) in which, under Tiberius, there were quartered three Roman legions, designed to keep the Egyptians in order. But there is little reason to suppose that there were many Jews there, or that a church was early collected there. The Jews would have been little likely to resort to a place which was merely a Roman garrison, nor would the apostles have been likely to go early to such a place to preach the gospel. Compare Basnage, Ant. 36, num. xxvii. As Lardner well remarks, if Peter had written an Epistle from Egypt, it would have been likely to have been from Alexandria. Besides, there is not, for the first four centuries, any notice of a church at Babylon in Egypt; a fact which can hardly be accounted for, if it had been supposed that one of the sacred books had been composed there. — Lardner, vol. vi. 265. It may be added, also, that as there was another place of that name on the Euphrates, a place much better known, and which would be naturally supposed to be the one referred to, it is probable that if the Epistle had been composed at the Babylon in Egypt, there would have been something said clearly to distinguish it. If the Epistle was written at the Babylon on the Euphrates, so well known was that place that no one would be likely to understand that the Babylon in Egypt was the place referred to; on the other supposition, however, nothing would be more likely than that a mistake should occur.

(2) others have supposed that Jerusalem is intended, and that the name was given to it on account of its wickedness, and because it resembled Babylon. This was the opinion of Capellus, Spanheim, Hardouin, and some others. But the objections to this are obvious:

(a) There is no evidence that the name Babylon was ever given to Jerusalem, or so given to it as to make it commonly understood that that was the place intended when the term was employed. If not so, its use would be likely to lead those to whom the Epistle was addressed into a mistake.

(b) There is every reason to suppose that an apostle in writing a letter, if he mentioned the place at all where it was written, would mention the real name. So Paul uniformly does.

(c) The name Babylon is not one which an apostle would be likely to give to Jerusalem; certainly not as the name by which it was to be familiarly known.

(d) If the Epistle had been written there, there is no conceivable reason why the name of the place should not have been mentioned.

(3) others have supposed that Rome is intended by the name Babylon. This was the opinion of many of the Fathers, and also of Bede, Valesius, Grotius, Cave, Whitby, and Lardner. The principal reasons for this are, that such is the testimony of Papias, Eusebius, and Jerome; and that at that time Babylon on the Euphrates was destroyed. See Lardner. But the objections to this opinion seem to me to be insuperable.

(a) There is no evidence that at that early period the name Babylon was given to Rome, nor were there any existing reasons why it should be. The name is generally supposed to have been applied to it by John, in the book of Revelation, ⁴⁶¹⁶⁹Revelation 16:19; 17:5; 18:10,21; but this was probably long after this Epistle was written, and for reasons which did not exist in the time of Peter. There is no evidence that it was given familiarly to it in the time of Peter, or even at all until after his death. Certain it is, that it was not given so familiarly to it that when the name Babylon was mentioned it would be generally understood that Rome was intended. But the only reason which Peter could have had for mentioning the name Babylon at all, was to convey some definite and certain information to those to whom he wrote.

(b) As has been already observed, the apostles, when they sent an epistle to the churches, and mentioned a place as the one where the Epistle was written, were accustomed to mention the real place.

(c) It would be hardly consistent with the dignity of an apostle, or any grave writer, to make use of what would be regarded as a nickname, when suggesting the name of a place where he then was.

(d) If Rome had been meant, it would have been hardly respectful to the church there which sent the salutation — "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you" — to have given it this name. Peter mentions the church with respect and kindness; and yet it would have been scarcely regarded as kind to mention it as a "Church in Babylon," if he used the term Babylon, as he must have done on such a supposition, to denote a place of eminent depravity.

(e) The testimony of the Fathers on this subject does not demonstrate that Rome was the place intended. So far as appears from the extracts relied on by Lardner, they do not give this as historical testimony, but as their own interpretation; and, from anything that appears, we are as well qualified to interpret the word as they were.

(f) In regard to the objection that Babylon was at that time destroyed, it may be remarked that this is true so far as the original splendor of the city was concerned, but still there may have been a sufficient population there to have constituted a church. The destruction of Babylon was gradual. It had not become an utter desert in the time of the apostles. In the first century of the Christian era a part of it was inhabited, though the greater portion of its former site was a waste. See the notes at <2313919>Isaiah 13:19. Compare Diod. Sic., ii. 27. All that time, there is no improbability in supposing that a Christian church may have existed there. It should be added here, however, that on the supposition that the word Babylon refers to Rome, rests nearly all the evidence which the Roman Catholics can adduce that the apostle Peter was ever at Rome at all. There is nothing else in the New Testament that furnishes the slightest proof that he ever was there. The only passage on which Bellarmine relies to show that Peter was at Rome, is the very passage now under consideration. "That Peter was one time at Rome," he says, "we show first from the testimony of Peter himself, who thus speaks at the end of his First Epistle: "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you." He does not pretend to cite any other evidence from Scripture than this; nor does any other writer.

(4) there remains the fourth opinion, that the well-known Babylon on the Euphrates was the place where the Epistle was written. This was the

opinion of Erasmus, Drusius, Lightfoot, Bengel, Wetstein, Basnage, Beausobre, and others. That this is the correct opinion seems to me to be clear from the following considerations:

(a) It is the most natural and obvious interpretation. It is that which would occur to the great mass of the readers of the New Testament now, and is that which would have been naturally adopted by those to whom the Epistle was sent. The word Babylon, without something to give it a different application, would have been understood anywhere to denote the well-known place on the Euphrates.

(b) There is, as has been observed already, no improbability that there was a Christian church there, but there are several circumstances which render it probable that this would be the case:

1. Babylon had been an important place; and its history was such, and its relation to the Jews such, as to make it probable that the attention of the apostles would be turned to it.

2. The apostles, according to all the traditions which we have respecting them, traveled extensively in the East, and nothing would be more natural than that they should visit Babylon.

3. There were many Jews of the captivity remaining in that region, and it would be in the highest degree probable that they would seek to carry the gospel to their own countrymen there. See Koppe, Proleg., pp. 16-18. Jos. Ant., b. xv., chapter ii., Section 2; chapter iii., Section 1. Philo. Do Virtut., p. 587.

These considerations make it clear that the place where the Epistle was written was Babylon on the Euphrates, the place so celebrated in ancient sacred and profane history. If this be the correct view, then this is a fact of much interest, as showing that even in apostolic times there was a true church in a place once so distinguished for splendor and wickedness, and so memorable for its acts in oppressing the ancient people of God. Our information respecting this church, however, ceases here. We know not by whom it was founded; we know not who were its pastors; nor do we know how long it survived. As Babylon, however, continued rapidly to decline, so that in the second century nothing remained but the walls (compare the notes at <23>Isaiah 13:19), there is no reason to suppose that the church long existed there. Soon the ancient city became a heap of ruins; and

excepting that now and then a Christian traveler or missionary has visited it, it is not known that a prayer has been offered there from generation to generation, or that amidst the desolations there has been a single worshipper of the true God. See this subject examined at length in Bacon's Lives of the Apostles, pp. 258-263.

In regard to the time when this First Epistle was written, nothing certainly can be determined. There are no marks of time in the Epistle itself, and there are no certain data from which we can determine when it was composed. Lardner supposes that it was in the year 63, or 64 A.D., or at the latest 65 A.D.; Michaelis, that it was about the year 60 A.D. If it was written at Babylon, it was probably some time between the year 58 and 61 A.D. The time is not material, and it is impossible now to determine it.

SECTION 3. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

(1) The Epistles of Peter are distinguished for great tenderness of manner, and for bringing forward prominently the most consolatory parts of the gospel. He wrote to those who were in affliction; he was himself an old man <61014>2 Peter 1:14; he expected soon to be with his Saviour; he had nearly done with the conflicts and toils of life; and it was natural that he should direct his eye onward, and should dwell on those things in the gospel which were adapted to support and comfort the soul. There is, therefore, scarcely any part of the New Testament where the ripe and mellow Christian will find more that is adapted to his matured feelings, or to which he will more naturally turn.

(2) there is great compactness and terseness of thought in his Epistles. They seem to be composed of a succession of texts, each one fitted to constitute the subject of a discourse. There is more that a pastor would like to preach on in a course of expository lectures, and less that he would be disposed to pass over as not so well adapted to the purposes of public instruction, than in almost any other part of the New Testament. There is almost nothing that is local or of temporary interest; there are no discussions about points pertaining to Jewish customs such as we meet with in Paul; there is little that pertains particularly to one age of the world or country. Almost all that he has written is of universal applicability to Christians, and may be read with as much interest and profit now by us as by the people to whom his Epistles were addressed.

(3) there is evidence in the Epistles of Peter that the author was well acquainted with the writings of the apostle Paul. See this point illustrated at length in Eichlorn, Einleitung in das Neue Tes. viii. 606-618, Section 284, and Michaelis, Introduction, vol. iv. p. 323, following Peter himself speaks of his acquaintance with the Epistles of Paul, and ranks them with the inspired writings. <61315>2 Peter 3:15-16,

> "even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction."

Indeed, to any one who will attentively compare the Epistles of Peter with those of Paul, it will be apparent that he was acquainted with the writings of the Apostle of the Gentiles, and had become so familiar with the modes of expression which he employed, that he naturally fell into it. There is that kind of coincidence which would be expected when one was accustomed to read what another had written, and when he had great respect for him, but not that when there was a purpose to borrow or copy from him. This will be apparent by a reference to a few parallel passages:

PAUL with PETER

<49103>**Ephesians 1:3;** <47103>2 Corinthians 1:3 with <60103>1 Peter 1:3.
<51303>**Colossians 3:8** with <60201>1 Peter 2:1
<49522>**Ephesians 5:22** with <60301>1 Peter 3:1
<49521>**Ephesians 5:21** with <60505>1 Peter 5:5
<52306>**1 Thessalonians 5:6** with <60508>1 Peter 5:8
<46160>**1 Corinthians 16:20** with <60514>1 Peter 5:14

Also <47312>2 Corinthians 13:12; <45616>Romans 16:16; <52526>1 Thessalonians 5:26

εν <1722> φιληματι <5370> αγαπης <26>.

<45818>**Romans 8:18** with <60501>1 Peter 5:1
<45424>**Romans 4:24** with <60121>1 Peter 1:21
<45301>**Romans 13:1,3-4** with <60213>1 Peter 2:13-14

See also the following passages:

Romans 12:6-7 with 1 Peter 4:10
1 Timothy 2:9 with 1 Peter 3:3
1 Timothy 5:5 with 1 Peter 3:5

These coincidences are not such as would occur between two authors when one had no acquaintance with the writings of the other; and they thus demonstrate, what may be implied in 2 Peter 3:15, that Peter was familiar with the Epistles of Paul. This also would seem to imply that the Epistles of Paul were in general circulation.

(4) “in the structure of his periods,” says Michaelis, “Peter has this peculiarity, that he is fond of beginning a sentence in such a manner that it shall refer to a principal word in the preceding. The consequence of this structure is, that the sentences, instead of being rounded, according to the manner of the Greeks, are drawn out to a great length; and in many places where we should expect that a sentence would be closed, a new clause is attached, and another again to this, so that before the whole period comes to an end, it contains parts which, at the commencement of the period, do not appear to have been designed for it.” This manner of writing is also found often in the Epistles of Paul.

The canonical authority of this Epistle has never been disputed. For a view of the contents of it, see the analysis prefixed to the several chapters.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

NOTES ON 1 PETER 1

This Epistle was evidently addressed to those who were passing through severe trials, and probably to those who were, at that time, enduring persecution, 1 Peter 1:6,7; 3:14; 6:1,12-19. The main object of this chapter is to comfort them in their trials; to suggest such considerations as would enable them to bear them with the right spirit, and to show the sustaining, elevating, and purifying power of the gospel. In doing this, the apostle adverts to the following considerations:

(1) He reminds them that they were the elect of God; that they had been chosen according to his foreknowledge, by the sanctifying agency of the Holy Spirit, and in order that they might be obedient, 1 Peter 1:1,2.

(2) He reminds them of the lively hope to which they had been begotten, and of the inheritance that was reserved for them in heaven. That inheritance was incorruptible, and undefiled, and glorious; it would be certainly theirs, for they would be kept by the power of God unto it, though now they were subjected to severe trials, 1 Peter 1:3-6.

(3) Even now they could rejoice in hope of that inheritance, (1 Peter 1:6) their trial was of great importance to themselves in order to test the genuineness of their piety (1 Peter 1:7), and in the midst of all their sufferings they could rejoice in the love of their unseen Saviour (1 Peter 1:8) and they would certainly obtain the great object for which they had believed — the salvation of their souls 1 Peter 1:9. By these considerations the apostle would reconcile them to their sufferings; for they would thus show the genuineness and value of Christian piety, and would be admitted at last to higher honor.

(4) The apostle proceeds, in order further to reconcile them to their sufferings, to say that the nature of the salvation which they would receive had been an object of earnest inquiry by the prophets. They had searched diligently to know precisely what the Spirit by which they were inspired meant by the revelations given to them, and they had understood that they

ministered to the welfare of those who should come after them, ⁶⁰¹¹⁰1 Peter 1:10-12. Those who thus suffered ought, therefore, to rejoice in a salvation which had been revealed to them in this manner; and in the fact that they had knowledge which had not been vouchsafed even to the prophets; and under these circumstances they ought to be willing to bear the trials which had been brought upon them by a religion so communicated to them.

(5) In view of these things, the apostle (⁶⁰¹¹³1 Peter 1:13-17) exhorts them to be faithful and persevering to the end. In anticipation of what was to be revealed to them at the final day, they should be sober and obedient; and as he who had called them into his kingdom was holy, so it became them to be holy also.

(6) This consideration is enforced (⁶⁰¹¹⁸1 Peter 1:18-21) by a reference to the price that was paid for their redemption. They should remember that they had been redeemed, not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. He had been appointed from eternity to be their Redeemer; he had been manifested in those times for them; he had been raised from the dead for them, and their faith and hope were through him. For these reasons they ought to be steadfast in their attachment to him.

(7) The apostle enjoins on them the special duty of brotherly love, ⁶⁰¹²²1 Peter 1:22,23. They had purified their hearts by obeying the truth, and as they were all one family, they should love one another fervently. Thus, they would show to their enemies and persecutors the transforming nature of their religion, and furnish an impressive proof of its reality.

(8) To confirm all these views, the apostle reminds them that all flesh must soon die. The glory of man would fade away. Nothing would abide but the Word of the Lord. They themselves would soon die, and be released from their troubles, and they should be willing, therefore, to bear trials for a little time. The great and the rich, and those apparently more favored in this life, would soon disappear, and all the splendor of their condition would vanish; and they should not envy them, or repine at their own more tremble and painful lot, ⁶⁰¹²⁴1 Peter 1:24,25. The keenest sufferings here are brief, and the highest honors and splendors of life here soon vanish away; and our main solicitude should be for the eternal inheritance. Having the prospect of that, and building on the sure word of God, which abides forever, we need not shrink from the trials appointed to us here below.

[60101]**1 Peter 1:1.** *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ* On the word apostle, see the notes at [45101]Romans 1:1; [46901]1 Corinthians 9:1ff.

To the strangers In the Greek, the word "elect" (see [60102]1 Peter 1:2) occurs here: εκλεκτοις <1588> παρεπιδημοις <3927>, "to the elect strangers." He here addresses them as elect; in the following verse he shows them in what way they were elected. See the notes there: The word rendered "strangers" occurs only in three places in the New Testament; [58113]Hebrews 11:13, and [60201]1 Peter 2:11, where it is rendered pilgrims, and in the place before us. See the notes at [58113]Hebrews 11:13. The word means, literally, a by-resident, a sojourner among a people not one's own — Robinson. There has been much diversity of opinion as to the persons here referred to: some supposing that the Epistle was written to those who had been Jews, who were now converted, and who were known by the common appellation among their countrymen as "the scattered abroad," or the "dispersion;" that is, those who were strangers or sojourners away from their native land; others, that the reference is to those who were called, among the Jews, "proselytes of the gate," or those who were admitted to certain external privileges among the Jews, (see the notes at [40235]Matthew 23:15) and others, that the allusion is to Christians as such, without reference to their origin, and who are spoken of as strangers and pilgrims. That the apostle did not write merely to those who had been Jews, is clear from [60403]1 Peter 4:3,4 (compare the introduction), and it seems probable that he means here Christians as such, without reference to their origin, who were scattered through the various provinces of Asia Minor. Yet it seems also probable that he did not use the term as denoting that they were "strangers and pilgrims on the earth," or with reference to the fact that the earth was not their home, as the word is used in [58113]Hebrews 11:13; but that he used the term as a Jew would naturally use it, accustomed, as he was, to employ it as denoting his own countrymen dwelling in distant lands. He would regard them still as the people of God, though dispersed abroad; as those who were away from what was properly the home of their fathers. So Peter addresses these Christians as the people of God, now scattered abroad; as similar in their condition to the Jews who had been dispersed among the Gentiles. Compare the introduction, section 1. It is not necessarily implied that these persons were strangers to Peter, or that he had never seen them; though this was not improbably the fact in regard to most of them.

Scattered Greek, "of the dispersion," (διασπορας <1290>) a term which a Jew would be likely to use who spoke of his countrymen dwelling among

the pagan. See the notes at <43075>John 7:35, and <59001>James 1:1, where the same Greek word is found. It does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. Here, however, it is applied to Christians as dispersed or scattered abroad.

Throughout Pontus ... These were provinces of Asia Minor. Their position may be seen in the map prefixed to the Acts of the Apostles. On the situation of Pontus, see the notes at <44009>Acts 2:9.

Galatia On the situation of this province, and its history, see the introduction to the notes at Galatians, section 1.

Cappadocia See the notes at <44009>Acts 2:9.

Asia Meaning a province of Asia Minor, of which Ephesus was the capital. See the notes at <44009>Acts 2:9.

And Bithynia See the notes at <44607>Acts 16:7.

<60102>**1 Peter 1:2.** *Elect* That is, “chosen.” The meaning here is, that they were IN FACT chosen. The word does not refer to the purpose to choose, but to the fact that they were chosen or selected by God as His people. It is a word commonly applied to the people of God as being chosen out of the world, and called to be His. The use of the word does not determine whether God had a previous eternal purpose to choose them or not. That must be determined by something else than the mere use of the term. This word has reference to the act of selecting them, without throwing any light on the question why it was done. See <40242>Matthew 24:22,24,31; <41320>Mark 13:20; <42107>Luke 18:7; <45833>Romans 8:33; <51312>Colossians 3:12. Compare the notes at <43516>John 15:16. The meaning is, that God had, on some account, a preference for them above others as his people, and had chosen them from the midst of others to be heirs of salvation. The word should be properly understood as applied to the act of choosing them, not to the purpose to choose them; the fact of his selecting them to be his, not the doctrine that he would choose them; and is a word, therefore, which should be freely and gratefully used by all Christians, for it is a word in frequent use in the Bible, and there is nothing for which people should be more grateful than the fact that God has chosen them to salvation. Elsewhere we learn that the purpose to choose them was eternal, and that the reason of it was his own good pleasure. See the notes at <49104>Ephesians 1:4,5. We are here also

informed that it was in accordance with “the foreknowledge of God the Father.”

According to the foreknowledge of God the Father The Father is regarded, in the Scriptures, as the Author of the plan of salvation, and as having chosen His people to life, and given them to His Son to redeem and save, <4067>John 6:37,65; 17:2,6,11. It is affirmed here that the fact that they were elect was in some sense in accordance with the “foreknowledge of God.” On the meaning of the phrase, see the notes at Rom 8:29. The passage does not affirm that the thing which God “foreknew,” and which was the reason of their being chosen, was, that they would of themselves be disposed to embrace the offer of salvation. The foreknowledge referred to might have been of many other things as constituting the reason which operated in the case; and it is not proper to assume that it could have been of this alone. It may mean that God foreknew all the events which would ever occur, and that He saw reasons why they should be selected rather than others; or that He foreknew all that could be made to bear on their salvation; or that He foreknew all that He would himself do to secure their salvation; or that He foreknew them as having been designated by his own eternal counsels; or that He foreknew all that could be accomplished by their instrumentality; or that He saw that they would believe; but it should not be assumed that the word means necessarily any one of these things. The simple fact here affirmed, which no one can deny, is, that there was foreknowledge in the case on the part of God. It was not the result of Ignorance or of blind chance that they were selected. But if foreknown, must it not be certain? How could a thing which is foreknown be contingent or doubtful? The essential idea here is, that the original choice was on the part of God, and not on their part, and that this choice was founded on what He before knew to be best. He undoubtedly saw good and sufficient reasons why the choice should fall on them. I do not know that the reasons why he did it are revealed, or that they could be fully comprehended by us if they were. I am quite certain that it is not stated that it is because they would be more disposed of themselves to embrace the Saviour than others; for the Scriptures abundantly teach, what every regenerated person feels to be true, that the fact that we are disposed to embrace the Saviour is to be traced to a divine influence on our hearts, and not to ourselves. See <4065>John 6:65; <4516>Romans 9:16; <5305>Titus 3:5; <19012>Psalm 110:2,3.

Through sanctification of the Spirit The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. The Greek is, "by (εν <1722>) sanctification of the Spirit;" that is, it was by this influence or agency. The election that was purposed by the Father was carried into effect by the agency of the Spirit in making them holy. The word rendered "sanctification" (ἁγιασμος <38>) is not used here in its usual and technical sense to denote "the progressive holiness of believers," but in its more primitive and usual sense of "holiness." Compare the notes at <461030>1 Corinthians 1:30. It means here the being made holy; and the idea is, that we become in fact the chosen or elect of God by a work of the Spirit on our hearts making us holy; that is, renewing us in the divine image. We are chosen by the Father, but it is necessary that the heart should be renewed and made holy by a work of grace, in order that we may actually become His chosen people. Though we are sinners, He proposes to save us; but we are not saved in our sins, nor can we regard ourselves as the children of God until we have evidence that we are born again. The purpose of God to save us found us unholy, and we become in fact His friends by being renewed in the temper of our mind. A man has reason to think that he is one of the elect of God, just so far as he has evidence that he has been renewed by the Holy Spirit, and so far as he has holiness of heart and life, AND NO FURTHER.

Unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ This expresses the design for which they had been chosen by the Father, and renewed by the Spirit. It was that they might obey God, and lead holy lives. On the phrase "unto obedience," see the notes at <450105>Romans 1:5. The phrase "unto sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," means to cleansing from sin, or to holiness, since it was by the sprinkling of that blood that they were to be made holy. See it explained in the notes at <581018>Hebrews 9:18-23; 12:24.

Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied See the notes at <450107>Romans 1:7. The phrase "be multiplied" means, "may it abound," or "may it be conferred abundantly on you." From this verse we may learn that they who are chosen should be holy. Just in proportion as they have evidence that God has chosen them at all, they have evidence that He has chosen them to be holy; and, in fact, all the evidence which any man can have that he is among the elect, is that he is practically a holy man, and desires to become more and more so. No man can penetrate the secret counsels of the Almighty. No one can go up to heaven, and inspect the Book of Life to see if his name be there. No one should presume that his name is there without evidence. No one should depend on dreams, or raptures, or visions, as

proof that his name is there. No one should expect a new revelation declaring to him that he is among the elect. All the proof which any man can have that he is among the chosen of God, is to be found in the evidences of personal piety; and any man who is willing to be a true Christian may have all that evidence in his own case. If anyone, then, wishes to settle the question whether he is among the elect or not, the way is plain. Let him become a true Christian, and the whole matter is determined, for that is all the proof which anyone has that he is chosen to salvation. Until a man is willing to do that, he should not complain of the doctrine of election. If he is not willing to become a Christian and to be saved, assuredly he should not complain that those who are think that they have evidence that they are the chosen of God.

1 Peter 1:3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* See the notes at 2 Corinthians 1:3.

Which according to His abundant mercy Margin, as in the Greek, “much.” The idea is, that there was great mercy shown them in the fact that they were renewed. They had no claim to the favor, and the favor was great. People are not begotten to the hope of heaven because they have any claim on God, or because it would not be right for him to withhold the favor. See the notes at Ephesians 2:4.

Hath begotten us again The meaning is, that as God is the Author of our life in a natural sense, so he is the Author of our second life by regeneration. The Saviour said, (John 3:3) that “except a man be born again,” or “begotten again,” (γεννηθη <1080> ανωθεν <509>) “he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Peter here affirms that that change had occurred in regard to himself and those whom he was addressing. The word used here as a compound (αναγενναω <313>) does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament, though it corresponds entirely with the words used by the Saviour in John 3:3,5,7. Perhaps the phrase “begotten again” would be better in each instance where the word occurs, the sense being rather that of being begotten again, than of being born again.

Unto a lively hope The word lively we now use commonly in the sense of active, animated, quick; the word used here, however, means living, in contradistinction from that which is dead. The hope which they had, had living power. It was not cold, inoperative, dead. It was not a mere form — or a mere speculation — or a mere sentiment; it was that which was vital

to their welfare, and which was active and powerful. On the nature of hope, see the notes at Romans 8,24. Compare <49212>Ephesians 2:12.

By the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead The resurrection of the Lord Jesus is the foundation of our hope. It was a confirmation of what he declared as truth when he lived; it was a proof of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul; it was a pledge that all who are united to him will be raised up. See the notes at <46150>1 Corinthians 15:1-20; <55110>2 Timothy 1:10; <52414>1 Thessalonians 4:14. On this verse we may remark, that the fact that Christians are chosen to salvation should be a subject of gratitude and praise. Every man should rejoice that any of the race may be saved, and the world should be thankful for every new instance of divine favor in granting to anyone a hope of eternal life. Especially should this be a source of joy to true Christians. Well do they know that if God had not chosen them to salvation, they would have remained as thoughtless as others; if he had had no purpose of mercy toward them, they would never have been saved. Assuredly, if there is anything for which a man should be grateful, it is that God has so loved him as to give him the hope of eternal life; and if he has had an eternal purpose to do this, our gratitude should be proportionably increased.

<60104>**1 Peter 1:4.** *To an inheritance* Through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus we now cherish the hope of that future inheritance in heaven. On the word inheritance, see the notes at <44032>Acts 20:32; <49111>Ephesians 1:11,14,18; <51212>Colossians 1:12. Christians are regarded as the adopted children of God, and heaven is spoken of as their inheritance — as what their Father will bestow on them as the proof of his love.

Incorruptible It will not fade away and vanish, as that which we inherit in this world does. See the word explained in the notes at <46925>1 Corinthians 9:25. The meaning here is, that the inheritance will be imperishable, or will endure forever. Here, to whatever we may be heirs, we must soon part with the inheritance; there it will be eternal.

And undefiled See the notes at <58726>Hebrews 7:26; 13:4; <59127>James 1:27. The word does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. As applied to an inheritance, it means that it will be pure. It will not have been obtained by dishonesty, nor will it be held by fraud; it will not be such as will corrupt the soul, or tempt to extravagance, sensuality, and lust, as a rich inheritance often does here; it will be such that its eternal enjoyment will never tend in any manner to defile the heart. “How many estates,” says

Benson, “have been got by fraudulent and unjust methods; by poisoning, or in some other way murdering the right heir; by cheating of helpless orphans; by ruining the fatherless and widows; by oppressing their neighbors, or grinding the faces of the poor, and taking their garments or vineyards from them! But this future inheritance of the saints is stained by none of these vices; it is neither got nor detained by any of these methods; nor shall persons polluted with vice have any share in it.” Here no one can be heir to an inheritance of gold or houses without danger of soon sinking into indolence, effeminacy, or vice; there the inheritance may be enjoyed forever, and the soul continually advance in knowledge, holiness, and the active service of God.

And that fadeth not away Greek αμαραντον <263>. This word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, though the word αμαραντινος <262> occurs in <60504>1 Peter 5:4, applied to a crown or garland. The word is properly applied to that which does not fade or wither, in contradistinction from a flower that fades. It may then denote anything that is enduring, and is applied to the future inheritance of the saints to describe its perpetuity in all its brilliance and splendor, in contrast with the fading nature of all that is earthly. The idea here, therefore, is not precisely the same as is expressed by the word “incorruptible.” Both words indeed denote perpetuity, but that refers to perpetuity in contrast with decay; this denotes perpetuity in the sense that everything there will be kept in its original brightness and beauty. The crown of glory, though worn for millions of ages, will not be dimmed; the golden streets will lose none of their luster; the flowers that bloom on the banks of the river of life will always be as rich in color, and as fragant, as when we first beheld them.

Reserved in heaven for you Margin, “us.” The difference in the text and the margin arises from the various readings in MSS. The common reading is “for you.” The sense is not materially affected. The idea is, that it is an inheritance appointed for us, and kept by one who can make it sure to us, and who will certainly bestow it upon us. Compare the notes at <402534>Matthew 25:34; <431402>John 14:2; <510105>Colossians 1:5.

<600105>**1 Peter 1:5.** *Who are kept by the power of God* That is, “kept” or preserved in the faith and hope of the gospel; who are preserved from apostacy, or so kept that you will finally obtain salvation. The word which is used here, and rendered “kept,” (φρουρεω <5432>, is rendered in <471132>2 Corinthians 11:32, kept with a garrison; in <480323>Galatians 3:23, and here,

kept; in <5104 7>Philippians 4:7, shall keep. It does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. It means to keep, as in a garrison or fortress; or as with a military watch. The idea is, that there was a faithful guardianship exercised over them to save them from danger, as a castle or garrison is watched to guard it against the approach of an enemy. The meaning is, that they were weak in themselves, and were surrounded by temptations; and that the only reason why they were preserved was, that God exerted his power to keep them. The only reason which any Christians have to suppose they will ever reach heaven, is the fact that God keeps them by his own power. Compare the notes at <5100 6>Philippians 1:6; <5501 2>2 Timothy 1:12; 4:18. If it were left to the will of man; to the strength of his own resolutions; to his power to meet temptations, and to any probability that he would of himself continue to walk in the path of life, there would be no certainty that anyone would be saved.

Through faith That is, he does not keep us by the mere exertion of power, but he excites faith in our hearts, and makes that the means of keeping us. As long as we have faith in God, and in his promises, we are safe. When that fails, we are weak; and if it should fail altogether, we could not be saved. Compare the notes at <4900 8>Ephesians 2:8.

Unto salvation Not preserved for a little period, and then suffered to fall away, but so kept as to be saved. We may remark here that Peter, as well as Paul, believed in the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. If he did not, how could he have addressed these Christians in this manner, and said that they were “kept by the power of God unto salvation?” What evidence could he have had that they would obtain salvation, unless he believed in the general truth that it was the purpose of God to keep all who were truly converted?

Ready to be revealed in the last time That is, when the world shall close. Then it shall be made manifest to assembled worlds that such an inheritance was “reserved” for you, and that you were “kept” in order to inherit it. Compare <4025 34>Matthew 25:34. This verse, then, teaches that the doctrine that the saints will persevere and be saved, is true. They are “kept by the power of God to salvation;” and as God has all power, and guards them with reference to this end, it cannot be but that they will be saved. It may be added:

(a) that it is very desirable that the doctrine should be true. Man is so weak and feeble, so liable to fall, and so exposed to temptation, that it is in itself

every way a thing to be wished that his salvation should be in some safer hands than his own.

(b) If it is desirable that it should be true, it is fair to infer that it is true, for God has made all the arrangements for the salvation of his people which are really desirable and proper.

(c) The only security for the salvation of anyone is founded on that doctrine. If it were left entirely to the hands of people, even the best of people, what assurance could there be that anyone could be saved? Did not Adam fall? Did not holy angels fall? Have not some of the best of men fallen into sin? And who has such a strength of holiness that he could certainly confide in it to make his own salvation sure? Any man must know little of himself, and of the human heart, who supposes that he has such a strength of virtue that he would never fall away if left to himself. But if this be so, then his only hope of salvation is in the fact that God intends to "keep his people by his own power through faith unto salvation."

1 Peter 1:6. *Wherein ye greatly rejoice* In which hope of salvation. The idea is, that the prospect which they had of the future inheritance was to them a source of the highest joy, even in the midst of their many sufferings and trials. On the general grounds for rejoicing, see the notes at Romans 5:1,2; Philippians 3:1; 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:16. See also the notes at 1 Peter 1:8. The particular meaning here is, that the hope which they had of their future inheritance enabled them to rejoice even in the midst of persecutions and trials. It not only sustained them, but it made them happy. That must be a valuable religion which will make people happy in the midst of persecutions and heavy calamities.

Though now for a season A short period — ολιγον . It would be in fact only for a brief period, even if it should continue through the whole of life. Compare the notes at 2 Corinthians 4:17: "Our light affliction which is but for a moment." It is possible, however, that Peter supposed that the trials which they then experienced would soon pass over. They may have been suffering persecutions which he hoped would not long continue.

If need be This phrase seems to have been thrown in here to intimate that there was a necessity for their afflictions, or that there was "need" that they should pass through these trials. There was some good to be accomplished by them, which made it desirable and proper that they should be thus

afflicted. The sense is, “since there is need;” though the apostle expresses it more delicately by suggesting the possibility that there might be need of it, instead of saying absolutely that there was need. It is the kind of language which we would use in respect to one who was greatly afflicted, by suggesting to him, in the most tender manner, that there might be things in his character which God designed to correct by trials, instead of saying roughly and bluntly that such was undoubtedly the fact. We would not say to such a person, “you certainly needed this affliction to lead you to amend your life;” but, “it may be that there is something in your character which makes it desirable, or that God intends that some good results shall come from it which will show that it is wisely ordered.”

Ye are in heaviness Greek, “Ye are sorrowing,” (λυπηθεντες <3076>) you are sad, or grieved, <4014>Matthew 14:9; 17:23.

Through manifold temptations Through many kinds of trials, for so the word rendered “temptation” (πειρασμος <3986>) means, <5902>James 1:2,12. See the notes at <4004>Matthew 4:1; 6:13. The meaning here is, that they now endured many things which were suited to try or test their faith. These might have consisted of poverty, persecution, sickness, or the efforts of ethers to lead them to renounce their religion, and to go back to their former state of unbelief. Anyone or all of these would try them, and would show whether their religion was genuine. On the various ways which God has of trying his people, compare the notes at <2823>Isaiah 28:23-29.

<6007>**1 Peter 1:7.** *That the trial of your faith* The putting of your religion to the test, and showing what is its real nature. Compare <5903>James 1:3,12.

Being much more precious than of gold This does not mean that their faith was much more precious than gold, but that the testing of it, (δοκιμιον <1383>), the process of showing whether it was or was not genuine, was a much more important and valuable process than that of testing gold in the fire. More important results were to be arrived at by it, and it was more desirable that it should be done.

That perisheth Not that gold perishes by the process of being tried in the fire, for this is not the fact, and the connection does not demand this interpretation. The idea is, that gold, however valuable it is, is a perishable thing. It is not an enduring, imperishable, indestructible thing, like religion. It may not perish in the fire, but it will in some way, for it will not endure forever.

Though it be tried with fire This refers to the gold. See the Greek. The meaning is, that gold, though it will bear the action of fire, is yet a destructible thing, and will not endure forever. It is more desirable to test religion than it is gold, because it is more valuable. It pertains to that which is eternal and indestructible, and it is therefore of more importance to show its true quality, and to free it from every improper mixture.

Might be found unto praise That is, might be found to be genuine, and such as to meet the praise or commendation of the final judge.

And honor That honor might be done to it before assembled worlds.

And glory That it might be rewarded with that glory which will be then conferred on all who have shown, in the various trials of life, that they had true religion.

At the appearing of Jesus Christ To judge the world. Compare <4025>Matthew 25:31; <4011>Acts 1:11; <5046>1 Thessalonians 4:16; <5108>2 Thessalonians 2:8; <5064>1 Timothy 6:14; <5001>2 Timothy 4:1,8; <5123>Titus 2:13. From these two verses (<6006>1 Peter 1:6,7) we may learn:

I. That it is desirable that the faith of Christians should be tried:

(a) It is desirable to know whether that which appears to be religion is genuine, as it is desirable to know whether that which appears to be gold is genuine. To gold we apply the action of intense heat, that we may know whether it is what it appears to be; and as religion is of more value than gold, so it is more desirable that it should be subjected to the proper tests, that its nature may be ascertained. There is much which appears to be gold, which is of no value, as there is much which appears to be religion, which is of no value. The one is worth no more than the other, unless it is genuine.

(b) It is desirable in order to show its true value. It is of great importance to know what that which is claimed to be gold is worth for the purposes to which gold is usually applied; and so it is in regard to religion. Religion claims to be of more value to man than anything else. It asserts its power to do that for the intellect and the heart which nothing else can do; to impart consolation in the various trials of life which nothing else can impart; and to give a support which nothing else can on the bed of death. It is very desirable, therefore, that in these various situations it should show

its power; that is, that its friends should be in these various conditions, in order that they may illustrate the true value of religion.

(c) It is desirable that true religion should be separated from all alloy. There is often much alloy in gold, and it is desirable that it should be separated from it, in order that it may be pure. So it is in religion. It is often combined with much that is unholy and impure; much that dims its lustre and mars its beauty; much that prevents its producing the effect which it would otherwise produce. Gold is, indeed, often better, for some purposes, for having some alloy mixed with it; but not so with religion. It is never better for having a little pride, or vanity, or selfishness, or meanness, or worldliness, or sensuality mingled with it; and that which will remove these things from our religion will be a favor to us.

II. God takes various methods of trying his people, with a design to test the value of their piety, and to separate it from all impure mixtures:

(1) He tries his people by prosperity — often as decisive a test of piety as can be applied to it. There is much pretended piety, which will bear adversity, but which will not bear prosperity. The piety of a man is decisively tested by popularity; by the flatteries of the world; by a sudden increase of property; and in such circumstances it is often conclusively shown that there is no true religion in the soul.

(2) He tries his people in adversity. He lays his hand on them heavily, to show:

(a) whether they will bear up under their trials, and persevere in his service;

(b) to show whether their religion will keep them from murmuring or complaining;

(c) to show whether it is adapted to comfort and sustain the soul.

(3) He tries his people by sudden transition from one to the other. We get accustomed to a uniform course of life, whether it be joy or sorrow; and the religion which is adapted to a uniform course may be little suited to transitions from one condition of life to another. In prosperity we may have shown that we were grateful, and benevolent, and disposed to serve God; but our religion will be subjected to a new test, if we are suddenly reduced to poverty. In sickness and poverty, we learn to be patient and resigned, and perhaps even happy. But the religion which we then cultivated may be

little adapted to a sudden transition to prosperity; and in such a transition, there would be a new trial of our faith. That piety which shone so much on a bed of sickness, might be little suited to shine in circumstances of sudden prosperity. The human frame may become accustomed either to the intense cold of the polar regions, or to the burning heats of the equator; but in neither case might it bear a transition from one to the other. It is such a transition that is a more decisive test of its powers of endurance than either intense heat or cold, if steadily prolonged.

III. Religion will bear any trial which may be applied to it, just as gold will bear the action of fire.

IV. Religion is imperishable in its nature. Even the most pure gold will perish. Time will corrode it, or it will be worn away by use, or it will be destroyed at the universal conflagration; but time and use will not wear out religion, and it will live on through the fires that will consume everything else.

V. Christians should be willing to pass through trials:

(a) They will purify their religion, just as the fire will remove dross from gold.

(b) They will make it shine more brightly, just as gold does when it comes out of the furnace.

(c) They will disclose more fully its value.

(d) They will furnish an evidence that we shall be saved; for that religion which will bear the tests that God applies to it in the present life, will bear the test of the final trial.

1 Peter 1:8. *Whom having not seen, ye love* This Epistle was addressed to those who were “strangers scattered abroad,” (See the notes at 1 Peter 1:1) and it is evident that they had not personally seen the Lord Jesus. Yet they had heard of his character, his preaching, his sacrifice for sin, and his resurrection and ascension, and they had learned to love him:

(1) It is possible to love one whom we have not seen. Thus, we may love God, whom no “eye hath seen,” (compare 1 John 4:20) and thus we

may love a benefactor, from whom we have received important benefits, whom we have never beheld.

(2) We may love the character of one whom we have never seen, and from whom we may never have received any particular favors. We may love his uprightness, his patriotism, his benignity, as represented to us. We might love him the more if we should become personally accquainted with him, and if we should receive important favors from him; but it is possible to feel a sense of strong admiration for such a character in itself.

(3) That may be a very pure love which we have for one whom we have never seen. It may be based on simple excellence of character; and in such a case there is the least chance for any intermingling of selfishness, or any improper emotion of any kind.

(4) We may love a friend as really and as strongly when he is absent, as when he is with us. The wide ocean that rolls between us and a child, does not diminish the ardour of our affection for him; and the Christian friend that has gone to heaven, we may love no less than when he sat with us at the fireside.

(5) Millions, even hundreds of millions, have been led to love the Saviour, who have never seen him. They have seen — not with the physical eye, but with the eye of faith — the inimitable beauty of his character, and have been brought to love him with an ardor of affection which they never had for any other one.

(6) There is every reason why we should love him:

(a) His character is infinitely lovely.

