

## Pictures of Believers

A copy of this lesson is posted in Adobe pdf format at <http://cranfordville.com> under [Bible Studies](#) in the Bible Study Aids section. A note about the [blue, underlined](#) material: These are hyperlinks that allow you to click them on and bring up the specified scripture passage automatically while working inside the pdf file connected to the internet. Just use your web browser's back arrow or the taskbar to return to the lesson material.

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The two documents in the New Testament with the name of Peter attached is a study in contrasts. The first letter of Peter represents a style of writing that echoes most of the letters of Paul. Why is this? A simple explanation surfaces in [1 Pet. 5:12](#), "Through Silvanus, whom I consider a faithful brother, I have written this short letter to encourage you and to testify that this is the true grace of God." That is, Peter didn't do the actual writing of this letter, Silas (his Latin name, Silvanus) did the writing of the letter as Peter told him what to write. This was the universal pattern of formal letter writing in the ancient world, a writing secretary (in Greek, a γραμματεὺς; in Latin, [amnuensis](#)). Not surprisingly, one who had spent most of his adult life traveling with the apostle Paul, and most likely had written some of Paul's letters as well, would put into writing the ideas of Peter with a Pauline tone to them. On the other hand, 2 Peter, in writing style, is world's apart from 1 Peter. It contains some of the worst Greek in the New Testament and is loaded with grammatical errors. Although many scholars, largely because of this, reject the idea that Peter had anything to do with this second document, a simpler idea is that Peter had no access to a writing secretary at the end of his earthly life when this letter was written. And thus the document possibly reflects the face that decades before as a boy in Galilee he was more interested in fishing, than in learning to write in Greek. The amazing part of this is that such a person could -- through the grace of Christ -- rise with such deficiencies to become the leader of the Christian movement after the ascension of Jesus.



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### I. [Context](#)

Because our study is in an ancient letter, understanding the historical and literary background of the document becomes all the more important to correct interpretation. Ancient letters were situational, more than any other type of writing in the New Testament. This means that specific situations in the lives of the original readers of the letter are what prompted the writing of the document to begin with. The more we know about those situations, the more accurate our knowledge of what was written to them.

**Note:** some hyperlinks may not work right. I'm making the full transition from Adobe Pagemaker to Adobe InDesign with this study. A steep learning curve is the challenge in order to expand formatting possibilities.

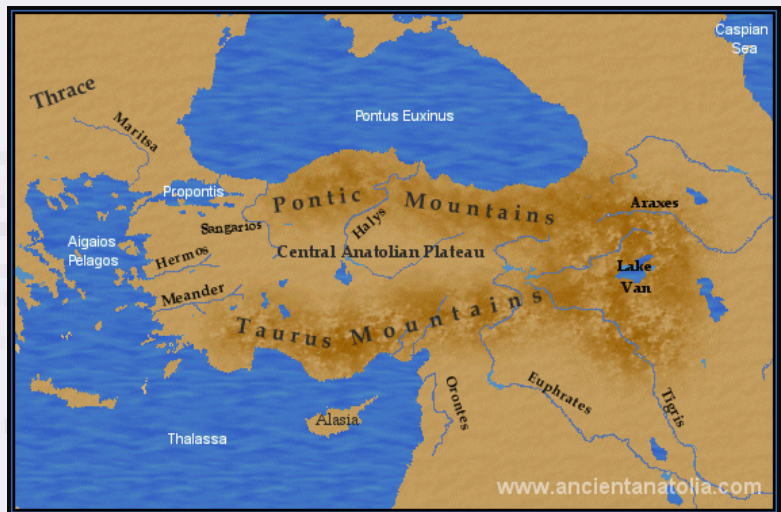
## a. Historical

**External History.** The compositional history of the document itself involves asking the typical “reporter” questions: Who wrote it? When was it written? Where was it written? To whom was it written? Why was it written? Finding answers to such questions leads one to analyze two kinds of sources of information. First, the contents of the document itself provide signals and clues. Second, sources outside the document often become major sources of information. This means beginning with information elsewhere inside the New Testament. Almost always it means scouring through the writings of the [Church Fathers](#) from the second through the sixth centuries, because on occasion they will discuss such matters. We will attempt to answer these questions based on the available information. Since these interpreters lived many centuries closer to the time of the writing of our scripture document than we do, they become major sources of insight. Sometimes, sharp differences of opinion among them become the challenge for modern study. From the 1500s on the tendency has been to place more value on an analysis of the contents of a scripture document than on the Church Fathers, but no serious approach to the Bible can afford to ignore the ideas of these early leaders of Christianity.