(b) He has done more for us than any other one who ever lived among men. He died for us, to redeem our souls. He rose, and brought life and immortality to light. He ever lives to intercede for us in heaven. He is employed in preparing mansions of rest for us in the skies, and he will come and take us to himself, that we may be with him forever. Such a Saviour ought to be loved, is loved, and will be loved. The strongest attachments which have ever existed on earth have been for this unseen Saviour. There has been a love for him stronger than that for a father, or mother, or wife, or sister, or home, or country. It has been so strong, that thousands have been willing, on account of it, to bear the torture of the rack or the stake. It has been so strong, that thousands of youth of the

finest minds, and the most flattering prospects of distinction, have been willing to leave the comforts of a civilized land, and to go among the benighted pagans, to tell them the story of a Saviour's life and death. It has been so strong, that unnumbered multitudes have longed, more than they have for all other things, that they might see him, and be with him, and abide with him forever and ever. Compare the notes at ⁵⁰¹²³Philippians 1:23.

In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing He is now in heaven, and to mortal eyes now invisible, like his Father. Faith in him is the source and fountain of our joy. It makes invisible things real, and enables us to feel and act, in view of them, with the same degree of certainty as if we saw them. Indeed, the conviction to the mind of a true believer that there is a Saviour, is as certain and as strong as if he saw him; and the same may be said of his conviction of the existence of heaven, and of eternal realities. If it should be said that faith may deceive us, we may reply:

(1) May not our physical senses also deceive us? Does the eye never deceive? Are there no optical illusions? Does the ear never deceive? Are there no sounds which are mistaken? Do the taste and the smell never deceive? Are we never mistaken in the report which they bring to us? And does the sense of feeling never deceive? Are we never mistaken in the size, the hardness, the figure of objects which we handle? But,

(2) for all the practical purposes of life, the senses are correct guides, and do not in general lead us astray. So,

(3) there are objects of faith about which we are never deceived, and where we do act and must act with the same confidence as if we had personally seen them. Are we deceived about the existence of London, or Paris, or Canton, though we may never have seen either? May not a merchant embark with perfect propriety in a commercial enterprise, on the supposition that there is such a place as London or Canton, though he has never seen them? Would he not be reputed mad, if he should refuse to do it on this ground? And so, may not a man, in believing that there is a heaven, and in forming his plans for it, though he has not yet seen it, act as rationally and as wisely as he who forms his plans on the supposition that there is such a place as Canton?

Ye rejoice Ye do rejoice; not merely ye ought to rejoice. It may be said of Christians that they do in fact rejoice; they are happy. The people of the world often suppose that religion makes its professors sad and melancholy.

That there are those who have not great comfort in their religion, no one indeed can doubt; but this arises from several causes entirely independent of their religion. Some have melancholy temperaments, and are not happy in anything. Some have little evidence that they are Christians, and their sadness arises not from religion, but from the want of it. But that true religion does make its possessors happy, anyone may easily satisfy himself by asking any number of sincere Christians, of any denomination, whom he may meet. With one accord they will say to him that they have a happiness which they never found before; that however much they may have possessed of the wealth, the honors, and the pleasures of the world — and they who are now Christians have not all of them been strangers to these things — they never knew solid and substantial peace until they found it in religion And why should they not be believed? The world would believe them in other things; why will they not when they declare that religion does not make them gloomy, but happy?

With joy unspeakable A very strong expression, and yet verified in thousands of cases among young converts, and among those in the maturer days of piety. There are thousands who can say that their happiness when they first had evidence that their sins were forgiven, that the burden of guilt was rolled away, and that they were the children of God, was unspeakable. They had no words to express it, it was so full and so new:

"Tongue can never express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love,"

And so there have been thousands of mature Christians who can adopt the same language, and who could find no words to express the peace and joy which they have found in the love of Christ, and the hope of heaven. And why are not all Christians enabled to say constantly that they "rejoice with joy unspeakable?" Is it not a privilege which they might possess? Is there anything in the nature of religion which forbids it? Why should not one be filled with constant joy who has the hope of dwelling in a world of glory forever? Compare [B14]John 14:27; 16:22.

And full of glory

(1) Of anticipated glory — of the prospect of enjoying the glory of heaven.

(2) Of present glory — with a joy even now which is of the same nature as that in heaven; a happiness the same in kind, though not in degree, as that

which will be ours in a brighter world. The saints on earth partake of the same kind of joy which they will have in heaven; for the happiness of heaven will be but an expansion, a prolongation, and a purifying of that which they have here. Compare the notes at <49114>Ephesians 1:14.

<60109>**1 Peter 1:9.** *Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls* The result or object of your faith; that is, what your faith is designed and adapted to secure. Compare the notes at <45104>Romans 10:4. The word rendered receiving is used here as indicating that they would surely obtain that. They even now had such peace and joy in believing, that it furnished undoubted evidence that they would be saved; and such that it might be said that even now they were saved. The condition of one who is a true Christian here is so secure that it may even now be called salvation.

<60110>**1 Peter 1:10.** *Of which salvation* Of the certainty that this system of religion, securing the salvation of the soul, would be revealed. The object of this reference to the prophets seems to be to lead them to value the religion which they professed more highly, and to encourage them to bear their trials with patience. They were in a condition, in many respects, far superior to that of the prophets. They had the full light of the gospel. The prophets saw it only at a distance and but dimly, and were obliged to search anxiously that they might understand the nature of that system of which they were appointed to furnish the comparatively obscure prophetic intimations.

The prophets This language would imply that this had been a common and prevalent wish of the prophets.

Have enquired This word is intensive. It means that they sought out, or scrutinized with care the revelations made to them, that they might understand exactly what was implied in that which they were appointed to record in respect to the salvation which was to be made known through the Messiah. See the following places where the same word is used which occurs here: <42150>Luke 11:50,51; <44157>Acts 15:17; <45311>Romans 3:11; <58106>Hebrews 11:6; 12:17.

And searched diligently εξερευναω <1830>. Compare <27912>Daniel 9:2,3. The word used here means to search out, to trace out, to explore. It is not elsewhere used in the New Testament, though one of the words from which this is compounded (ερευναω <2045>) occurs. See <43959>John 5:39, (Notes) <43752>John 7:52; <45827>Romans 8:27; <46210>1 Corinthians 2:10;

[66123]Revelation 2:23. The idea is, that they perceived that in their communications there were some great and glorious truths which they did not fully comprehend, and that they diligently employed their natural faculties to understand that which they were appointed to impart to succeeding generations. They thus became students and interpreters for themselves of their own predictions. They were not only prophets, but men. They had souls to be saved in the same way as others. They had hearts to be sanctified by the truth; and it was needful, in order to this, that truth should be applied to their own hearts in the same way as to others. The mere fact that they were the channels or organs for imparting truth to others would not save them, any more than the fact that a man now preaches truth to others will save himself, or than the fact that a sutler delivers bread to an army will nourish and support his own body.

Who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you Of the favor that should be shown to you in the gospel. Though the predictions which they uttered appeared to the people of their own times, and perhaps to themselves, obscure, yet they were in fact prophecies of what was to come, and of the favors which, under another dispensation, would be bestowed upon the people of God. The apostle does not mean to say that they prophesied particularly of those persons to whom he was then writing, but that their prophecies were in fact for their benefit, for the things which they predicted had actually terminated on them. The benefit was as real as though the predictions had been solely on their account.

[60111]**1 Peter 1:11.** *Searching what* That is, examining their own predictions with care, to ascertain what they meant. They studied them as we do the predictions which others have made; and though the prophets were the medium through which the truth was made known, yet their own predictions became a subject of careful investigation to themselves. The expression used here in the original, rendered “what,” (εις <1519> τινα <5100>) literally, “unto what,” may mean, so far as the Greek is concerned, either “what time,” or “what people,” or “what person;” that is, with reference to what person the prophecies were really uttered. The latter, it seems to me, is the correct interpretation, meaning that they inquired in regard to him, who he would be, what would be his character, and what would be the nature of the work which he would perform. There can be no doubt that they understood that their predictions related to the Messiah; but still it is not improper to suppose that it was with them an interesting inquiry what sort of a person he would be, and what would be the nature of the work

which he would perform. This interpretation of the phrase εις <1519> τινα <5100>, (unto what or whom) it should be observed, however, is not that which is commonly given of the passage. Bloomfield, Rosenmuller, Doddridge, Whitby, Benson, and Grotius suppose it to refer to time, meaning that they inquired at what time, or when these things would occur. Macknight thinks it refers "to people," (λαον <2992>) meaning that they diligently inquired what people would put him to death. But the most obvious interpretation is that which I have suggested above, meaning that they made particular inquiry to whom their prophecies related — what was his rank and character, and what was to be the nature of his work. What would be a more natural inquiry for them than this? What would be more important? And how interesting is the thought that when Isaiah, for example, had given utterance to the sublime predictions which we now have of the Messiah, in his prophecies, he sat himself down with the spirit of a little child, to learn by prayer and study, what was fully implied in the amazing words which the Spirit had taught him to record! How much of mystery might seem still to hang around the subject And how intent would such a mind be to know what was the full import of those words!

Or what manner of time This phrase, in Greek, (ποιον <4169> καιρον <2540>) would properly relate, not to the exact time when these things would occur, but to the character or condition of the age when they would take place; perhaps referring to the state of the world at that period, the preparation to receive the gospel, and the probable manner in which the great message would be received. Perhaps, however, the inquiry in their minds pertained to the time when the predictions would be fulfilled, as well as to the condition of the world when the event takes place. The meaning of the Greek phrase would not exclude this latter sense. There are not unfrequent indications of time in the prophets, (compare <270924>Daniel 9:24ff) and these indications were of so clear a character, that when the Saviour actually appeared there was a general expectation that the event would then occur. See the notes at <400209>Matthew 2:9.

The Spirit of Christ which was in them This does not prove that they knew that this was the Spirit of Christ, but is only a declaration of Peter that it was actually so. It is not probable that the prophets distinctly understood that the Spirit of inspiration, by which they were led to foretell future events, was especially the Spirit of Christ. They understood that they were inspired; but there is no intimation, with which I am acquainted, in their writings, that they regarded themselves as inspired by the Messiah. It was

not improper, however, for Peter to say that the Spirit by which they were influenced was in fact the Spirit of Christ, so called because that Spirit which suggested these future events to them was given as the great Medium of all revealed truth to the world. Compare <580103>Hebrews 1:3; <430109>John 1:9; 14:16,26; 16:7; <232906>Isaiah 49:6. It is clear from this passage:

(1) that Christ must have had an existence before his incarnation; and,

(2) that he must have understood then what would occur to him when he should become incarnate; that is, it must have been arranged or determined beforehand.

Did signify Meant to intimate or manifest to them, (εδηλου <6213>) or what was implied in the communications made to them.

When it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ. As Isaiah, Isaiah 53; Daniel, <270925>Daniel 9:25-27. They saw clearly that the Messiah was to suffer; and doubtless this was the common doctrine of the prophets, and the common expectation of the pious part of the Jewish nation. Yet it is not necessary to suppose that they had clear apprehensions of his sufferings, or were able to reconcile all that was said on that subject with what was said of his glory and his triumphs. There was much about those sufferings which they wished to learn, as there is much still which we desire to know. We have no reason to suppose that there were any views of the sufferings of the Messiah communicated to the prophets except what we now have in the Old Testament; and to see the force of what Peter says, we ought to imagine what would be our views of him if all that we have known of Christ as history were obliterated, and we had only the knowledge which we could derive from the Old Testament. As has been already intimated, it is probable that they studied their own predictions, just as we would study them if we had not the advantage of applying to them the facts which have actually occurred.

And the glory that should follow That is, they saw that there would be glory which would be the result of his sufferings, but they did not clearly see what it would be. They had some knowledge that he would be raised from the dead, (<191608>Psalm 16:8-11; Compare <442025>Acts 2:25-28) they knew that he would “see of the travail of his soul, and would be satisfied,” (<235311>Isaiah 53:11) they had some large views of the effects of the gospel on the nations of the earth, Isaiah 11; 25:7,8; 60; 66. But there were many things respecting his glorification which it cannot be supposed they clearly

understood; and it is reasonable to presume that they made the comparatively few and obscure intimations in their own writings in relation to this, the subject of profound and prayerful inquiry.

[60112]**1 Peter 1:12.** *Unto whom it was revealed* They were not permitted to know fully the import of the predictions which they were made the instruments of communicating to mankind, but they understood that they were intended for the benefit of future ages.

That not unto themselves We are not to suppose that they derived no benefit from their own predictions; for, as far as they understood the truth, it was as much adapted to sanctify and comfort them as it is us now: but the meaning is, that their messages had reference mainly to future times, and that the full benefit of them would be experienced only in distant ages. Compare [58139]Hebrews 11:39,40.

Unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you Not unto us by name, but their ministrations had reference to the times of the Messiah; and those to whom Peter wrote, in common with all Christians, were those who were to enjoy the fruits of the communications which they made. The word reported means announced, or made known.

By them that have preached the gospel unto you The apostles, who have made known unto you, in their true sense, the things which the prophets predicted, the import of which they themselves were so desirous of understanding.

With the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven Accompanied by the influences of the Holy Spirit bearing those truths to the heart, and confirming them to the soul. It was the same Spirit which inspired the prophets which conveyed those truths to the souls of the early Christians, and which discloses them to true believers in every age. Compare [43163]John 16:13,14; [44104]Acts 2:4; 10:44,45. The object of Peter by thus referring to the prophets, and to the interest which they took in the things which those to whom he wrote now enjoyed, seems to have been, to impress on them a deep sense of the value of the gospel, and of the great privileges which they enjoyed. They were reaping the benefit of all the labors of the prophets. They were permitted to see truth clearly, which the prophets themselves saw only obscurely. They were, in many respects, more favored than even those holy men had been. It was for them that the prophets had spoken the word of the Lord: for them and their salvation that a long line

of the most holy men that the world ever saw, had lived, and toiled, and suffered; and while they themselves had not been allowed to understand the fall import of their own predictions, the most humble believer was permitted to see what the most distinguished prophet never saw. See <4013717>Matthew 13:17.

Which things the angels desire to look into The object of this reference to the angels is the same as that to the prophets. It is to impress on Christians a sense of the value of that gospel which they had received, and to show them the greatness of their privileges in being made partakers of it. It had excited the deepest interest among the most holy men on earth, and even among the inhabitants of the skies. They were enjoying the full revelation of what even the angels had desired more fully to understand, and to comprehend which they had employed their great powers of investigation. The things which are here referred to, (εις <1519> ἁ <3739> — unto which) are those which the prophets were so desirous to understand — the great truths respecting the sufferings of Christ, the glory which would follow, and the nature and effects of the gospel. In all the events pertaining to the redemption of a world they felt a deep interest. The word which is rendered "to look," (παρακυψαι <3879>) is rendered "stooping down," and "stooped down," in <4241212>Luke 24:12; <4320511>John 20:5,11; looketh, in <5901225>James 1:25; and look, in the place before us. It does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. It properly means, to stoop down near by anything; to bend forward near, in order to look at anything more closely — Robinson, Lexicon. It would denote that state where one, who was before at so great a distance that he could not clearly see an object, should draw nearer, stooping down in order that he might observe it more distinctly. It is possible, as Grotius supposes, that there may be an allusion here to the posture of the cherubim over the mercy-seat, represented as looking down with an intense gaze, as if to behold what was in the ark. But it is not necessary to suppose that this is the allusion, nor is it absolutely certain that that was the posture of the cherubim. See the notes at <5801605>Hebrews 9:5. All that is necessarily implied in the language is, that the angels had an intense desire to look into these things; that they contemplated them with interest and fixed attention, like one who comes near to an object, and looks narrowly upon it. In illustration of this sentiment, we may make the following suggestions:

I. The angels, doubtless, desire to look into all the manifestations of the character of God, wherever those manifestations are made:

(1) It is not unreasonable to suppose that, to a great degree, they acquire the knowledge of God as all other creatures do. They are not omniscient, and cannot be supposed to comprehend at a glance all his doings.

(2) They doubtless employ their faculties, substantially as we do, in the investigation of truth; that is, from things known they seek to learn those that are even unknown.

(3) It is not unreasonable to suppose that there are many things in relation to the divine character and plans, which they do not yet understand. They know, undoubtedly, much more than we do; but there are plans and purposes of God which are yet made known to none of his creatures. No one can doubt that these plans and purposes must be the object of the attentive study of all holy created minds.

(4) They doubtless feel a great interest in the welfare of other beings — of their fellow-creatures, wherever they are. There is in the universe one great brotherhood, embracing all the creatures of God.

(5) They cannot but feel a deep interest in man — a fallen creature, tempted, suffering, dying, and exposed to eternal death. This they have shown in every period of the world's history. See the notes at ⁵⁸Hebrews 1:14.

II. It is probable, that in each one of the worlds which God has made, there is some unique manifestation of his glory and character; something which is not to be found at all in any other world, or, if found, not in so great perfection; and that the angels would feel a deep interest in all these manifestations, and would desire to look into them:

(1) This is probable from the nature of the case, and from the variety which we see in the form, size, movements, and glory of the heavenly orbs. There is no reason to suppose, that on any one of those worlds all the glory of the divine character would be manifest, which he intends to, make known to the universe.

(2) This is probable from what we can now see of the worlds which he has made. We know as yet comparatively little of the heavenly bodies, and of the manifestations of the Deity there; and yet, as far as we can see, there must be far more striking exhibitions of the power, and wisdom, and glory of God, in many or most of those worlds that roll above us, than there are on our earth. On the body of the sun — on the planets Jupiter and Saturn,

so vast in comparison with the earth — there must be far more impressive exhibitions of the glory of the Creator, than there is on our little planet. Saturn, for example, is 82,000 miles in diameter, 1,100 times as large as our earth; it moves at the rate of 22,000 miles an hour; it is encircled by two magnificent rings, 5,000 miles apart, the innermost of which is 21,000 miles from the body of the planet, and 22,000 miles in breadth, forming a vast illuminated arch over the planet above the brightness of our moon, and giving a most beautiful appearance to the heavens there. It is also, doubtless, true of all the worlds which God has made, that in each one of them there may be some unique manifestation of the glory of the Deity.

(3) The universe, therefore, seems suited to give eternal employment to mind in contemplating it; and, in the worlds which God has made, there is enough to employ the study of his creatures forever. On our own world, the most diligent and pious student of the works of God might spend many thousand years, and then leave much, very much, which he did not comprehend; and it may yet be the eternal employment of holy minds to range from world to world, and in each new world to find much to study and to admire; much that shall proclaim the wisdom, power, love, and goodness of God, which had not elsewhere been seen.

(4) Our world, therefore, though small, a mere speck in creation, may have something to manifest the glory of the Creator which may not exist in any other. It cannot be its magnitude; for, in that respect, it is among the smallest which God has made. It may not be the height and the majesty of our mountains, or the length and beauty of our rivers, or the fragrance of our flowers, or the clearness of our sky; for, in these respects, there may be much more to admire in other worlds: it is the exhibition of the character of God in the work of redemption; the illustration of the way in which a sinner may be forgiven; the manifestation of the Deity as incarnate, assuming permanently a union with one of his own creatures. This, so far as we know, is seen in no other part of the universe; “and this is honor enough for one world.” To see this, the angels may be attracted down to earth. When they come, they come not to contemplate our works of art, our painting and our sculpture, or to read our hooks of science or poetry: they come to gather around the cross, to minister to the Saviour, to attend on his steps while living, and to watch over his body when dead; to witness his resurrection and ascension, and to bless, with their offices of kindness, those whom he died to redeem, [30104]Hebrews 1:4.

III. What, then, is there in our world which we may suppose would attract their attention? What is there which they would not see in other worlds? I answer, that the manifestation of the divine character in the plan of redemption, is that which would especially attract their attention here, and lead them from heaven down to earth:

(1) The mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God would be to them an object of the deepest interest. This, so far as we know, or have reason to suppose, has occurred nowhere else. There is no evidence that in any other world God has taken upon himself the form of one of his own creatures dwelling there, and stooped to live and act like one of them; to mingle with them; to share their feelings; and to submit to toil, and want, and sacrifice, for their welfare.

(2) The fact that the guilty could be pardoned would attract their attention, for:

(a) it is elsewhere unknown, no inhabitant of heaven having the need of pardon, and no offer of pardon having been made to a rebel angel.

(b) There are great and difficult questions about the whole subject of forgiveness, which an angel could easily see, but which he could not so easily solve. How could it be done consistently with the justice and truth of God? How could he forgive, and yet maintain the honor of his own law, and the stability of his own throne? There is no more difficult subject in a human administration than that of pardon; and there is none which so much perplexes those who are entrusted with executive power.

(3) The way in which pardon has been shown to the guilty here would excite their deep attention. It has been in a manner entirely consistent with justice and truth; showing, through the great sacrifice made on the cross, that the attributes of justice and mercy may both be exercised: that, while God may pardon to any extent, he does it in no instance at the expense of justice and truth. This blending of the attributes of the Almighty in beautiful harmony; this manifesting of mercy to the guilty and the lost; this raising up a fallen and rebellious race to the favor and friendship of God; and this opening before a dying creature the hope of immortality, was what could be seen by the angels nowhere else: and hence, it is no wonder that they hasten with such interest to our world, to learn the mysteries of redeeming love. Every step in the process of recovering a sinner must be new to them, for it is unseen elsewhere; and the whole work, the

atonement, the pardon and renovation of the sinner, the conflict of the child of God with his spiritual foes, the supports of religion in the time of sickness and temptation, the bed of death, the sleep in the tomb, the separate flight of the soul to its final abode, the resurrection of the body, and the solemn scenes of the judgment, all must open new fields of thought to an angelic mind, and attract the heavenly inhabitants to our world, to learn here what they cannot learn in their own abodes, however otherwise bright, where sin, and suffering, and death, and redemption are unknown. In view of these truths we may add:

(1) The work of redemption is worthy of the study of the profoundest minds. Higher talent than any earthly talent has been employed in studying it; for, to the most exalted intellects of heaven, it has been a theme of the deepest interest. No mind on earth is too exalted to be engaged in this study; no intellect here is so profound that it would not find in this study a range of inquiry worthy of itself.

(2) This is a study that is especially appropriate to man. The angels have no other interest in it than that which arises from a desire to know God, and from a benevolent regard for the welfare of others; we have a personal interest in it of the highest kind. It pertains primarily to us. The plan was formed for us. Our eternal all depends upon it. The angels would be safe and happy it they did not fully understand it; if we do not understand it, we are lost forever. It has claims to their attention as a wonderful exhibition of the character and purposes of God, and as they are interested in the welfare of others; it claims our attention because our eternal welfare depends on our accepting the offer of mercy made through a Saviour’s blood.

(3) How amazing, then, how wonderful, is the indifference of man to this great and glorious work! How wonderful, that neither as a matter of speculation, nor of personal concern, he can be induced “to look into these things!” How wonderful that all other subjects engross his attention, and excite inquiry; but that for this he feels no concern, and that here he finds nothing to interest him! It is not unreasonable to suppose, that amidst all the other topics of wonder in this plan as seen by angels, this is not the least — that man by nature takes no interest in it; that in so stupendous a work, performed in his own world, he feels no concern; that he is unmoved when he is told that even God became incarnate, and appeared on the earth where he himself dwells; and that, busy and interested as he is in other things, often of a most trifling nature, he has no concern for that on which

is suspended his own eternal happiness. If heaven was held in mute astonishment when the Son of God left the courts of glory to be poor, to be persecuted, to bleed, and to die, not less must be the astonishment than when, from those lofty heights, the angelic hosts look down upon a race unconcerned amidst wonders such as those of the incarnation and the atonement!

1 Peter 1:13. *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind* The allusion here is to the manner in which the Orientals were accustomed to dress. They wear loose, flowing robes, so that, when they wish to run, or to fight, or to apply themselves to any business, they are obliged to bind their garments close around them. See the notes at Matthew 5:38-41. The meaning here is, that they were to have their minds in constant preparation to discharge the duties, or to endure the trials of life — like those who were prepared for labor, for a race, or for a conflict.

Be sober See the notes at 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8; 2:2.

And hope to the end Margin, “perfectly.” The translation in the text is the most correct. It means that they were not to become faint or weary in their trials. They were not to abandon the hopes of the gospel, but were to cherish those hopes to the end of life, whatever opposition they might meet with, and however much might be done by others to induce them to apostatize. Compare the notes at Hebrews 10:35,36.

For the grace that is to be brought unto you For the favor that shall then be bestowed upon you; to wit, salvation. The word brought here means, that this great favor which they hoped for would be borne to them by the Saviour on his return from heaven.

At the revelation of Jesus Christ When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in his glory; that is, when he comes to judge the world. See the notes at 2 Thessalonians 1:7.

1 Peter 1:14. *As obedient children* That is, conduct yourselves as becomes the children of God, by obeying his commands; by submitting to His will; and by manifesting unwavering confidence in him as your Father at all times.

Not fashioning yourselves Not forming or modeling your life. Compare the notes at Romans 12:2. The idea, is that they were to have some model or example, in accordance with which they were to frame their lives, but

that they were not to make their own former principles and conduct the model. The Christian is to be as different from what he was himself before conversion as he is from his fellow-men. He is to be governed by new laws, to aim at new objects, and to mould his life in accordance with new principles. Before conversion, he was:

(a) supremely selfish;

(b) he lived for personal gratification;

(c) he gave free indulgence to his appetites and passions, restrained only by a respect for the decencies of life, and by a reference to his own health, property, or reputation, without regard to the will of God;

(d) he conformed himself to the customs and opinions around him, rather than to the requirements of his Maker;

(e) he lived for worldly aggrandizements, his supreme object being wealth or fame; or,

(f) in many cases, those who are now Christians, gave indulgence to every passion which they wished to gratify, regardless of reputation, health, property, or salvation.

Now they are to be governed by a different rule, and their own former standard of morals and of opinions is no longer their guide, but the will of God.

According to the former lusts in your ignorance When you were ignorant of the requirements of the gospel, and gave yourselves up to the unrestrained indulgence of your passions.

1 Peter 1:15. *But as he which hath called you is holy* On the word called, see the notes at Ephesians 4:1. The meaning here is, that the model or example in accordance with which they were to frame their lives, should be the character of that God who had called them into his kingdom. They were to be like him. Compare the notes at Matthew 5:48.

So be ye holy in all manner of conversation In all your conduct. On the word “conversation,” see the notes at Philippians 1:27. The meaning is, that since God is holy, and we profess to be his followers, we also ought to be holy.

<60116>**1 Peter 1:16.** *Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy* <03144>Leviticus 11:44. This command was addressed at first to the Israelites, but it is with equal propriety addressed to Christians, as the professed people of God. The foundation of the command is, that they professed to be his people, and that as his people they ought to be like their God. Compare Mic. 4:5. It is a great truth, that people everywhere will imitate the God whom they worship. They will form their character in accordance with his. They will regard what he does as right. They will attempt to rise no higher in virtue than the God whom they adore, and they will practice freely what he is supposed to do or approve. Hence, by knowing what are the characteristics of the gods which are worshipped by any people, we may form a correct estimate of the character of the people themselves; and, hence, as the God who is the object of the Christian's worship is perfectly holy, the character of His worshipers should also be holy. And hence, also, we may see that the tendency of true religion is to make people pure. As the worship of the impure gods of the pagan moulds the character of the worshippers into their image, so the worship of Yahweh moulds the character of His professed friends into His image, and they become like him.

<60117>**1 Peter 1:17.** *And if ye call on the Father* That is, if you are true Christians, or truly pious — piety being represented in the Scriptures as calling on God, or as the worship of God. Compare <44091>Acts 9:11; <01046>Genesis 4:26; <11824>1 Kings 18:24; <19617>Psalm 116:17; <12511>2 Kings 5:11; <13608>1 Chronicles 16:8; <29232>Joel 2:32; <45013>Romans 10:13; <36309>Zephaniah 3:9; <46102>1 Corinthians 1:2; <44221>Acts 2:21. The word "Father" here is used evidently not to denote the Father in contradistinction to the Son, but as referring to God as the Father of the universe. See <60114>1 Peter 1:14 — "As obedient children." God is often spoken of as the Father of the intelligent beings whom he has made. Christians worship Him as a Father — as one having all the feelings of a kind and tender parent toward them. Compare <19A313>Psalm 103:13, following.

Who without respect of persons Impartiality. One who is not influenced in His treatment of people by a regard to rank, wealth, beauty, or any external distinction. See the notes at <44034>Acts 10:34, and <45211>Romans 2:11.

Judgeth according to every man's work He judges each one according to his character; or to what he has done, <66212>Revelation 22:12. See the notes at <47510>2 Corinthians 5:10. The meaning is: "You worship a God who will

judge every person according to his real character, and you should therefore lead such lives as he can approve."

Pass the time of your sojourning "Of your temporary residence on earth. This is not your permanent home, but you are strangers and sojourners." See the notes at <60113>Hebrews 11:13.

In fear See the notes at <50212>Philippians 2:12; <60128>Hebrews 12:28. With true reverence or veneration for God and His law. Religion is often represented as the reverent fear of God, <50602>Deuteronomy 6:2,13,24; <20107>Proverbs 1:7; 3:13; 14:26,27, et saepe al.

<60118>**1 Peter 1:18.** *Forasmuch as ye know* This is an argument for a holy life, derived from the fact that they were redeemed, and from the manner in which their redemption had been effected. There is no more effectual way to induce true Christians to consecrate themselves entirely to God, than to refer them to the fact that they are not their own, but have been purchased by the blood of Christ.

That ye were not redeemed On the word rendered "redeemed," (λυτρωο <3084>) see the notes at <56214>Titus 2:14. The word occurs in the New Testament only in <42421>Luke 24:21; <56214>Titus 2:14, and in this place. The noun (λυτρον <3083>) is found in <42028>Matthew 20:28; <41045>Mark 10:45, rendered ransom. For the meaning of the similar word, (απολυτρωσις <629>) see the notes at <45624>Romans 3:24. This word occurs in <42128>Luke 21:28; <45624>Romans 3:24; 8:23; <46130>1 Corinthians 1:30; <490107>Ephesians 1:7,14; 4:30; <510114>Colossians 1:14; <580915>Hebrews 9:15, in all which places it is rendered redemption; and in <581135>Hebrews 11:35, where it is rendered "deliverance." The word here means that they were rescued from sin and death by the blood of Christ, as the valuable consideration on account of which it was done; that is, the blood, or the life of Christ offered as a sacrifice, effected the same purpose in regard to justice and to the maintenance of the principles of moral government, which the punishment of the sinner himself would have done. It was that which God was pleased to accept in the place of the punishment of the sinner, as answering the same great ends in his administration. The principles of his truth and justice could as certainly be maintained in this way as by the punishment of the guilty themselves. If so, then there was no obstacle to their salvation; and they might, on repentance, be consistently pardoned and taken to heaven.

With corruptible things, as silver and gold On the word “corruptible,” as applicable to gold, see the notes at <60107>1 Peter 1:7. Silver and gold usually constitute the price or the valuable consideration paid for the redemption of captives. It is clear that the obligation of one who is redeemed, to love his benefactor, is in proportion to the price which is paid for his ransom. The idea here is, that a price far more valuable than any amount of silver or gold had been paid for the redemption of the people of God, and that they were under proportionate obligation to devote themselves to his service. They were redeemed by the life of the Son of God offered in their behalf; and between the value of that life and silver and gold there could be no comparison.

From your vain conversation Your “vain conduct, or manner of life.” See the notes at <60115>1 Peter 1:15. The word “vain,” applied to conduct, (ματαιας <3152>) means properly “empty, fruitless.” It is a word often applied to the worship of idols, as being nothing, worthless, unable to help, (<44145>Acts 14:15; <111613>1 Kings 16:13; <121715>2 Kings 17:15; <241015>Jeremiah 2:5,8,19) and is probably used in a similar sense in this place. The apostle refers to their former worship of idols, and to all the abominations connected with that service, as being vain and unprofitable; as the worship of nothing real (compare <460804>1 Corinthians 8:4, “We know that an idol is nothing in the world’), and as resulting in a course of life that answered none of the proper ends of living. From that they had been redeemed by the blood of Christ.

Received by tradition from your fathers The mode of worship which had been handed down from father to son. The worship of idols depends on no better reason than that it is that which has been practiced in ancient times; and it is kept up now in all lands, in a great degree, only by the fact that it has had the sanction of the venerated people of other generations.

<60119>**1 Peter 1:19.** *But with the precious blood of Christ* On the use of the word blood, and the reason why the efficacy of the atonement is said to be in the blood, see the notes at <450325>Romans 3:25. The word “precious” (τιμιος <5093>) is a word which would be applied to that which is worth much; which is costly. Compare for the use of the noun (τιμη <5092>) in this sense, <402706>Matthew 27:6, “The price of blood;” <440434>Acts 4:34; 5:2,3; 7:16. See also for the use of the adjective, (τιμιος <5093>) <661704>Revelation 17:4, “gold and precious stones” <661812>Revelation 18:12, “vessels of most precious wood.” <662111>Revelation 21:11, “a stone most precious.” The meaning here

is, that the blood of Christ had a value above silver and gold; it was worth more, to wit:

(1) in itself — being a more valuable thing — and

(2) in effecting our redemption. It accomplished what silver and gold could not do. The universe had nothing more valuable to offer, of which we can conceive, than the blood of the Son of God.

As of a lamb That is, of Christ regarded as a lamb offered for sacrifice. See the notes at <43029>John 1:29.

Without blemish and without spot Such a lamb only was allowed to be offered in sacrifice, <032220>Leviticus 22:20-24; <390108>Malachi 1:8. This was required:

(1) because it was proper that man should offer that which was regarded as perfect in its kind; and,

(2) because only that would be a proper symbol of the great sacrifice which was to be made by the Son of God. The idea was thus kept up from age to age that he, of whom all these victims were the emblems, would be perfectly pure.

<600120>**1 Peter 1:20.** *Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world* That is, it was foreordained, or predetermined, that he should be the great stoning Sacrifice for sin. On the meaning of the word "foreordained," (προγινωσκω <4267>) see <450829>Romans 8:29. The word is rendered which knew, <442605>Acts 26:5; foreknew and foreknow, <450829>Romans 8:29; 11:2; foreordained, <600120>1 Peter 1:20; and know before, <610317>2 Peter 2:17. It does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. The sense is, that the plan was formed, and the arrangements made for the atonement, before the world was created.

Before the foundation of the world That is, from eternity. It was before man was formed; before the earth was made; before any of the material universe was brought into being; before the angels were created. Compare the notes at <402534>Matthew 25:34; <431724>John 17:24; <490104>Ephesians 1:4.

But was manifest Was revealed. See the notes at <540316>1 Timothy 3:16.

In these last times In this, the last dispensation of things on the earth. See the notes at <580102>Hebrews 1:2.

For you For your benefit or advantage. See the notes at <60112>1 Peter 1:12. It follows from what is said in this verse:

(1) that the atonement was not an afterthought on the part of God. It entered into his plan when he made the world, and was revolved in his purposes from eternity.

(2) It was not a device to supply a defect in the system; that is, it was not adopted because the system did not work well, or because God had been disappointed. It was arranged before man was created, and when none but God could know whether he would stand or fall.

(3) The creation of the earth must have had some reference to this plan of redemption, and that plan must have been regarded as in itself so glorious, and so desirable, that it was deemed best to bring the world into existence that the plan might be developed, though it would involve the certainty that the race would fall, and that many would perish. It was, on the whole, more wise and benevolent that the race should be created with a certainty that they would apostatize, than it would be that the race should not he created, and the plan of salvation be unknown to distant worlds. See the notes at <60112>1 Peter 1:12.

<60121>**1 Peter 1:21.** *Who by him do believe in God* Faith is sometimes represented particularly as exercised in God, and sometimes in Christ. It is always a characteristic of true religion that a man has faith in God. Compare the notes at <41122>Mark 11:22.

That raised him up from the dead See the notes at <44024>Acts 2:24; 3:15,26; 4:10; 5:30; 13:30; <45624>Romans 4:24; 6:4; <46515>1 Corinthians 15:15.

And gave him glory By exalting him at his own right hand in heaven, <50209>Philippians 2:9; <54316>1 Timothy 3:16; <49120>Ephesians 1:20,21.

That your faith and hope might be in God That is, by raising up the Lord Jesus, and exalting him to heaven, he has laid the foundation of confidence in his promises, and of the hope of eternal life. Compare the notes at <60103>1 Peter 1:3. Compare 1 Corinthians 15; <51027>Colossians 1:27; <52103>1 Thessalonians 1:3; <54101>1 Timothy 1:1.

<60122>**1 Peter 1:22.** *Seeing ye have purified your souls* Greek, “Having purified your souls.” The apostles were never afraid of referring to human agency as having an important part in saving the soul Compare <46045>1

Corinthians 4:15. No one is made pure without personal intention or effort — any more than one becomes accomplished or learned without personal exertion. One of the leading effects of the agency of the Holy Spirit is to excite us to make efforts for our own salvation; and there is no true piety which is not the fair result of culture, as really as the learning of a Person, or the harvest of the farmer. The amount of effort which we make "in purifying our souls" is usually also the measure of our attainments in religion. No one can expect to have any true piety beyond the amount of effort which he makes to be conformed to God, any more than one can expect wealth, or fame, or learning, without exertion.

In obeying the truth That is, your yielding to the requirements of truth, and to its fair influence on your minds, has been the means of your becoming pure. The truth here referred to is, undoubtedly, that which is revealed in the gospel — the great system of truth respecting the redemption of the world.

Through the Spirit By the agency of the Holy Spirit. It is his office to apply truth to the mind; and however precious the truth may be, and however adapted to secure certain results on the soul, it will never produce those effects without the influences of the Holy Spirit. Compare <56005>Titus 3:5,6; the notes at <43005>John 3:5.

Unto unfeigned love of the brethren The effect of the influence of the Holy Spirit in applying the truth has been to produce sincere love to all who are true Christians. Compare the notes at <43134>John 13:34; <52409>1 Thessalonians 4:9. See also <62314>1 John 3:14-18.

See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently Compare the notes at <58101>Hebrews 13:1; <43134>John 13:34,35; <49502>Ephesians 5:2. The phrase "with a pure heart fervently," means:

(1) that it should be genuine love proceeding from a heart in which there is no guile or hypocrisy; and

(2) that it should be intense affection, (εκτενως <1619>) not cold and formal, but ardent and strong.

If there is any reason why we should love true Christians at all, there is the same reason why our attachment to them should be intense. This verse establishes the following points:

(1) That truth was at the foundation of their piety. They had none of which this was not the proper basis; and in which the foundation was not as broad as the superstructure. There is no religion in the world which is not the fair developement of truth; which the truth is not suited to produce.

(2) They became Christians as the result of obeying the truth; or by yielding to its fair influence on the soul. Their own minds complied with its claims; their own hearts yielded; there was the exercise of their own volitions. This expresses a doctrine of great importance:

(a) There is always the exercise of the powers of the mind in true religion; always a yielding to truth; always a voluntary reception of it into the soul.

(b) Religion is always of the nature of obedience. It consists in yielding to what is true and right; in laying aside the feelings of opposition, and in allowing the mind to follow where truth and duty lead.

(c) This would always take place when the truth is presented to the mind, if there were no voluntary resistance. If all people were ready to yield to the truth, they would become Christians. The only reason why all people do not love and serve God is that they refuse to yield to what they know to be true and right.

(3) The agency by which this was accomplished was that of the Holy Spirit. Truth is adapted in itself to a certain end or result, as seed is adapted to produce a harvest. But it will no more of itself produce its appropriate effects on the soul, than seed will produce a harvest without rains, and dews, and suns. In all cases, therefore, the proper effect of truth on the soul is to be traced to the influence of the Holy Spirit, as the germination of the seed in the earth is to the foreign cause that acts on it. No man was ever converted by the mere effect of truth without the agency of the Holy Spirit, any more than seed germinates when laid upon a hard rock.

(4) The effect of this influence of the Holy Spirit in applying the truth is to produce love to all who are Christians. Love to Christian brethren springs up in the soul of everyone who is truly converted: and this love is just as certain evidence that the seed of truth has germinated in the soul, as the green and delicate blade that peeps up through the earth is evidence that the seed sown has been quickened into life. Compare the notes at <52409>1 Thessalonians 4:9; <62314>1 John 3:14. We may learn hence:

(a) that truth is of inestimable value. It is as valuable as religion itself, for all the religion in the world is the result of it.

(b) Error and falsehood are mischievous and evil in the same degree. There is no true religion which is the fair result of error; and all the pretended religion that is sustained by error is worthless.

(c) If a system of religion, or a religious measure or doctrine, cannot be defended by truth, it should be at once abandoned. Compare the notes at <18137>Job 13:7.

(d) We should avoid the places where error is taught. <20127>Proverbs 19:27, "Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge."

(e) We should place ourselves under the teachings of truth, for there is truth enough in the world to occupy all our time and attention; and it is only by truth that our minds can be benefited.

<60123>**1 Peter 1:23.** *Being born again* See the notes at <43003>John 3:3.

Not of corruptible seed "Not by virtue of any descent from human parents" — Doddridge. The result of such a birth, or of being begotten in this way — for so the word rendered "born again" more properly signifies — is only corruption and decay. We are begotten only to die. There is no permanent, enduring life produced by that. It is in this sense that this is spoken of as, "corruptible seed," because it results in decay and death. The word here rendered "seed" — σπορα <4701> — occurs nowhere else in the New Testament.

But of incorruptible By truth, communicating a living principle to the soul which can never decay. Compare <62309>1 John 3:9: "His seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

By the word of God See the note at <59018>James 1:18:, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." Compare the notes at <43013>John 1:13. It is the uniform doctrine of the Scriptures that divine truth is made the instrument of quickening the soul into spiritual life.

Which liveth and abideth forever This expression may either refer to God, as living forever, or to the word of God, as being forever true. Critics are about equally divided in the interpretation. The Greek will bear either

construction. Most of the recent critics incline to the latter opinion — that it refers to the word of God, or to his doctrine. So Rosenmuller, Doddridge, Bloomfield, Wolf, Macknight, Clarke. It seems to me, however, that the more natural construction of the Greek is to refer it to God, as ever-living or enduring; and this interpretation agrees well with the connection. The idea then is, that as God is ever-living, that which is produced directly by him in the human soul, by the instrumentality of truth, may be expected also to endure forever. It will not be like the offspring of human parents, themselves mortal, liable to early and certain decay, but may be expected to be as enduring as its ever-living Creator.

<60124>**1 Peter 1:24.** *For all flesh is as grass* That is, all human beings, all men. The connection here is this: The apostle, in the previous verse, had been contrasting that which is begotten by man with that which is begotten by God, in reference to its permanency. The former was corruptible and decaying; the latter abiding. The latter was produced by God, who lives forever; the former by the agency of man, who is himself corruptible and dying. It was not unnatural, then, to dwell upon the feeble, frail, decaying nature of man, in contrast with God; and the apostle, therefore, says that "all flesh, every human being, is like grass. There is no stability in anything that man does or produces. He himself resembles grass that soon fades and withers; but God and his word endure forever the same." The comparison of a human being with grass, or with flowers, is very beautiful, and is quite common in the Scriptures. The comparison turns on the fact, that the grass or the flower, however green or beautiful it may be, soon loses its freshness; is withered; is cut down, and dies. Thus, in <19A315>Psalm 103:15,16:

> "As for man, his days are as grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth; For the wind passeth over it and it is gone, And the place thereof shall know it no more."

So in <23406>Isaiah 40:6-8; a passage which is evidently referred to by Peter in this place:

> "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, And all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, The flower fadeth, When the wind of Jehovah bloweth upon it: Surely the people is grass, The grass withereth, The flower fadeth, But the word of our God shall stand forever."

See also <590110>James 1:10,11. This sentiment is beautifully imitated by the great dramatist in the speech of Wolsey:

> “This is the state of man; today he puts forth The tender leaves of hope, tomorrow blossoms, And bears his blushing honors thick upon him. The third day comes a frost, a killing frost, And — when he thinks, good easy man, full surely His greatness is a ripening — nips his root, And then he falls.”

Compare the notes at <230406>Isaiah 40:6-8.

And all the glory of man All that man prides himself on — his wealth, rank, talents, beauty, learning, splendor of equipage or apparel.

As the flower of grass The word rendered “grass,” (χορτος <5528>) properly denotes herbage; that which furnishes food for animals — pasture, hay. Probably the prophet Isaiah, from whom this passage is taken, referred rather to the appearance of a meadow or a field, with mingled grass and flowers, constituting a beautiful landscape, than to mere grass. In such a field, the grass soon withers with heat, and with the approach of winter; and the flowers soon fade and fall.

The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away This is repeated, as is common in the Hebrew writings, for the sake of emphasis, or strong confirmation.

<600125>**1 Peter 1:25.** *But the word of the Lord* In Isaiah (<230408>Isaiah 40:8) “the word of our God.” The sense is not materially varied.

Endureth forever Is unmoved, fixed, permanent. Amidst all the revolutions on earth, the fading glories of natural objects, and the wasting strength of man, his truth remains unaffected. Its beauty never fades; its power is never enfeebled. The gospel system is as lovely now as it was when it was first revealed to man, and it has as much power to save as it had when first applied to a human heart. We see the grass wither at the coming on of autumn; we see the flower of the field decay; we see man, though confident in his strength, and rejoicing in the rigor of his frame, cut down in an instant; we see cities decline, and kingdoms lose their power: but the word of God is the same now that it was at first, and, amidst all the changes which may ever occur on the earth, that will remain the same.

And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you That is, this gospel is the "word" which was referred to by Isaiah in the passage which has been quoted. In view, then, of the affecting truth stated in the close of this chapter, (<60124>1 Peter 1:24,25) let us learn habitually to reflect on our feebleness and frailty. "We all do fade as a leaf," <23606>Isaiah 64:6. Our glory is like the flower of the field. Our beauty fades, and our strength disappears, as easily as the beauty and vigor of the flower that grows up in the morning, and that in the evening is cut down, <19006>Psalm 90:6. The rose that blossoms on the cheek of youth may wither as soon as any other rose; the brightness of the eye may become dim, as readily as the beauty of a field covered with flowers; the darkness of death may come over the brow of manliness and intelligence, as readily as night settles down on the landscape and our robes of adorning may be laid aside, as soon as beauty fades in a meadow full of flowers before the scythe of the mower. There is not an object of natural beauty on which we pride ourselves that will not decay; and soon all our pride and pomp will be laid low in the tomb. It is sad to look on a beautiful lily, a rose, a magnolia, and to think how soon all that beauty will disappear. It is more sad to look on a rosy cheek, a bright eye, a lovely form, an expressive brow, an open, serene, intelligent countenance, and to think how soon all that beauty and brilliancy will fade away. But amidst these changes which beauty undergoes, and the desolations which disease and death spread over the world, it is cheering to think that all is not so. There is that which does not change, which never loses its beauty. "The word of the Lord" abides. His cheering promises, his assurances that there is a brighter and better world, remain amidst all these changes the same. The traits which are drawn on the character by the religion of Christ, more lovely by far than the most delicate coloring of the lily, remain forever. There they abide, augmenting in loveliness, when the rose fades from the cheek; when the brilliancy departs from the eye; when the body moulders away in the sepulchre. The beauty of religion is the only permanent beauty in the earth; and he that has that need not regret that that which in this mortal frame charms the eye shall fade away like the flower of the field.

NOTES ON 1 PETER 2

This chapter may be divided into three parts:

I. An exhortation to those whom the apostle addressed, to lay aside all malice, and all guile, and to receive the simple and plain instructions of the word of God with the earnestness with which babies desire their appropriate food, <60201>1 Peter 2:1-3. Religion reproduces the traits of character of children in those whom it influences, and they ought to regard themselves as new-born babes, and seek that kind of spiritual nutriment which is adapted to their condition as such.

II. The privileges which they had obtained by becoming Christians, while so many others had stumbled at the very truths by which they had been saved, <60204>1 Peter 2:4-10:

(a) They had come to the Saviour, as the living stone on which the whole spiritual temple was founded, though others had rejected him; they had become a holy priesthood; they had been admitted to the privilege of offering true sacrifices, acceptable to God, <60204>1 Peter 2:4,5.

(b) To them Christ was precious as the chief cornerstone, on which all their hopes rested, and on which the edifice that was to be reared was safe, though that foundation of the Christian hope had been rejected and disallowed by others, <60206>1 Peter 2:6-8.

(c) They were now a chosen people, an holy nation, appointed to show forth on earth the praises of God, though formerly they were not regarded as the people of God, and were not within the range of the methods by which he was accustomed to show mercy, <60209>1 Peter 2:9,10.

III. Various duties growing out of these privileges, and out of the various relations which they sustained in life, <60211>1 Peter 2:11-25:

(a) The duty of living as strangers and pilgrims; of abstaining from all those fleshly lusts which war against the soul; and of leading lives of entire honesty in relation to the Gentiles, by whom they were surrounded, <60211>1 Peter 2:11,12.

(b) The duty of submitting to civil rulers, <60213>1 Peter 2:13-17.

(c) The duty of servants to submit to their masters, though their condition was a hard one in life, and they were often called to suffer wrongfully, <60218>1 Peter 2:18-20.

(d) This duty was enforced on servants, and on all, from the example of Christ, who was more wronged than any others can be, and who yet bore all his sufferings with entire patience, leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps, <60221>1 Peter 2:21-25.

<60201>**1 Peter 2:1.** *Wherefore laying aside* On the word rendered laying aside, see <45132>Romans 13:12; <49422>Ephesians 4:22,25; <51308>Colossians 3:8. The allusion is to putting off clothes; and the meaning is, that we are to cast off these things entirely; that is, we are no longer to practice them. The word "wherefore" (ουν <3767>) refers to the reasonings in the first chapter. In view of the considerations stated there, we should renounce all evil.

All malice All "evil," (κακιαν <2549>). The word "malice" we commonly apply now to a particular kind of evil, denoting extreme enmity of heart, ill-will, a disposition to injure others without cause, from mere personal gratification, or from a spirit of revenge — Webster. The Greek word, however, includes evil of all kinds. See the notes at <45129>Romans 1:29. Compare <44822>Acts 8:22, where it is rendered wickedness, and <46508>1 Corinthians 5:8; 14:20; <49431>Ephesians 4:31; <51308>Colossians 3:8; <56303>Titus 3:3.

And all guile Deceit of all kinds. See the notes at <45129>Romans 1:29; <47216>2 Corinthians 12:16; <52203>1 Thessalonians 2:3.

And hypocrisies See the notes at <54602>1 Timothy 4:2; <40223>Matthew 23:28; <48013>Galatians 2:13, on the word rendered dissimulation. The word means, feigning to be what we are not; assuming a false appearance of religion; cloaking a wicked purpose under the appearance of piety.

And envies Hatred of others on account of some excellency which they have, or something which they possess which we do not. See the notes at <45129>Romans 1:29.

And all evil speaking Greek: "speaking against others." This word (καταλαλια <2636>) occurs only here and in <47220>2 Corinthians 12:20, where it is rendered "backbitings." It would include all unkind or slanderous speaking against others. This is by no means an uncommon fault in the world, and it is one of the designs of religion to guard against it. Religion

teaches us to lay aside whatever guile, insincerity, and false appearances we may have acquired, and to put on the simple honesty and openness of children. We all acquire more or less of guile and insincerity in the course of life. We learn to conceal our sentiments and feelings, and almost unconsciously come to appear different from what we really are. It is not so with children. In the child, every emotion of the bosom appears as it is. "Nature there works well and beautifully." Every emotion is expressed; every feeling of the heart is developed; and in the cheeks, the open eye, the joyous or sad countenance, we know all that there is in the bosom, as certainly as we know all that there is in the rose by its color and its fragrance. Now, it is one of the purposes of religion to bring us back to this state, and to strip off all the subterfuges which we may have acquired in life; and he in whom this effect is not accomplished has never been converted. A man that is characteristically deceitful, cunning, and crafty, cannot be a Christian. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," <4018>Matthew 18:3.

<6012>**1 Peter 2:2.** *As new-born babes* The phrase used here would properly denote those which were just born, and hence Christians who had just begun the spiritual life. See the word explained in the notes at <5315>2 Timothy 3:15. It is not uncommon, in the Scriptures, to compare Christians with little children. See the notes at <4018>Matthew 18:3, for the reasons of this comparison. Compare the notes at <4602>1 Corinthians 3:2; <5812>Hebrews 5:12,14.

Desire the sincere milk of the word The pure milk of the word. On the meaning of the word "sincere," see the notes at <4624>Ephesians 6:24. The Greek word here (αδολον <97>) means, properly, that which is without guile or falsehood; then unadulterated, pure, genuine. The Greek adjective rendered "of the word," (λογικον <3050>) means properly rational, pertaining to reason, or mind; and, in the connection here with milk, means that which is adapted to sustain the soul. Compare the notes at <5201>Romans 12:1. There is no doubt that there is allusion to the gospel in its purest and most simple form, as adapted to be the nutriment of the new-born soul. Probably there are two ideas here; one, that the proper aliment of piety is simple truth; the other, that the truths which they were to desire were the more elementary truths of the gospel, such as would be adapted to those who were babes in knowledge.

That ye may grow thereby As babes grow on their proper nutriment. Piety in the heart is susceptible of growth, and is made to grow by its proper aliment, as a plant or a child is, and will grow in proportion as it has the proper kind of nutriment. From this verse we may see:

(1) the reason of the injunction of the Saviour to Peter, to "feed his lambs," John 21:15; 1 Peter 2:1,2. Young Christians strongly resemble children, babies; and they need watchful care, and kind attention, and appropriate aliment, as much as new-born infants do. Piety receives its form much from its commencement and the character of the whole Christian life will be determined in a great degree by the views entertained at first, and the kind of instruction which is given to those who are just entering on their Christian course. We may also see,

(2) that it furnishes evidence of conversion, if we have a love for the simple and pure truths of the gospel. It is evidence that we have spiritual life, as really as the desire of appropriate nourishment is evidence that an infant has natural life. The new-born soul loves the truth. It is nourished by it. It perishes without it. The gospel is just what it wants; and without that it could not live. We may also learn from this verse,

(3) that the truths of the gospel which are best adapted to that state, are those which are simple and plain. Compare Hebrews 5:12-14. It is not philosophy that is needed then; it is not the profound and difficult doctrines of the gospel; it is those elementary truths which lie at the foundation of all religion, and which can be comprehended by children. Religion makes everyone docile and humble as a child; and whatever may be the age at which one is converted, or whatever attainments he may have made in science, he relishes the same truths which are loved by the youngest and most unlettered child that is brought into the kingdom of God.

1 Peter 2:3. *If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious* Or rather, as Doddridge renders it, "Since you have tasted that the Lord is gracious." The apostle did not mean to express any doubt on the subject, but to state that, since they had had an experimental acquaintance with the grace of God, they should desire to increase more and more in the knowledge and love of him. On the use of the word "taste," see the notes at Hebrews 6:4.

1 Peter 2:4. *To whom coming* To the Lord Jesus, for so the word "Lord" is to be understood in 1 Peter 2:3. Compare the notes at

<40124>Acts 1:24. The idea here is, that they had come to him for salvation, while the great mass of people rejected him. Others “disallowed” him, and turned away from him, but they had seen that he was the one chosen or appointed of God, and had come to him in order to be saved. Salvation is often represented as corning to Christ. See <40128>Matthew 11:28.

As unto a living stone The allusion in this passage is to <23816>Isaiah 28:16,

> “Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.”

See the notes at that passage. There may be also possibly an allusion to <19822>Psalm 118:22,

> “The stone which the builders disallowed is become the headstone of the corner.”

The reference is to Christ as the foundation on which the church is reared. He occupied the same place in regard to the church which a foundation-stone does to the edifice that is reared upon it. Compare <40724>Matthew 7:24,25. See the notes at <45933>Romans 9:33, and <49220>Ephesians 2:20-22. The phrase “living stone” is however unusual, and is not found, I think, except in this place. There seems to be an incongruity in it, in attributing life to a stone, yet the meaning is not difficult to be understood. The purpose was not to speak of a temple, like that at Jerusalem, made up of gold and costly stones; but of a temple made up of living materials — of redeemed people — in which God now resides. In speaking of that, it was natural to refer to the foundation on which the whole rested, and to speak of that as corresponding to the whole edifice. It was all a living temple — a temple composed of living materials — from the foundation to the top. Compare the expression in <43010>John 4:10, “He would have given thee living water;” that is, water which would have imparted life to the soul. So Christ imparts life to the whole spiritual temple that is reared on him as a foundation.

Disallowed indeed of men Rejected by them, first by the Jews, in causing him to be put to death; and then by all people when he is offered to them as their Saviour. See the notes at <23503>Isaiah 53:3. <19822>Psalm 118:22: “Which the builders refused.” Compare the notes at <42142>Matthew 21:42; <44011>Acts 4:11.

But chosen of God Selected by him as the suitable foundation on which to rear his church.

And precious Valuable. The universe had nothing more valuable on which to rear the spiritual temple.

1 Peter 2:5. *Ye also, as lively stones* Greek, “living stones.” The word should have been so rendered. The word lively with us now has a different meaning from living, and denotes “active, quick, sprightly.” The Greek word is the same as that used in the previous verse, and rendered living. The meaning is, that the materials of which the temple here referred to was composed, were living materials throughout. The foundation is a living foundation, and all the superstructure is compased of living materials. The purpose of the apostle here is to compare the church to a beautiful temple — such as the temple in Jerusalem, and to show that it is complete in all its parts, as that was. It has within itself what corresponds with everything that was valuable in that. It is a beautiful structure like that; and as in that there was a priesthood, and there were real and acceptable sacrifices offered, so it is in the Christian church. The Jews prided themselves much on their temple. It was a most costly and splendid edifice. It was the place where God was worshipped, and where he was supposed to dwell. It had an imposing service, and there was acceptable worship rendered there. As a new dispensation was introduced; as the tendency of the Christian system was to draw off the worshippers from that temple, and to teach them that God could be worshipped as acceptably elsewhere as at Jerusalem, (John 4:21-23) as Christianity did not inculcate the necessity of rearing splendid temples for the worship of God; and as in fact the temple at Jerusalem was about to be destroyed forever, it was important to show that in the Christian church there might be found all that was truly beautiful and valuable in the temple at Jerusalem; that it had what corresponded to what was in fact most precious there, and that there was still a most magnificent and beautiful temple on the earth. Hence, the sacred writers labor to show that all was found in the church that had made the temple at Jerusalem so glorious, and that the great design contemplated by the erection of that splendid edifice — the maintenance of the worship of God — was now accomplished in a more glorious manner than even in the services of that house. For there was a temple, made up of living materials, which was still the special dwelling-place of God on the earth. In that I temple there was a holy priesthood — for every Christian was a priest. In that temple there were sacrifices offered, as acceptable to God as

in the former — for they were spiritual sacrifices, offered continually. These thoughts were often dwelt upon by the apostle Paul, and are here illustrated by Peter, evidently with the same design, to impart consolation to those who had never been permitted to worship at the temple in Jerusalem, and to comfort those Jews, now converted to Christianity, who saw that that splendid and glorious edifice was about to be destroyed. The special abode of God on the earth was now removed from that temple to the Christian church. The first aspect in which this is illustrated here is, that the temple of God was made up of “living stones;” that is, that the materials were not inanimate stones but endued with life, and so much more valuable than those employed in the temple at Jerusalem, as the soul is more precious than any materials of stone. There were living beings which composed that temple, constituting a more beautiful structure, and a more appropriate dwelling-place for God, than any edifice could be made of stone, however costly or valuable.

A spiritual house A spiritual temple, not made of perishable materials, like that at Jerusalem net composed of matter, as that was, but made up of redeemed souls — a temple more appropriate to be the residence of one who is a pure spirit. Compare the notes at <4029>Ephesians 2:19-22, and <4069>1 Corinthians 6:19,20.

An holy priesthood In the temple at Jerusalem, the priesthood appointed to minister there, and to offer sacrifices, constituted an essential part of the arrangement. It was important, therefore, to show that this was not overlooked in the spiritual temple that God was raising. Accordingly, the apostle says that this is amply provided for, by constituting “the whole body of Christians” to be in fact a priesthood. Everyone is engaged in offering acceptable sacrifice to God. The business is not entrusted to a particular class to be known as priests; there is not a particular portion to whom the name is to be especially given; but every Christian is in fact a priest, and is engaged in offering an acceptable sacrifice to God. See <4006>Romans 1:6: “And hath made us: kings and priests unto God.” The Great High Priest in this service is the Lord Jesus Christ, (see the Epistle to the Hebrews, passim) but besides him there is no one who sustains this office, except as it is borne by all the Christian members. There are ministers, elders, pastors, evangelists in the church; but there is no one who is a priest, except in the general sense that ALL are priests — because the great sacrifice has been offered, and there is no expiation now to be made. The name priest, therefore should never be conferred on a minister of the

gospel. It is never so given in the New Testament, and there was a reason why it should not be. The proper idea of a priest is one who offers sacrifice; but the ministers of the New Testament have no sacrifices to offer — the one great and perfect oblation for the sins of the world having been made by the Redeemer on the cross. To him, and him alone, under the New Testament dispensation, should the name priest be given, as it is uniformly in the New Testament, except in the general sense in which it is given to all Christians. In the Roman Catholic communion it is consistent to give the name "priest" to a minister of the gospel, but it is wrong to do it. It is consistent, because they claim that a true sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ is offered in the mass. It is wrong, because that doctrine is wholly contrary to the New Testament, and is derogatory to the one perfect Oblation which has been once made for the sins of the world, and in conferring upon just one class of people a degree of importance and of power to which they have no claim, and which is so liable to abuse. But in a Protestant church it is neither consistent nor right to give the name "priest" to a minister of religion. The only sense in which the term can now be used in the Christian church is a sense in which it is applicable to all Christians alike — that they "offer the sacrifice of prayer and praise."

To offer up spiritual sacrifices Not bloody offerings, the blood of lambs and bullocks, but those which are the offerings of the heart — the sacrifices of prayer and praise. Since there is a priest, there is also involved the notion of a sacrifice; but that which is offered is such as all Christians offer to God, proceeding from the heart, and breathed forth from the lips, and in a holy life. It is called sacrifice, not because it makes an explanation for sin, but because it is of the nature of worship. Compare the notes at Hebrews 13:15; 10:14.

Acceptable to God by Jesus Christ Compare the notes at Romans 12:1. Through the merits of the great sacrifice made by the Redeemer on the cross. Our prayers and praises are in themselves so imperfect, and proceed from such polluted lips and hearts, that they can be acceptable only through him as our intercessor before the throne of God. Compare the notes at Hebrews 9:24,25; 10:19-22.

1 Peter 2:6. *Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture* Isaiah 28:16. The quotation is substantially as it is found in the Septuagint.

Behold, I lay in Sion See the notes at Isaiah 28:16, and Romans 9:33. *A chief cornerstone* The principal stone on which the corner of the

edifice rests. A stone is selected for this which is large and solid, and, usually, one which is squared, and worked with care; and as such a stone is commonly laid with solemn ceremonies, so, perhaps, in allusion to this, it is here said by God that he would lay this stone at the foundation. The solemnities attending this were those which accompanied the great work of the Redeemer. See the word explained in the notes at <490220>Ephesians 2:20.

Elect Chosen of God, or selected for this purpose, <600204>1 Peter 2:4.

And he that believeth on him shall not be confounded Shall not be ashamed. The Hebrew is, “shall not make haste.” See it explained in the notes at <450933>Romans 9:33.

<600207>**1 Peter 2:7.** *Unto you therefore which believe* Christians are often called simply “believers,” because faith in the Saviour is one of the prominent characteristics by which they are distinguished from their fellow-men. It sufficiently describes any man, to say that he is a believer in the Lord Jesus.

He is precious Margin, “an honor.” That is, according to the margin, it is an honor to believe on him, and should be so regarded. This is true, but it is very doubtful whether this is the idea of Peter. The Greek is ἡ <3588> τιμη <5092>; literally, “esteem, honor, respect, reverence;” then “value or price.” The noun is probably used in the place of the adjective, in the sense of honorable, valued, precious; and it is not incorrectly rendered in the text, “he is precious.” The connection demands this interpretation. The apostle was not showing that it was an honor to believe on Christ, but was stating the estimate which was put on him by those who believe, as contrasted with the view taken of him by the world. The truth which is taught is, that while the Lord Jesus is rejected by the great mass of people, he is regarded by all Christians as of inestimable value:

I. Of the fact there can be no doubt. Somehow, Christians perceive a value in him which is seen in nothing else. This is evinced:

(a) in their avowed estimate of him as their best friend;

(b) in their being willing so far to honor him as to commit to him the keeping of their souls, resting the whole question of their salvation upon him alone;

(c) in their readiness to keep his commands, and to serve him, while the mass of people disobey him; and

(d) in their being willing to die for him.

II. The reasons why he is so precious to them are such as these:

(1) They are brought into a condition where they can appreciate his worth. To see the value of food, we must be hungry; of clothing, we must be exposed to the winter's blast; of home, we must be wanderers without a dwelling-place; of medicine, we must be sick; of competence, we must be poor. So, to see the value of the Saviour, we must see that we are poor, helpless, dying sinners; that the soul is of inestimable worth; that we have no merit of our own; and that unless someone interpose, we must perish. Everyone who becomes a true Christian is brought to this condition; and in this state he can appreciate the worth of the Saviour. In this respect the condition of Christians is unlike that of the rest of mankind — for they are in no better state to appreciate the worth of the Saviour, than the man in health is to appreciate the value of the healing art, or than he who has never had a want unsupplied, the kindness of one who comes to us with an abundant supply of food.

(2) The Lord Jesus is in fact of more value to them than any other benefactor. We have had benefactors who have done us good, but none who have done us such good as he has. We have had parents, teachers, kind friends, who have provided for us, taught us, relieved us; but all that they have done for us is slight, compared with what he has done. The fruit of their kindness, for the most part, pertains to the present world; and they have not laid down their lives for us. What he has done pertains to our welfare to all eternity; it is the fruit of the sacrifice of his own life. How precious should the name and memory of one be who has laid down his own life to save us!

(3) We owe all our hopes of heaven to him; and in proportion to the value of such a hope, he is precious to us. We have no hope of salvation but in him. Take that away — blot out the name and the work of the Redeemer — and we see no way in which we could be saved; we have no prospect of being saved. As our hope of heaven, therefore, is valuable to us; as it supports us in trial; as it comforts us in the hour of death, so is the Saviour precious: and the estimate which we form of him is in proportion to the value of such a hope.

(4) There is an intrinsic value and excellency in the character of Christ, apart from his relation to us, which makes him precious to those who can appreciate his worth. In his character, abstractedly considered, there was more to attract, to interest, to love, than in that of any other one who ever lived in our world. There was more purity, more benevolence, more that was great in trying circumstances, more that was generous and self-denying, more that resembled God, than in any other one who ever appeared on earth. In the moral firmament, the character of Christ sustains a pre-eminence above all others who have lived, as great as the glory of the sun is superior to the feeble lights, though so numerous, which glimmer at midnight. With such views of him, it is not to be wondered at that, however he may be estimated by the world, “to them who believe, he is precious.”

But unto them which be disobedient Literally, “unwilling to be persuaded,” (απειθης <545>) that is, those who refused to believe; who were obstinate or contumacious, <4201 7>Luke 1:17; <4501 0>Romans 1:30. The meaning is, that to them he is made a stone against which they impinge, and ruin themselves. See the notes at <6012 8>1 Peter 2:8.

The stone which the builders disallowed Which they rejected, or refused to make a cornerstone. The allusion here, by the word “builders,” is primarily to the Jews, represented as raising a temple of salvation, or building with reference to eternal life. They refused to lay this stone, which God had appointed, as the foundation of their hopes, but preferred some other foundation. See this passage explained in the notes at <4042 2>Matthew 21:42; <4401 1>Acts 4:11; and <4501 3>Romans 9:33.

The same is made the head of the corner That is, though it is rejected by the mass of people, yet God has in fact made it the cornerstone on which the whole spiritual temple rests, <4401 1>Acts 4:11,12. However people may regard it, there is, in fact, no other hope of heaven than that which is founded on the Lord Jesus. If people are not saved by him, he becomes to them a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.

<6012 8>**1 Peter 2:8.** *And a stone of stumbling* A stone over which they, stumble, or against which they impinge. The idea seems to be that of a cornerstone which projects from the building, against which they dash themselves, and by which they are made to fall. See the notes at <4042 4>Matthew 21:44. The rejection of the Saviour becomes the means of

their ruin. They refuse to build on him, and it is as if one should run against a solid projecting cornerstone of a house, that would certainly be the means of their destruction. Compare the notes at <4201134>Luke 1:34. An idea similar to this occurs in <4212144>Matthew 21:44: “Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken.” The meaning is, that if this foundation-stone is not the means of their salvation, it will be of their ruin. It is not a matter of indifference whether they believe on him or not — whether they accept or reject him. They cannot reject him without the most fearful consequences to their souls.

And a rock of offence This expresses substantially the same idea as the phrase “stone of stumbling.” The word rendered “offence,” (σκανδαλον <4625>) means properly “a trap-stick — a crooked stick on which the bait is fastened which the animal strikes against, and so springs the trap,” (Robinson, Lexicon) then “a trap, gin, snare”; and then “anything which one strikes or stumbles against; a stumbling-block.” It then denotes “that which is the cause or occasion of ruin.” This language would be strictly applicable to the Jews, who rejected the Saviour on account of his humble birth, and whose rejection of him was made the occasion of the destruction of their temple, city, and nation. But it is also applicable to all who reject him, from whatever cause; for their rejection of him will be followed with ruin to their souls. It is a crime for which God will judge them as certainly as he did the Jews who disowned him and crucified him, for the offence is substantially the same. What might have been, therefore, the means of their salvation, is made the cause of their deeper condemnation.

Even to them which stumble at the word To all who do this. That is, they take the same kind of offence at the gospel which the Jews did at the Saviour himself. It is substantially the same thing, and the consequences must be the same. How does the conduct of the man who rejects the Saviour now, differ from that of him who rejected him when he was on the earth?

Being disobedient <6010107>1 Peter 2:7. The reason why they reject him is, that they are not disposed to obey. They are solemnly commanded to believe the gospel; and a refusal to do it, therefore, is as really an act of disobedience as to break any other command of God.

Whereunto they were appointed (εις <1519> ὁ <3588> και <2532> ετεθησαν <5087>). The word “whereunto “ means unto which. But unto what? It cannot be

supposed that it means that they were “appointed” to believe on him and be saved by him; for:

(1) this would involve all the difficulty which is ever felt in the doctrine of decrees or election; for it would then mean that he had eternally designated them to be saved, which is the doctrine of predestination; and

(2) if this were the true interpretation, the consequence would follow that God had been foiled in his plan — for the reference here is to those who would not be saved, that is, to those who “stumble at that stumblingstone,” and are destroyed.

Calvin supposes that it means, “unto which rejection and destruction they were designated in the purpose of God.” So Bloomfield renders it,” Unto which (disbelief) they were destined,’(Critical Digest) meaning, as he supposes, that “into this stumbling and disobedience they were permitted by God to fall.” Doddridge interprets it,

> “To which also they were appointed by the righteous sentence of God, long before, even as early as in his first purpose and decree he ordained his Son to be the great foundation of his church.”

Rosenmuller gives substantially the same interpretation. Clemens Romanus says it means that “they were appointed, not that they should sin, but that, sinning, they should be punished.” See Wetstein. So Macknight. “To which punishment they were appointed.” Whitby gives the same interpretation of it, that because they were disobedient, (referring, as he supposes, to the Jews who rejected the Messiah) “they were appointed, for the punishment of that disobedience, to fall and perish.” Dr. Clark supposes that it means that they were prophesied of that they should thus fall; or that, long before, it was predicted that they should thus stumble and fall. In reference to the meaning of this difficult passage, it is proper to observe that there is in the Greek verb necessarily the idea of designation, appointment, purpose. There was some agency or intention by which they were put in that condition; some act of placing or appointing, (the word τιθημι <5087> meaning to set, put, lay, lay down, appoint, constitute) by which this result was brought about. The fair sense, therefore, and one from which we cannot escape, is, that this did not happen by chance or accident, but that there was a divine arrangement, appointment, or plan on the part of God in reference to this result, and that the result was in conformity with that. So it is said in <650104>Jude 1:4, of a similar class of people, “For there are certain

men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation.” The facts were these:

(1) That God appointed his Son to be the cornerstone of his church.

(2) That there was a portion of the world which, from some cause, would embrace him and be saved.

(3) That there was another portion who, it was certain, would not embrace him.

(4) That it was known that the appointment of the Lord Jesus as a Saviour would be the occasion of their rejecting him, and of their deeper and more aggravated condemnation.

(5) That the arrangement was nevertheless made, with the understanding that all this would be so, and because it was best on the whole that it should be so, even though this consequence would follow. That is, it was better that the arrangement should be made for the salvation of people even with this result, that a part would sink into deeper condemnation, than that no arrangement should be made to save any. The primary and originating arrangement, therefore, did not contemplate them or their destruction, but was made with reference to others, and notwithstanding they would reject him, and would fall. The expression “whereunto” (εις <1519> ὁ <3739>) refers to this plan, as involving, under the circumstances, the result which actually followed. Their stumbling and falling was not a matter of chance, or a result which was not contemplated, but entered into the original arrangement; and the whole, therefore, might be said to be in accordance with a wise plan and purpose. And,

(6) it might he said in this sense, and in this connection, that those who would reject him were appointed to this stumbling and falling. It was what was foreseen; what entered into the general arrangement; what was involved in the purpose to save any. It was not a matter that was unforeseen, that the consequence of giving a Saviour would result in the condemnation of those who should crucify and reject him; but the whole thing, as it actually occurred, entered into the divine arrangement. It may be added, that as, in the facts in the case, nothing wrong has been done by God, and no one has been deprived of any rights, or punished more than he deserves, it was not wrong in him to make the arrangement. It was better that the arrangement should be made as it is, even with this consequence,

than that none at all should be made for human salvation. Compare the notes at <4809>Romans 9:15-18; <4812>John 12:39,40. This is just a statement, in accordance with what everywhere occurs in the Bible, that all things enter into the eternal plans of God; that nothing happens by chance; that there is nothing that was not foreseen; and that the plan is such as, on the whole, God saw to be best and wise, and therefore adopted it. If there is nothing unjust and wrong in the actual development of the plan, there was nothing in forming it. At the same time, no man who disbelieves and rejects the gospel should take refuge in this as an excuse. He was "appointed" to it no otherwise than as it actually occurs; and as they know that they are voluntary in rejecting him, they cannot lay the blame of this on the purposes of God. They are not forced or compelled to do it; but it was seen that this consequence would follow, and the plan was laid to send the Saviour notwithstanding.

<6209>**1 Peter 2:9.** *But ye are a chosen generation* In contradistinction from those who, by their disobedience, had rejected the Saviour as the foundation of hope. The people of God are often represented as his chosen or elected people. See the notes at <6002>1 Peter 1:2.

A royal priesthood See the notes at <6005>1 Peter 2:5. The meaning of this is, probably, that they "at once bore the dignity of kings, and the sanctity of priests" — Doddridge. Compare <6606>Revelation 1:6:

> "And hath made us kings and priests unto God."

See also <2306>Isaiah 61:6:

> "But ye shall be named priests of the Lord; men shall call ye ministers of our God."

It may be, however, that the word royal is used only to denote the dignity of the priestly office which they sustained, or that they constituted, as it were, an entire nation or kingdom of priests. They were a kingdom over which he presided, and they were all priests; so that it might be said they were a kingdom of priests — a kingdom in which all the subjects were engaged in offering sacrifice to God. The expression appears to be taken from <2906>Exodus 19:6 — "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests" — and is such language as one who had been educated as a Jew would be likely to employ to set forth the dignity of those whom he regarded as the people of God.

An holy nation This is also taken from <02Ex19:6>Exodus 19:6. The Hebrews were regarded as a nation consecrated to God; and now that they were cast off or rejected for their disobedience, the same language was properly applied to the people whom God had chosen in their place — the Christian church.

A peculiar people Compare the notes at <56Ti2:14>Titus 2:14. The margin here is purchased. The word “peculiar,” in its common acceptation now, would mean that they were distinguished from others, or were singular. The reading in the margin would mean that they had been bought or redeemed. Both these things are so, but neither of them expresses the exact sense of the original. The Greek (λαος <2992> εις <1519> περιποιησιν <4047>) means, “a people for a possession;” that is, as pertaining to God. They are a people which he has secured as a possession, or as his own; a people, therefore, which belong to him, and to no other. In this sense they are SPECIAL as being His; and, being such, it may be inferred that they should be special in the sense of being UNLIKE others (unique) in their manner of life. But that idea is not necessarily in the text. There seems to be here also an allusion to <02Ex19:5>Exodus 19:5: “Ye shall be a peculiar treasure with me (Septuagint λαος <2992> περιουσιος <4041>) above all people.”

That ye should show forth the praises of him Margin, “virtues.” The Greek word (αρετη <703>) means properly “good quality, excellence” of any kind. It means here the excellences of God — His goodness, His wondrous deeds, or those things which make it proper to praise Him. This shows one great object for which they were redeemed. It was that they might proclaim the glory of God, and keep up the remembrance of His wondrous deeds in the earth. This is to be done:

(a) by proper ascriptions of praise to him in public, family, and social worship;

(b) by being always the avowed friends of God, ready ever to vindicate His government and ways;

(c) by endeavoring to make known His excellences to all those who are ignorant of Him; and

(d) by such a life as shall constantly proclaim His praise — as the sun, the moon, the stars, the hills, the streams, the flowers do, showing what God does. The consistent life of a devoted Christian is a constant setting forth

of the praise of God, showing to all that the God who has made him such is worthy to be loved.

Who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light On the word called, see the notes at <49401>Ephesians 4:1. Darkness is the emblem of ignorance, sin, and misery, and refers here to their condition before their conversion; light is the emblem of the opposite, and is a beautiful representation of the state of those who are brought to the knowledge of the gospel. See the notes at <44618>Acts 26:18. The word marvelous means wonderful; and the idea is, that the light of the gospel was such as was unusual, or not to be found elsewhere, as that excites wonder or surprise which we are not accustomed to see. The primary reference here is, undoubtedly, to those who had been pagans, and to the great change which had been produced by their having been brought to the knowledge of the truth as revealed in the gospel; and, in regard to this, no one can doubt that the one state deserved to be characterized as darkness, and the other as light. The contrast was as great as that between midnight and noonday. But what is here said is substantially correct of all who are converted, and is often as strikingly true of those who have been brought up in Christian lands, as of those who have lived among the pagans. The change in conversion is often so great and so rapid, the views and feelings are so different before and after conversion, that it seems like a sudden transition from midnight to noon. In all cases, also, of true conversion, though the change may not be so striking, or apparently so sudden, there is a change of which this may be regarded as substantially an accurate description. In many cases the convert can adopt this language in all its fulness, as descriptive of his own conversion; in all cases of genuine conversion it is true that each one can say that he has been called from a state in which his mind was dark to one in which it is comparatively clear.

<60210>**1 Peter 2:10.** *Which in time past were not a people* That is, who formerly were not regarded as the people of God. There is an allusion here to the passage in <28223>Hosea 2:23,

> “And I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.”

It is, however, a mere allusion, such as one makes who uses the language of another to express his ideas, without meaning to say that both refer to the same subject. In Hosea, the passage refers evidently to the reception of

one portion of the Israelites into favor after their rejection; in Peter, it refers mainly to those who had been Gentiles, and who had never been recognized as the people of God. The language of the prophet would exactly express his idea, and he therefore uses it without intending to say that this was its original application. See it explained in the notes at <4925>Romans 9:25. Compare the notes at <4921>Ephesians 2:11,12.

Which had not obtained mercy That is, who had been living unpardoned, having no knowledge of the way by which sinners might be forgiven, and no evidence that your sins were forgiven. They were then in the condition of the whole pagan world, and they had not then been acquainted with the glorious method by which God forgives iniquity.

<6021>**1 Peter 2:11.** *Dearly beloved, I beseech you strangers and pilgrims* On the word rendered "strangers," (παροικους <3941>,) see the notes at <4929>Ephesians 2:19, where it is rendered "foreigners." It means, properly, one dwelling near, neighboring; then a by-dweller, a sojourner, one without the rights of citizenship, as distinguished from a citizen; and it means here that Christians are not properly citizens of this world, but that their citizenship is in heaven, and that they are here mere sojourners. Compare the notes at <5020>Philippians 3:20, "For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven." On the word rendered "pilgrims," (παρεπιδημους <3927>) see the notes at <6001>1 Peter 1:1; <5811>Hebrews 11:13. A pilgrim, properly, is one who travels to a distance from his own country to visit a holy place, or to pay his devotion to some holy object; then a traveler, a wanderer. The meaning here is, that Christians have no permanent home on earth; their citizenship is not here; they are mere sojourners, and they are passing on to their eternal home in the heavens. They should, therefore, act as become such persons; as sojourners and travelers do. They should not:

(a) regard the earth as their home.

(b) They should not seek to acquire permanent possessions here, as if they were to remain here, but should act as travelers do, who merely seek a temporary lodging, without expecting permanently to reside in a place.

(c) They should not allow any such attachments to be formed, or arrangements to be made, as to impede their journey to their final home, as pilgrims seek only a temporary lodging, and steadily pursue their journey.

(d) Even while engaged here in the necessary callings of life — their studies, their farming, their merchandise — their thoughts and affections should be on other things. One in a strange land thinks much of his country and home; a pilgrim, much of the land to which he goes; and even while his time and attention may be necessarily occupied by the arrangements needful for the journey, his thoughts and affections will be far away.

(e) We should not encumber ourselves with much of this world's goods. Many professed Christians get so many worldly things around them, that it is impossible for them to make a journey to heaven. They burden themselves as no traveler would, and they make no progress. A traveler takes along as few things as possible; and a staff is often all that a pilgrim has. We make the most rapid progress in our journey to our final home when we are least encumbered with the things of this world.

Abstain from fleshly lusts Such desires and passions as the carnal appetites prompt to. See the notes at Galatians 5:19-21. A sojourner in a land, or a pilgrim, does not give himself up to the indulgence of sensual appetites, or to the soft pleasures of the soul. All these would hinder his progress, and turn him off from his great design. Compare Romans 13:4; Galatians 5:24; 2 Timothy 2:22; Titus 2:12; 1 Peter 1:14.