The external history of 1 Peter is complex. The “who” question of authorship has to give serious attention to the role of Silas as the writing secretary (see beginning discussion). Modern scholarly objections to Petrine authorship have largely been based on writing style of the document. The impact of the writing secretary on this aspect of a document could be substantial in the ancient world, and thus overrides automatically many objections against Petrine authorship.

The most natural assumption is to accept the traditional view of Petrine authorship with the understanding that the gap between the internal author profile and the external profile from early church tradition can be largely accounted for by the impact of Silas having done the writing of the document.

The ‘to whom’ question is answered internally by letter Adscriptio in 1:1b-2, “[To the exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who have been chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ and to be sprinkled with his blood.](#)” The Roman provinces named here refer to the region



largely covered by the Pontic Mountains in the above map. This was the area that Paul wanted to travel to during the second missionary journey after revisiting the churches in Galatia in the central Taurus Mountains region. But according to Acts 16, the Lord through His Spirit closed the door in Asia both along the western coastal region and the northern coastal region. Today this territory comprises the northern region of the country of Turkey along the Black Sea.

The ‘when’ and ‘from where’ questions are more difficult to answer. The assumption of Petrine authorship for the letter limits the dating to no later than the mid-60s of the first century when the apostle Peter was executed by Nero at Rome. [1 Pet. 5:13](#) implies an answer to the ‘from where’ question: “[Your sister church in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings;...](#)” The letter was sent from ‘Babylon.’ Most will take this as a cryptic reference to Rome as is found in the book of Revelation. Most Church Fathers understood the term this way. Many modern scholars have agreed with this view, although some take the reference entirely figuratively to mean ‘from a place of evil persecution.’

The ‘why’ question impacts the preceding ones, and poses the opportunity for different conclusions. The theme of persecution saturates the body of the letter after being set up in the letter proem in 1: 6-7, “[In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.](#)” Thus the letter was intended to encourage these believers enduring persecution, as the summation of the letter body in the letter Conclusio in 5:10 makes clear: “[And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will](#)

himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you.” The point of disagreement is over identification of a period of Roman government persecution that could match the depiction in the letter. Some argue that only the era of persecution of Christians by Emperor Hadrian (AD. 117-138) fits. But others will argue persuasively that regional persecution of Christians especially at various times during the first century fit the depiction quite adequately. Certainly Christians in Rome came under severe persecution during the final days of Nero’s reign (AD 54-68). Many of the Roman governors of the provinces now making up modern Turkey were especially vigorous in pressing emperor worship from the middle of the first century. Christian refusal to acknowledge the emperor as a deity brought about instant reprisal and persecution in these provinces.

Putting all these issues together, one can argue successfully for a Petrine authorship of this letter

**b. Literary**

**Genre.** The literary form of our passage can be accurately labeled a mixture of paranesis and didactic teaching with a strong doctrinal tone. The first segment, vv. 1-3 (core statement 8 in the diagram of the larger internet version of this study), is clearly moral admonition in nature. Embedded inside this is a [vice list](#) in verse one. These sins are portrayed as dirty clothes that the believer must shed while craving spiritual nourishment.

The remainder of the passage comprises profound belief affirmations about who Christians are in God’s scheme of things. Central to the first section, vv. 4-8, is that believers comprise the new spiritual temple of God with Christ as the corner stone of that temple. Also, believers become God’s new people in Christ (vv. 9-10). The critical role of Christ in both the paranesis and the doctrinal affirms becomes a key way for Peter to link these two sections together. Believers have tasted the graciousness of Christ in salvation (v. 3) as a motivation for craving spiritual nourishment. But they are also coming to him as a living stone (v. 4) in whom they are being used as God’s construction material in the building of His new temple on earth.