Which war against the soul Compare the notes at Romans 8:12,13. The meaning is, that indulgence in these things makes war against the nobler faculties of the soul; against the conscience, the understanding, the memory, the judgment, the exercise of a pure imagination. Compare the notes at Galatians 5:17. There is not a faculty of the mind, however brilliant in itself, which will not be ultimately ruined by indulgence in the carnal propensities of our nature. The effect of intemperance on the noble faculties of the soul is well known; and alas, there are too many instances in which the light of genius, in those endowed with splendid gifts, at the bar, in the pulpit, and in the senate, is extinguished by it, to need a particular description. But there is one vice preeminently, which prevails all over the pagan world, (Compare the notes at Romans 1:27-29,) and extensively in Christian lands, which more than all others, blunts the moral sense, pollutes the memory, defiles the imagination, hardens the heart. and sends a withering influence through all the faculties of the soul.

“The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Embodies, and embrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.’

Of this passion, Burns beautifully and truly said —

“But oh! it hardens a” within,
And petrifies the feeling.’

From all these passions the Christian pilgrim is to abstain.

1 Peter 2:12. *Having your conversation honest* Your conduct. See the notes at Philippians 1:27. That is, lead upright and consistent lives. Compare the notes at Philippians 4:8.

Among the Gentiles The pagans by whom you are surrounded, and who will certainly observe your conduct. See the notes at 1 Thessalonians 4:12,

“That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without.”

Compare Romans 13:13.

That, whereas they speak against you as evil doers Margin, “wherein.” Greek εν ὡ — “in what;” either referring “to time,” and meaning that at the very time when they speak against you in this manner they may be silenced by seeing your upright lives; or meaning “in respect to which” — that is, that in respect to the very matters for which they reproach you they may see by your meek and upright conduct that there is really no ground for reproach. Wetstein adopts the former, but the question which is meant is not very important. Bloomfield supposes it to mean inasmuch, whereas. The sentiment is a correct one, whichever interpretation is adopted. It should be true that at the very time when the enemies of religion reproach us, they should see that we are actuated by Christian principles, and that in the very matter for which we are reproached we are conscientious and honest.

They may, by your good works, which they shall behold Greek, “which they shall closely or narrowly inspect.” The meaning is, that upon a close and narrow examination, they may see that you are actuated by upright principles, and ultimately be disposed to do you justice. It is to be remembered that the pagan were very little acquainted with the nature of Christianity; and it is known that in the early ages they charged on

Christians the most abominable vices, and even accused them of practices at which human nature revolts. The meaning of Peter is, that while they charged these things on Christians, whether from ignorance or malice, they ought so to live as that a more full acquaintance with them, and a closer inspection of their conduct, would disarm their prejudices, and show that their charges were entirely unfounded. The truth taught here is, "that our conduct as Christians should be such as to bear the strictest scrutiny; such that the closest examination will lead our enemies to the conviction that we are upright and honest." This may be done by every Christian this his religion solemnly requires him to do.

Glorify God Honor God; that is, that they may be convinced by your conduct of the pure and holy nature of that religion which he has revealed, and be led also to love and worship him. See the notes at <40516>Matthew 5:16.

In the day of visitation Many different opinions have been entertained of the meaning of this phrase, some referring it to the day of judgment; some to times of persecution; some to the destruction of Jerusalem; and some to the time when the gospel was preached among the Gentiles, as a period when God visited them with mercy. The word "visitation" (επισκοπη <1984>) means the act of visiting or being visited for any purpose, usually with the notion of inspecting conduct, of inflicting punishment, or of conferring favors. Compare <41256>Matthew 25:36,43; <42168>Luke 1:68,78; 7:16; 19:44. in the sense of visiting for the purpose of punishing, the word is often used in the Septuagint for the Hebrew dq1p; <06485>, though there is no instance in which the word is so used in the New Testament, unless it be in the verse before us. The "visitation" here referred to is undoubtedly that of God; and the reference is to some time when he would make a "visitation" to people for some purpose, and when the fact that the Gentiles had narrowly inspected the conduct of Christians would lead them to honor him. The only question is, to what visitation of that kind the apostle referred. The prevailing use of the word in the New Testament would seem to lead us to suppose that the "visitation" referred to was designed to confer favors rather than to inflict punishment, and indeed the word seems to have somewhat of a technical character, and to have been familiarly used by Christians to denote God's coming to people to bless them; to pour out his Spirit upon them; to revive religion. This seems to me to be its meaning here; and, if so, the sense is, that when God appeared among people to accompany the preaching of the gospel with saving power, the result of the

observed conduct of Christians would be to lead those around them to honor him by giving up their hearts to Him; that is, their consistent lives would be the means of the revival and extension of true religion. And is it not always so? Is not the pure and holy walk of Christians an occasion of His bending His footsteps down to earth to bless dying sinners, and to scatter spiritual blessings with a liberal hand? Compare the notes at <61424>1 Corinthians 14:24,25.

<60203>**1 Peter 2:13.** *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man* Greek, "to every creation of man," (ανθρωπινη <442> κτισει <2937>) The meaning is, to every institution or appointment of man; to wit, of those who are in authority, or who are appointed to administer government. The laws, institutes, and appointments of such a government may be spoken of as the creation of man; that is, as what man makes. Of course, what is here said must be understood with the limitation everywhere implied, that what is ordained by those in authority is not contrary to the law of God. See the notes at <40419>Acts 4:19. On the general duty here enjoined of subjection to civil authority, see the notes at <45501>Romans 13:1-7.

For the Lord's sake Because he has required it, and has entrusted this power to civil rulers. See the notes at <45506>Romans 13:5. Compare the notes at <49007>Ephesians 6:7.

Whether it be to the king It has been commonly supposed that there is reference here to the Roman emperor, who might be called king, because in him the supreme power resided. The common title of the Roman sovereign was, as used by the Greek writers, αυτοκρατωρ , and among the Romans themselves, "imperator," (emperor;) but the title king was also given to the sovereign. <43915>John 19:15, "We have no king but Cesar." <44707>Acts 17:7, "And these all do contrary to the decrees of Cesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus." Peter undoubtedly had particular reference to the Roman emperors, but he uses a general term, which would be applicable to all in whom the supreme power resided, and the injunction here would require submission to such authority, by whatever name it might be called. The meaning is, that we are to be subject to that authority whether exercised by the sovereign in person, or by those who are appointed by him.

As supreme Not supreme in the sense of being superior to God, or not being subject to him, but in the sense of being over all subordinate officers.

⁶⁰¹²⁴**1 Peter 2:14.** *Or unto governors* Subordinate officers, appointed by the chief magistrate, over provinces. Perhaps Roman proconsuls are here particularly intended.

As unto them that are sent by him By the king, or the Roman emperor. They represent the supreme power.

For the punishment of evil doers One of the leading ends of government. “The Roman governors had the power of life and death in such conquered provinces as those mentioned in ⁶⁰¹⁰¹1 Peter 1:1” — Doddridge. Ulpian, the celebrated Roman lawyer, who flourished two hundred years after Christ, thus describes the power of the governors of the Roman provinces: “It is the duty of a good and vigilant president to see to it that his province be peaceable and quiet. And that he ought to make diligent search after sacrilegious persons, robbers, man-stealers, and thieves, and to punish everyone according to their guilt.” Again, “They who govern whole provinces, have the power of sending to the mines.” And again,” The presidents of provinces have the highest authority, next to the emperor.” Peter has described the office of the Roman governors in language nearly resembling that of Ulpian. See Lardner’s Credibility, (Works, i. 77, edit. 8vo., Lond. 1829)

And for the praise of them that do well Praise here stands opposed to punishment, and means commendation, applause, reward. That is, it is a part of their business to reward in a suitable manner those who are upright and virtuous as citizens. This would be by protecting their persons and property; by defending their rights, and, perhaps, by admitting those to share the honors and emoluments of office who showed that they were worthy to be trusted. It is as important a part of the functions of magistracy to protect the innocent, as it is to punish the wicked.

⁶⁰¹²⁵**1 Peter 2:15.** *For so is the will of God* That is, it is in accordance with the divine will that in this way you should put them to silence.

That with well doing By a life of uprightness and benevolence.

Ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men See the notes at ⁵⁶²⁰⁸Titus 2:8. The reference here is to men who brought charges against Christians, by accusing them of being inimical to the government, or insubordinate, or guilty of crimes. Such charges, it is well known, were often brought against them by their enemies in the early ages of

Christianity. Peter says they were brought by foolish men, perhaps using the word foolish in the sense of evil-disposed, or wicked, as it is often used in the Bible. Yet, though there might be malice at the bottom, the charges were really based on ignorance. They were not thoroughly acquainted with the principles of the Christian religion; and the way to meet those charges was to act in every way as became good citizens, and so as "to live them down." One of the best ways of meeting the accusations of our enemies is to lead a life of strict integrity. It is not easy for the wicked to reply to this argument.

[60216]**1 Peter 2:16.** *As free* That is, they were to consider themselves as freemen, as having a right to liberty. The Jews boasted much of their freedom, and regarded it as a birthright privilege that they were free, [40833]John 8:33. They never willingly acknowledged their subjection to any other power, but claimed it as an elementary idea of their civil constitution that God only was their Sovereign. They were indeed conquered by the Romans, and paid tribute, but they did it because they were compelled to do it, and it was even a question much debated among them whether they should do it or not [40217]Matthew 22:17. Josephus has often referred to the fact that the Jews rebelled against the Romans under the plea that they were a free people, and that they were subject only to God. This idea of essential freedom the Jews had when they became Christians, and everything in Christianity tended to inspire them with the love of liberty. They who were converted to the Christian faith, whether from among the Jews or the Gentiles, were made to feel that they were the children of God; that his law was the supreme rule of their lives; that in the ultimate resort they were subject to him alone; that they were redeemed, and that, therefore, the yoke of bondage could not be properly imposed on them; that God

> "had made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth," ([44726]Acts 17:26;)

and that, therefore, they were on a level before him. The meaning here is, that they were not to consider themselves as slaves, or to act as slaves. In their subjection to civil authority they were not to forget that they were freemen in the highest sense, and that liberty was an invaluable blessing. They had been made free by the Son of God, [40832]John 8:32,36. They were free from sin and condemnation. They acknowledged Christ as their supreme Head, and the whole spirit and tendency of his religion prompted

to the exercise of freedom. They were not to submit to the chains of slavery; not to allow their consciences to be bound, or their essential liberty to be interfered with; nor in their subjection to the civil magistrate were they ever to regard themselves otherwise than as freemen. As a matter of fact, Christianity has always been the friend and promoter of liberty. Its influence emancipated the slaves throughout the Roman Empire; and all the civil freedom which we enjoy, and which there is in the world, can be traced to the influence of the Christian religion. To spread the gospel in its purity everywhere would be to break every yoke of oppression and bondage, and to make people everywhere free. It is the essential right of every man who is a Christian to be a freeman — to be free to worship God; to read the Bible; to enjoy the avails of his own labor; to train up his children in the way in which he shall deem best; to form his own plans of life, and to pursue his own ends, provided only that he does not interfere with the equal rights of others — and every system which prevents this, whether it be that of civil government, of ecclesiastical law, or of domestic slavery, is contrary to the religion of the Saviour.

And not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness Margin, as in Greek, "having." Not making your freedom a mere pretext under which to practice all kinds of evil. The word rendered "maliciousness" — κακια <2549> — means more than our word maliciousness does; for it denotes evil of any kind, or all kinds. The word maliciousness refers rather to enmity of heart, ill-will, an intention to injure. The apostle has reference to an abuse of freedom, which has often occurred. The pretence of these who have acted in this manner has been, that the freedom of the gospel implied deliverance from all kinds of restraint; that they were under no yoke, and bound by no laws; that, being the children of God, they had a right to all kinds of enjoyment and indulgence; that even the moral law ceased to bind them, and that they had a right to make the most of liberty in all respects. Hence, they have given themselves up to all sorts of sensual indulgence, claiming exemption from the restraints of morality as well as of civil law, and sinking into the deepest abyss of vice. Not a few have done this who have professed to be Christians; and, occasionally, a fanatical sect now appears who make the freedom which they say Christianity confers, a pretext for indulgence in the most base and degrading vices. The apostles saw this tendency in human nature, and in nothing are they more careful than to guard against this abuse.

But as the servants of God Not free from all restraint; not at liberty to indulge in all things, but bound to serve God in the faithful obedience of his laws. Thus bound to obey and serve him, they could not be at liberty to indulge in those things which would be in violation of his laws, and which would dishonor him. See this sentiment explained in the notes at <46722>1 Corinthians 7:22; 9:21.

<60217>**1 Peter 2:17.** *Honor all men* That is, show them the respect which is due to them according to their personal worth, and to the rank and office which they sustain. See the notes at <45137>Romans 13:7.

Love the brotherhood The whole fraternity of Christians, regarded as a band of brothers. The word used here occurs only in this place and in <60509>1 Peter 5:9, where it is rendered “brethren.” The idea expressed here occurs often in the New Testament. See the notes at <43134>John 13:34,35.

Fear God A duty everywhere enjoined in the Bible, as one of the first duties of religion. Compare <03257>Leviticus 25:17; <19201>Psalm 23:18; 24:7; 25:14; <20107>Proverbs 1:7; 3:13; 9:10; 23:17; See the notes at <45918>Romans 3:18; <47701>2 Corinthians 7:1. The word fear, when used to express our duty to God, means that we are to reverence and honor him. Religion, in one aspect, is described as the fear of God; in another, as the love of God; in another, as submission to his will, etc. A holy veneration or fear is always an elementary principle of religion. It is the fear, not so much of punishment as of his disapprobation; not so much the dread of suffering as the dread of doing wrong.

Honor the king Referring here primarily to the Roman sovereign, but implying that we are always to respect those who have the rule over us. See the notes at <45601>Romans 13:1-7. The doctrine taught in these verses (<45613>Romans 13:13-17) is, that we are faithfully to perform all the relative duties of life. There are duties which we owe to ourselves, which are of importance in their place, and which we are by no means at liberty to neglect. But we also owe duties to our fellow-men, to our Christian brethren, and to those who have the rule over us; and religion, while it is honored by our faithful performance of our duty to ourselves, is more openly honored by our performance of our duties to those to whom we sustain important relations in life. Many of the duties which we owe to ourselves are, from the nature of the case, hidden from public observation. All that pertains to the examination of the heart; to our private devotions; to the subjugation of our evil passions; to our individual communion with

God, must be concealed from public view. Not so, however, with those duties which pertain to others. In respect to them, we are open to public view. The eye of the world is upon us. The judgment of the world in regard to us is made up from their observation of the manner in which we perform them. If religion fails there, they judge that it fails altogether; and however devout we may be in private, if it is not seen by the world that our religion leads to the faithful performance of the duties which we owe in the various relations of life, it will be regarded as of little value.

⁶⁰¹²⁸**1 Peter 2:18.** *Servants, be subject to your masters* On the duty here enjoined, see the notes at ⁴⁹⁰⁶⁵Ephesians 6:5-9. The Greek word used here (οικεται ³⁶¹⁰) is not the same which is employed in Ephesians, (δουλοι ¹⁴⁰¹) The word here means properly “domestics” — those employed about a house, or living in the same house — from οικος ³⁶²⁴, “house.” These persons might have been slaves, or might not. The word would apply to them, whether they were hired, or whether they were owned as slaves. The word should not and cannot be employed to prove that slavery existed in the churches to which Peter wrote, and still less to prove that he approved of slavery, or regarded it as a good institution. The exhortation here would be, and still is, strictly applicable to any persons employed as domestics, though they had voluntarily hired themselves out to be such. It would be incumbent on them, while they remained in that condition, to perform with fidelity their duties as Christians, and to bear with Christian meekness all the wrongs which they might suffer from those in whose service they were. Those who are hired, and who are under a necessity of “going out to service” for a living, are not always free from hard usage, for there are trials incident to that condition of life which cannot be always avoided. It might be better, in many cases, to bear much than to attempt a change of situation, even though they were entirely at liberty to do so. It must be admitted, however, that the exhortation here will have more force if it is supposed that the reference is to slaves, and there can be no doubt that many of this class were early converted to the Christian faith. The word here rendered “masters” (δεσποταις ¹²⁰³) is not the same which is used in ⁴⁹⁰⁶⁵Ephesians 6:5, (κυριοις ²⁹⁶²) Neither of these words necessarily implies that those who were under them were slaves. The word used here is applicable to the head of a family, whatever may be the condition of those under him. It is frequently applied to God, and to Christ; and it cannot be maintained that those to whom God sustains the relation of δεσποτης ¹²⁰³, or “master,” are “slaves.” See ⁴²⁰²⁹Luke 2:29; ⁴⁴⁰²⁴Acts 4:24;

[5122]2 Timothy 2:21; [6001]2 Peter 2:1; [6504]Jude 1:4; [6660]Revelation 6:10. The word, indeed, is one that might be applied to those who were owners of slaves. If that be the meaning here, it is not said, however, that those to whom it is applied were Christians. It is rather implied that they were pursuing such a course as was inconsistent with real piety. Those who were under them are represented as suffering grievous wrongs.

With all fear That is, with all proper reverence and respect. See the notes at [4965]Ephesians 6:5.

Not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward The word rendered "froward" (σκολιοις [4646]) means properly "crooked, bent;" then perverse, wicked, unjust, peevish. Anyone who is a servant or domestic is liable to be employed in the service of such a master; but while the relation continues, the servant should perform his duty with fidelity, whatever may be the character of the master. Slaves are certainly liable to this; and even those who voluntarily engage as servants to others, cannot always be sure that they will have kind employers. Though the terms used here do not necessarily imply that those to whom the apostle gave this direction were slaves, yet it may be presumed that they probably were, since slavery abounded throughout the Roman empire; but the directions will apply to all who are engaged in the service of others, and are therefore of permanent value. Slavery will, sooner or later, under the influence of the gospel, wholly cease in the world, and instructions addressed to masters and slaves will have no permanent value; but it will always be true that there will be those employed as domestics, and it is the duty of all who are thus engaged to evince true fidelity and a Christian spirit themselves, whatever may be the character of their employers.

[6012]**1 Peter 2:19.** *For this is thank-worthy* Margin, "thank." Greek, "This is grace," (χαρις [5485]). Doddridge renders the expression, "This is graceful indeed." Various interpretations of this expression have been proposed; but the meaning evidently is, that it is acceptable to God, (see [6012]1 Peter 2:20, "this is acceptable to God" — χαρις [5485] παρα [3844] Θεω [2316]); that is, this will be regarded by him with favor. It does not mean that it was worthy of thanks, or that God would thank them for doing it, (compare [4270]Luke 17:9,10;) but that such conduct would meet with his approbation.

If a man for conscience toward God If, in the conscientious discharge of his duty, or if, in the endurance of this wrong, he regards himself as serving

God. That is, if he feels that God, by his providence, has placed him in the circumstances in which he is, and that it is a duty which he owes to him to bear every trial incident to that condition with a submissive spirit. If he does this, he will evince the true nature of religion, and will be graciously accepted of God.

Endure grief That is, endure that which is suited to produce grief, or that which is wrong.

Suffering wrongfully Suffering injury, or where there is "injustice," (πασχων <3958> αδικως <95>). This, though a general remark, has particular reference to servants, and to their duty in the relation which they sustain to their masters. In view of what is here said, we may remark:

(1) that if this has reference to slaves, as has been usually supposed, it proves that they are very liable to be abused; that they have little or no security against being wronged; and that it was a special and very desirable characteristic of those who were in that condition, to be able to bear wrong with a proper spirit. It is impossible so to modify slavery that this shall not be the case; for the whole system is one of oppression, and there can be nothing that shall effectually secure the slave from being ill-treated.

(2) It would follow from this passage, if this refers to slavery, that that is a very hard and undesirable condition of life; for that is a very undesirable condition where the principal virtue. which they who are in it are required to exercise, is "patience under wrongs." Such a condition cannot be in accordance with the gospel, and cannot be designed by God to be permanent. The relation of parent and child is never thus represented. It is never said or implied in the Scriptures that the principal virtue to which children are exhorted is patience under wrongs; nor, in addressing them, is it ever supposed that the most prominent thing in their condition is, that they would need the exercise of such patience.

(3) It is acceptable to God, if we bear wrong with a proper spirit, from whatever quarter it may come. Our proper business in life is, to do the will of God; to evince the right spirit, however others may treat us; and to show, even under excessive wrong, the sustaining power and the excellence of true religion. Each one who is oppressed and wronged, therefore, has an eminent opportunity to show a spirit which will honor the gospel; and the slave and the martyr may do more to honor the gospel than if they were both permitted to enjoy liberty and life undisturbed.

^[61220]**1 Peter 2:20.** *For what glory is it* What honor or credit would it be.

If, when ye be buffeted for your faults That is, if you are punished when you deserve it. The word "buffet" (κολαφιζω ^[2852]) — means, to strike with the fist; and then to strike in any way; to maltreat, ^[40265]Matthew 26:67; ^[41465]Mark 14:65; ^[46411]1 Corinthians 4:11; ^[47707]2 Corinthians 12:7. Perhaps there may be a reference here to the manner in which servants were commonly treated, or the kind of punishment to which they were exposed. They would be likely to be struck in sudden anger, either by the hand, or by anything that was accessible. The word rendered "for your faults," is sinning, (ἁμαρτανοντες ^[264]). That is, "if being guilty of an offence, or having done wrong." The idea is, that if they were justly punished, and should take it patiently, there would be no credit or honor in it.

Ye shall take it patiently "If, even then, you evince an uncomplaining spirit, and bear it with the utmost calmness and patience, it would be regarded as comparatively no virtue, and as entitling you to no honor. The feeling of all who saw it would be that you deserved it, and there would be nothing to excite their sympathy or compassion. The patience evinced might indeed be as great as in the other case, but there would be the feeling that you deserved all that you received, and the spirit evinced in that case could not be regarded as entitled to any particular praise. If your masters are inflicting on you only what you deserve, it would be in the highest degree shameful for you to rise up against them, and resist them, for it would be only adding to the wrong which you had already done." The expression here is, doubtless, to be understood comparatively. The meaning is not that absolutely there would be no more credit due to one who should bear his punishment patiently when he had done wrong, than if he had met it with resistance and complaining; but that there is very little credit in that compared with the patience which an innocent person evinces, who, from regard to the will of God, and by control over all the natural feelings of resentment, meekly endures wrong. This expresses the common feeling of our nature. We attribute no particular credit to one who submits to a just punishment even with a calm temper. We feel that it would be wrong in the highest degree for him to do otherwise. So it is when calamities are brought on a man on account of his sins. If it is seen to be the fruit of intemperance or crime, we do not feel that there is any great virtue exhibited if he bears it with a calm temper. But if he is overwhelmed with calamity when it seems to have no particular connection with his sins, or to be a punishment for any particular fault; if he suffers at the hand of man,

where there is manifest injustice done him, and yet evinces a calm, submissive, and meek temper, we feel that in such cases there is eminent virtue.

This is acceptable with God Margin, as in <60129>1 Peter 2:19, “thank.” It is that which is agreeable to him, or with which he is pleased.

<60221>**1 Peter 2:21.** *For even hereunto were ye called* Such a spirit is required by the very nature of your Christian vocation; you were called into the church in order that you might evince it. See the notes at <51303>1 Thessalonians 3:3.

Because Christ also suffered for us Margin, “some read, for you.” The latest editions of the Greek Testament adopt the reading “for you.” The sense, however, is not essentially varied. The object is, to hold up the example of Christ to those who were called to suffer, and to say to them that they should bear their trials in the same spirit that he evinced in his. See the notes at <50310>Philippians 3:10.

Leaving us an example The apostle does not say that this was the only object for which Christ suffered, but that it was an object, and an important one. The word rendered “example” (ὑπογραμμον <5261>) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means properly “a writing copy,” such as is set for children; or an outline or sketch for a painter to fill up; and then, in general, an example, a pattern for imitation.

That ye should follow his steps That we should follow him, as if we trod exactly along behind him, and should place our feet precisely where his were. The meaning is, that there should be the closest imitation or resemblance. The things in which we are to imitate him are specified in the following verses.

<60222>**1 Peter 2:22.** *Who did no sin* Who was in all respects perfectly holy. There is an allusion here to <23509>Isaiah 53:9; and the sense is, that he was entirely innocent, and that he suffered without having committed any crime. In this connection the meaning is, that we are to be careful that, if we suffer, it should be without committing any crime. We should so live, as the Saviour did, as not to deserve to be punished, and thus only shall we entirely follow his example. It is as much our duty to live so as not to deserve the reproaches of others, as it is to bear them with patience when we are called to suffer them. The first thing in regard to hard treatment

from others, is so to live that there shall be no just occasion for it; the next is, if reproaches come upon us when we have not deserved them, to bear them as the Saviour did. If he suffered unjustly, we should esteem it to be no strange thing that we should; if he bore the injuries done him with meekness, we should learn that it is possible for us to do it also; and should learn also that we have not the spirit of his religion unless we actually do it. On the expression used here, compare the notes at <2510>Isaiah 53:9; <5826>Hebrews 7:26.

Neither was guile found in his mouth There was no deceit, hypocrisy, or insincerity. He was in all respects what he professed to be, and he imposed on no one by any false and unfounded claim. All this has reference to the time when the Saviour was put to death; and the sense is, that though he was condemned as an impostor, yet that the charge was wholly unfounded. As in his whole life before he was perfectly sincere, so he was eminently on that solemn occasion.

<6023>**1 Peter 2:23.** *Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again* He did not use harsh and opprobrious words in return for those which he received:

(1) He was reviled. He was accused of being a seditious man; spoken of as a deceiver; charged with being in league with Beelzebub, the "prince of the devils" and condemned as a blasphemer against God. This was done:

(a) by the great and the influential of the land;

(b) in the most public manner;

(c) with a design to alienate his friends from him;

(d) with most cutting and severe sarcasm and irony; and

(e) in reference to everything that would most affect a man of delicate and tender sensibility.

(2) He did not revile those who had reproached him. He asked that justice might be done. He demanded that if he had spoken evil, they should bear witness of the evil; but beyond that he did not go. He used no harsh language. He showed no anger. He called for no revenge. He prayed that they might robe forgiven. He calmly stood and bore it all, for he came to endure all kinds of suffering in order that he might set us an example, and make an atonement for our sins.

When he suffered, he threatened not That is, when he suffered injustice from others, in his trial and in his death, he did not threaten punishment. He did not call down the wrath of heaven. He did not even predict that they would be punished; he expressed no wish that they should be.

But committed himself to him that judgeth righteously Margin, his cause. The sense is much the same. The meaning is, that he committed his cause, his name, his interests, the whole case, to God. The meaning of the phrase "that judgeth righteously" here is, that God would do him exact justice. Though wronged by people, he felt assured that he would do right. He would rescue his name from these reproaches; he would give him the honor in the world which he deserved; and he would bring upon those who had wronged him all that was necessary in order to show his disapprobation of what they had done, and all that would be necessary to give the highest support to the cause of virtue. Compare <42346>Luke 23:46. This is the example which is set before us when we are wronged. The whole example embraces these points:

(1) We should see to it that we ourselves are guiltless in the matter for which we are reproached or accused. Before we fancy that we are suffering as Christ did, we should be sure that our lives are such as not to deserve reproach. We cannot indeed hope to be as pure in all things as he was; but we may so live that if we are reproached and reviled we may be certain that it is not for any wrong that we have done to others, or that we do not deserve it from our fellow-men.

(2) When we are reproached and reviled, we should feel that we were called to this by our profession; that it was one of the things which we were taught to expect when we became Christians; that it is what the prophets and apostles endured, and what the Master himself suffered in an eminent degree; and that if we meet with the scorn of the great, the frivilous, the rich, the powerful, it is no more than the Saviour did, and no more than we have been taught to expect will be our portion. It may be well, too, to remember our unworthiness; and to reflect, that though we have done no wrong to the individual who reviles us yet that we are sinners, and that such reproaches may not be a useless admonisher of our being guilty before God. So David felt when reproached by Shimei: "So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?" <101610>2 Samuel 16:10.

(3) When this occurs, we should calmly and confidently commit our cause to God. Our name, our character, our influence, our reputation, while living and after we are dead, we should leave entirely with him. We should not seek nor desire revenge. We should not call down the wrath of God on our persecutors and slanderers. We should calmly feel that God will give us the measure of reputation which we ought to have in the world, and that he will suffer no ultimate injustice to be done us.

> "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass; and he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day," <19705>Psalm 37:5,6.

The Latin Vulgate has here, "But he committed himself to him who judged him unjustly," judicanti se injuste; that is, to Pontius Pilate, meaning that he left himself in his hands, though he knew that the sentence was unjust. But there is no authority for this in the Greek, and this is one of the instances in which that version departs from the original.

<60224>**1 Peter 2:24.** *Who his own self* See the notes at <58103>Hebrews 1:3, on the phrase "when he had by himself purged our sins." The meaning is, that he did it in his own proper person; he did not make expiation by offering a bloody victim, but was himself the sacrifice.

Bare our sins There is an allusion here undoubtedly to <23504>Isaiah 53:4,12. See the meaning of the phrase "to bear sins" fully considered in the notes at those places. As this cannot mean that Christ so took upon himself the sins of people as to become himself a sinner, it must mean that he put himself in the place of sinners, and bore that which those sins deserved; that is, that he endured in his own person that which, if it had been inflicted on the sinner himself, would have been a proper expression of the divine displeasure against sin, or would have been a proper punishment for sin. See the notes at <47521>2 Corinthians 5:21. He was treated as if he had been a sinner, in order that we might be treated as if we had not sinned; that is, as if we were righteous. There is no other way in which we can conceive that one bears the sins of another. They cannot be literally transferred to another; and all that can be meant is, that he should take the consequences on himself, and suffer as if he had committed the transgressions himself.

> (See also the supplementary notes at <47521>2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 4; 5; and <48313>Galatians 3:13, in which the subject of imputation is discussed at large)

In his own body This alludes undoubtedly to his sufferings. The sufferings which he endured on the cross were such as if he had been guilty; that is, he was treated as he would have been if he had been a sinner. He was treated as a criminal; crucified as those most guilty were; endured the same kind of physical pain that the guilty do who are punished for their own sins; and passed through mental sorrows strongly resembling — as much so as the case admitted of — what the guilty themselves experience when they are left to distressing anguish of mind, and are abandoned by God. The sufferings of the Saviour were in all respects made as nearly like the sufferings of the most guilty, as the sufferings of a perfectly innocent being could be.

On the tree Margin, "to the tree" Greek, επι <1909> το <3588> ξυλον <3586>. The meaning is rather, as in the text, that while himself on the cross, he bore the sorrows which our sins deserved. It does not mean that he conveyed our sorrows there, but that while there he suffered under the intolerable burden, and was by that burden crushed in death. The phrase "on the tree," literally "on the wood," means the cross. The same Greek word is used in <440530>Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:29; <480313>Galatians 3:13, as applicable to the cross, in all of which places it is rendered "tree."

That we, being dead to sins In virtue of his having thus been suspended on a cross; that is, his being put to death as an atoning sacrifice was the means by which we become dead to sin, and live to God. The phrase "being dead to sins" is, in the original, ταις <3588> ἁμαρτιαις <266> απογενομενοι <581> — literally, "to be absent from sins." The Greek word was probably used (by an euphemism) to denote to die, that is, to be absent from the world. This is a milder and less repulsive word than to say to die. It is not elsewhere used in the New Testament. The meaning is, that we being effectually separated from sin — that is, being so that it no longer influences us — should live unto God. We are to be, in regard to sin, as if we were dead; and it is to have no more influence over us than if we were in our graves. See the notes at <450602>Romans 6:2-7. The means by which this is brought about is the death of Christ (See the notes at <450608>Romans 6:8) for as he died literally on the cross on account of our sins, the effect has been to lead us to see the evil of transgression, and to lead new, and holy lives.

Should live unto righteousness Though dead in respect to sin, yet we have real life in another respect. We are made alive unto God to righteousness, to true holiness. See the notes at <450611>Romans 6:11; <480220>Galatians 2:20.

By whose stripes This is taken from <25515>Isaiah 53:5. See it explained in the notes on that verse. The word rendered “stripes” (μωλωπι <3468>) means, properly, the livid and swollen mark of a blow; the mark designated by us when we use the expression “black and blue.” It is not properly a bloody wound, but that made by pinching, beating, scourging. The idea seems to be that the Saviour was scourged or whipped; and that the effect on us is the same in producing spiritual healing, or in recovering us from our faults, as if we had been scourged ourselves. By faith we see the bruises inflicted on him, the black and blue spots made by beating; we remember that they were on account of our sins, and not for his; and the effect in reclaiming us is the same as if they had been inflicted on us.

Ye were healed Sin is often spoken of as a disease, and redemption from it as a restoration from a deadly malady. See this explained in the notes at <25515>Isaiah 53:5.

<61025>**1 Peter 2:25.** *For ye were as sheep going astray* Here also is an allusion to <25306>Isaiah 53:6, “All we like sheep have gone astray.” See the notes at that verse. The figure is plain. We were like a flock without a shepherd. We had wandered far away from the true fold, and were following our own paths. We were without a protector, and were exposed to every kind of danger. This aptly and forcibly expresses the condition of the whole race before God recovers people by the plan of salvation. A flock thus wandering without a shepherd, conductor, or guide, is in a most pitiable condition; and so was man in his wanderings before he was sought out and brought back to the true fold by the Great Shepherd.

But are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls To Christ, who thus came to seek and save those who were lost. He is often called a Shepherd. See the notes at <43001>John 10:1-16. The word rendered “bishop,” (επισκοπος <1985>), means “overseer.” It may be applied to one who inspects or oversees anything, as public works, or the execution of treaties; to anyone who is an inspector of wares offered for sale; or, in general, to anyone who is a superintendent. It is applied in the New Testament to those who are appointed to watch over the interests of the church, and especially to the officers of the church. Here it is applied to the Lord Jesus as the great Guardian and Superintendent of his church; and the title of universal Bishop belongs to him alone!

REMARKS ON 1 PETER 2

In the conclusion of this chapter we may remark:

(1) That there is something very beautiful in the expression “Bishop of souls.” It implies that the soul is the special care of the Saviour; that it is the object of his special interest; and that it is of great value — so great that it is that which mainly deserves regard. He is the Bishop of the soul in a sense quite distinct from any care which he manifests for the body. That too, in the proper way, is the object of his care; but that has no importance compared with the soul. Our care is principally employed in respect to the body; the care of the Redeemer has special reference to the soul.

(2) It follows that the welfare of the soul may be committed to him with confidence. It is the object of his special guardianship, and he will not be unfaithful to the trust reposed in him. There is nothing more safe than the human soul is when it is committed in faith to the keeping of the Son of God. Compare 2 Timothy 1:12.

(3) As, therefore, he has shown his regard for us in seeking us when we were wandering and lost; as he came on the kind and benevolent errand to find us and bring us back to himself, let us show our gratitude to him by resolving to wander no more. As we regard our own safety and happiness, let us commit ourselves to him as our great Shepherd, to follow where he leads us, and to be ever under his pastoral inspection. We had all wandered away. We had gone where there was no happiness and no protector. We had no one to provide for us, to care for us, to pity us. We were exposed to certain ruin. In that state he pitied us, sought us out, brought us back. If we had remained where we were, or had gone further in our wanderings, we should have gone certainly to destruction. He has sought us out; be has led us back; he has taken us under his own protection and guidance; and we shall be safe as long as we follow where he leads, and no longer. To him then, a Shepherd who never forsakes his flock, let us at all times commit ourselves, following where he leads, feeling that under him our great interests are secure.

(4) We may learn from this chapter, indeed, as we may from every other part of the New Testament, that in doing this we may be called to suffer. We may be reproached and reviled as the great Shepherd himself was. We may become the objects of public scorn on account of our devoted attachment to him. We may suffer in name, in feeling, in property, in our

business, by our honest attachment to the principles of his gospel. Many who are his followers may be in circumstances of poverty or oppression. They may be held in bondage; they may be deprived of their rights; they may feel that their lot in life is a hard one, and that the world seems to have conspired against them to do them wrong; but let us in all these circumstances look to Him "who made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," (<50207>Philippians 2:7,8;) and let us remember that it is "enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord," <40025>Matthew 10:25. In view of the example of our Master, and of all the promises of support in the Bible, let us bear with patience all the trials of life, whether arising from poverty, an humble condition, or the reproaches of a wicked world. Our trials will soon be ended; and soon, under the direction of the "Shepherd and Bishop of souls," we shall be brought to a world where trials and sorrows are unknown.

(5) In our trials here, let it be our main object so to live that our sufferings shall not be on account of our own faults. See <60219>1 Peter 2:19-22. Our Saviour so lived. He was persecuted, reviled, mocked, condemned to die. But it was for no fault of his. In all his varied and prolonged sufferings, he had the ever-abiding consciousness that he was innocent; he had the firm conviction that it would yet be seen and confessed by all the world that he was "holy, harmless, undefiled," <60123>1 Peter 2:23. His were not the sufferings produced by a guilty conscience, or by the recollection that he had wronged anyone. So, if we must suffer, let our trials come upon us. Be it our first aim to have a conscience void of offence, to wrong no one, to give no occasion for reproaches and revilings, to do our duty faithfully to God and to people. Then, if trials come, we shall feel that we suffer as our Master did; and then we may, as he did, commit our cause "to him that judgeth righteously," assured that in due time "he will bring forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noon-day," <19706>Psalm 37:6.

NOTES ON 1 PETER 3

This chapter embraces the following subjects:

I. The duty of wives, 1 Peter 3:1-6. Particularly:

(a) that their conduct should be such as would be adapted to lead their unbelieving husbands to embrace a religion whose happy influence was seen in the pure conduct of their wives, 1 Peter 3:1,2.

(b) In reference to dress and ornaments, that they should not seek that which was external, but rather that which was of the heart, 1 Peter 3:3,4.

(c) For an illustration of the manner in which these duties should be performed, the apostle refers them to the holy example of the wife of Abraham, as one which Christian females should imitate, 1 Peter 3:5,6.

II. The duty of husbands, 1 Peter 3:7. It was their duty to render all proper honor to their wives, and to live with them as fellow-heirs of salvation, that their prayers might not be hindered; implying:

(1) that in the most important respects they were on an equality;

(2) that they would pray together, or that there would be family prayer; and,

(3) that it was the duty of husband and wife so to live together that their prayers might ascend from united hearts, and that it would be consistent for God to answer them.

III. The general duty of unity and of kindness, 1 Peter 3:8-14. They were:

(a) to be of one mind; to have compassion; to love as brethren, 1 Peter 3:8.

(b) They were never to render evil for evil, or railing for railing, 1 Peter 3:9.

(c) They were to remember the promises of length of days, and of honor, made to those who were pure in their conversation, and who were the friends of peace, 1 Peter 3:9,10.

(d) They were to remember that the eyes of the Lord were always on the righteous; that they who were good were under his protection, 1 Peter 3:12; and that if, while they maintained this character, they were called to suffer, they should count it rather an honor than a hardship, 1 Peter 3:13,14.

IV. The duty of being ready always to give to every man a reason for the hope they entertained; and, if they were called to suffer persecution and trial in the service of God, of being able still to show good reasons why they professed to be Christians, and of so living that those who wronged them should see that their religion was more than a name, and was founded in such truth as to command the assent even of their persecutors, 1 Peter 3:15-17.

V. In their persecutions and trials they were to remember the example of Christ, his trials, his patience, and his triumphs, 1 Peter 3:18-22. Particularly:

(a) the apostle refers them to the fact that he had suffered, though he was innocent, and that he was put to death though he had done no wrong, 1 Peter 3:18.

(b) He refers them to the patience and an age of great and abounding wickedness, when in the person of his representative and ambassador Noah, he suffered much and long from the opposition of the guilty and perverse people who were finally destroyed, and who are now held in prison, showing us how patient we ought to be when offended by others in our attempts to do them good, 1 Peter 3:19,20.

(c) He refers to the fact that notwithstanding all the opposition which Noah met with in bearing a message, as an ambassador of the Lord, to a wicked generation, he and his family were saved, 1 Peter 3:21. The design of this allusion evidently is to show us, that if we are patient and forbearing in the trials which we meet with in the world, we shall be saved also. Noah, says the apostle, was saved by water. We, too, says he, are saved in a similar manner by water. In his salvation, and in ours, water is employed as

the means of salvation: in his case by bearing up the ark, in ours by becoming the emblem of the washing away of sins.

(d) The apostle refers to the fact that Christ has ascended to heaven, and has been exalted over angels, and principalities, and powers; thus showing that having borne all his trials with patience he ultimately triumphed, and that in like manner we, if we are patient, shall triumph also, <60322>1 Peter 3:22. He came off a conqueror, and was exalted to the highest honors of heaven; and so, if faithful, we may hope to come off conquerors also, and be exalted to the honors of heaven as he was. The whole argument here is drawn from the example of Christ, first, in his patience and forbearance with the whole world, and then when he was personally on the earth; from the fact, that in the case of that messenger whom he sent to the ungodly race before the flood, and in his own case when personally on earth, there was ultimate triumph after all that they met with from ungodly people; and thus, if we endure opposition and trials in the same way, we may hope also to triumph in heaven with our exalted Saviour.

<60301>**1 Peter 3:1.** *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands* On the duty here enjoined, see the notes at <46103>1 Corinthians 11:3-9, and <49522>Ephesians 5:22.

That, if any obey not the word The word of God; the gospel. That is, if any wives have husbands who are not true Christians. This would be likely to occur when the gospel was first preached, as it does now, by the fact that wives might be converted, though their husbands were not. It cannot be inferred from this, that after they themselves had become Christians they had married unbelieving husbands. The term “word” here refers particularly to the gospel as preached; and the idea is, that if they were regardless of that gospel when preached — if they would not attend on preaching, or if they were unaffected by it, or if they openly rejected it, there might be hope still that they would be converted by the Christian influence of a wife at home. In such cases, a duty of special importance devolves on the wife.

They also may without the word be won In some other way than by preaching. This I does not mean that they would be converted independently of the influence of truth — for truth is always the instrument of conversion, (<59018>James 1:18; <43017>John 17:17;) but that it was to be by another influence than preaching.

By the conversation of the wives By the conduct or deportment of their wives. See the notes at <50127>Philippians 1:27. The word conversation, in the Scriptures, is never confined, as it is now with us, to oral discourse, but denotes conduct in general. It includes indeed “conversation” as the word is now used, but it embraces also much more — including everything that we do. The meaning here is, that the habitual deportment of the wife was to be such as to show the reality and power of religion; to show that it had such influence on her temper, her words, her whole deportment, as to demonstrate that it was from God.

<60302>**1 Peter 3:2.** *While they behold your chaste conversation* Your pure conduct. The word chaste here ἁγνην <53> refer’s to purity of conduct in all respects, and not merely to chastity properly so called. It includes that, but it also embraces much more. The conduct of the wife is to be in all respects pure; and this is to be the grand instrumentality in the conversion of her husband. A wife may be strictly chaste, and yet there may be many other things in her conduct and temper which would mar the beauty of her piety, and prevent any happy influence on the mind of her husband.

Coupled with fear The word fear, in this place, may refer either to the fear of God, or to a proper respect and reverence for their husbands, <49533>Ephesians 5:33. The trait of character which is referred to is that of proper respect and reverence in all the relations which she sustained, as opposed to a trifling and frivolous mind. Leighton suggests that the word fear here relates particularly to the other duty enjoined — that of chaste conversation — “fearing the least stain of chastity, or the very appearance of anything not suiting with it. It is a delicate, timorous grace, afraid of the least air, or shadow of anything that hath but a resemblance of wronging it, in carriage, or speech, or apparel.”

<60303>**1 Peter 3:3.** *Whose adorning* Whose ornament. The apostle refers here to a propensity which exists in the heart of woman to seek that which would be esteemed ornamental, or that which will appear well in the sight of others, and commend us to them. The desire of this is laid deep in human nature and therefore, when properly regulated is not wrong. The only question is, what is the true and appropriate ornament? What should be primarily sought as the right kind of adorning? The apostle does not condemn true ornament, nor does he condemn the desire to appear in such a way as to secure the esteem of others. God does not condemn real ornament. The universe is full of it. The colors of the clouds and of the

rainbow; the varied hues of flowers; the plumage of birds, and the covering of many of the animals of the forest; the green grass; the variety of hill and dale; the beauty of the human complexion, the ruddy cheek, and the sparkling eye, are all of the nature of ornament. They are something superadded to what would be merely useful, to make them appear well. Few or none of these things are absolutely necessary to the things to which they are attached; for the eye could see without the various tints of beauty that are drawn upon it, and the lips and the cheeks could perform their functions without their beautiful tints, and the vegetable world could exist without the variegated colors that are painted on it; but God meant that this should be a beautiful world; that it should appear well; that there should be something more than mere utility. The true notion of ornament or adorning is that which will make any person or thing appear well, or beautiful, to others; and the apostle does not prohibit that which would have this effect in the wife. The grand thing which she was to seek, was not that which is merely external, but that which is internal, and which God regards as of so great value.

Let it not be that outward adorning Let not this be the main or principal thing; let not her heart be set on this. The apostle does not say that she should wholly neglect her personal appearance, for she has no more right to be offensive to her husband by neglecting her personal appearance, than by a finical attention to it. Religion promotes neatness, and cleanliness, and a proper attention to our external appearance according to our circumstances in life, as certainly as it does to the internal virtue of the soul. On this whole passage, see the notes at <5209>1 Timothy 2:9,10.

Of plaiting the hair See the notes at <5209>1 Timothy 2:9; Compare the notes at <2324>Isaiah 3:24. Great attention is paid to this in the East, and it is to this that the apostle here refers. “The women in the eastern countries,” says Dr. Shaw, (Travels, p. 294,) “affect to have their hair hang down to the ground, which they collect into one lock, upon the hinder part of the head, binding and plaiting it about with ribbons. Above this, or on the top of their heads, persons of better fashion wear flexible plates of gold or silver, variously cut through, and engraved in imitation of lace.” We are not to suppose that a mere braiding or plaiting of the hair is improper, for there may be no more simple or convenient way of disposing of it. But the allusion here is to the excessive care which then prevailed, and especially to their setting the heart on such ornaments rather than on the adorning which is internal. It may not be easy to fix the exact limit of propriety about the

method of arranging the hair, or about any other ornament; but those whose hearts are right, generally have little difficulty on the subject. Every ornament of the body, however beautiful, is soon to be laid aside; the adorning of the soul will endure forever.

And of wearing of gold The gold here particularly referred to is probably that which was interwoven in the hair, and which was a common female ornament in ancient times. Thus, Virgil says, crines nodantur in aurum. And again, crinem implicat auro. See Homer, Iliad, B. 872; Herod. i. 82; and Thucydides i. 6. The wearing of gold in the hair, however, was more common among women of loose morals than among virtuous females — Pollux iv. 153. It cannot be supposed that all wearing of gold about the person is wrong, for there is nothing evil in gold itself, and there may be some articles connected with apparel made of gold that may in no manner draw off the affections from higher things, and may do nothing to endanger piety. The meaning is, that such ornaments should not be sought; that Christians should be in no way distinguished for them; that they should not engross the time and attention; that Christians should so dress as to show that their minds are occupied with nobler objects, and that in their apparel they should be models of neatness, economy, and plainness. If it should be said that this expression teaches that it is wrong to wear gold at all, it may be replied that on the same principle it would follow that the next clause teaches that it is wrong to put on apparel at all. There is really no difficulty in such expressions. We are to dress decently, and in the manner that will attract least attention, and we are to show that our hearts are interested supremely in more important things than in outward adorning.

Or of putting on of apparel That is, this is not to be the ornament which we principally seek, or for which we are distinguished. We are to desire a richer and more permanent adorning — that of the heart.

1 Peter 3:4. *But let it be the hidden man of the heart* This expression is substantially the same as that of Paul in Romans 7:22, “the inward man.” See the notes at that place. The word “hidden” here means that which is concealed; that which is not made apparent by the dress, or by ornament. It lies within, pertaining to the affections of the soul.

In that which is not corruptible Properly, “in the incorruptible ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.” This is said to be incorruptible in contradistinction to gold and apparel. They will decay; but the internal ornament is ever enduring. The sense is, that whatever pertains to outward decoration,

however beautiful and costly, is fading; but that which pertains to the soul is enduring. As the soul is immortal, so all that tends to adorn that will be immortal too; as the body is mortal, so all with which it can be invested is decaying, and will soon be destroyed.

The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit Of a calm temper; a contented mind; a heart free from passion, pride, envy, and irritability; a soul not subject to the agitations and vexations of those who live for fashion, and who seek to be distinguished for external adorning. The connection here shows that the apostle refers to this, not only as that which would be of great price in the sight of God, but as that which would tend to secure the affection of their husbands, and win them to embrace the true religion, (see 1 Peter 3:1,2); and, in order to this, he recommends them, instead of seeking external ornaments, to seek those of the mind and of the heart, as more agreeable to their husbands; as better adapted to win their hearts to religion; as that which would be most permanently proved. In regard to this point we may observe:

(1) that there are, undoubtedly, some husbands who are pleased with excessive ornaments in their wives, and who take a pleasure in seeing them decorated with gold, and pearls, and costly array.

(2) That all are pleased and gratified with a suitable attention to personal appearance on the part of their wives. It is as much the duty of a wife to be cleanly in her person, and neat in her habits, in the presence of her husband, as in the presence of strangers; and no wife can hope to secure the permanent affection of her husband who is not attentive to her personal appearance in her own family; especially if, while careless of her personal appearance in the presence of her husband, she makes it a point to appear gaily dressed before others. Yet

(3) the decoration of the body is not all, nor is it the principal thing which husband desires. He desires primarily in his wife the more permanent adorning which pertains to the heart. Let it be remembered:

(a) that a large part of the ornaments on which females value themselves are lost to a great extent on the other sex. Many a man cannot tell the difference between diamonds and cut-glass, or paste in the form of diamonds; and few are such connoisseurs in the matter of female ornaments as to appreciate at all the difference in the quality or color of silks, and shawls, and laces, which might appear so important to a female

eye. The fact is, that those personal ornaments which to females appear of so much value, are much less regarded and prized by people than they often suppose. It is a rare thing that a man is so thoroughly skilled in the knowledge of the distinctions that pertain to fashions, as to appreciate that on which the heart of a female often so much prides itself; and it is no great credit to him if he can do this. His time usually, unless he is a draper or a jeweler, might have been much better employed than in making those acquisitions which are needful to qualify him to appreciate and admire the specialities of frivolous female apparel.

(b) But a man has a real interest in what constitutes the ornaments of the heart. His happiness, in his contact with his wife, depends on these. He knows what is denoted by a kind temper; by gentle words; by a placid brow; by a modest and patient spirit; by a heart that is calm in trouble, and that is affectionate and pure; by freedom from irritability, fretfulness, and impatience; and he can fully appreciate the value of these things No professional skill is necessary to qualify him to see their worth; and no acquired tact in discrimination is requisite to enable him to estimate them according to their full value. A wife, therefore, if she would permanently please her husband, should seek the adorning of the soul rather than the body; the ornament of the heart rather than gold and jewels. The one can never be a substitute for the other; and whatever outward decorations she may have, unless she have a gentleness of spirit, a calmness of temper, a benevolence and purity of soul, and a cultivation of mind that her husband can love, she cannot calculate on his permanent affection.

Which is in the sight of God of great price Of great value; that being of great value for which a large price is paid. He has shown his sense of its value:

(a) by commending it so often in his word:

(b) by making religion to consist so much in it, rather than in high intellectual endowments, learning, skill in the arts, and valor; and

(c) by the character of his Son, the Lord Jesus, in whom this was so prominent a characteristic.

Sentiments not unlike what is here stated by the apostle, occur not unfrequently in pagan Classic writers. There are some remarkable passages in Plutarch, strongly resembling it:

> "An ornament, as Crates said, is that which adorns. The proper ornament of a woman is that which becomes her best. This is neither gold, nor pearls, nor scarlet, but those things which are an evident proof of gravity, regularity, and modesty" — Conjugalio Praecept., c. xxvi.

The wife of Phocion, a celebrated Athenian general, receiving a visit from a lady who was elegantly adorned with gold and jewels, and her hair with pearls, took occasion to call the attention of her guest to the elegance and costliness of her dress. "My ornament," said the wife of Phocion, "is my husband, now for the twentieth year general of the Athenians" — Plutarch's Life of Phocion. "The Sicilian tyrant sent to the daughters of Lysander garments and tissues of great value, but Lysander refused them, saying, "These ornaments will rather put my daughters out of countenance than adorn them" — Plutarch. So in the fragments of Naumachius, as quoted by Benson, there is a precept much like this of Peter: "Be not too fond of gold, neither wear purple hyacinth about your neck, or the green jasper, of which foolish persons are proud. Do not covet such vain ornaments, neither view yourself too often in the glass, nor twist your hair into a multitude of curls," etc.

1 Peter 3:5. *For after this manner, in the old time* The allusion here is particularly to the times of the patriarchs, and the object of the apostle is to state another reason why they should seek that kind of ornament which he had been commending. The reason is, that this characterized the pious and honored females of ancient times — those females who had been most commended of God, and who were most worthy to be remembered on earth.

Who trusted in God Greek, "Who hoped in God;" that is, who were truly pious. They were characterized by simple trust or hope in God, rather than by a fondness for external adorning.

Adorned themselves To wit, with a meek and quiet spirit, manifested particularly by the respect evinced for their husbands.

Being in subjection unto their own husbands This was evidently a characteristic of the early periods of the world; and piety was understood to consist much in proper respect for others, according to the relations sustained toward them.

1 Peter 3:6. *Even as Sara obeyed Abraham* Sarah was one of the most distinguished of the wives of the patriarchs, and her case is referred to as furnishing one of the best illustrations of the duty to which the apostle refers. Nothing is said, in the brief records of her life, of any passion for outward adorning; much is said of her kindness to her husband, and her respect for him. Compare Genesis 12:5; 18:6.

Calling him Lord See Genesis 18:12. It was probably inferred from this instance, by the apostle, and not without reason, that Sarah habitually used this respectful appellation, acknowledging by it that he was her superior, and that he had a right to rule in his own house. The word lord has the elementary idea of ruling, and this is the sense here — that she acknowledged that he had a right to direct the affairs of his household, and that it was her duty to be in subjection to him as the head of the family. In what respects this is a duty, may be seen by consulting the notes at Ephesians 5:22. Among the Romans, it was quite common for wives to use the appellation lord, (dominus), when speaking of their husbands. The same custom also prevailed among the Greeks. See Grotius, in loc. This passage does not prove that the term lord should be the particular appellation by which Christian wives should address their husbands now, but it proves that there should be the same respect and deference which was implied by its use in patriarchal times. The welfare of society, and the happiness of individuals, are not diminished by showing proper respect for all classes of persons in the various relations of life.

Whose daughters ye are That is, you will be worthy to be regarded as her daughters, if you manifest the same spirit that she did. The margin here, as the Greek, is children. The sense is that if they demeaned themselves correctly in the relation of wives, it would be proper to look upon her as their mother, and to feel that they were not unworthy to be regarded as her daughters.

As long as ye do well In respect to the particular matter under consideration.

And are not afraid with any amazement This passage has been variously understood, Some have supposed that this is suggested as an argument to persuade them to do well, from the consideration that by so doing they would be preserved from those alarms and terrors which a contest with superior power might bring with it, and which would prove as injurious to their peace as to their character. Rosenmuller explains it,

> "If ye do well, terrified by no threats of unbelieving husbands, if they should undertake to compel you to deny the Christian faith."

Doddridge supposes that it means that they were to preserve their peace and fortitude in any time of danger, so as not to act out of character, through amazement or danger. Calvin, Benson, and Bloomfield understand it of that firmness and intrepidity of character which would be necessary to support their religious independence, when united with pagan husbands; meaning that they were not to be deterred from doing their duty by any threats or terrors, either of their unbelieving husbands, or of their enemies and persecutors. Dr. Clarke supposes that it means that if they did well, they would live under no dread of being detected in improprieties of life, or being found out in their infidelities to their husbands, as those must always be who are unfaithful to their marriage vows. The word rendered "amazement" (πτονσις) does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. It means terror, trepidation, fear; and the literal translation of the Greek is, "not fearing any fear." It seems to me that the following may express the sense of the passage:

(1) There is undoubtedly an allusion to the character of Sarah, and the object of the apostle is to induce them to follow her example.

(2) The thing in Sarah which he would exhort them to imitate, was her pure and upright life, her faithful discharge of her duties as a woman fearing God. This she did constantly wherever she was, regardless of consequences. Among friends and strangers, at home and abroad, she was distinguished for doing well. Such was her character, such her fidelity to her husband and her God, such her firm integrity and benevolence, that she at all times lived to do good, and would have done it, unawed by terror, undeterred by threats, To whatever trial her piety was exposed, it bore the trial; and such was her strength of virtue, that it was certain her integrity would be firm by whatever consequences she might have been threatened for her adherence to her principles.

(3) They were to imitate her in this, and were thus to show that they were worthy to be regarded as her daughters. They were to do well; to be faithful to their husbands; to be firm in their principles; to adhere steadfastly to what was true and good, whatever trials they might pass through, however much they might be threatened with persecution, or however any might attempt to deter them from the performance of their duty. Thus, by a life of Christian fidelity, unawed by fear from any quarter,

they would show that they were imbued with the same principles of unbending virtue which charaeterised the wife of the father of the faithful, and that they were not unworthy to be regarded as her daughters.

1 Peter 3:7. *Likewise, ye husbands* On the general duty of husbands, see the notes at Ephesians 5:25ff.

Dwell with them That is, "Let your manner of living with them be that which is immediately specified."

According to knowledge In accordance with an intelligent view of the nature of the relation; or, as becomes those who have been instructed in the duties of this relation according to the gospel. The meaning evidently is, that they should seek to obtain just views of what Christianity enjoins in regard to this relation, and that they should allow those intelligent views to control them in all their contact with their wives.

Giving honor unto the wife It was an important advance made in society when the Christian religion gave such a direction as this, for everywhere among the pagan, and under all false systems of religion, woman has been regarded as worthy of little honor or respect. She has been considered as a slave, or as a mere instrument to gratify the passions of man. It is one of the elementary doctrines of Christianity, however, that woman is to be treated with respect; and one of the first and most marked effects of religion on society is to elevate the wife to a condition in which she will be worthy of esteem. The particular reasons for the honor which husbands are directed to show to their wives, here specified, are two: she is to be treated with special kindness as being more feeble than man, and as having a claim therefore to delicate attention; and she is to be honored as the equal heir of the grace of life. Doddridge, Clarke, and some others, suppose that the word honor here refers to maintenance or support; and that the command is, that the husband is to provide for his wife so that she may not want. But it seems to me that the word is to be understood here in its more usual signification, and that it inculcates a higher duty than that of merely providing for the temporal needs of the wife, and strikes at a deeper evil than a mere neglect of meeting her temporal necessities. The reasons assigned for doing this seem to imply it.

As unto the weaker vessel It is not uncommon in the Scriptures to compare the body to a vessel, (Compare the notes at 1 Thessalonians 4:4,) and thence the comparison is extended to the whole person. This is done either

because the body is frail and feeble, like an earthen vessel easily broken; or because it is that in which the soul is lodged; or because, in accordance with a frequent use of the word, (see below,) the body is the instrument by which the soul accomplishes its purposes, or is the helper of the soul. Compare <44915>Acts 9:15; <45922>Romans 9:22,23; <47407>2 Corinthians 4:7. In the later Hebrew usage it was common to apply the term vessel (Hebrew yl K] <3627>, Greek σκευος <4632>) to a wife, as is done here. See Schoettgen, Hor. Hebrews p. 827. Expressions similar to this, in regard to the comparative feebleness of woman, occur frequently in the classic writers. See Wetstein in loc. The reasons why the term vessel was given to a wife, are not very apparent. A not unfrequent sense of the word used here (σκευος <4632>) in tho Greek classics was that of an instrument; a helper; one who was employed by another to accomplish anything, or to aid him (Passow), and it seems probable that this was the reason why the term was given to the wife. Compare <01218>Genesis 2:18. The reason here assigned for the honor that was to be shown to the wife is, that she is "the weaker vessel." By this it is not necessarily meant that she is of feebler capacity, or inferior mental endowments, but that she is more tender and delicate; more subject to infirmities and weaknesses; less capable of enduring fatigue and toil; less adapted to the rough and stormy scenes of life. As such, she should be regarded and treated with special kindness and attention. This is a reason, the force of which all can see and appreciate. So we feel toward a sister; so we feel toward a beloved child, if he is of feeble frame and delicate constitution; and so every man should feel in relation to his wife. She may have mental endowments equal to his own; she may have moral qualities in every way superior to his; but the God of nature has made her with a more delicate frame, a more fragile structure, and with a body subject to many infirmities to which the more hardy frame of man is a stranger.

And as being heirs together of the grace of life The grace that is connected with eternal life; that is, as fellow-Christians. They were equal heirs of the everlasting inheritance, called in the Scripture "life;" and the same "grace" connected with that inheritance had been conferred on both. This passage contains a very important truth in regard to the female sex. Under every other system of religion but the Christian system, woman has been regarded as in every way inferior to man. Christianity teaches that, in respect to her higher interests, the interests of religion, she is every way his equal. She is entitled to all the hopes and promises which religion imparts.

She is redeemed as he is. She is addressed in the same language of tender invitation. She has the same privileges and comforts which religion imparts here, and she will be elevated to the same rank and privileges in heaven. This single truth would raise the female sex everywhere from degradation, and check at once half the social evils of the race. Make her the equal of man in the hope of heaven, and at once she rises to her appropriate place. Home is made what it should be, a place of intelligence and pure friendship; and a world of suffering and sadness smiles under the benefactions of Christian woman.

That your prayers be not hindered It is fairly implied here:

(1) that it was supposed there would be united or family prayer. The apostle is speaking of "dwelling with the wife," and of the right manner of treating her; and it is plainly supposed that united prayer would be one thing that would characterise their living together. He does not direct that there should be prayer. He seems to take it for granted that there would be; and it may be remarked, that where there is true religion in right exercise, there is prayer as a matter of course. The head of a family does not ask whether he must establish family worship; he does it as one of the spontaneous fruits of religion — as a thing concerning which no formal command is necessary. Prayer in the family, as everywhere else, is a privilege; and the true question to be asked on the subject is not whether a man must, but whether he may pray.

(2) It is implied that there might be such a way of living as effectually to hinder prayer; that is, to prevent its being offered aright, and to prevent any answer. This might occur in many ways. If the husband treated the wife unkindly; if he did not show her proper respect and affection; if there were bickerings, and jealousies, and contentions between them, there could be no hope that acceptable prayer would be offered. A spirit of strife; irritability and unevenness of temper; harsh looks and unkind words; a disposition easily to take offence, and an unwillingness to forgive, all these prevent a "return of prayers." Acceptable prayer never can be offered in the tempest of passion, and there can be no doubt that such prayer is often "hindered" by the inequalities of temper, and the bickerings and strifes that exist in families. Yet how desirable is it that husband and wife should so live together that their prayers may not be hindered! How desirable for their own peace and happiness in that relation; how desirable for the welfare of children! In view of the exposition in this verse we may remark:

(a) that Christianity has done much to elevate the female sex. It has taught that woman is an heir of the grace of life as well as man; that, while she is inferior in physical vigor, she is his equal in the most important respect; that she is a fellow-traveler with him to a higher world; and that in every way she is entitled to all the blessings which redemption confers, as much as he is. This single truth has done more than all other things combined to elevate the female sex, and is all that is needful to raise her from her degradation all over the world.

(b) They, therefore, who desire the elevation of the female sex, who see woman ignorant and degraded in the dark parts of the earth, should be the friends of all well-directed efforts to send the gospel to pagan lands. Every husband who has a pure and intelligent wife, and every father who has an accomplished daughter, and every brother who has a virtuous sister, should seek to spread the gospel abroad. To that gospel only he owes it that he has such a wife, daughter, sister; and that gospel, which has given to him such an intelligent female friend, would elevate woman everywhere to the same condition. The obligation which he owes to religion in this respect can be discharged in no better way than by aiding in diffusing that gospel which would make the wife, the daughter, the sister, everywhere what she is in his own dwelling.

(c) Especially is this the duty of the Christian female. She owes her elevation in society to Christianity, and what Christianity has made her, it would make the sunken and debased of her own sex all over the earth; and how can she better show her gratitude than by aiding in any and every way in making that same gospel known in the dark parts of the world?

(d) Christianity makes a happy home. Let the principles reign in any family which are here enjoined by the apostle, and that family will be one of intelligence, contentment, and peace. There is a simple and easy way of being happy in the family relation. It is to allow the spirit of Christ and his gospel to reign there. That done, though there be poverty, and disappointment, and sickness, and cares, and losses, yet there will be peace within, for there will be mutual love, and the cheerful hope of a brighter world. Where that is missing, no outward splendor, no costly furniture or viands, no gilded equipage, no long train of servants, no wine, or music, or dances, can secure happiness in a dwelling. With all these things there may be the most corroding passions; in the mansion where these things are, pale

disease, disappointment, and death may come, and there shall be nothing to console and support.

⁶⁰¹⁰⁸**1 Peter 3:8.** *Finally* As the last direction, or as general counsel in reference to your conduct in all the relations of life. The apostle had specified most of the important relations which Christians sustain, (⁶⁰¹²³1 Peter 2:13-95; 3:1-7;) and he now gives a general direction in regard to their conduct in all those relations.

Be ye all of one mind See the notes at ⁴⁵⁶¹⁶Romans 12:16. The word used here (ὁμοφρων³⁶⁷⁵) does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. It means, of the same mind; like-minded; and the object is to secure harmony in their views and feelings.

Having compassion one of another "Sympathizing," (συμπαθεις ⁴⁸³⁵); entering into one another's feelings, and evincing a regard for each other's welfare. See the notes at ⁴⁵⁶¹⁵Romans 12:15. Compare ⁴⁶¹²⁶1 Corinthians 12:26; ⁴³¹³⁵John 11:35. The Greek word used here does occur not elsewhere in the New Testament. It describes that state of mind which exists when we enter into the feelings of others as if they were our own, as the different parts of the body are affected by that which affects one. See the notes at ⁴⁶¹²⁶1 Corinthians 12:26.

Love as brethren Margin, "loving to the;" that is, the brethren. The Greek word (φιλαδελφος ⁵³⁶¹) does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. It means loving one's brethren; that is, loving each other as Christian brethren — Robinson, Lexicon. Thus, it enforces the duty so often enjoined in the New Testament, that of love to Christians as brethren of the same family. See the notes at ⁴⁵⁶¹⁰Romans 12:10. Compare ⁵⁸¹⁰¹Hebrews 13:1; ⁴³¹³⁴John 13:34.

Be pitiful The word used here (ευσπλανγχνος ²¹⁵⁵) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, except in ⁴⁹⁰³²Ephesians 4:32, where it is rendered "tender-hearted." See the notes at that verse.

Be courteous This word also (φιλοφρων ⁵³⁹¹) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means "friendly-minded, kind, courteous." Later editions of the New Testament, instead of this, read (ταπεινοφρονες ⁵⁷⁵⁶) of a lowly or humble mind. See Hahn. The sense is not materially varied. In the one word, the idea of "friendliness" is the one that prevails; in the other, that of "humility." Christianity requires both of these virtues, and

either word enforces an important injunction. The authority is in favor of the latter reading; and though Christianity requires that we should be courteous and gentlemanly in our treatment of others, this text can hardly be relied on as a prooftext of that point.

1 Peter 3:9. *Not rendering evil for evil* See the notes at Matthew 5:39,44; Romans 12:17.

Or railing for railing See the notes at 1 Timothy 6:4. Compare Mark 15:29; Luke 23:39.

But contrariwise blessing In a spirit contrary to this. See the notes at Matthew 5:44.

Knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing "Knowing that you were called to be Christians in order that you should obtain a blessing infinite and eternal in the heavens. Expecting such a blessing yourselves, you should be ready to scatter blessings on all others. You should be ready to bear all their reproaches, and even to wish them well. The hope of eternal life should make your minds calm; and the prospect that you are to be so exalted in heaven should fill your hearts with benignity and love." There is nothing which is better suited to cause our hearts to overflow with benignity, to make us ready to forgive all others when they injure us, than the hope of salvation. Cherishing such a hope ourselves, we cannot but wish that all others may share it, and this will lead us to wish for them every blessing, A man who has a hope of heaven should abound in every virtue. and show that he is a sincere well-wisher of the race. Why should one who expects soon to be in heaven harbor malice in his bosom? Why should he wish to injure a fellow-worm? How can he?

1 Peter 3:10. *For he that will love life* Greek, "He willing, (θελων), or that wills to love life." It implies that there is some positive desire to live; some active wish that life should be prolonged. This whole passage (1 Peter 3:10-12) is taken, with some slight variations, from Psalm 34:12-16. In the Psalm this expression is, "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?" The sense is substantially the same. It is implied here that it is right to love life, and to desire many days. The desire of this is referred to by the psalmist and by the apostle, without any expression of disapprobation, and the way is shown by which length of days may be secured. Life is a blessing; a precious gift of God. We are taught so to regard it by the instinctive

feelings of our nature; for we are so made as to love it, and to dread its extinction. Though we should be prepared to resign it when God commands, yet there are important reasons why we should desire to live. Among them are the following:

(1) Because, as already intimated, life, as such, is to be regarded as a blessing. We instinctively shrink back from death, as one of the greatest evils; we shudder at the thought of annihilation. It is not wrong to love that, in proper degree, which, by our very nature, we are prompted to love; and we are but acting out one of the universal laws which our Creator has impressed on us, when, with proper submission to his will, we seek "to lengthen out our days as far as possible.

(2) That we may see the works of God, and survey the wonders of his hand on earth. The world is full of wonders, evincing the wisdom and goodness of the Deity; and the longest life, nay, many such lives as are allotted to us here, could be well employed in studying his works and ways.

(3) That we may make preparation for eternity. Man may, indeed, make preparation in a very brief period; but the longest life is not too much to examine and settle the question whether we have a well-founded hope of heaven. If man had nothing else to do, the longest life could be well employed in inquiries that grow out of the question whether we are suited for the world to come. In the possibility, too, of being deceived, and in view of the awful consequences that will result from deception, it is desirable that length of days should be given us that we may bring the subject to the severest test, and so determine it, that we may go sure to the changeless world.

(4) That we may do good to others. We may, indeed, do good in another world; but there are ways of doing good which are probably confined to this. What good we may do hereafter to the inhabitants of distant worlds, or what ministrations, in company with angels, or without them, we may exercise toward the friends of God on earth after we leave it, we do not know; but there are certain things which we are morally certain we shall not be permitted to do in the future world. We shall not:

(a) personally labor for the salvation of sinners, by conversation and other direct efforts;

(b) we shall not illustrate the influence of religion by example in sustaining us in trials, subduing and controlling our passions, and making us dead to the world;

(c) we shall not be permitted to pray for our impenitent friends and kindred, as we may now;

(d) we shall not have the opportunity of contributing of our substance for the spread of the gospel, or of going personally to preach the gospel to the perishing;

(e) we shall not be employed in instructing the ignorant, in advocating the cause of the oppressed and the wronged, in seeking to remove the fetters from the slave, in dispensing mercy to the insane, or in visiting the prisoner in his lonely cell;

(f) we shall not have it in our power to address a kind word to an impenitent child, or seek to guide him in paths of truth, purity, and salvation. What we can do personally and directly for the salvation of others is to be done in this world; and, considering how much there is to be done, and how useful life may be on the earth, it is an object which we should desire, that our days may be lengthened out, and should use all proper means that it may be done. While we should ever be ready and willing to depart when God calls us to go; while we should not wish to linger on these mortal shores beyond the time when we may be useful to others, yet, as long as he permits us to live, we should regard life as a blessing, and should pray that, if it be his will, we may not be cut down in the midst of our way.

> "Love not thy life, nor hate; but what thou livest Live well; how long, or short, permit to heaven." — Paradise Lost.

And see good days In the Psalm (<19B412>Psalm 34:12) this is, "and loveth many days, that he may see good." The quotation by Peter throughout the passage is taken from the Septuagint, excepting that there is a change of the person from the second to the third: in the psalm, e.g., "refrain thy tongue from evil," etc.; in the quotation, "let him refrain his tongue from evil," etc. "Good days" are prosperous days; happy days; days of usefulness; days in which we may be respected and loved.

Let him refrain his tongue from evil The general meaning of all that is said here is, "let him lead an upright and pious life; doing evil to no one, but

seeking the good of all men." To refrain the tongue from evil, is to avoid all slander, falsehood; "obscenity, and profaneness, and to abstain from uttering erroneous and false opinions. Compare <590126>James 1:26; 3:2.

And his lips that they speak no guile No deceit; nothing that will lead others astray. The words should be an exact representation of the truth. Rosenmuller quotes a passage from the Hebrew book Musar, which may be not an inappropriate illustration of this: "A certain Assyrian wandering through the city, cried and said, "Who will receive the elixir of life?" The daughter of Rabbi Jodus heard him, and went and told her father. "Call him in," said he. When he came in, Rabbi Jannei said to him, "What is that elixir of life which thou art selling?" He said to him, "Is it not written, What man is he that desireth life, and loveth days that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile. Lo, this is the elixir of life which is in the mouth of a man!""

<600311>**1 Peter 3:11.** *Let him eschew evil* Let him avoid all evil. Compare <180101>Job 1:1.

And do good In any and every way; by endeavoring to promote the happiness of all. Compare the notes at <480610>Galatians 6:10.

Let him seek peace, and ensue it Follow it; that is, practice it. See the notes at <400509>Matthew 5:9; <451218>Romans 12:18. The meaning is, that a peaceful spirit will contribute to length of days:

(1) A peaceful spirit — a calm, serene, and equal temper of mind — is favorable to health, avoiding those corroding and distracting passions which do so much to wear out the physical energies of the frame; and

(2) such a spirit will preserve us from those contentions and strifes to which so many owe their death. Let anyone reflect on the numbers that are killed in duels, in battles, and in brawls, and he will have no difficulty in seeing how a peace fill spirit will contribute to length of days.

<600312>**1 Peter 3:12.** *For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous* That is, he is their Protector. His eyes are indeed on all people, but the language here is that which describes continual guardianship and care.

And his ears are open unto their prayers He hears their prayers. As he is a hearer of prayer, they are at liberty to go to him at all times, and to pour out their desires before him. This passage is taken from <193415>Psalm 34:15,

and it is designed to show the reason why a life of piety will contribute to length of days.

But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil Margin, upon. The sense of the passage, however, is against. The Lord sets his face against them: an expression denoting disapprobation, and a determination to punish them. His face is not mild and benignant toward them, as it is toward the righteous. The general sentiment in these verses (1 Peter 3:10-12) is, that while length of days is desirable, it is to be secured by virtue and religion, or that virtue and religion will contribute to it. This is not to be understood as affirming that all who are righteous will enjoy long life, for we know that the righteous are often cut down in the midst of their way; and that in fire, and flood, and war, and the pestilence, the righteous and the wicked often perish together. But still there is a sense in which it is true that a life of virtue and religion will contribute to length of days, and that the law is so general as to be a basis of calculation in reference to the future:

I. Religion and virtue contribute to those things which are favorable to length of days, which are conducive to health and to a vigorous constitution. Among those things are the following:

(a) a calm, peaceful, and contented mind — avoiding the wear and tear of the raging passions of lusts, avarice, and ambition;

(b) temperance in eating and drinking — always favorable to length of days;

(c) industry — one of the essential means, as a general rule, of promoting long life;

(d) prudence and economy — avoiding the extravagancies by which many shorten their days; and

(e) a conscientious and careful regard of life itself. Religion makes men feel that life is a blessing, and that it should not be thrown away. Just in proportion as a man is under the influence of religion, does he regard life as of importance, and does he become careful in preserving it. Strange and paradoxical as it may seem, the lack of religion often makes people reckless of life, and ready to throw it away for any trifling cause. Religion shows a man what great issues depend on life, and makes him, therefore,

desirous of living to secure his own salvation and the salvation of all others.

II. Multitudes lose their lives who would have preserved them if they had been under the influence of religion. To see this, we have only to reflect:

(a) on the millions who are cut off in war as the result of ambition, and the want of religion;

(b) on the countless hosts cut down in middle life, or in youth, by intemperance, who would have been saved by religion;

(c) on the numbers who are the victims of raging passions, and who are cut off by the diseases which gluttony and licentiousness engender;

(d) on the multitude who fall in duels, all of whom would have been saved by religion;

(e) on the numbers who, as the result of disappointment in business or in love, close their own lives, who would have been enabled to bear up under their troubles if they had had religion; and

(f) on the numbers who are cut off from the earth as the punishment of their crimes, all of whom would have continued to live if they had had true religion.

III. God protects the righteous. He does it by saving them from those vices by which the lives of so many are shortened; and often, we have no reason to doubt, in answer to their prayers, when, but for those prayers, they would have fallen into crimes that would have consigned them to an early grave, or encountered dangers from which they would have had no means of escape. No one can doubt that in fact those who are truly religious are saved from the sins which consign millions to the tomb; nor is there any less reason to doubt that a protecting shield is often thrown before the children of God when in danger. Compare Psalm 91.

1 Peter 3:13. *And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* This question is meant to imply, that as a general thing they need apprehend no evil if they lead an upright and benevolent life. The idea is, that God would in general protect them, though the next verse shows that the apostle did not mean to teach that there would be absolute security, for it is implied there that they might be called to suffer for

righteousness" sake. While it is true that the Saviour was persecuted by wicked people, though his life was wholly spent in doing good; while it is true that the apostles were put to death, though following his example; and while it is true that good people have often suffered persecution, though laboring only to do good, still it is true as a general thing that a life of integrity and benevolence conduces to safety, even in a wicked world. People who are upright and pure; who live to do good to others who are characteristically benevolent and who are imitators of God — are those who usually pass life in most tranquillity and security, and are often safe when nothing else would give security but confidence in their integrity. A man of a holy and pure life may, under the protection of God, rely on that character to carry him safely through the world and to bring him at last to an honored grave. Or should he be calumniated when living, and his sun set under a cloud, still his name will be vindicated, and justice will ultimately be done to him when he is dead. The world ultimately judges right respecting character, and renders "honor to whom honor is due." Compare <19303>Psalm 37:3-6.

<60314>**1 Peter 3:14.** *But and if ye suffer for righteousness" sake* Implying that though, in general, a holy character would constitute safety, yet that there was a possibility that they might suffer persecution. Compare the notes at <40510>Matthew 5:10; <550312>2 Timothy 3:12.

Happy are ye Perhaps alluding to what the Saviour says in <40510>Matthew 5:10: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness" sake." On the meaning of the word happy or blessed, see the notes at <40503>Matthew 5:3. The meaning here is, not that they would find positive enjoyment in persecution on account of righteousness, but that they were to regard it as a blessed condition; that is, as a condition that might be favorable to salvation; and they were not therefore, on the whole, to regard it as an evil.

And be not afraid of their terror Of anything which they can do to cause terror. There is evidently an allusion here to <230812>Isaiah 8:12,13: "Neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread." See the notes at that passage. Compare <235112>Isaiah 51:12; <401028>Matthew 10:28. "Neither be troubled." With apprehension of danger. Compare the notes at <431401>John 14:1. If we are true Christians, we have really no reason to be alarmed in view of anything that can happen to us. God is our protector, and he is abundantly able to

vanquish all our foes; to uphold us in all our trials; to conduct us through the valley of death, and to bring us to heaven

> "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come," [46]1 Corinthians 3:21,22.

[60]**1 Peter 3:15.** *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts* In Isaiah ([23]Isaiah 8:13) this is, "sanctify the Lord of hosts himself;" that is, in that connection, regard him as your Protector, and be afraid of him, and not of what man can do. The sense in the passage before us is, "In your hearts, or in the affections of the soul, regard the Lord God as holy, and act toward him with that confidence which a proper respect for one so great and so holy demands. In the midst of dangers, be not intimidated; dread not what man can do, but evince proper reliance on a holy God, and flee to him with the confidence which is due to one so glorious." This contains, however, a more general direction, applicable to Christians at all times. It is, that in our hearts we are to esteem God as a holy being, and in all our deportment to act toward him as such. The object of Peter in quoting the passage from Isaiah, was to lull the fears of those whom he addressed, and preserve them from any alarms in view of the persecutions to which they might be exposed; the trials which would be brought upon them by people. Thus, in entire accordance with the sentiment as employed by Isaiah, he says, "Be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts." That is, "in order to keep the mind calm in trials, sanctify the Lord in your hearts; regard him as your holy God and Saviour; make him your refuge. This will allay all your fears, and secure you from all that you dread." The sentiment of the passage then is, that the sanctifying of the Lord God in our hearts, or proper confidence in him as a holy and righteous God, will deliver us from fear. As this is a very important sentiment for Christians, it may be proper, in order to a just exposition of the passage, to dwell a moment on it:

I. What is meant by our sanctifying the Lord God? It cannot mean to make him holy, for he is perfectly holy, whatever may be our estimate of him; and our views of him evidently can make no change in his character. The meaning therefore must be, that we should regard him as holy in our estimate of him, or in the feelings which we have toward him. This may include the following things:

(1) To esteem or regard him as a holy being, in contradistinction from all those feelings which rise up in the heart against him — the feelings of complaining and murmuring under his dispensations, as if he were severe and harsh; the feelings of dissatisfaction with his government, as if it were partial and unequal; the feelings of rebellion, as if his claims were unfounded or unjust.

(2) To desire that he may be regarded by others as holy, in accordance with the petition in the Lord's prayer, (Matthew 6:9), "hallowed be thy name;" that is, "let thy name be esteemed to be holy everywhere;" a feeling in opposition to that which is regardless of the honor which he may receive in the world. When we esteem a friend, we desire that all due respect should be shown him by others; we wish that all who know him should have the same views that we have; we are sensitive to his honor, just in proportion as we love him.

(3) To act toward him as holy: that is, to obey his laws, and acquiesce in all his requirements, as if they were just and good. This implies:

(a) that we are to speak of him as holy, in opposition to the language of disrespect and irreverence so common among mankind;

(b) that we are to flee to him in trouble, in contradistinction from withholding our hearts from him, and flying to other sources of consolation and support.

II. What is it to do this in the heart? Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; that is, in contradistinction from a mere external service. This may imply the following things:

(1) In contradistinction from a mere intellectual assent to the proposition that he is holy. Many admit the doctrine that God is holy into their creeds, who never suffer the sentiment to find its way to the heart. All is right on this subject in the articles of their faith; all in their hearts may be murmuring and complaining. In their creeds he is spoken of as just and good; in their hearts they regard him as partial and unjust, as severe and stern, as unamiable and cruel.

(2) In contradistinction From a mere outward form of devotion. In our prayers, and in our hymns, we, of course, "ascribe holiness to our Maker." But how much of this is the mere language of form! How little does the heart accompany it! And even in the most solemn and sublime ascriptions

of praise, how often are the feelings of the heart entirely at variance with what is expressed by the lips! What would more justly offend us, than for a professed friend to approach us with the language of friendship, when every feeling of his heart belied his expressions, and we knew that his honeyed words were false and hollow!

III. Such a sanctifying of the Lord in our hearts will save us from fear. We dread danger, we dread sickness, we dread death, we dread the eternal world. We are alarmed when our affairs are tending to bankruptcy; we are alarmed when a friend is sick and ready to die; we are alarmed if our country is invaded by a foe, and the enemy already approaches our dwelling. The sentiment in the passage before us is, that if we sanctify the Lord God with proper affections, we shall be delivered from these alarms, and the mind will be calm:

(1) The fear of the Lord, as Leighton (in loc.) expresses it, "as greatest, overtops and nullifies all lesser fears: the heart possessed with this fear hath no room for the other." It is an absorbing emotion; making everything else comparatively of no importance. If we fear God, we have nothing else to fear. The highest emotion which there can be in the soul is the fear of God; and when that exists, the soul will be calm amidst all that might tend otherwise to disturb it. "What time I am afraid," says David, "I will trust in thee," <19563>Psalm 56:3. "We are not, careful," said Daniel and his friends, "to answer thee, O king. Our God can deliver us; but if not, we will not worship the image," <27316>Daniel 3:16.

(2) If we sanctify the Lord God in our hearts, there will be a belief that he will do all things well, and the mind will be calm. However dark his dispensations may be, we shall be assured that everything is ordered aright. In a storm at sea, a child may be calm when he feels that his father is at the helm, and assures him that there is no danger. In a battle, the mind of a soldier may be calm, if he has confidence in his commander, and he assures him that all is safe. So in anything, if we have the assurance that the best thing is done that can be, that the issues will all be right, the mind will be calm. But in this respect the highest confidence that can exist, is that which is reposed in God.

(3) There will be the assurance that all is safe.

> "Though I walk," says David, "through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me," <19234>Psalm 23:4.

> "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? [1970]Psalm 27:1.
>
> "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble: therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof," [1961]Psalm 46:1-3.

Let us ever then regard the Lord as holy, just, and good. Let us flee to him in all the trials of the present life, and in the hour of death repose on his arm. Every other source of trust will fail; and whatever else may be our reliance, when the hour of anguish approaches, that reliance will fail, and that which we dreaded will overwhelm us. Nor riches, nor honors, nor earthly friends, can save us from those alarms, or be a security for our souls when "the rains descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow" upon us.

And be ready always That is:

(a) be always able to do it; have such reasons for the hope that is in you that they can be stated; or, have good and substantial reasons; and

(b) be willing to state those reasons on all proper occasions. No man ought to entertain opinions for which a good reason cannot be given; and every man ought to be willing to state the grounds of his hope on all proper occasions. A Christian should have such intelligent views of the truth of his religion, and such constant evidence in his own heart and life that he is a child of God, as to be able at any time to satisfy a candid inquirer that the Bible is a revelation from heaven, and that it is proper for him to cherish the hope of salvation.

To give an answer Greek, "An apology," (απολογιαν [627]) This word formerly did not mean, as the word apology does now, an excuse for anything that is done as if it were wrong, but a defense of anything. We apply the word now to denote something written or said in extenuation of what appears to others to be wrong, or what might be construed as wrong — as when we make an apology to others for not fulfilling an engagement, or for some conduct which might be construed as designed neglect. The word originally, however, referred rather to that which was thought not to be true, than that which might be construed as wrong; and the defense or

"apology" which Christians were to make of their religion, was not on the supposition that others would regard it as wrong, but in order to show them that it was true. The word used here is rendered "defense," <42201>Acts 22:1; <50107>Philippians 1:7,17; answer, <44256>Acts 25:16; <46903>1 Corinthians 9:3; <55046>2 Timothy 4:16; <60315>1 Peter 3:15; and clearing of yourselves in <47011>2 Corinthians 7:11. We are not to hold ourselves ready to make an apology for our religion as if it were a wrong thing to be a Christian; but we are always to be ready to give reasons for regarding it as true.

To every man that asketh you Anyone has a right respectfully to ask another on what grounds he regards his religion as true; for every man has a common interest in religion, and in knowing what is the truth on the subject. If any man, therefore, asks us candidly and respectfully by what reasons we have been led to embrace the gospel, and on what grounds we, regard it as true, we are under obligation to state those grounds in the best manner that we are able. We should regard it not as an impertinent intrusion into our private affairs, but as an opportunity of doing good to others, and to honor the Master whom we serve. Nay, we should hold ourselves in readiness to state the grounds of our faith and hope, whatever maybe the motive of the inquirer, and in whatever manner the request may be made. Those who were persecuted for their religion, were under obligation to make as good a defense of it as they could, and to state to their persecutors the "reason" of the hope which they entertained. And so now, if a man attacks our religion; if he ridicules us for being Christians; if he tauntingly asks us what reason we have for believing the truth of the Bible, it is better to tell him in a kind manner, and to meet his taunt with a kind and strong argument, than to become angry, or to turn away with contempt. The best way to disarm him is to show him that by embracing religion we are not fools in understanding; and, by a kind temper, to convince him that the influence of religion over us when we are abused and insulted, is a REASON why we should love our religion, and why he should too.

A reason of the hope that is in you Greek, "an account," (λογον <3056>) That is, you are to state on what ground you cherish that hope. This refers to the whole ground of our hope, and includes evidently two things:

(1) The reason why we regard Christianity as true, or as furnishing a ground of hope for people; and,

(2) the reason which we have ourselves for cherishing a hope of heaven, or the experimental and practical views which we have of religion, which constitute a just ground of hope.

It is not improbable that the former of these was more directly in the eye of the apostle than the latter, though both seem to be implied in the direction to state the reasons which ought to satisfy others that it is proper for us to cherish the hope of heaven. The first part of this duty — that we are to state the reasons why we regard the system of religion which we have embraced as true — implies, that we should be acquainted with the evidences of the truth of Christianity, and be able to state them to others. Christianity is founded on evidence; and though it cannot be supposed that every Christian will be able to understand all that is involved in what are called the evidences of Christianity, or to meet all the objections of the enemies of the gospel; yet every man who becomes a Christian should have such intelligent views of religion, and of the evidences of the truth of the Bible, that he can show to others that the religion which he has embraced has claims to their attention, or that it is not a mere matter of education, of tradition, or of feeling. It should also be an object with every Christian to increase his acquaintance with the evidences of the truth of religion, not only for his own stability and comfort in the faith, but that he may be able to defend religion if attacked, or to guide others if they are desirous of knowing what is truth. The second part of this duty, that we state the reasons which we have for cherishing the hope of heaven as a personal matter, implies:

(a) that there should be, in fact, a well-founded hope of heaven; that is, that we have evidence that we are true Christians, since it is impossible to give a “reason” of the hope that is in us unless there are reasons for it;

(b) that we be able to state in a clear and intelligent manner what constitutes evidence of piety, or what should be reasonably regarded as such; and

(c) that we be ever ready to state these reasons. A Christian should always be willing to converse about his religion. He should have such a deep conviction of its truth, of its importance, and of his personal interest in it; he should have a hope so firm, so cheering, so sustaining, that he will be always prepared to converse on the prospect of heaven and to endeavor to lead others to walk in the path to life.

With meekness With modesty; without any spirit of ostentation; with gentleness of manner. This seems to be added on the supposition that they sometimes might be rudely assailed; that the questions might be proposed in a spirit of evil; that it might be done in a taunting or insulting manner. Even though this should be done, they were not to fall into a passion, to manifest resentment, or to retort in an angry and revengeful manner; but, in a calm and gentle spirit, they were to state the reasons of their faith and hope, and leave the matter there.

And fear Margin, "reverence." The sense seems to be, "in the fear of God; with a serious and reverent spirit; as in the presence of Him who sees and hears all things." It evidently does not mean with the fear or dread of those who propose the question, but with that serious and reverent frame of mind which is produced by a deep impression of the importance of the subject, and a conscious sense of the presence of God. It follows, from the injunction of the apostle here:

(1) that every professing Christian should have clear and intelligent views of his own personal interest in religion, or such evidences of piety that they can be stated to others, and that they can be made satisfactory to other minds;

(2) that every Christian, however humble his rank, or however unlettered he may be, may become a valuable defender of the truth of Christianity;

(3) that we should esteem it a privilege to bear our testimony to the truth and value of religion, and to stand up as the advocates of truth in the world. Though we may be rudely assailed, it is an honor to speak in defense of religion; though we are persecuted and reviled, it is a privilege to be permitted in any way to show our fellow-men that there is such a thing as true religion, and that man may cherish the hope of heaven.

1 Peter 3:16. *Having a good conscience* That is, a conscience that does not accuse you of having done wrong. Whatever may be the accusations of your enemies, so live that you may be at all times conscious of uprightness. Whatever you suffer, see that you do not suffer the pangs inflicted by a guilty conscience, the anguish of remorse. On the meaning of the word "conscience," see the notes at Romans 2:15. The word properly means the judgment of the mind respecting right and wrong; or the judgment which the mind passes on the immorality of its own actions, when it instantly approves or condemns them. There is always a feeling of

obligation connected with operations of conscience, which precedes, attends, and follows our actions. “Conscience is first occupied in ascertaining our duty, before we proceed to action; then in judging of our actions when performed.” A “good conscience” implies two things:

(1) That it be properly enlightened to know what is right and wrong, or that it be not under the dominion of ignorance, superstition, or fanaticism, prompting us to do what would be a violation of the divine law; and

(2) that its dictates must always be obeyed. Without the first of these — clear views of that which is right and wrong — conscience becomes an unsafe guide; for it merely prompts us to do what we esteem to be right, and if our views of what is right and wrong are erroneous, we may be prompted to do what may be a direct violation of the law of God. Paul thought he “ought” to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth (<4409>Acts 26:9); the Saviour said, respecting his disciples, that the time would come when whosoever should kill them would think that they were doing God service, (<4302>John 16:2;) and Solomon says,

> “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death,” (<2012>Proverbs 14:12; 16:25)

Under an unenlightened and misguided conscience, with the plea and pretext of religion, the most atrocious crimes have been committed; and no man should infer that he is certainly doing right, because he follows the promptings of conscience. No man, indeed, should act against the dictates of his conscience; but there may have been a previous wrong in not using proper means to ascertain what is right. Conscience is not revelation, nor does it answer the purpose of a revelation. It communicates no new truth to the soul, and is a safe guide only so far as the mind has been properly enlightened to see what is truth and duty. Its office is “to prompt us to the performance of duty,” not “to determine what is right.” The other thing requisite that we may have a good conscience is, that its decisions should be obeyed. Conscience is appointed to be the “vicegerent” of God in inflicting punishment, if his commands are not obeyed. It pronounces a sentence on our own conduct. Its penalty is remorse; and that penalty will be demanded if its promptings be not regarded. It is an admirable device, as a part of the moral government of God, urging man to the performance of duty, and, in case of disobedience, making the mind its own executioner. There is no penalty that will more certainly be inflicted, sooner or later, than that incurred by a guilty conscience. It needs no witnesses; no process

for arresting the offender; no array of judges and executioners; no stripes, imprisonment, or bonds. Its inflictions will follow the offender into the most secluded retreat; overtake him in his most rapid flight; find him out in northern snows, or on the sands of the equator; go into the most splendid palaces, and seek out the victim when he is safe from all the vengeance that man can inflict; pursue him into the dark valley of the shadow of death, or arrest him as a fugitive in distant worlds. No one, therefore, can over-estimate the importance of having a good conscience. A true Christian should aim, by incessant study and prayer, to know what is right, and then always do it, no matter what may be the consequences.

That, whereas they speak evil of you They who are your enemies and persecutors. Christians are not to hope that people will always speak well of them, <40511>Matthew 5:11; <42606>Luke 6:26.

As of evildoers See the notes at <60212>1 Peter 2:12.

They may be ashamed They may see that they have misunderstood your conduct, and regret that they have treated you as they have. We should expect, if we are faithful and true, that even our enemies will yet appreciate our motives, and do us justice. Compare <19706>Psalm 37:5,6.

That falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ Your good conduct as Christians. They may accuse you of insincerity, hypocrisy, dishonesty; of being enemies of the state, or of monstrous crimes; but the time will come when they will see their error, and do you justice. See the notes at <60212>1 Peter 2:12.

<60317>**1 Peter 3:17.** *For it is better, if the will of God be so* That is, if God sees it to be necessary for your good that you should suffer, it is better that you should suffer for doing well than for crime. God often sees it to be necessary that his people should suffer. There are effects to be accomplished by affliction which can be secured in no other way; and some of the happiest results on the soul of a Christian, some of the brightest traits of character, are the effect of trials. But it should be our care that our sufferings should not be brought upon us for our own crimes or follies. No man can promote his own highest good by doing wrong, and then enduring the penalty which his sin incurs; and no one should do wrong with any expectation that it may be overruled for his own good. If we are to suffer, let it be by the direct hand of God, and not by any fault of our own. If we suffer then, we shall have the testimony of our own conscience in our

favor, and the feeling that we may go to God for support. If we suffer for our faults, in addition to the outward pain of body, we shall endure the severest pangs which man can suffer — those which the guilty mind inflicts on itself.

1 Peter 3:18. *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins* Compare the notes at 1 Peter 2:21. The design of the apostle in the reference to the sufferings of Christ, is evidently to remind them that he suffered as an innocent being, and not for any wrong-doing, and to encourage and comfort them in their sufferings by his example. The reference to his sufferings leads him (1 Peter 3:18-22) into a statement of the various ways in which Christ suffered, and of his ultimate triumph. By his example in his sufferings, and by his final triumph, the apostle would encourage those whom he addressed to bear with patience the sorrows to which their religion exposed them. He assumes that all suffering for adhering to the gospel is the result of well-doing; and for an encouragement in their trials, he refers them to the example of Christ, the highest instance that ever was, or ever will be, both of well-doing, and of suffering on account of it. The expression, “hath once suffered,” in the New Testament, means once for all; once, in the sense that it is not to occur again. Compare Hebrews 7:27. The particular point here, however, is not that he once suffered; it is that he had in fact suffered, and that in doing it he had left an example for them to follow.

The just for the unjust The one who was just, (δικαιος <1342>), on account of, or in the place of, those who were unjust, (ὑπερ <5228> αδικων <94>); or one who was righteous, on account of those who were wicked. Compare the notes at Romans 5:6; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:28. The idea on which the apostle would particularly fix their attention was, that he was just or innocent. Thus, he was an example to those who suffered for well-doing.

That he might bring us to God That his death might be the means of reconciling sinners to God. Compare the notes at John 3:14; 12:32. It is through that death that mercy is proclaimed to the guilty; it is by that alone that God can be reconciled to people; and the fact that the Son of God loved people, and gave himself a sacrifice for them, enduring such bitter sorrows, is the most powerful appeal which can be made to mankind to induce them to return to God. There is no appeal which can be made to us more powerful than one drawn from the fact that another suffers on our

account. We could resist the argument which a father, a mother, or a sister would use to reclaim us from a course of sin; but if we perceive that our conduct involves them in suffering, that fact has a power over us which no mere argument could have.

Being put to death in the flesh As a man; in his human nature. Compare the notes at <45103>Romans 1:3,4. There is evidently a contrast here between "the flesh" in which it is said he was "put to death," and "the Spirit" by which it is said he was "quickened." The words "in the flesh" are clearly designed to denote something that was unique in his death; for it is a departure from the usual method of speaking of death. How singular would it be to say of Isaiah, Paul, or Peter, that they were put to death in the flesh! How obvious would it be to ask, In what other way are people usually put to death? What was there special in their case, which would distinguish their death from the death of others? The use of this phrase would suggest the thought at once, that though, in regard to that which was properly expressed by the phrase, "the flesh," they died, yet that there was something else in respect to which they did not die. Thus, if it were said of a man that he was deprived of his rights as a father, it would be implied that in, other respects he was not deprived of his rights; and this would be especially true if it were added that he continued to enjoy his rights as a neighbor, or as holding an office under the government. The only proper inquiry, then, in this place is, What is fairly implied in the phrase, the flesh? Does it mean simply his body, as distinguished from his human soul? or does it refer to him as a man, as distinguished from some higher nature, over which death had no power Now, that the latter is the meaning seems to me to be apparent, for these reasons:

(1) It is the usual way of denoting the human nature of the Lord Jesus, or of saying that he became in carnate, or was a man, to speak of his being in the flesh. See <45102>Romans 1:2: "Made of the seed of David according to the flesh." <43014>John 1:14: "And the Word was made flesh." <54316>1 Timothy 3:16: "God was manifest in the flesh." <62402>1 John 4:2: "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." <63007>2 John 1:7: "Who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh."

(2) So far as appears, the effect of death on the human soul of the Redeemer was the same as in the case of the soul of any other person; in other words, the effect of death in his case was not confined to the mere body or the flesh. Death, with him, was what death is in any other case —

the separation of the soul and body, with all the attendant pain of such dissolution. It is not true that his "flesh," as such, died without the ordinary accompaniments of death on the soul, so that it could be said that the one died, and the other was kept alive. The purposes of the atonement required that he should meet death in the usual form; that the great laws which operate everywhere else in regard to dissolution, should exist in his case; nor is there in the Scriptures any intimation that there was, in this respect, anything special in his case. If his soul had been exempt from whatever there is involved in death in relation to the spirit, it is unaccountable that there is no hint on this point in the sacred narrative. But if this be so, then the expression "in the flesh" refers to him as a man, and means, that so far as his human nature was concerned, he died. In another important respect, he did not die. On the meaning of the word "flesh" in the New Testament, see the notes at ⁽⁴⁵⁾Romans 1:3.

But quickened Made alive — ζωοποιηθεις ⁽²²²⁷⁾. This does not mean "kept alive," but "made alive; recalled to life; reanimated." The word is never used in the sense of maintained alive, or preserved alive. Compare the following places, which are the only ones in which it occurs in the New Testament: ⁽⁵⁰²¹⁾John 5:21 (twice); ⁽⁶⁰⁶³⁾John 6:63; ⁽⁴⁰⁴⁷⁾Romans 4:17; 8:11; ⁽⁴⁶⁵⁶⁾1 Corinthians 15:36,45; ⁽⁵⁴⁶³⁾1 Timothy 6:13; ⁽⁶⁰¹⁸⁾1 Peter 3:18; in all which it is rendered "quickened, quicken, quickeneth;" ⁽⁴⁶⁵²⁾1 Corinthians 15:22, "be made alive;" ⁽⁴⁰³⁶⁾2 Corinthians 3:6, "giveth life;" and ⁽⁴⁰²¹⁾Galatians 3:21, "have given life." "Once the word refers to God, as he who giveth life to all creatures, ⁽⁵⁴⁶³⁾1 Timothy 6:13; three times it refers to the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, or of the doctrines of the gospel, ⁽⁶⁰⁶³⁾John 6:63; ⁽⁴⁰³⁶⁾2 Corinthians 3:6; ⁽⁴⁰²¹⁾Galatians 3:21; seven times it is used with direct reference to the raising of the dead, ⁽⁵⁰²¹⁾John 5:21; ⁽⁴⁰⁴⁷⁾Romans 4:17; 8:11; ⁽⁴⁶⁵²⁾1 Corinthians 15:22,36,45; ⁽⁶⁰¹⁸⁾1 Peter 3:18." See Biblical Repos., April, 1845, p. 269. See also Passow, and Robinson, Lexicon. The sense, then, cannot be that, in reference to his soul or spirit, he was preserved alive when his body died, but that there was some agency or power restoring him to life, or reanimating him after he was dead.

By the Spirit According to the common reading in the Greek, this is τω ⁽³⁵⁸⁸⁾ Πνευματι ⁽⁴¹⁵¹⁾ — with the article the — "the Spirit." Hahn, Tittman, and Griesbach omit the article, and then the reading is, "quickened in spirit;" and thus the reading corresponds with the former expression, "in flesh" (σαρκι ⁽⁴⁵⁶¹⁾), where the article also is lacking. The word "spirit," so far as

the mere use of the word is concerned, might refer to his own soul, to his divine nature, or to the Holy Spirit. It is evident:

(1) that it does not refer to his own soul, for:

(a) as we have seen, the reference in the former clause is to his human nature, including all that pertained to him as a man, body and soul;

(b) there was no power in his own spirit, regarded as that pertaining to his human nature, to raise him up from the dead, any more than there is such a power in any other human soul. That power does not belong to a human soul in any of its relations or conditions.

(2) It seems equally clear that this does not refer to the Holy Spirit, or the Third Person of the Trinity, for it may be doubted whether the work of raising the dead is anywhere ascribed to that Spirit. His special province is to enlighten, awaken, convict, convert, and sanctify the soul; to apply the work of redemption to the hearts of people, and to lead them to God. This influence is moral, not physical; an influence accompanying the truth, not the exertion of mere physical power.

(3) It remains, then, that the reference is to his own divine nature — a nature by which he was restored to life after he was crucified; to the Son of God, regarded as the Second Person of the Trinity. This appears, not only from the facts above stated, but also:

(a) from the connection, It is stated that it was in or by this spirit that he went and preached in the days of Noah. But it was not his spirit as a man that did this, for his human soul had then no existence. Yet it seems that he did this personally or directly, and not by the influences of the Holy Spirit, for it is said that "he went and preached." The reference, therefore, cannot be to the Holy Spirit, and the fair conclusion is that it refers to his divine nature.

(b) This accords with what the apostle Paul says (⁴⁵⁰¹Romans 1:3,4), "which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh," that is, in respect to his human nature, "and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness," that is, in respect to his divine nature, "by the resurrection from the dead." See the notes at that passage.

(c) It accords with what the Saviour himself says, ⁴³⁰¹John 10:17,18:

> "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."

This must refer to his divine nature, for it is impossible to conceive that a human soul should have the power of restoring its former tenement, the body, to life. See the notes at the passage. The conclusion, then, to which we have come is, that the passage means, that as a man, a human being, he was put to death; in respect to a higher nature, or by a higher nature, here denominated Spirit (Πνευμα <4151>), he was restored to life. As a man, he died; as the incarnate Son of Gods the Messiah, he was made alive again by the power of his own Divine Spirit, and exalted to heaven. Compare Robinson's Lexicon on the word Πνευμα <4151>, C.

<60319>**1 Peter 3:19.** *By which* Evidently by the Spirit referred to in the previous verse — εν <1722> ὡ <3588> — the divine nature of the Son of God; that by which he was "quickened" again, after he had been put to death; the Son of God regarded as a Divine Being, or in that same nature which afterward became incarnate, and whose agency was employed in quickening the man Christ Jesus, who had been put to death. The meaning is, that the same "Spirit" which was efficacious in restoring him to life, after he was put to death, was that by which he preached to the spirits in prison.

He went To wit, in the days of Noah. No particular stress should be laid here on the phrase "he went." The literal sense is, "he, having gone, preached," etc. πορευθεις <4198>. It is well known that such expressions are often redundant in Greek writers, as in others. So Herodotus, "to these things they spake, saying" — for they said. "And he, speaking, said;" that is, he said. So <490217>Ephesians 2:17, "And came and preached peace," etc. <400913>Matthew 9:13, "But go and learn what that meaneth," etc. So God is often represented as coming, as descending, etc., when he brings a message to mankind. Thus, <011105>Genesis 11:5, "The Lord came down to see the city and the tower." <021920>Exodus 19:20, "The Lord came down upon Mount Sinai." <041125>Numbers 11:25, "The Lord came down in a cloud." <102210>2 Samuel 22:10, "He bowed the heavens and came down." The idea, however, would be conveyed by this language that he did this personally, or by himself, and not merely by employing the agency of another. It would then be implied here, that though the instrumentality of Noah was employed, yet that it was done not by the Holy Spirit, but by him who

afterward became incarnate. On the supposition, therefore, that this whole passage refers to his preaching to the antediluvians in the time of Noah, and not to the "spirits" after they were confined in prison, this is language which the apostle would have properly and probably used. If that supposition meets the full force of the language, then no argument can be based on it in proof that he went to preach to them after their death, and while his body was lying in the grave.

And preached The word used here (εκηρυξεν <2784>) is of a general character, meaning to make a proclamation of any kind, as a crier does, or to deliver a message, and does not necessarily imply that it was the gospel which was preached, nor does it determine anything in regard to the nature of the message. It is not affirmed that he preached the gospel, for if that specific idea had been expressed it would have been rather by another word — ευαγγελιζω <2097>. The word used here would be appropriate to such a message as Noah brought to his contemporaries, or to any communication which God made to people. See <401301>Matthew 3:1; 4:17; <401301>Mark 1:35; 5:20; 7:36. It is implied in the expression, as already remarked, that he did this himself; that it was the Son of God who subsequently became incarnate, and not the Holy Spirit, that did this; though the language is consistent with the supposition that he did it by the instrumentality of another, to wit, Noah. "Qui facit per alium, facit per se." God really proclaims a message to mankind when he does it by the instrumentality of the prophets, or apostles, or other ministers of religion; and all that is necessarily implied in this language would be met by the supposition that Christ delivered a message to the antediluvian race by the agency of Noah. No argument, therefore, can be derived from this language to prove that Christ went and personally preached to those who were confined in hades or in prison.

Unto the spirits in prison That is, clearly, to the spirits now in prison, for this is the fair meaning of the passage. The obvious sense is, that Peter supposed there were "spirits in prison" at the time when he wrote, and that to those same spirits the Son of God had at some time "preached," or had made some proclamation respecting the will of God. Since this is the only passage in the New Testament upon which the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory is supposed to rest, it is important to ascertain the fair meaning of the language here employed. There are three obvious inquiries in ascertaining its signification. Who are referred to by "spirits?" What is

meant by “in prison?” Was the message brought to them while in the prison, or at some previous period?

I. Who are referred to by spirits? The specification in the next verse determines this. They were those “who were sometimes disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah.” No others are specified; and if it should be maintained that this means that he went down to hell (Hades), or to Sheol, and preached to those who are confined there, it could be inferred from this passage only that he preached to that portion of the lost spirits confined there which belonged to the particular generation in which Noah lived. Why he should do this; or how there should be such a separation made in hades that it could be done; or what was the nature of the message which he delivered to that portion, are questions which it is impossible for any man who bolds to the opinion that Christ went down to hell after his death to preach, to answer. But if it means that he preached to those who lived in the days of Noah, while they were yet alive, the question will be asked why are they called “spirits?” Were they spirits then, or were they people like others? To this the answer is easy. Peter speaks of them as they were when he wrote; not as they had been, or were at the time when the message was preached to them. The idea is, that to those spirits who were then in prison who had formerly lived in the days of Noah, the message had been in fact delivered. It was not necessary to speak of them precisely as they were at the time when it was delivered, but only in such a way as to identify them. We should use similar language now. If we saw a company of men in prison who had seen better days — a multitude now drunken, and debased, and poor, and riotous — it would not be improper to say that “ the prospect of wealth and honor was once held out to this ragged and wretched multitude. All that is needful is to identify them as the same persons who once had this prospect. In regard to the inquiry, then, who these “spirits” were, there can be no difference of opinion. They were that wicked race which lived in the days of Noah. There is no allusion in this passage to any other; there is no intimation that to any others of those “in prison” the message here referred to had been delivered.

II. What is meant by prison here? Purgatory, or the limbus patrum, say the Romanists — a place in which departed souls are supposed to be confined, and in which their final destiny may still be effected by the purifying fires which they endure, by the prayers of the living, or by a message in some

way conveyed to their gloomy abodes — in which such sins may be expiated as do not deserve eternal damnation. The Syriac here is "in Sheol," referring to the abodes of the dead, or the place in which departed spirits are supposed to dwell. The word rendered "prison," (φυλακη <5438>), means properly "watch, guard" — the act of keeping watch, or the guard itself; then watchpost, or station; then a place where anyone is watched or guarded, as a prison; then a watch in the sense of a division of the night, as the morning watch. It is used in the New Testament, with reference to the future world, only in the following places: <6019>1 Peter 3:19, "Preached unto the spirits in prison;" and <6207>Revelation 20:7, "Satan shall be loosed put of his prison." An idea similar to the one here expressed may be found in <6024>2 Peter 2:4, though the word prison does not there occur: "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;" and in <6106>Jude 1:6,

> "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day."

The allusion, in the passage before us, is undoubtedly to confinement or imprisonment in the invisible world; and perhaps to those who are reserved there with reference to some future arrangement — for this idea enters commonly into the use of the word prison. There is, however, no specification of the place where this is; no intimation that it is purgatory — a place where the departed are supposed to undergo purification; no intimation that their condition can be affected by anything that we can do; no intimation that those particularly referred to differ in any sense from the others who are confined in that world; no hint that they can be released by any prayers or sacrifices of ours. This passage, therefore, cannot be adduced to support the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory, because:

(1) the essential ideas which enter into the doctrine of purgatory are not to be found in the word used here;

(2) there is no evidence in the fair interpretation of the passage that any message is borne to them while in prison;

(3) there is not the slightest hint that they can be released by any prayers or offerings of those who dwell on the earth. The simple idea is that of persons confined as in a prison; and the passage will prove only that in the time when the apostle wrote there were those wire were thus confined.

III. Was the message brought to them while in prison, or at some previous period? The Romanists say that it was while in prison; that Christ, after he was put to death in the body, was still kept alive in his spirit, and went and proclaimed his gospel to those who were in prison. So Bloomfield maintains, (in loc.,) and so (Ecumenius and Cyril, as quoted by Bloomfield. But against this view there are plain objections drawn from the language of Peter himself:

(1) As we have seen, the fair interpretation of the passage "quickened by the Spirit," is not that he was kept alive as to his human soul, but that he, after being dead, was made alive by his own divine energy.

(2) If the meaning be that he went and preached after his death, it seems difficult to know why the reference is to those only who "had been disobedient in the days of Noah." Why were they alone selected for this message? Are they separate from others? Were they the only ones in purgatory who could be beneficially affected by his preaching? On the other method of interpretation, we can suggest a reason why they were particularly specified. But how can we on this?

(3) The language employed does not demand this interpretation. Its full meaning is met by the interpretation that Christ once preached to the spirits then in prison, to wit, in the days of Noah; that is, that he caused a divine message to be borne to them. Thus, it would be proper to say that "Whitefield came to America, and preached to the souls in perdition;" or to go among the graves of the first settlers of New Haven, and say, "Davenport came from England to preach to the dead men around us."

(4) This interpretation accords with the design of the apostle in inculcating the duty of patience and forbearance in trials; in encouraging those whom he addressed to be patient in their persecutions. See the analysis of the chapter. With this object in view, there was entire propriety in directing them to the long-suffering and forbearance evinced by the Saviour, through Noah. He was opposed, reviled, disbelieved, and, we may suppose, persecuted. It was to the purpose to direct them to the fact that he was saved as the result of his steadfastness to Him who had commanded him to preach to that ungodly generation. But what pertinency would there have been in saying that Christ went down to hell, and delivered some sort of a message there, we know not what, to those who are confined there?

1 Peter 3:20. *Which sometime were disobedient* Which were “once,” or “formerly,” (ποτε ,) disobedient or rebellious. The language here does not imply that they had ceased to be disobedient, or that they had become obedient at the time when the apostle wrote; but the object is to direct the attention to a former race of people characterized by disobedience, and to show the patience evinced under their provocations, in endeavoring to do them good. To say that people were formerly rebellious, or rebellious in a specified age, is no evidence that they are otherwise now. The meaning here is, that they did not obey the command of God when he called them to repentance by the preaching of Noah. Compare 2 Peter 2:5, where Noah is called “a preacher of righteousness.”

When once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah God waited on that guilty race for 120 years, (Genesis 6:3,) a period sufficiently protracted to evince his long-suffering toward one generation. It is not improbable that during that whole period Noah was, in various ways, preaching to that wicked generation. Compare the notes at Hebrews 11:7.

While the ark was a preparing It is probable that preparations were made for building the ark during a considerable portion of that time. Peter’s, at Rome, was a much longer time in building; and it is to be remembered that in the age of the world when Noah lived, and with the imperfect knowledge of the arts of naval architecture which must have prevailed, it was a much more serious undertaking to construct an ark that would hold such a variety and such a number of animals as that was designed to, land that would float safely for more than a year in an universal flood, than it was to construct such a fabric as Peter’s, in the days when that edifice was raised.

Wherein few, that is, eight souls Eight persons — Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives, Genesis 7:7. The allusion to their being saved here seems to be to encourage those whom Peter addressed to perseverance and fidelity, in the midst of all the opposition which they might experience. Noah was not disheartened. Sustained by the Spirit of Christ — the presence of the Son of God — he continued to preach. He did not abandon his purpose, and the result was that tie was saved. True, they were few in number who were saved; the great mass continued to be wicked; but this very fact should be an encouragement to us — that though

the great mass of any one generation may be wicked, God can protect and save the few who are faithful.

By water They were borne up by the waters, and were thus preserved. The thought on which the apostle makes his remarks turn, and which leads him in the next verse to the suggestions about baptism, is, that water was employed in their preservation, or that they owed their safety, in an important sense, to that element. In like manner we owe our salvation, in an important sense, to water; or, there is an important agency which it is made to perform in our salvation. The apostle does not say that it was in the same way, or that the one was a type designed to represent the other, or even that the efficacy of water was in both cases the same; but he says, that as Noah owed his salvation to water, so there is an important sense in which water is employed in ours. There is in certain respects — he does not say in all respects — a resemblance between the agency of water in the salvation of Noah, and the agency of water in our salvation. In both cases water is employed, though it may not be that it is in the same manner, or with precisely the same efficacy.

[60102]**1 Peter 3:21.** *The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us* There are some various readings here in the Greek text, but the sense is not essentially varied. Some have proposed to read (ω) to which instead of (ὁ <3739>) which, so as to make the sense “the antitype to which baptism now also saves us.” The antecedent to the relative, whichever word is used, is clearly not the ark, but water; and the idea is, that as Noah was saved by water, so there is a sense in which water is made instrumental in our salvation. The mention of water in the case of Noah, in connection with his being saved, by an obvious association suggested to the mind of the apostle the use of water in our salvation, and hence led him to make the remark about the connection of baptism with our salvation. The Greek word here rendered “figure” — αντιτυπον <499> — “antitype” means properly, “resisting a blow or impression,” (from αντι <473> and τυπος <5179>); that is, hard, solid. In the New Testament, however, it is used in a different sense; and αντι <473> in composition, implies resemblance, correspondence and hence, the word means, “formed after a type or model; like; corresponding; that which corresponds to a type” — Robinson, Lexicon. The word occurs only in this place and <580924>Hebrews 9:24, rendered “figures.” The meaning here is, that baptism corresponded to, or had a resemblance to, the water by which Noah was saved; or that there was a use of water in the one case which corresponded in some

respects to the water that was used in the other; to wit, in effecting salvation. The apostle does not say that it corresponded in all respects; in respect, e.g., to quantity, or to the manner of the application, or to the efficacy; but there is a sense in which water performs an important part in our salvation, as it did in his.

Baptism Not the mere application of water, for that idea the apostle expressly disclaims, when he says that it involves not "putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God." The sense is, that baptism, including all that is properly meant by baptism as a religious rite — that is, baptism administered in connection with true repentance, and true faith in the Lord Jesus, and when it is properly a symbol of the putting away of sin, and of the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit, and an act of unreserved dedication to God — now saves us. On the meaning of the word "baptism," see the notes at <4003> Matthew 3:6,16.

Doth also now save us The water saved Noah and his family from perishing in the flood; to wit, by bearing up the ark. Baptism, in the proper sense of the term, as above explained, where the water used is a symbol, in like manner now saves us; that is, the water is an emblem of that purifying by which we are saved. It may be said to save us, not as the meritorious cause, but as the indispensable condition of salvation. No man can be saved without that regenerated and purified heart of which baptism is the appropriate symbol, and when it would be proper to administer that ordinance. The apostle cannot have meant that water saves us in the same way in which it saved Noah, because that cannot be true. It is neither the same in quantity, nor is it applied in the same way, nor is it efficacious in the same manner. It is indeed connected with our salvation in its own proper way, as an emblem of that purifying of the heart by which we are saved. Thus, it corresponds with the salvation of Noah by water, and is the (αντιτυπον <499>) "antitype" of that. Nor does it mean that the salvation of Noah by water was designed to be a type of Christian baptism. There is not the least evidence of that; and it should not be affirmed without proof. The apostle saw a resemblance in some respects between the one and the other; such a resemblance that the one naturally suggested the other to his mind, and the resemblance was so important as to make it the proper ground of remark.

(But if Noah's preservation in the ark, be the type of that salvation of which baptism is the emblem, who shall say it was not so designed of God? Must we indeed regard the resemblance between Noah's deliverance and ours, as a happy coincidence merely? But the author is accustomed to deny typical design in very clear cases; and in avoiding one extreme seems to have gone into another. Some will have types everywhere; and, therefore, others will allow them nowhere. See the supplementary note at <3801>Hebrews 7:1; M. Knight's Essay, viii. Sect. v., on the laws of typical interpretation, with his commentary in loco)

The points of resemblance in the two cases seem to have been these:

(1) There was salvation in both; Noah was saved from death, and we are saved from hell.

(2) Water is employed in both cases — in the case of Noah to uphold the ark; in ours to be a symbol of our purification.

(3) The water in both cases is connected with salvation: in the case of Noah by sustaining the ark; in ours by being a symbol of salvation, of purity, of cleansing, of that by which we may be brought to God. The meaning of this part of the verse, therefore, may be thus expressed: "Noah and his family were saved by water, the antitype to which (to wit, that which in important respects corresponds to that) baptism (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, or the mere application of material water, but that purifying of the heart of which it is the appropriate emblem) now saves us."

Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh Not a mere external washing, however solemnly done. No outward ablution or purifying saves us, but that which pertains to the conscience. This important clause is thrown in to guard the statement from the abuse to which it would otherwise be liable, the supposition that baptism has of itself a purifying and saving power. To guard against this, the apostle expressly declares that he means much more than a mere outward application of water.

But the answer of a good conscience toward God The word here rendered "answer" (επερωτημα <1906>) means properly a question, an inquiry. It is "spoken of a question put to a convert at baptism, or rather of the whole process of question and answer; that is, by implication, examination, profession" — Robinson, Lexicon. It is designed to mark the spiritual

character of the baptismal rite in contrast with a mere external purification, and evidently refers to something that occurred at baptism; some question, inquiry, or examination, that took place then; and it would seem to imply:

(1) that when baptism was performed, there was some question or inquiry in regard to the belief of the candidate;

(2) that an answer was expected, implying that there was a good conscience; that is, that the candidate had an enlightened conscience, and was sincere in his profession; and,

(3) that the real efficacy of baptism, or its power in saving, was not in the mere external rite, but in the state of the heart, indicated by the question and answer, of which that was the emblem.

On the meaning of the phrase "a good conscience," see the notes at 1 Peter 3:16 of this chapter. Compare on this verse Neander, Geschich der Pfianz. u. Leit. der chr, Kirche, i. p. 203ff, in Bibl. Reposi. iv. 272ff. It is in the highest degree probable that questions would be proposed to candidates for baptism repecting their belief, an we have an instance of this fact undoubtedly in the case before us. How extensive such examinations would be, what points would be embraced, how much reference there was to personal experience, we have, of course, no certain means of ascertaining. We may suppose, however, that the examination pertained to what constituted the essential features of the Christian religion, as distinguished from other systems, and to the cordial belief of that system by the candidate.

By the resurrection of Jesus Christ That is, we are saved in this manner through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The whole efficiency in the case is derived from that. If he had not been raised from the dead, baptism would have been vain, and there would have been no power to save us. See this illustrated at length in the notes at Romans 6:4,5. The points, therefore, which are established in regard to baptism by this important passage are these:

(1) That Christian baptism is not a mere external rite; a mere outward ablution; a mere application of water to the body. It is not contemplated that it shall be an empty form, and its essence does not consist in a mere "putting away of the filth of the flesh." There is a work to be done in respect to the conscience which cannot be reached by the application of water.

(2) That there was an examination among the early Christians when a candidate was about to be baptized, and of course such an examination is proper now. Whatever was the ground of the examination, it related to that which existed before the baptism was administered. It was not expected that it should be accomplished by the baptism. There is, therefore, implied evidence here that there was no reliance placed on that ordinance to produce that which constituted the " answer of a good conscience;" in other words, that it was not supposed to have an efficacy to produce that of itself, and was not a converting or regenerating ordinance.

(3) The "answer" which was returned in the inquiry, was to be such as indicated a good conscience; that is, as Bloomfield expresses it, (New Testament in loc.,) "that which enables us to return such an answer as springs from a good conscience toward God, which can be no other than the inward change and renovation wrought by the Spirit." It was supposed, therefore, that there would be an internal work of grace; that there would be much more than an outward rite in the whole transaction. The application of water is, in fact, but an emblem or symbol of that grace in the heart, and is to be administered as denoting that. It does not convey grace to the soul by any physical efficacy of the water. It is a symbol of the purifying influences of religion, and is made a means of grace in the same way as obedience to any other of the commands of God.

(4) There is no efficacy in the mere application of water in any form, or with any ceremonies of religion, to put away sin. It is the "good conscience," the renovated heart, the purified soul, of which baptism is the emblem, that furnishes evidence of the divine acceptance and favor. Compare Hebrews 9:9,10. There must be a deep internal work on the soul of man, in order that he may be acceptable to God; and when that is missing, no external rite is of any avail.

(5) Yet, it does not follow from this that baptism is of no importance. The argument of the apostle here is, that it is of great importance. Noah was saved by water; and so baptism has an important connection with our salvation. As water bore up the ark, and was the means of saving Noah, so baptism by water is the emblem of our salvation; and when administered in connection with a "good conscience," that is, with a renovated heart, it is as certainly connected with our salvation as the sustaining waters of the flood were with the salvation of Noah. No man can prove from the Bible that baptism has no important connection with salvation; and no man can

prove that by neglecting it he will be as likely to obtain the divine favor as he would by observing it. It is a means of exhibiting great and important truths in an impressive manner to the soul; it is a means of leading the soul to an entire dedication to a God of purity; it is a means through which God manifests himself to the soul, and through which he imparts grace, as he does in all other acts of obedience to his commandments.

1 Peter 3:22. *Who is gone into heaven* See the notes at Acts 1:9.

And is on the right hand of God See the notes at Mark 16:19.

Angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him See the notes at Ephesians 1:20,21. The reason why the apostle here adverts to the fact that the Lord Jesus is raised up to the right hand of God, and is so honored in heaven, seems to have been to encourage those to whom he wrote to persevere in the service of God, though they were persecuted. The Lord Jesus was in like manner persecuted. He was reviled, and rejected, and put to death. Yet he ultimately triumphed. He was raised from the dead, and was exalted to the highest place of honor in the universe. Even so they, if they did not faint, might hope to come off in the end triumphant. As Noah, who had been faithful and steadfast when surrounded by a scoffing world, was at last preserve by his faith from ruin, and as the Redeemer, though persecuted and put to death, was at last exalted to the right hand of God, so would it be with them if they bore their trials patiently, and did not faint or fail in the persecutions which they endured.

In view of the exposition in 1 Peter 3:1,2, we may remark:

(1) that it is our duty to seek the conversion and salvation of our impenitent relatives and friends. All Christians have relatives and friends who are impenitent; it is a rare thing that some of the members of their own families are not so. In most families, even Christian families, there is a husband or a wife, a father or a mother, a son or daughter, a brother or sister, who is not converted. To all such, they who are Christians owe important duties, and there is none more important than that of seeking their conversion. That this is a duty is clearly implied in this passage in reference to a wife, and for the same reason it is a duty in reference to all other persons. It may be further apparent from these considerations:

(a) It is an important part of the business of all Christians to seek the salvation of others. This is clearly the duty of ministers of the gospel; but it is no less the duty of all who profess to be followers of the Saviour, and to take him as their example and guide. Compare James 5:19,20.

(b) It is a duty especially devolving on those who have relatives who are unconverted, on account of the advantages which they have for doing it. They are with them constantly; they have their confidence and affection; they can feel more for them than anyone else can; and if they are not concerned for their salvation, they cannot hope that any others will be.

(c) It is not wholly an improper motive to seek their salvation from the happiness which it would confer on those who are already Christians. It is not improper that a wife should be stimulated to desire the conversion of her husband from the increased enjoyment which she would have if her partner in life were united with her in the same hope of heaven, and from the pleasure which it would give to enjoy the privilege of religious worship in the family, and the aid which would be furnished in training up her children in the Lord. A Christian wife and mother has important duties to perform toward her children; it is not improper that in performing those duties she should earnestly desire the cooperation of her partner in life.

(2) Those who have impenitent husbands and friends should be encouraged in seeking their conversion. It is plainly implied (1 Peter 3:1,2) that it was not to be regarded as a hopeless thing, but that in all cases they were to regard it as possible that unbelieving husbands might be brought to the knowledge of the truth. If this is true of husbands, it is no less true of other friends. We should never despair of the conversion of a friend as long as life lasts, however far he may be from the path of virtue and piety. The grounds of encouragement are such as these:

(a) You have an influence over them which no other one has; and that influence may be regarded as capital, which will give you great advantages in seeking their conversion.

(b) You have access to them at times when their minds are most open to serious impressions. Every man has times when he may be approached on the subject of religion; when he is pensive and serious; when he is disappointed and sad; when the affairs of this world do not go well with him, and his thoughts are drawn along to a better. There are times in the life of every man when he is ready to open his mind to a friend on the

subject of religion, and when he would be glad of a word of friendly counsel and encouragement. It is much to have access to a man at such times.

(c) If all the facts were known which have occurred, there would be no lack of encouragement to labor for the conversion of impenitent relatives and friends. Many a husband owes his salvation to the persevering solicitude and prayers of a wife; many a son will enter heaven because a mother never ceased to pray for his salvation, even when to human view there seemed no hope of it.

(3) We may learn (1 Peter 3:1,2) what are the principal means by which we are to hope to secure the conversion and salvation of impenitent friends. It is to be mainly by a pure life; by a holy walk; by a consistent example. Conversation, properly so called, is not to be regarded as excluded from those means, but the main dependence is to be on a holy life. This is to be so, because:

(a) most persons form their notions of religion from what they see in the lives of its professed friends. It is not so much what they hear in the pulpit, because they regard preaching as a mere professional business, by which a man gets a living; not so much by books in defense and explanation of religion, for they seldom or never read them; not by what religion enabled the martyrs to do, for they may have scarcely heard the names of even the most illustrious of the martyrs; but by what they see in the walk and conversation of those who profess to be Christians, especially of those who are their near relations. The husband is forming his views of religion constantly from what he sees on the brow and in the eye of his professedly Christian wife; the brother from what he sees in his sister; the child from what he sees in the parent.

(b) Those who profess to be Christians have an opportunity of showing the power of religion in a way which is superior to any abstract argument. It controls their temper; it makes them kind and gentle; it sustains them in trial; it prompts them to deeds of benevolence; it disposes them to be contented, to be forgiving, to be patient in the reverses of life.

Everyone may thus be always doing something to make an impression favorable to religion on the minds of others. Yet it is also true that much may be done, and should be done for the conversion of others, by conversation properly so called, or by direct address and appeal. There is

nothing, however, which requires to be managed with more prudence than conversation with those who are not Christians, or direct efforts to lead them to attend to the subject of religion. In regard to this it may be observed:

(a) that it does no good to be always talking with them. Such a course only produces disgust.

(b) It does no good to talk to them at unseasonable and improper times. If they are specially engaged in their business, and would not like to be interrupted — if they are in company with others, or even with their family — it does little good to attempt a conversation with them. It is

> "the word that fitly spoken that is like apples of gold in pictures of silver," <25:11>Proverbs 25:11.

(c) It does no good to scold them on the subject of religion, with a view to make them Christians. In such a case you show a spirit the very reverse of that religion which you are professedly endeavoring to persuade them to embrace.

(d) All conversation with impenitent sinners should be kind, and tender, and respectful. It should be addressed to them when they will be disposed to listen; usually when they are alone; and especially when from trials or other causes they may be in such a state of mind that they will be willing to listen. It may be added, that impenitent sinners are much more frequently in such a state of mind than most Christians suppose, and that they often wonder that their Christian friends do not speak to them about the salvation of the soul.

From the exposition given of the important <60318>1 Peter 3:18-21, we may derive the following inferences:

(1) The pre-existence of Christ. If he preached to the antediluvians in the time of Noah, he must have had an existence at that time.

(2) His divinity. If he was "quickened" or restored to life by his own exalted nature, he must be divine; for there is no more inalienable attribute of the Deity than the power of raising the dead.

(3) If Christ preached to the pagan world in the time of Noah, for the same reason it may be regarded as true that all the messages which are brought to people, calling them to repentance, in any age or country, are through

him. Thus, it was Christ who spake by the prophets and by the apostles; and thus he speaks now by his ministers.

(4) If this interpretation is wellfounded, it takes away one of the strongest supports of the doctrine of purgatory. There is no stronger passage of the Bible in support of this doctrine than the one before us; and if this does not countenance it, it may be safely affirmed that it has not a shadow of proof in the sacred Scriptures.

(5) It follows that there is no hope or prospect that the gospel will be preached to those who are lost. This is the only passage in the Bible that could be supposed to teach any such doctrine; and if the interpretation above proposed be correct, this furnishes no ground of belief that if a man dies impenitent he will ever be favored with another offer of mercy. This interpretation also accords with all the other representations in the Bible. "As the tree falleth, so it lies." "He that is holy, let him be holy still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still." All the representations in the Bible lead us to suppose that the eternal destiny of the soul after death is fixed, and that the only change which can ever occur in the future state is that which will be produced by DEVELOPMENT: the developement of the principles of piety in heaven; the development of the principles of evil in hell.

(6) It follows, that if there is not a place of purgatory in the future world there is a place of punishment. If the word prison, in the passage before us, does not mean purgatory, and does not refer to a detention with a prospect or possibility of release, it must refer to detention of another kind, and for another purpose, and that can be only with reference "to the judgment of the great day," <61024>2 Peter 2:14; <65106>Jude 1:6. From that gloomy prison there is no evidence that any have been, or will be, released.

(7) People should embrace the gospel at once. Now it is offered to them; in the future world it will not be. But even if it could be proved that the gospel would be offered to them in the future world, it would be better to embrace it now. Why should people go down to that world to suffer long before they become reconciled to God? Why choose to taste the sorrows of hell before they embrace the offers of mercy? Why go to that world of woe at all? Are people so in love with suffering and danger that they esteem it wise to go down to that dark prison-house, with the intention or the hope that the gospel may be offered to them there, and that when there they may be disposed to embrace it? Even if it could be shown, therefore, that they might again hear the voice of mercy and salvation, how much

wiser would it be to hearken to the voice now, and become reconciled to God here, and never experience in any way the pangs of the second death! But of any such offer of mercy in the world of despair, the Bible contains no intimation; and he who goes to the eternal world unreconciled to God, perishes for ever. The moment when he crosses the line between time and eternity, he goes forever beyond the boundaries of hope.

NOTES ON 1 PETER 4

This chapter relates principally to the manner in which those to whom the apostle wrote ought to bear their trials, and to the encouragements to a holy life, notwithstanding their persecutions. He had commenced the subject in the preceding chapter, and had referred them particularly to the example of the Saviour. His great solicitude was, that if they suffered, it should not be for crime, and that their enemies should not be able to bring any well-founded accusation against them He would have them pure and harmless, patient and submissive; faithful in the performance of their duties, and confidently looking forward to the time when they should be delivered. He exhorts them, therefore, to the following things:

(a) To arm themselves with the same mind that was in Christ; to consider that the past time of their lives was enough for them to have performed the will of the flesh, and that now it was their duty to be separate from the wicked world, in whatever light the world might regard their conduct — remembering that they who calumniated them must soon give account to God, 1 Peter 4:1-6.

(b) He reminds them that the end of all things was at hand, and that it became them to be sober, and watch unto prayer, 1 Peter 4:7.

(c) He exhorts them to the exercise of mutual love and hospitality — virtues eminently useful in a time of persecution and afflictions, 1 Peter 4:8,9.

(d) He exhorts them to a performance of every duty with seriousness of manner, and fidelity — whether it were in preaching, or in dispensing alms to the poor and needy, 1 Peter 4:10,11.

(e) He tells them not to think it strange that they were called to pass through fiery trials, nor to suppose that any unusual thing had happened to them; reminds them that they only partook of Christ's sufferings, and that it was to be regarded as a favor if anyone suffered as a Christian; and presses upon them the thought that they ought to be careful that none of them suffered for crime, 1 Peter 4:12-16.

(f) He reminds them that the righteous would be saved with difficulty, and that the wicked would certainly be destroyed; and exhorts them, therefore,

to commit the keeping of their souls to a faithful Creator, <60418>1 Peter 4:18,19.

<60401>**1 Peter 4:1.** *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh* Since he as a man has died for us. See the notes at <60318>1 Peter 3:18. The design was to set the suffering Redeemer before them as an example in their trials.

Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind That is, evidently, the same mind that he evinced — a readiness to suffer in the cause of religion, a readiness to die as he had done. This readiness to suffer and die, the apostle speaks of as armour, and having this is represented as being armed. Armour is put on for offensive or defensive purposes in war; and the idea of the apostle here is, that that state of mind when we are ready to meet with persecution and trial, and when we are ready to die, will answer the purpose of armour in engaging in the conflicts and strifes which pertain to us as Christians, and especially in meeting with persecutions and trials. We are to put on the same fortitude which the Lord Jesus had, and this will be the best defense against our foes, and the best security of victory.

For he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin Compare the notes at <45607>Romans 6:7. To “suffer in the flesh” is to die. The expression here has a proverbial aspect, and seems to have meant something like this: “when a man is dead, he will sin no more;” referring of course to the present life. So if a Christian becomes dead in a moral sense — dead to this world, dead by being crucified with Christ (see the notes at <48220>Galatians 2:20) — he may be expected to cease from sin. The reasoning is based on the idea that there is such a union between Christ and the believer that his death on the cross secured the death of the believer to the world. Compare <55211>2 Timothy 2:11; <51220>Colossians 2:20; 3:3.

<60402>**1 Peter 4:2.** *That he no longer should live* That is, he has become, through the death of Christ, dead to the world and to the former things which influenced him, in order that he should hereafter live not to the lusts of the flesh. See the notes at <47515>2 Corinthians 5:15.

The rest of his time in the flesh The remainder of the time that he is to continue in the flesh; that is, that he is to live on the earth.

To the lusts of men Such lusts as people commonly live for and indulge in. Some of these are enumerated in the following verse.

But to the will of God In such a manner as God commands. The object of redemption is to rescue us from being swayed by wicked lusts, and to bring us to be conformed wholly to the will of God.

1 Peter 4:3. *For the time past of our life may suffice us* "We have spent sufficient time in indulging ourselves, and following our wicked propensities, and we should hereafter live in a different manner." This does not mean that it was ever proper thus to live, but that, as we would say, "we have had enough of these things; we have tried them; there is no reason why we should indulge in them any more." An expression quite similar to this occurs in Horace — Lusisti satis, edisti satis, atque bibisti. Tempus abire tibi est, etc. Epis. ii. 213.

To have wrought the will of the Gentiles This does not mean to be subservient to their will, but to have done what they willed to do; that is, to live as they did. That the Gentiles or pagan lived in the manner immediately specified, see demonstrated in the notes at Romans 1:21-32.

When we walked in lasciviousness When we lived in the indulgence of corrupt passions — the word walk being often used in the Scriptures to denote the manner of life. On the word "lasciviousness," see the notes at Romans 13:13. The apostle says we, not as meaning that he himself had been addicted to these vices, but as speaking of those who were Christians in general. It is common to say that we lived so and so, when speaking of a collection of persons, without meaning that each one was guilty of all the practices enumerated. See the notes at 1 Thessalonians 4:17, for a similar use of the word we. The use of the word we in this place would show that the apostle did not mean to set himself up as better than they were, but was willing to be identified with them.

Lusts The indulgence of unlawful desires. See the notes at Romans 1:24.

Excess of wine The word used here (οινοφλυγια) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It properly means "overflowing of wine," (οινος , "wine," and φλυω , "to overflow"); then wine-drinking; drunkenness. That this was a common vice need not be proved. Multitudes of those who became Christians had been drunkards, for intemperance abounded in all the pagan world. Compare 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. It should not be inferred here from the English translation, "excess of wine," that wine is improper only when used to excess, or that the moderate use

of wine is proper. Whatever may be true on that point, nothing can be determined in regard to it from the use of this word. The apostle had his eye on one thing — on such a use of wine as led to intoxication; such as they had indulged in before their conversion. About the impropriety of that, there could be no doubt. Whether any use of wine, by Christians or other persons, was lawful, was another question. It should be added, moreover, that the phrase “excess of wine” does not precisely convey the meaning of the original. The word excess would naturally imply something more than was needful; or something beyond the proper limit or measure; but no such idea is in the original word. That refers merely to the abundance of wine, without any reference to the inquiry whether there was more than was proper or not. Tyndale renders it, somewhat better: “drunkenness.” So Luther, “Trunkenheit.”

Revellings Rendered rioting in <45 13 13>Romans 13:13. See the notes at that verse. The Greek word (κωμος <2970>) occurs only here, and in <45 13 13>Romans 13:13, and <48 5 21>Galatians 5:21. It means feasting, revel; “a carousing or merrymaking after supper, the guests often sallying into the streets, and going through the city with torches, music, and songs in honor of Bacchus,” etc. Robinson, Lexicon. The word would apply to all such noisy and boisterous processions now — scenes wholly inappropriate to the Christian.

Banquetings The word used here (ποτος <4224>) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means properly drinking; an act of drinking; then a drinking bout; drinking together. The thing forbidden by it is an assembling together for the purpose of drinking. There is nothing in this word referring to eating, or to banqueting, as the term is now commonly employed. The idea in the passage is, that it is improper for Christians to meet together for the purpose of drinking — as wine, toasts, etc. The prohibition would apply to all those assemblages where this is understood to be the main object. It would forbid, therefore, an attendance on all those celebrations in which drinking toasts is understood to be an essential part of the festivities, and all those where hilarity and joyfulness are sought to be produced by the intoxicating bowl Such are not proper places for Christians.

And abominable idolatries Literally, unlawful idolatries; that is, unlawful to the Jews, or forbidden by their laws. Then the expression is used in the sense of wicked, impious, since what is unlawful is impious and wrong. That the vices here referred to were practiced by the pagan world is well

known. See the notes at Romans 1:26-31. That many who became Christians were guilty of them before their conversion is clear from this passage. The fact that they were thus converted shows the power of the gospel, and also that we should not despair in regard to those who are indulging in these vices now. They seem indeed almost to be hopeless, but we should remember that many who became Christians when the gospel was first preached, as well as since, were of this character. If they were reclaimed; if those who had been addicted to the gross and debasing vices referred to here, were brought into the kingdom of God, we should believe that those who are living in the same manner now may also be recovered. From the statement made in this verse, that "the time past of our lives may suffice to have worked the will of the Gentiles," we may remark that the same may be said by all Christians of themselves; the same thing is true of all who are living in sin:

(1) It is true of all who are Christians, and they feel it, that they lived long enough in sin:

(a) They made a fair trial — many of them with ample opportunities; with abundant wealth; with all that the fashionable world can furnish; with all that can be derived from low and gross indulgences. Many who are now Christians had opportunities of living in splendor and ease; many moved in joyful and brilliant circles; many occupied stations of influence, or had brilliant prospects of distinction; many gave indulgence to gross propensities; many were the companions of the vile and the abandoned. Those who are now Christians, take the church at large, have had ample opportunity of making the fullest trial of what sin and the world can furnish.

(b) They all feel that the past is enough for this manner of living. It is "sufficient" to satisfy them that the world cannot furnish what the soul demands. They need a better portion; and they can now see that there is no reason why they should desire to continue the experiment in regard to what the world can furnish. On that unwise and wicked experiment they have expended time enough; and satisfied with that, they desire to return to it no more.

(2) The same thing is true of the wicked — of all who are living for the world. The time past should be regarded as sufficient to make an experiment in sinful indulgences; for:

(a) the experiment has been made by millions before them, and has always failed; and they can hope to find in sin only what has always been found — disappointment, mortification, and despair.

(b) They have made a sufficient experiment. They have never found in those indulgences what they flattered themselves they would find, and they have seen enough to satisfy them that what the immortal soul needs can never be obtained there.

(c) They have spent sufficient time in this hopeless experiment. Life is short. Man has no time to waste. He may soon die — and at whatever period of life anyone may be who is living in sin, we may say to him that he has already wasted enough of life; he has thrown away enough of probation in a fruitless attempt to find happiness where it can never be found. For any purpose whatever for which anyone could ever suppose it to be desirable to live in sin, the past should suffice. But why should it ever be deemed desirable at all? The fruits of sin are always disappointment, tears, death, despair.

1 Peter 4:4. *Wherein they think it strange* In respect to which vices, they who were once your partners and accomplices now think it strange that you no longer unite with them. They do not understand the reasons why you have left them. They regard you as abandoning a course of life which has much to attract and to make life merry, for a severe and gloomy superstition. This is a true account of the feelings which the people of the world have when their companions and friends leave them and become Christians. It is to them a strange and unaccountable thing, that they give up the pleasures of the world for a course of life which to them seems to promise anything but happiness. Even the kindred of the Saviour regarded him as "beside himself," (Mark 3:21,) and Festus supposed that Paul was mad, Acts 26:24. There is almost nothing which the people of the world so little comprehend as the reasons which influence those with ample means of worldly enjoyment to leave the circles of gaiety and vanity, and to give themselves to the serious employments of religion. The epithets of fool, enthusiast, fanatic, are terms which frequently occur to the heart to denote this, if they are not always allowed to escape from the lips. The reasons why they esteem this so strange, are something like the following:

(1) They do not appreciate the motives which influence those who leave them. They feel that it is proper to enjoy the world, and to make life

cheerful, and they do not understand what it is to act under a deep sense of responsibility to God, and with reference to eternity. They live for themselves. They seek happiness as the end and aim of life. They have never been accustomed to direct the mind onward to another world, and to the account which they must soon render at the bar of God. Unaccustomed to act from any higher motives than those which pertain to the present world, they cannot appreciate the conduct of those who begin to live and act for eternity.

(2) They do not yet see the guilt and folly of sinful pleasures. They are not convinced of the deep sinfulness of the human soul, and they think it strange that ethers should abandon a course of life which seems to them so innocent. They do not see why those who have been so long accustomed to these indulgences should have changed their opinions, and why they now regard those things as sinful which they once considered to be harmless.

(3) They do not see the force of the argument for religion. Not having the views of the unspeakable importance of religious truth and duty which Christians now have, they wonder that they should break off from the course of life which they formerly pursued, and separate from the mass of their fellow-men. Hence, they sometimes regard the conduct of Christians as amiable weakness; sometimes as superstition; sometimes as sheer folly; sometimes as madness; and sometimes as sourness and misanthropy. In all respects they esteem it strange:

"Lions and beasts of savage name
Put on the nature of the lamb,
While the wide world esteems it strange,
Gaze, and admire, and hate the change."

That ye run not with them There may be an allusion here to the well-known orgies of Bacchus, in which his votaries ran as if excited by the furies, and were urged on as if transported with madness. See Ovid, Metam. iii. 529, thus translated by Addison:

"For now, through prostrate Greece, young Bacchu rode,
Whilst howling matrons celebrate the god;
All ranks and sexes to his orgies ran,
To mingle in the pomp and fill the train,"

The language, however, will well describe revels of any sort, and at any period of the world.

To the same excess of riot The word rendered “excess” (αναχυσις <401>) means, properly, a pouring out, an affusion; and the idea here is, that all the sources and forms of riot and disorder were poured out together. There was no withholding, no restraint. The most unlimited indulgence was given to the passions. This was the case in the disorder referred to among the ancients, as it is the case now in scenes of midnight revelry. On the meaning of the word riot, see the notes at <490518>Ephesians 5:18; <560106>Titus 1:6.

Speaking evil of you Greek, blaspheming. See the notes at <400903>Matthew 9:3. The meaning here is, that they used harsh and reproachful epithets of those who would not unite with them in their revelry. They called them fools, fanatics, hypocrites, etc. The idea is not that they blasphemed God, or that they charged Christians with crime, but that they used language suited to injure the feelings, the character, the reputation of those who would no longer unite with them in the ways of vice and folly.

<600405>**1 Peter 4:5.** *Who shall give account* That is, they shall not do this with impunity. They are guilty in this of a groat wrong and they must answer for it to God.

That is ready to judge That is, “who is prepared to judge” — τω <3588> ἑτοιμως <2093> εχοντι <2192>. See the phrase used in <442113>Acts 21:13: “I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem.” <471214>2 Corinthians 12:14: “The third time I am ready to come to you.” Compare the word “ready” — ἑτοιμος <2092> — in <402204>Matthew 22:4,8; 24:44; 25:10; <421240>Luke 12:40; 22:33; <600105>1 Peter 1:5. The meaning is, not that he was about to do it, or that the day of judgment was near at hand — whatever the apostle may have supposed to be true on that point — but that he was prepared for it; all the arrangements were made with reference to it; there was nothing to hinder it.

To judge the quick and the dead The living and the dead; that is, those who shall be alive when he comes, and those in their graves. This is a common phrase to denote all who shall be brought before the bar of God for judgment. See the notes at <441042>Acts 10:42; <520416>1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; <550401>2 Timothy 4:1. The meaning in this connection seems to be, that they should bear their trials and the opposition which they would meet with patiently, not feeling that they were forgotten, nor attempting to avenge themselves; for the Lord would vindicate them when he should come to

judgment, and call those who had injured them to an account for all the wrongs which they had done to the children of God.

1 Peter 4:6. *For, for this cause* The expression, “For, for this cause,” refers to an end to be reached, or an object to be gained, or a reason why anything referred to is done. The end or reason why the thing referred to here, to wit, that “the gospel was preached to the dead,” was done, is stated in the subsequent part of the verse to have been “that they might be judged,” etc. It was with reference to this, or in order that this might be, that the gospel was preached to them.

Was the gospel preached also to them that are dead Many, as Doddridge, Whitby, and others, understand this of those who are spiritually dead, that is, the Gentiles, and suppose that the object for which this was done was that “they might be brought to such a state of life as their carnal neighhors would look upon as a kind of condemnation and death” — Doddridge. Others have supposed that it refers to those who had suffered martyrdom in the cause of Christianity; others, that it refers to the sinners of the old world (Saurin), expressing a hope that some of them might be saved; and others, that it means that the Saviour went down and preached to those who are dead, in accordance with one of the interpretations given of 1 Peter 3:19. It seems to me that the most natural and obvious interpretation is to refer it to those who were then dead, to whom the gospel had been preached when living, and who had become true Christians. This is the interpretation proposed by Wetstein, Rosenmuller, Bloomfield, and others. In support of this it may be said:

(1) that this is the natural and obvious meaning of the word dead, which should be understood literally, unless there is some good reason in the connection for departing from the common meaning of the word.

(2) The apostle had just used the word in that sense in the previous verse.

(3) This will suit the connection, and accord with the design of the apostle. He was addressing those who were suffering persecution. It was natural, in such a connection, to refer to those who had died in the faith, and to show, for their encouragement, that though they had been put to death, yet they still lived to God. He therefore says, that the design in publishing the gospel to them was, that though they might be judged by people in the usual manner, and put to death, yet that in respect to their higher and nobler nature, the spirit, they might live unto God. It was not uncommon

nor unnatural for the apostles, in writing to those who were suffering persecution, to refer to those who had been removed by death, and to make their condition and example an argument for fidelity and perseverance. Compare <5104><sup>1 Thessalonians 4:13; <6614><sup>Revelation 14:13.

That they might be judged according to men in the flesh That is, so far as people are concerned, (κατα <2596> ανθρωπους <444>,) or in respect to the treatment which they received from people in the flesh, they were judged and condemned; in respect to God, and the treatment which they received from him, (κατα <2596> Θεον <2316>), they would live in spirit. People judged them severely, and put them to death for their religion; God gave them life, and saved them. By the one they were condemned in the flesh — so far as pain, and sorrow, and death could be inflicted on the body; by the other they were made to live in spirit — to be his, to live with him. The word "judged" here, I suppose, therefore, to refer to a sentence passed on them for their religion, consigning them to death for it. There is a particle in the original — μεν <3303>, "indeed" — which has not been retained in the common translation, but which is quite important to the sense: "that they might indeed be judged in the flesh, but live," etc. The direct object or design of preaching the gospel to them was not that they might be condemned and put to death by man, but this was indeed or in fact one of the results in the way to a higher object.

But live according to God In respect to God, or so far as he was concerned. By him they would not be condemned. By him they would be made to live — to have the true life. The gospel was preached to them in order that so far as God was concerned, so far as their relation to him was concerned, so far as he would deal with them, they might live. The word live here seems to refer to the whole life that was the consequence of their being brought under the power of the gospel:

(a) that they might have spiritual life imparted to them;

(b) that they might live a life of holiness in this world;

(c) that they might live hereafter in the world to come.

In one respect, and so far as people were concerned, their embracing the gospel was followed by death; in another respect, and so far as God was concerned, it was followed by life. The value and permanence of the latter, as contrasted with the former, seems to have been the thought in the mind

of the apostle in encouraging those to whom he wrote to exercise patience in their trials, and to show fidelity in the service of their master.

In the spirit In their souls, as contrasted with their body. In respect to that — to the flesh — they were put to death; in respect to their souls — their higher natures — they were made truly to live. The argument, then, in this verse is, that in the trials which we endure on account of religion, we should remember the example of those who have suffered for it, and should remember why the gospel was preached to them. It was in a subordinate sense, indeed, that they might glorify God by a martyr's death; but in a higher sense, that in this world and the next they might truly live. The flesh might suffer in consequence of their embracing the gospel that was preached to them, but the soul would live. Animated by their example, we should be willing to suffer in the flesh, if we may for ever live with God.

(6047)**1 Peter 4:7.** *But the end of all things is at hand* This declaration is also evidently designed to support and encourage them in their trials, and to excite them to lead a holy life, by the assurance that the end of all things was drawing near. The phrase, "the end of all things," would naturally refer to the end of the world; the winding up of human affairs. It is not absolutely certain, however, that the apostle used it here in this sense. It might mean that so far as they were concerned, or in respect to them, the end of all things drew near. Death is to each one the end of all things here below; the end of his plans and of his interest in all that pertains to sublunary affairs. Even if the phrase did originally and properly refer to the end of the world, it is probable that it would soon come to denote the end of life in relation to the affairs of each individual; since, if it was believed that the end of the world was near, it must consequently be believed that the termination of the earthly career of each one also drew near to a close. It is possible that the latter signification may have come ultimately to predominate, and that Peter may have used it in this sense without referring to the other. Compare the notes at (6068)2 Peter 3:8-14, for his views on this subject. See also the notes at (4531)Romans 13:11,12. The word rendered "is at hand," (ηνγικε (1448)), may refer either to proximity of place or time, and it always denotes that the place or the time referred to was not far off. In the former sense, as referring to nearness of place, see (4021)Matthew 21:1; (4111)Mark 11:1; (4072)Luke 7:12; 15:25; 18:35,40; 19:29,37,41; 24:15; (4093)Acts 9:3; 10:9; 21:33; in the latter sense, as referring to time as being near, see (4032)Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; 21:34; 26:45; (4015)Mark 1:15; (4220)Luke 21:20,28; (4077)Acts 7:17; (4532)Romans 13:12; (5805)Hebrews 10:25;

<6047>1 Peter 4:7. The idea as applied to time, or to an approaching event, is undoubtedly that it is close by; it is not far off; it will soon occur. If this refers to the end of the world, it would mean that it was soon to occur; if to death, that this was an event which could not be far distant — perhaps an event that was to be hastened by their trials. The fact that it is such language as we now naturally address to people, saying that in respect to them "the end of all things is at hand," shows that it cannot be demonstrated that Peter did not use it in the same sense, and consequently that it cannot be proved that he meant to teach that the end of the world was then soon to occur.

Be ye therefore sober Serious; thoughtful; considerate. Let a fact of so much importance make a solemn impression on your mind, and preserve you from frivolity, levity, and vanity. See the word explained in the notes at <5402>1 Timothy 3:2.

And watch unto prayer Be looking out for the end of all things in such a manner as to lead you to embrace all proper opportunities for prayer. Compare the notes at <4041>Matthew 26:39,41. The word rendered watch, means to be sober, temperate, abstinent, especially in respect to wine; then watchful, circumspect. The important truth, then, taught by this passage is, "that the near approach, of the end of all things should make us serious and prayerful."

I. The end may be regarded as approaching. This is true:

(1) of all things; of the winding up of the affairs of this world. It is constantly drawing nearer and nearer, and no one can tell how soon it will occur. The period is wisely hidden from the knowledge of all people, (see <4024>Matthew 24:36: <4007>Acts 1:7,) among other reasons, in order that we may be always ready. No man can tell certainly at what time it will come; no man can demonstrate that it may not come at any moment. Everywhere in the Scriptures it is represented that it will come at an unexpected hour, as a thief in the night, and when the mass of people shall be slumbering in false security, <4024>Matthew 24:37-39,42,43; <5102>1 Thessalonians 5:2; <4213>Luke 21:34.

(2) It is near in relation to each one of us. The day of our death cannot be far distant; it may be very near. The very next thing that we may have to do, may be to lie down and die.

II. It is proper that such a nearness of the end of all things should lead us to be serious, and to pray.

(1) To be serious; for:

(a) the end of all things, in regard to us, is a most important event. It closes our probation. It fixes our character. It seals up our destiny. It makes all ever onward in character and doom unchangeable.

(b) We are so made as to be serious in view of such events. God has so constituted the mind, that when we lose property, health, or friends; when we look into a grave, or are beset with dangers; when we are in the room of the dying or the dead, we are serious and thoughtful. It is unnatural not to be so. Levity and frivolity on such occasions are as contrary to all the finer and better feelings of our nature as they are to the precepts of the Bible.

(c) There are advantages in seriousness of mind. It enables us to take better views of things, <2002>Ecclesiastes 7:2,3. A calm, sober, sedate mind is the best for a contemplation of truth, and for looking at things as they are.

(2) To be watchful unto prayer:

(a) People naturally pray when they suppose that the end of all things is coming. An earthquake induces them to pray. An eclipse, or any other supposed prodigy, leads people to pray if they suppose the end of the world is drawing near. A shipwreck, or any other sudden danger, leads them to pray, <1978>Psalm 107:28. So people often pray in sickness who have never prayed in days of health.

(b) It is proper to do it. Death is an important event, and in anticipation of such an event we should pray. Who can help us then but God? Who can conduct us through the dark valley but he? Who can save us amidst the wrecks and ruins of the universe but he? Who can dissipate our fears, and make us calm amidst the convulsions of dissolving nature, but God? As that event, therefore, may come upon us at any hour, it should lead us to constant prayer; and the more so because, when it comes, we may be in no state of mind to pray. The posture in which we should feel that it would be most appropriate that the messenger of death should find us, would be that of prayer.

<6048>**1 Peter 4:8.** *And above all things* More than all things else.

Have fervent charity among yourselves Warm, ardent love toward each other. On the nature of charity, see the notes at <46C01301>1 Corinthians 13:1. The word rendered “fervent,” means properly extended; then intent, earnest, fervent.

For charity shall cover the multitude of sins Love to another shall so cover or hide a great many imperfections in him, that you will not notice them. This passage is quoted from <201012>Proverbs 10:12: “Love covereth all sins.” For the truth of it we have only to appeal to the experience of everyone:

(a) True love to another makes us kind to his imperfections, charitable toward his faults, and often blind even to the existence of faults. We would not see the imperfections of those whom we love; and our attachment for what we esteem their real excellencies, makes us insensible to their errors.

(b) If we love them we are ready to cover over their faults, even those which we may see in them. Of love the Christian poet says:

“Tis gentle, delicate, and kind,
To faults compassionate or blind.

The passage before us is not the same in signification as that in <590520>James 5:20,

> “He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”

See the notes at that passage. That passage means, that by the conversion of another the sins of him who is converted shall be covered over, or not brought to judgment for condemnation; that is, they shall be covered over so far as God is concerned: this passage means that, under the influence of love, the sins of another shall be covered over so far as we are concerned; that is, they shall be unobserved or forgiven. The language used here does not mean, as the Romanists maintain, that “charity shall procure us pardon for a multitude of sins;” for, besides that such a doctrine is contrary to the uniform teachings of the Scriptures elsewhere, it is a departure from the obvious meaning of the passage. The subject on which the apostle is treating is the advantage of love in our conduct toward others, and this he enforces by saying that it will make us kind to their imperfections, and lead us to overlook their faults. It is nowhere taught in the Scriptures that our “charity” to others will be an atonement or expiation for our own offences. If it could be so, the atonement made by Christ would have been

unnecessary. Love, however, is of inestimable value in the treatment of others; and imperfect as we are, and liable to go astray, we all have occasion to cast ourselves on the charity of our brethren, and to avail ourselves much and often of that "love which covers over a multitude of sins."

(60409)**1 Peter 4:9.** *Use hospitality one to another* On the duty of hospitality, see the notes at (45123)Romans 12:13; (58302)Hebrews 13:2.

Without grudging Greek, "without murmurs;" that is, without complaining of the hardship of doing it; of the time, and expense, and trouble required in doing it. The idea of grudging, in the common sense of that word — that is, of doing it unwillingly, or regretting the expense, and considering it as ill-bestowed, or as not producing an equivalent of any kind — is not exactly the idea here. It is that we are to do it without murmuring or complaining. It greatly enhances the value of hospitality, that it be done on our part with entire cheerfulness. One of the duties involved in it is to make a guest happy; and this can be done in no other way than by showing him that he is welcome.

(60410)**1 Peter 4:10.** *As every man hath received the gift* The word rendered "the gift" (χαρισμα (5486)), in the Greek, without the article, means "endowment" of any kind, but especially that conferred by the Holy Spirit. Here it seems to refer to every kind of endowment by which we can do good to others; especially every kind of qualification furnished by religion by which we can help others. It does not refer here particularly to the ministry of the word — though it is applicable to that, and includes that — but to all the gifts and graces by which we can contribute to the welfare of others. All this is regarded as a gift, or charisma, of God. It is not owing to ourselves, but is to be traced to him. See the word explained in the notes at (54044)1 Timothy 4:14.

Even so minister the same one to another In anything by which you can benefit another. Regard What you have and they have not as a gift bestowed upon you by God for the common good, and be ready to impart it as the needs of ethers require. The word "minister" here (διακονουντες (1247)) would refer to any kind of ministering, whether by counsel, by advice, by the supply of the needs of the poor, or by preaching. It has here no reference to any one of these exclusively; but means, that in whatever God

has favored us more than others, we should be ready to minister to their needs. See <55118>2 Timothy 1:18; <47808>2 Corinthians 3:8; 8:19,20.

As good stewards Regarding yourselves as the mere stewards of God; that is, as appointed by him to do this work for him, and entrusted by him with what is needful to benefit others. He intends to do them good, but he means to do it through your instrumentality, and has entrusted to you as a steward what he designed to confer on them. This is the true idea, in respect to any special endowments of talent, property, or grace, which we may have received from God. Compare the notes at <46401>1 Corinthians 4:1,2; <42161>Luke 16:1,2,8.

Of the manifold grace of God The grace or favor of God evinced in many ways, or by a variety of gifts. His favors are not confined to one single thing; as, for example, to talent for doing good by preaching; but are extended to a great many things by which we may do good to others — influence, property, reputation, wisdom, experience. All these are to be regarded as his gifts; all to be employed in doing good to others as we have opportunity.

<60411>**1 Peter 4:11.** *If any man speak* As a preacher, referring here particularly to the office of the ministry.

Let him speak as the oracles of God As the oracles of God speak; to wit, in accordance with the truth which God has revealed, and with an impressive sense of the responsibility of delivering a message from him. The word rendered “oracles” (λογια <3051>) means, properly, something “spoken” or “uttered”; then anything uttered by God — a divine communication — a revelation. See the notes at <45302>Romans 3:2; <58512>Hebrews 5:12. See the general duty here inculcated illustrated at length in the notes at <45206>Romans 12:6-8. The passage here has a strong resemblance to the one in Romans.

If any man minister διακονει <1247>. This may refer either, so far as the word is concerned, to the office of a deacon, or to any service which one renders to another. See <60410>1 Peter 4:10. The word commonly refers to service in general; to attendance on another, or to aid rendered to another; to the distribution of alms, etc. It seems probable that the word here does not refer to the office of a deacon as such, because the speciality of that office was to take charge of the poor of the church, and of the funds provided for them, (see <44602>Acts 6:2,3;) but the apostle here says that they

to whom he referred should “minister as of the ability which God giveth,” which seems to imply that it was rather to distribute what was their own, than what was committed to them by the church. The word may refer to any aid which we render to others in the church, as distributing alms, attending on the sick, etc. Compare the notes at <45127>Romans 12:7,8.

As of the ability which God giveth In regard to property, talent, strength, influence, etc. This is the limit of all obligation. No one is bound to go beyond his ability; everyone is required to come up to it. Compare <41408>Mark 14:8; <42170>Luke 17:10.

That God in all things may be glorified That he may be honored; to wit, by our doing all the good we can to others, and thus showing the power of his religion. See the notes at <46031>1 Corinthians 10:31.

Through Jesus Christ That is, as the medium through whom all those holy influences come by which God is honored.

To whom That is, to God; for he is the main subject of the sentence. The apostle says that in all things he is to be glorified by us, and then adds in this doxology that he is worthy to be thus honored. Compare <66106>Revelation 1:6; See the notes at <55048>2 Timothy 4:18. Many, however, suppose that the reference here is to the Son of God. That it would be true of him, and appropriate, see the notes at <45905>Romans 9:5.

<60412>**1 Peter 4:12.** *Beloved, think it not strange* Do not consider it as anything which you had no reason to expect; as anything which may not happen to others also.

Concerning the fiery trial which is to try you Referring, doubtless, to some severe persecution which was then impending. We have not the means of determining precisely what this was. The word rendered “fiery trial” (πυρωσει <44451>) occurs only here and in <66809>Revelation 18:9, 18; in both of which latter places it is rendered burning. It means, properly, a being on fire, burning, conflagration; and then any severe trial. It cannot be demonstrated from this word that they were literally to suffer by fire, but it is clear that some heavy calamity was before them.

As though some strange thing happened unto you Something unusual; something which did not occur to others.

1 Peter 4:13. *But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ" s sufferings* That is, sufferings of the same kind that he endured, and inflicted for the same reasons. Compare Colossians 1:24; James 1:2; See the notes at Matthew 5:12. The meaning here is, that they were to regard it as a matter of rejoicing that they were identified with Christ, even in suffering. See this sentiment illustrated at length in the notes at Philippians 3:10.

That, when his glory shall be revealed At the day of judgment. See the notes at Matthew 26:30.

Ye may be glad also with exceeding joy Being admitted to the rewards which he will then confer on his people. Compare 1 Thessalonians 2:19. Every good man will have joy when, immediately at death, he is received into the presence of his Saviour; but his joy will be complete only when, in the presence of assembled worlds, he shall hear the sentence which shall confirm him in happiness forever.

1 Peter 4:14. *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye* That is, in his cause, or on his account. See the notes at Matthew 5:11. The sense of the word "happy" here is the same as "blessed" in Matthew 5:3-5, etc. It means that they were to regard their condition or lot as a blessed one; not that they would find personal and positive enjoyment on being reproached and vilified. It would be a blessed condition, because it would be like that of their Saviour; would show that they were his friends; would be accompanied with rich spiritual influences in the present world; and would be followed by the rewards of heaven.

For the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you The glorious and Divine Spirit. There is no doubt that there is reference here to the Holy Spirit; and the meaning is, that they might expect that that Spirit would rest upon them, or abide with them, if they were persecuted for the cause of Christ. There may be some allusion here, in the language, to the fact that the Spirit of God descended and abode on the Saviour at his baptism (John 1:33); and, in like manner, they might hope to have the same Spirit resting on them. The essential idea is, that, if they were called to suffer in the cause of the Redeemer, they would not be left or forsaken. They might hope that God would impart his Spirit to them in proportion to their sufferings in behalf of religion, and that they would have augmented joy and peace. This is doubtless the case with those who suffer

persecution, and this is the secret reason why they are so sustained in their trials. Their persecutions are made the reason of a much more copious effusion of the Spirit on their souls. The same principle applies, doubtless, to all the forms of trial which the children of God pass through; and in sickness, bereavement, loss of property, disappointment in their worldly plans, and death itself, they may hope that larger measures of the Spirit's influences will rest upon them. Hence, it is often gain to the believer to suffer.

On their part So far as they are concerned; or by them.

He is evil spoken of That is, the Holy Spirit. They only blaspheme him, (Greek;) they reproach his sacred influences by their treatment of you and your religion.

But on your part he is glorified By your manner of speaking of him, and by the honor done to him in the patience evinced in your trials, and in your purity of life.

60415**1 Peter 4:15.** *But let none of you suffer as a murderer* If you must be called to suffer, see that it be not for crime. Compare the notes at 603141 Peter 3:14,17. They were to be careful that their sufferings were brought upon them only in consequence of their religion, and not because any crime could be laid to their charge. If even such charges were brought against them, there should be no pretext furnished for them by their lives.

As an evil doer As a wicked man; or as guilty of injustice and wrong toward others.

Or as a busy-body in other men's matters The Greek word used here (αλλοτριοεπισκοπος 244) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means, properly, an inspector of strange things, or of the things of others. Prof. Robinson (Lexicon) supposes that the word may refer to one who is "a director of heathenism;" but the more obvious signification, and the one commonly adopted, is that which occurs in our translation — one who busies himself with what does not concern him; that is, one who pries into the affairs of another; who attempts to control or direct them as if they were his own. In respect to the vice here condemned, see the notes at 50204Philippians 2:4. Compare 538112 Thessalonians 3:11, and 545131 Timothy 5:13.

1 Peter 4:16. *Yet if any man suffer as a Christian* Because he is a Christian; if he is persecuted on account of his religion. This was often done, and they had reason to expect that it might occur in their own case. Compare the notes at 1 Peter 3:17. On the import of the word Christian, and the reasons why the name was given to the disciples of the Lord Jesus, see the notes at Acts 11:26.

Let him not be ashamed

(1) Ashamed of religion so as to refuse to suffer on account of it.

(2) Ashamed that he is despised and maltreated.

He is to regard his religion as every way honorable, and all that fairly results from it in time and eternity as in every respect desirable. He is not to be ashamed to be called a Christian; he is not to be ashamed of the doctrines taught by his religion; he is not to be ashamed of the Saviour whom he professes to love; he is not to be ashamed of the society and fellowship of those who are true Christians, poor and despised though they may be; he is not to be ashamed to perform any of the duties demanded by his religion; he is not to be ashamed to have his name cast out, and himself subjected to reproach and scorn. A man should be ashamed only of that which is wrong. He should glory in that which is right, whatever may be the consequences to himself. Christians now, though not subjected to open persecution, are frequently reproached by the world on account of their religion; and though the rack may not be employed, and the fires of martyrdom are not enkindled, yet it is often true that one who is a believer is called to “suffer as a Christian.” He may be reviled and despised. His views may be regarded as bigoted, narrow, severe. Opprobrious epithets, on account of his opinions, may be applied to him. His former friends and companions may leave him because he has become a Christian. A wicked father, or a frivilous and worldly mother, may oppose a child, or a husband may revile a wife, on account of their religion. In all these cases, the same spirit essentially is required which was enjoined on the early Christian martyrs. We are never to be ashamed of our religion, whatever results may follow from our attachment to it. Compare the notes at Romans 1:16.

But let him glorify God on this behalf Let him praise God that he is deemed not unworthy to suffer in such a cause. It is a matter of thankfulness:

(1) that they may have this evidence that they are true Christians;

(2) that they may desire the advantages which may result from suffering as Christ did, and in his cause. See the notes at <4454>Acts 5:41, where the sentiment here expressed is fully illustrated. Compare the notes at <5110>Philippians 3:10; <5124>Colossians 1:24.

<6047>**1 Peter 4:17.** *For the time is come* That is, this is now to be expected. There is reason to think that this trial will now occur, and there is a propriety that it should be made. Probably the apostle referred to some indications then apparent that this was about to take place.

That judgment must begin The word “judgment” here (κριμα <2917>) seems to mean “the severe trial which would determine character.” It refers to such calamities as would settle the question whether there was any religion, or would test the value of that which was professed. It was to “begin” at the house of God, or be applied to the church first, in order that the nature and worth of religion might be seen. The reference is, doubtless, to some fearful calamity which would primarily fall on the “house of God;” that is, to some form of persecution which was to be let loose upon the church.

At the house of God Benson, Bloomfield, and many others, suppose that this refers to the Jews, and to the calamities that were to come around the temple and the holy city about to be destroyed. But the more obvious reference is to Christians, spoken of as the house or family of God. There is probably in the language here an allusion to <26906>Ezekiel 9:6: “Slay utterly old and young, both maids, andlittle children, and women; and begin at my sanctuary.” Compare <24529>Jeremiah 25:29. But the language used here by the apostle does not denote literally the temple, or the Jews, but those who were in his time regarded as the people of God — Christians — the church. So the phrase tyBe <1004> hwhy <3068>, “house of Yahweh” is used to denote the family or people of God, <04207>Numbers 12:7; <28801>Hosea 8:1. Compare also <54315>1 Timothy 3:15 and the note on that verse. The sense here is, therefore, that the series of calamities referred to were to commence with the church, or were to come first upon the people of God. Schoettgen here aptly quotes a passage from the writings of the Rabbis: “Punishments never come into the world unless the wicked are in it; but they do not begin unless they commence first with the righteous.”

And if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? If God brings such trials upon us who have obeyed his

gospel, what have we not reason to suppose he will bring upon those who are yet in their sins? And if we are selected first as the objects of this visitation, if there is that in us which requires such a method of dealing, what are we to suppose will occur in the end with those who make no pretensions to religion, but are yet living in open transgression? The sentiment is, that if God deals thus strictly with his people; if there is that in them which makes the visitations of his judgment proper on them, there is a certainty that they who are not his people, but who live in iniquity, will in the end be overwhelmed with the tokens of severer wrath. Their punishment hereafter will be certain; and who can tell what will be the measure of its severity? Every wicked man, when he sees the trials which God brings upon his own people, should tremble under the apprehension of the deeper calamity which will hereafter come upon himself. We may remark:

(1) that the judgments which God brings upon his own people make it certain that the wicked will be punished. If he does not spare his own people, why should he spare others?

(2) The punishment of the wicked is merely delayed. It begins at the house of God. Christians are tried, and are recalled from their wanderings, and are prepared by discipline for the heavenly world. The punishment of the wicked is often delayed to a future world, and in this life they have almost uninterrupted prosperity, but in the end it will be certain. See <19730>Psalm 73:1-19. The punishment will come in the end. It cannot be evaded. Sooner or later justice requires that the wicked should be visited with the expressions of divine displeasure on account of sin, and in the future world there will be ample time for the infliction of all the punishment which they deserve.

<60418>**1 Peter 4:18.** *And if the righteous scarcely be saved* If they are saved with difficulty. The word used here (μολις <3433>) occurs in the following places: <44148>Acts 14:18, “scarce restrained they the people;” <44207>Acts 27:7, “and scarce were come over against Cuidus;” <60408>1 Peter 4:8, “and hardly passing it;” <60416>1 Peter 4:16, “we had much work to come by the boat” — literally, we were able with difficulty to get the boat; <45607>Romans 5:7, “scarcely for a righteous man will one die;” and in the passage before us. The word implies that there is some difficulty, or obstruction, so that the thing came very near not to happen, or so that there was much risk about it. Compare <42331>Luke 13:31. The apostle in this passage seems to have had

his eye on a verse in Proverbs, (2013Proverbs 11:31,) and he has merely expanded and illustrated it: “Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner.” By the question which he employs, he admits that the righteous are saved with difficulty, or that there are perils which jeopard their salvation, and which are of such a kind as to make it very near not to happen. They would indeed be saved, but it would be in such a manner as to show that the circumstances were such as to render it, to human appearances, doubtful and problematical. This peril may have arisen from many circumstances:

(a) The difficulty of forming a plan of salvation, involving a degree of wisdom wholly beyond that of man, and of such a character that beforehand it would have been problematical and doubtful whether it could be. There was but one way in which it could be done. But what human wisdom could have devised that, or thought of it? There was but one being who could save. But who would have supposed that the Son of God would have been willing to become a man, and to die on a cross to do it? If he had been unwilling to come and die, the righteous could not have been saved.

(b) The difficulty of bringing those who are saved to a willingness to accept of salvation. All were disposed alike to reject it; and there were many obstacles in the human heart, arising from pride, and selfishness, and unbelief, and the love of sin, which must be overcome before any would accept of the offer of mercy. There was but one agent who could overcome these things, and induce any of the race to embrace the gospel — the Holy Spirit. But who could have anticipated that the Spirit of God would have undertaken to renew and sanctify the polluted human heart? Yet, if he had failed, there could have been no salvation for any.

(c) The difficulty of keeping them from falling away amidst the temptations and allurements of the world. Often it seems to be wholly doubtful whether those who have been converted will be kept to eternal life. They have so little religion; they yield so readily to temptation; they conform so much to the world; they have so little strength to bear up under trials, that it seems as if there was no power to preserve them and bring them to heaven. They are saved when they seemed almost ready to yield everything.

(d) The difficulty of rescuing them from the power of the great enemy of souls. The adversary has vast power, and he means, if be can, to destroy those who are the children of God. Often they are in most imminent

danger, and it seems to be a question of doubtful issue whether they will not be entirely overcome and perish. It is no small matter to rescue a soul from the dominion of Satan, and to bring it to heaven, so that it shall be eternally safe. Through the internal struggles and the outward conflicts of life, it seems often a matter of doubt whether with all their effort they will be saved; and when they are saved, they will feel that they have been rescued from thousands of dangers, and that there has been many a time when they have stood on the very verge of ruin, and when, to human appearances, it was scarcely possible that they could be saved.

Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? What hope is there of their salvation? The meaning is, that they would certainly perish; and the doctrine in the passage is, that the fact that the righteous are saved with so much difficulty is proof that the wicked will not be saved at all. This follows, because:

(a) there is the same difficulty in their salvation which there was in the salvation of those who became righteous; the same difficulty arising from the love of sin, the hardness of the heart, and the arts and power of the adversary.

(b) No one can be saved without effort, and in fact the righteous are saved only by constant and strenuous effort on their part.

But the wicked make no effort for their own salvation. They make use of no means for it; they put forth no exertions to obtain it; they do not make it a part of their plan of life. How, then, can they be saved? But where will they appear? I answer:

(a) they will appear somewhere. They will not cease to exist when they pass away from this world. Not one of them will be annihilated; and though they vanish from the earth, and will be seen here no more, yet they will make their appearance in some other part of the universe.

(b) They will appear at the judgment-seat, as all others will, to receive their sentence according to the deeds done in the body. It follows from this:

(1) that the wicked will certainly be destroyed. If the righteous are scarcely saved, how can they be?

(2) That there will be a state of future punishment, for this refers to what is to occur in the future world.

(3) That the punishment of the wicked will be eternal, for it is the opposite of what is meant by saved. The time will never come when it will be said that they are saved! But if so, their punishment must be eternal!

1 Peter 4:19. *Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God* That is, who endure the kind of sufferings that he, by his providence, shall appoint. Compare 1 Peter 3:17; 4:15,16.

Commit the keeping of their souls to him. Since there is so much danger; since there is no one else that can keep them; and since he is a Being so faithful, let them commit all their interests to him. Compare Psalm 37:5. The word “souls” here (ψυχας) is equivalent to themselves. They were to leave everything in his hand, faithfully performing every duty, and not being anxious for the result.

In well doing Constantly doing good, or seeking to perform every duty in a proper manner. Their business was always to do right; the result was to be left with God. A man who is engaged always in well-doing, may safely commit all his interest to God.

As unto a faithful Creator God may be trusted, or confided in, in all His attributes, and in all the relations which He sustains as Creator, Redeemer, Moral Governor, and Judge. In these, and in all other respects, we may come before Him with confidence, and put unwavering trust in Him. As Creator particularly; as one who has brought us, and all creatures and things into being, we may be sure that he will be “faithful” to the design which he had in view. From that design he will never depart until it is fully accomplished. He abandons no purpose which he has formed, and we may be assured that he will faithfully pursue it to the end. As our Creator we may come to Him, and look to Him for His protection and care. He made us. He had a design in our creation. He so endowed us that we might live forever, and so that we might honor and enjoy Him. He did not create us that we might be miserable; nor does He wish that we should be. He formed us in such a way that, if we choose, we may be eternally happy. In that path in which He has appointed us to go, if we pursue it, we may be sure of His help and protection. If we really aim to accomplish the purposes for which we were made, we may be certain that He will show Himself to be a “faithful Creator;” one in whom we may always confide. And even though we have wandered from Him, and have long forgotten why we were made, and have loved and served the creature more than the

Creator, we may be sure, if we will return to Him, that He will not forget the design for which He originally made us. As our Creator we may still confide in Him. Redeemed by the blood of His Son, and renewed by His Spirit after the image of Him who erected us, we may still go to Him as our Creator, and may pray that even yet the high and noble ends for which we were made may be accomplished in us. Doing this, we shall find Him as true to that purpose as though we had never sinned.

NOTES ON 1 PETER 5

This chapter embraces the following subjects:

I. An exhortation to the elders of the churches to be faithful to the flocks committed to their charge, <60501>1 Peter 5:1-4.

II. An exhortation to the younger members of the church to evince all proper submission to those who were older; to occupy the station in which they were placed with a becoming spirit, casting all their care on God, <60505>1 Peter 5:5-7.

III. An exhortation to be sober and vigilant, in view of the dangers which beset them, and the arts and power of their great adversary, the devil, and especially to bear with patience the trials to which they were subjected, in common with their Christian brethren elsewhere, <60508>1 Peter 5:8-11.

IV. Salutations, <60512>1 Peter 5:12-14.

<60501>**1 Peter 5:1.** *The elders which are among you I exhort* The word "elder" means, properly, "one who is old;" but it is frequently used in the New Testament as applicable to the officers of the church; probably because aged persons were at first commonly appointed to these offices. See notes at <441130>Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2. There is evidently an allusion here to the fact that such persons were selected on account of their age, because in the following verses (4ff) the apostle addresses particularly the younger. It is worthy of remark, that he here refers only to one class of ministers. He does NOT speak of three "orders," of "bishops, priests, and deacons;" and the evidence from the passage here is quite strong that there were no such orders in the churches of Asia Minor, to which this Epistle was directed. It is also worthy of remark, that the word "exhort" is here used. The language which Peter uses is not that of stern and arbitrary command; it is that of kind and mild Christian exhortation. Compare the notes at <570108>Philemon 1:8,9.

Who am also an elder Greek: "a fellow-presbyter," (συμπρεσβυτερος <4850>). This word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means that he was a co-presbyter with them; and he makes this one of the grounds of his exhortation to them. He does not put it on the ground of his apostolical

authority; or urge it because he was the vicegerent of Christ; or because he was the head of the church; or because he had any pre-eminence over others in any way. Would he have used this language if he had been the " head of the church" on earth? Would he if he supposed that the distinction between apostles and other ministers was to be perpetuated? Would he if he believed that there were to be distinct orders of clergy? The whole drift of this passage is adverse to such a supposition.

And a witness of the sufferings of Christ Peter was indeed a witness of the sufferings of Christ when on his trial, and doubtless also when he was scourged and mocked, and when he was crucified. After his denial of his Lord, he wept bitterly, and evidently then followed him to the place where he was crucified, and, in company with others, observed with painful solicitude the last agonies of his Saviour. It is not, so far as I know, expressly said in the Gospels that Peter was pre sent at the crucifixion of the Saviour; but it is said (<42349>Luke 23:49) that "all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things," and nothing is more probable than that Peter was among them. His warm attachment to his Master, and his recent bitter repentance for having denied him, would lead him to follow him to the place of his death; for after the painful act of denying him he would not be likely to expose himself to the charge of neglect, or of any want of love again. His own solemn declaration here makes it certain that he was present. He alludes to it now, evidently because it qualified him to exhort those whom he addressed. It would be natural to regard with special respect one who had actually seen the Saviour in his last agony, and nothing would be more impressive than an exhortation falling from the lips of such a man. A son would be likely to listen with great respect to any suggestions which should be made by one who had seen his father or mother die. The impression which Peter had of that scene he would desire to have transferred to those whom he addressed, that by a lively view of the sufferings of their Saviour they might be excited to fidelity in his cause.

And a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed Another reason to make his exhortation impressive and solemn. He felt that he was an heir of life. He was about to partake of the glories of heaven. Looking forward, as they did also, to the blessed world before him and them, he had a right to exhort them to the faithful performance of duty. Anyone, who is himself an heir of salvation, may appropriately exhort his fellow-Christians to fidelity in the service of their common Lord.

1Pet. 5:2 *Feed the flock of God* Discharge the duties of a shepherd toward the flock. On the word “feed,” see the notes at ⁴²¹¹⁵John 21:15. It is a word which Peter would be likely to remember, from the solemn manner in which the injunction to perform the duty was laid on him by the Saviour. The direction means to take such an oversight of the church as a shepherd is accustomed to take of his flock. See the notes at ⁴³⁰⁰¹John 10:1-16.

Which is among you Margin, as much as in you is. The translation in the text is the more correct. It means the churches which were among them, or over which they were called to preside.

Taking the oversight thereof επισκοπουντες ¹⁹⁸³. The fair translation of this word is, “discharging the episcopal office”; and the word implies all that is always implied by the word “bishop” in the New Testament. This idea should have been expressed in the translation. The meaning is not merely to take the oversight — for that might be done in a subordinate sense by anyone in office; but it is to take such an oversight as is implied in the episcopate, or by the word “bishop.” The words “episcopate,” “episcopal,” and “episcopacy,” are merely the Greek word used here and its correlatives transferred to our language. The sense is that of overseeing; taking the oversight of; looking after, as of a flock; and the word has originally no reference to what is now spoken of as especially the episcopal office. It is a word strictly applicable to any minister of religion, or officer of a church. In the passage before us this duty was to be performed by those who, in ⁶⁰⁵⁰¹1 Peter 5:1, are called presbyters, or elders; and this is one of the numerous passages in the New Testament which prove that all that is properly implied in the performance of the episcopal functions pertained to those who were called presbyters, or elders. If so, there was no higher grade of ministers to which the special duties of the episcopate were to be entrusted; that is, there was no class of officers corresponding to those who are now called “bishops.” Compare the notes at ⁴⁴⁰²⁸Acts 20:28.

Not by constraint, but willingly Not as if you felt that a heavy yoke was imposed on you, or a burden from which you would gladly be discharged. Go cheerfully to your duty as a work which you love, and act like a freeman in it, and not as a slave. Arduous as are the labors of the ministry, yet there is no work on earth in which a man can and should labor more cheerfully.

Not for filthy lucre Shameful or dishohorable gain. See the notes at <540303>1 Timothy 3:3,

But of a ready mind Cheerfully, promptly. We are to labor in this work, not under the influence of the desire of gain, but from the promptings of love. There is all the difference conceivable between one who does a thing because he is paid for it, and one who does it from love — between, for example, the manner in which one attends on us when we are sick who loves us, and one who is merely hired to do it. Such a difference is there in the spirit with which one who is actuated by mercenary motives, and one whose heart is in the work, will engage in the ministry.

<600503>**1 Peter 5:3.** *Neither as being lords* Margin, “overruling.” The word here used (κατακυριευω <2634>) is rendered “exercise dominion over,” in <402025>Matthew 20:25; exercise lordship over, in <411042>Mark 10:42; and overcame, in <441916>Acts 19:16. It does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. It refers properly to that kind of jurisdiction which civil rulers or magistrates exercise. This is an exercise of authority, as contradistinguished from the influence of reason, persuasion, and example. The latter pertains to the ministers of religion; the former is forbidden to them. Their dominion is not to be that of temporal lordship; it is to be that of love and truth. This command would prohibit all assumption of temporal power by the ministers of religion, and all conferring of titles of nobility on those who are preachers of the gospel. It needs scarcely to be said that it has been very little regarded in the church.

Over God’s heritage των <3588> κληρων <2819>. Vulgate: “in cleris” — over the clergy. The Greek word here (κληρος) is that from which the word “clergy” has been derived; and some have interpreted it here as referring to the clergy, that is, to priests and deacons who are under the authority of a bishop. Such an interpretation, I however, would hardly be adopted now. The word means properly:

(a) a lot, die, anything used in determining chances;

(b) a part or portion, such as is assigned by lot; hence,

(c) an office to which one is designated or appointed, by lot or otherwise; and

(d) in general any possession or heritage, <442618>Acts 26:18; <510112>Colossians 1:12.

The meaning here is, “not lording it over the possessions or the heritage of God.” The reference is, undoubtedly, to the church, as that which is especially his property; his own in the world. Whitby and others suppose that it refers to the possessions or property of the church; Doddridge explains it — “not assuming dominion over those who fall to your lot,” supposing it to mean that they were not to domineer over the particular congregations committed by Providence to their care. But the other interpretation is most in accordance with the usual meaning of the word.

But being ensamples to the flock Examples. See the notes at 1 Timothy 4:12. Peter has drawn here with great beauty, the appropriate character of the ministers of the gospel, and described the spirit with which they should be actuated in the discharge of the duties of their office. But how different it is from the character of many who have claimed to be ministers of religion; and especially how different from that corrupt communion which professes in a special manner to recognize Peter as the head, and the vicegerent of Christ. It is well remarked by Benson on this passage, that “the church of Rome could not well have acted more directly contrary to this injunction of Peter’s if she had studied to disobey it, and to form herself upon a rule that should be the reverse of this.”

1 Peter 5:4. *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear* The prince of the pastors — the Lord Jesus Christ. “Peter, in the passage above, ranks himself with the elders; here he ranks Christ himself with the pastors” — Benson. See the notes at 1 Peter 2:25. Compare Hebrews 13:20.

Ye shall receive a crown of glory A glorious crown or diadem. Compare the notes at 2 Timothy 4:8.

That fadeth not away This is essentially the same word, though somewhat different in form, which occurs in 1 Peter 1:4. See the notes at that verse. The word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. Compare the notes at 1 Corinthians 9:25.

1 Peter 5:5. *Likewise, ye younger* All younger persons of either sex.

Submit yourselves unto the elder That is, with the respect due to their age, and to the offices which they sustain. There is here, probably, a particular reference to those who sustained the office of elders or teachers, as the same word is used here which occurs in 1 Peter 5:1. As there was an allusion in that verse, by the use of the word, to age, so there is in this

verse to the fact that they sustained an office in the church. The general duty, however, is here implied, as it is everywhere in the Bible, that all suitable respect is to be shown to the aged. Compare <03:19:32>Leviticus 19:32; <54:05:01>1 Timothy 5:1; <44:23:04>Acts 23:4; <61:02:09>2 Peter 2:9.

Yea, all of you be subject one to another In your proper ranks and relations. You are not to attempt to lord it over one another, but are to treat each other with deference and respect. See the notes at <49:05:21>Ephesians 5:21; <50:02:03>Philippians 2:3.

And be clothed with humility The word here rendered “be clothed” (ενγκομβωμαι <14:06:3>) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It is derived from κομβος — a strip, string, or loop to fasten a garment; and then the word refers to a garment that was fastened with strings. The word ενγκομβωμα refers particularly to a long white apron, or outer garment, that was commonly worn by slaves. See Robinson, Lexicon; Passow, Lexicon. There is, therefore, special force in the use of this word here, as denoting an humble mind. They were to be willing to take any place, and to perform any office, however humble, in order to serve and benefit others. They were not to assume a style and dignity of state and authority, as if they would lord it over others, or as if they were better than others; but they were to be willing to occupy any station, however humble, by which they might honor God. It is known that not a few of the early Christians actually sold themselves as slaves, in order that they might preach the gospel to those who were in bondage. The sense here is, they were to put on humility as a garment bound fast to them, as a servant bound fast to him the apron that was significant of his station. Compare <51:03:13>Colossians 3:13. It is not unusual in the Scriptures, as well as in other writings, to compare the virtues with articles of apparel; as that with which we are clothed, or in which we are seen by others. Compare <23:11:05>Isaiah 11:5; 59:17.

For God resisteth the proud ... This passage is quoted from the Greek translation in <20:03:34>Proverbs 3:34. See it explained in the notes at <59:04:06>James 4:6, where it is also quoted.

<61:05:06>**1 Peter 5:6.** *Humble yourselves therefore* Be willing to take a low place — a place such as becomes you. Do not arrogate to yourselves what does not belong to you; do not evince pride and haughtiness in your manner; do not exalt yourselves above others. See the notes at <42:14:07>Luke

14:7-11. Compare <20153>Proverbs 15:33; 18:12; 22:4; <33068>Micah 6:8; <51208>Philippians 2:8.

Under the mighty hand of God This refers probably to the calamities which he had brought upon them, or was about to bring upon them; represented here, as often elsewhere, as the infliction of his hand — the hand being that by which we accomplish anything. When that hand was upon them they were not to be lifted up with pride and with a spirit of rebellion, but were to take a lowly place before him, and submit to him wish a calm mind, believing that he would exalt them in due time. There is no situation in which one will be more likely to feel humility than in scenes of affliction.

That he may exalt you in due time When he shall see it to be a proper time:

(1) They might be assured that this would be done at some time. He would not always leave them in this low and depressed condition. He would take off his heavy hand, and raise them up from their state of sadness and suffering.

(2) This would be in due time; that is, in the proper time, in the best time:

(a) It might be in the present life.

(b) It would certainly be in the world to come. There they would be exalted to honors which will be more than an equivalent for all the persecution, poverty, and contempt which are suffered in this world. He may well afford to be humble here who is to be exalted to a throne in heaven.

<60507>**1 Peter 5:7.** *Casting all your care upon him* Compare <19522>Psalm 55:22, from whence this passage was probably taken. “Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee; he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.” Compare, for a similar sentiment, <40625>Matthew 6:25-30. The meaning is, that we are to commit our whole cause to him. If we suffer heavy trials; if we lose our friends, health, or property; if we have arduous and responsible duties to perform; if we feel that we have no strength, and are in danger of being crushed by what is laid upon us, we may go and cast all upon the Lord; that is, we may look to him for grace and strength, and feel assured that he will enable us to sustain all that is laid upon us. The relief in the case will be as real, and as full of consolation, as if he took the burden and bore it himself. He will enable us to bear with ease what we supposed we could never have done; and the burden which he lays upon us

will be light, <4011130>Matthew 11:30. Compare the notes at <5100406>Philippians 4:6,7.

For he careth for you See the notes at <4001029>Matthew 10:29-31. He is not like the gods worshipped by many of the pagan, who were supposed to be so exalted, and so distant, that they did not interest themselves in human affairs; but He condescends to regard the needs of the meanest of his creatures. It is one of the glorious attributes of the true God, that he can and will thus notice the needs of the mean as well as the mighty; and one of the richest of all consolations when we are afflicted, and are despised by the world, is the thought that we are not forgotten by our heavenly Father. He who remembers the falling sparrow, and who hears the young ravens when they cry, will not be unmindful of us.

> "Yet the LORD thinketh on me," was the consolation of David, when he felt that he was "poor and needy," <1904017>Psalm 40:17.
>
> "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up," <1902710>Psalm 27:10.

Compare <2304915>Isaiah 49:15. What more can one wish than to be permitted to feel that the great and merciful Yahweh thinks on him? What are we — what have we done, that should be worthy of such condescension? Remember, poor, despised, afflicted child of God, that you will never be forgotten. Friends on earth, the great, the frivilous, the noble, the rich, may forget you; God never will. Remember that you will never be entirely neglected. Father, mother, neighbor, friend, those whom you have loved, and those to whom you have done good, may neglect you, but God never will. You may become poor, and they may pass by you; you may lose your office, and flatterers may no longer throng your path; your beauty may fade, and your admirers may leave you; you may grow old, and be infirm, and appear to be useless in the world, and no one may seem to care for you; but it is not thus with the God whom you serve. When he loves, he always loves; if he regarded you with favor when you were rich, he will not forget you when you are poor; he who watched over you with a parent's care in the bloom of youth, will not cast you off when you are "old and grey-headed," <1907118>Psalm 71:18. If we are what we should be, we shall never be without a friend as long as there is a God.

<6010508>**1 Peter 5:8.** *Be sober* While you cast your cares Upon God, and have no anxiety on that score, let your solicitude be directed to another point.

Do not doubt that he is able and willing to support and befriend you, but be watchful against your foes. See the word used here fully explained in the notes at <51516>1 Thessalonians 5:6.

Be vigilant This word (γρηγορεω <1127>) is everywhere else in the New Testament rendered “watch.” See <40242>Matthew 24:42,43; 25:13; 26:38,40,41. It means that we should exercise careful circumspection, as one does when he is in danger. In reference to the matter here referred to, it means that we are to be on our guard against the wiles and the power of the evil one.

Your adversary the devil Your enemy; he who is opposed to you. Satan opposes man in his best interests. He resists his efforts to do good; his purposes to return to God; his attempts to secure his own salvation. There is no more appropriate appellation that can be given to him than to say that he resists all our efforts to obey God and to secure the salvation of our own souls.

As a roaring lion Compare <66212>Revelation 12:12. Sometimes Satan is represented as transforming himself into an angel of light, (see the notes at <47114>2 Corinthians 11:14;) and sometimes, as here, as a roaring lion: denoting the efforts which he makes to alarm and overpower us. The lion here is not the crouching lion — the lion stealthfully creeping toward his foe — but it is the raging monarch of the woods, who by his terrible roar would intimidate all so that they might become an easy prey. The particular thing referred to here, doubtless, is persecution, resembling in its terrors a roaring lion. When error comes in; when seductive arts abound; when the world allures and charms the representation of the character of the foe is not of the roaring lion, but of the silent influence of an enemy that has clothed himself in the garb of an angel of light, <47114>2 Corinthians 11:14.

Walketh about, seeking whom he may devour “Naturalists have observed that a lion roars when he is roused with hunger, for then he is most fierce, and most eagerly seeks his prey. See <07145>Judges 14:5; <19213>Psalm 22:13; <24025>Jeremiah 2:15; <26225>Ezekiel 22:25; <28110>Hosea 11:10; <36103>Zephaniah 3:3; <38103>Zechariah 11:3” — Benson.

<60109>**1 Peter 5:9.** *Whom resist* See the notes at <59407>James 4:7. You are in no instance to yield to him, but are in all forms to stand up and oppose him. Feeble in yourselves, you are to confide in the arm of God. No matter in

what form of terror he approaches, you are to fight manfully the fight of faith. Compare the notes at <49610>Ephesians 6:10-17.

Steadfast in the faith Confiding in God. You are to rely on him alone, and the means of successful resistance are to be found in the resources of faith. See the notes at <49616>Ephesians 6:16.

Knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world Compare for a similar sentiment, <46103>1 Corinthians 10:13. The meaning is, that you should be encouraged to endure your trials by the fact that your fellow-Christians suffer the same things. This consideration might furnish consolation to them in their trials in the following ways:

(1) They would feel that they were suffering only the common lot of Christians. There was no evidence that God was especially angry with them, or that he had in a special manner forsaken them.

(2) The fact that others were enabled to bear their trials should be an argument to prove to them that they would also be able. If they looked abroad, and saw that others were sustained, and were brought off triumphant, they might be assured that this would be the case with them.

(3) There would be the support derived from the fact that they were not alone in suffering. We can bear pain more easily if we feel that we are not alone — that it is the common lot — that we are in circumstances where we may have sympathy from others. This remark may be of great practical value to us in view of persecutions, trials, and death. The consideration suggested here by Peter to sustain those whom he addressed, in the trials of persecution, may be applied now to sustain and comfort us in every form of apprehended or real calamity. We are all liable to suffering. We are exposed to sickness, bereavement, death. We often feet as if we could not bear up under the sufferings that may be before us, and especially do we dread the great trial — DEATH. It may furnish us some support and consolation to remember:

(1) that this is the common lot of people. There is nothing special in our case. It proves nothing as to the question whether we are accepted of God, and are beloved by him, that we suffer; for those whom he has loved most have been often among the greatest sufferers. We often think that our sufferings are unique; that there have been none like them. Yet, if we knew all, we should find that thousands — and among them the most wise, and

pure, and good — have endured sufferings of the same kind as ours, and perhaps far more intense in degree.

(2) Others have been conveyed triumphantly through their trials. We have reason to hope and to believe that we shall also, for:

(a) our trials have been no greater than theirs have been; and

(b) their natural strength was no greater than ours. Many of them were timid, and shrinking, and trembling, and felt that they had no strength, and that they should fail under the trial.

(3) The grace which sustained them can sustain us. The hand of God is not shortened that it cannot save; his ear is not heavy that it cannot hear. His power is as great, and his grace is as fresh, as it was when the first sufferer was supported by him; and that divine strength which supported David and Job in their afflictions, and the apostles and martyrs in theirs, is just as powerful as it was when they applied to God to be upheld in their sorrows.

(4) We are especially fearful of death — fearful that our faith will fail, and that we shall be left to die without support or consolation. Yet let us remember that death is the common lot of man. Let us remember who have died — tender females; children; the timid and the fearful; those, in immense multitudes, who had no more strength by nature than we have. Let us think of our own kindred who have died. A wife has died, and shall a husband be afraid to die? A child, and shall a father? A sister, and shall a brother? It does much to take away the dread of death, to remember that a mother has gone through the dark valley; that that gloomy vale has been trod by delicate, and timid, and beloved sisters. Shall I be afraid to go where they have gone? Shall I apprehend that I shall find no grace that is able to sustain me where they have found it? Must the valley of the shadow of death be dark and gloomy to me, when they found it to be illuminated with the opening light of heaven? Above all, it takes away the fear of death when I remember that my Saviour has experienced all the horrors which can ever be in death; that he has slept in the tomb, and made it a hallowed resting-place.

1 Peter 5:10. *But the God of all grace* The God who imparts all needful grace. It was proper in their anticipated trials to direct them to God, and to breathe forth in their behalf an earnest and affectionate prayer that they might be supported. A prayer of this kind by an apostle would

also be to them a sort of pledge or assurance that the needed grace would be granted them.

Who hath called us unto his eternal glory And who means, therefore, that we shall be saved. As he has called us to his glory, we need not apprehend that he will leave or forsake us. On the meaning of the word called, see the notes at <49401>Ephesians 4:1.

After that ye have suffered a while After you have suffered as long as he shall appoint. The Greek is, “having suffered a little,” and may refer either to time or degree. In both respects the declaration concerning afflictions is true. They are short, compared with eternity; they are light, compared with the exceeding and eternal weight of glory. See the notes at <47046>2 Corinthians 4:16-18.

Make you perfect By means of your trials. The tendency of affliction is to make us perfect.

Stablish The Greek word means “to set fast; to fix firmly; to render immovable,” <42265>Luke 16:26; 9:51; 22:32; <46111>Romans 1:11; 16:25; <52302>1 Thessalonians 3:2,13, et al.

Strengthen Give you strength to bear all this.

Settle you Literally, found you, or establish you on a firm foundation — θεμελιωσεις <2311>. The allusion is to a house which is so firmly fixed on a foundation that it will not be moved by winds or floods. Compare the notes at <40724>Matthew 7:24ff.

<60511>**1 Peter 5:11.** *To him be glory ...* See the notes at <60411>1 Peter 4:11.

<60512>**1 Peter 5:12.** *By Silvanus* Or Silas. See the notes at <47019>2 Corinthians 1:19; <52901>1 Thessalonians 1:1. He was the intimate friend and companion of Paul, and had labored much with him in the regions where the churches were situated to which this Epistle was addressed. In what manner he became acquainted with Peter, or why he was now with him in Babylon is unknown.

A faithful brother unto you, as I suppose The expression “as I suppose” — ὡς <5613> λογιζομαι <3049> — does not imply that there was any doubt on the mind of the apostle, but indicates rather a firm persuasion that what he said was true. Thus, <45818>Romans 8:18, “For I reckon (λογιζομαι <3049>) that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared,” etc. That is,

I am fully persuaded of it; I have no doubt of it. Peter evidently had no doubt on this point, but he probably could not speak from any personal knowledge. He had not been with them when Silas was, and perhaps not at all; for they may have been" strangers "to him personally — for the word "strangers," in <60101>1 Peter 1:1, may imply that he had no personal acquaintance with them. Silas, however, had been much with them, (compare <441517>Acts 15:17-31,) and Peter had no doubt that he had shown himself to be "a faithful brother" to them. An epistle conveyed by his hands could not but be welcome. It should be observed, however, that the expression "I suppose" has been differently interpreted by some. Wetstein understands it as meaning, "Not that he supposed Silvanus to be a faithful brother, for who, says he, could doubt that? but that he had written as he understood matters, having carefully considered the subject, and as he regarded things to be true;" and refers for illustration to <450818>Romans 8:18; <500408>Philippians 4:8; <581109>Hebrews 11:9. Grotius understands it as meaning, "If I remember right;" and supposes that the idea is, that he shows his affection for them by saying that this was not the first time that he had written to them, but that he had written before briefly, and sent the letter, as well as he could remember, by Silvanus. But there is no evidence that he had written to them before, and the common interpretation is undoubtedly to be preferred.

Exhorting No small part of the Epistle is taken up with exhortations.

And testifying Bearing witness. The main design of the office of the apostles was to bear witness to the truth, (See the notes at <461501>1 Corinthians 9:1;) and Peter in this Epistle discharged that part of the functions of his office toward the scattered Christians of Asia Minor.

That this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand That the religion in which you stand, or which you now hold, is that which is identified with the grace or favor of God. Christianity, not Judaism, or Paganism, was the true religion. To show this, and bear continual witness to it, was the leading design of the apostolic office.

<601513>**1 Peter 5:13.** *The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you* It will be seen at once that much of this is supplied by our translators; the words "church that is" not being in the original. The Greek is, ἡ <3588> εν <1722> Βαβυλωνι <897> συνεκλεκτη <4899>; and might refer to a church, or to a female. Wall, Mill, and some others, suppose that the reference is to a

Christian woman, perhaps the wife of Peter himself. Compare <60101>2 John 1:1. But the Arabic, Syriac, and Vulgate, as well as the English versions, supply the word “church.” This interpretation seems to be confirmed by the word rendered “elected together with” — συνεκλεκτη <4899>. This word would be properly used in reference to one individual if writing to another individual, but would hardly be appropriate as applied to an individual addressing a church. It could not readily be supposed, moreover, that any one female in Babylon could have such a prominence, or be so well known, that nothing more would be necessary to designate her than merely to say, “the elect female.” On the word Babylon here, and the place denoted by it, see the introduction, section 2.

And so doth Marcus my son Probably John Mark. See the notes at <44122>Acts 12:12; 15:37. Why he was now with Peter is unknown. If this was the Mark referred to, then the word son is a title of affection, and is used by Peter with reference to his own superior age. It is possible, however, that some other Mark may be referred to, in whose conversion Peter had been instrumental.

<60514>**1 Peter 5:14.** *Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity* A kiss of love; a common method of affectionate salutation in the times of the apostles. See the notes at <45616>Romans 16:16.

Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus That are true Christians. See the notes at <49623>Ephesians 6:23; <50407>Philippians 4:7.