**Literary Context.** At the broadest level 2:1-10 is a part of the body proper of the letter. The [basic sections](#) are Praescriptio, 1:1-2; Proem, 1:3-12; Body, 1:13-5:11; Conclusio, 5:12-14. Inside the body of the letter the following sections are lined out in the UBS Greek NT 3rd rev edition:

[A Call to Holy Living, 1:13-25](#)

from Rome during the time prior to his execution in the mid 60s. The letter was intended to encourage persecuted believers -- largely Gentile, but including many Jews -- to remain faithful to Christ during their time of suffering. These congregations of believers were scattered in the towns and villages mostly in Roman provinces in the Pontic Mountains along the southern shore of the Black Sea.

**Internal History.** The language of 2:1-10 contains almost no time and place markers specifying first century locations and events. The indirect time marker inside the passage is the application of designations of the Israelites in the OT era to Peter’s Christian readers in the mid-first century. This meant the transferal of these labels from the Jews who claimed them to the believing community made up of both Jews and Gentiles through their common faith commitment to Christ. These became the “new people of God” as Peter will contend in 2:10.

- [The Living Stone and the Holy Nation, 2:1-10](#)
- [Live as Servants of God, 2:11-17](#)
- [The Example of Christ’s Suffering, 2:18-25](#)
- [Wives and Husbands, 3:1-7](#)
- [Suffering for Righteousness Sake, 3:8-22](#)
- [Good Stewards of God’s Grace, 4:1-11](#)
- [Suffering as a Christian, 4:12-19](#)
- [Tending the Flock of God, 5:1-11](#)

Our passage comes as the second unit of material in the letter body. It is linked to 1:13-25 by the inferential conjunction οὖν in 2:1, which is usually translated as ‘then’ or ‘therefore.’ The implication of this is that 2:1-10 grows out of the concepts contained in 1:13-25. Something implicit in the first section is now expressed directly in the second section.

The section following 2:1-10 is introduced with a clear signal of a new direction being taken in the letter in 2:11, “[Beloved, I urge you as aliens and exiles...](#)” (Ἀγαπητοί, παρακαλῶ ὡς παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμους...). The combination of the vocative case direct address, “beloved,” and the new metaphors of “aliens and exiles” move the thought a new direction with new emphasis. The

limited connection of 2:11-17 to 2:1-10 can be seen in the historical experi-



ence of the children of Israel as God's people having been exiles and strangers in Egypt before the Exodus. This echo lies in the background of the two metaphors of God's people and strangers. But Peter's main emphasis in the metaphors of strangers and exiles in 2:11-17 is a contrast between living on earth and anticipating Heaven as our real homeland.

Thus 2:1-10 has a closer connection to 1:13-25 than it does to 2:11-17. But a fairly coherent progression of thought can be detected from pericope to pericope through the body of the letter. Most of

the time the flow of ideas will have some kind of connection to what precedes and to what follows. But this doesn't move along the lines of modern logical thought patterns. Instead, it reflects -- more than anything -- ancient Jewish ways of thinking, with some influence from Greco-Roman culture. The challenge to modern commentators who must develop outlines of a document as a part of their writing contract is to preserve this non-modern thought pattern while casting it in a modern outline which assumes contemporary ways of thinking to the culture and language group the writer lives in.

## II. Message

**Literary Structure.** The internal arrangement of ideas and how they connect to one another is explored in great detail in the [Semantic Diagram](#) and the [Summary of Rhetorical Structure](#) in the larger internet version of this study. For the detailed analysis in the [Block Diagram](#) of the Greek text as foundational to the above two studies, one can detect three core elements in the thought flow. These revolve around three controlling metaphors: (1) craving milk like new born babies, vv. 1-3; (2) becoming a part of the building of God's new house, vv. 4-9; and (3) being God's new people with all that implies, vv. 9-10. The study will be structured around these three emphases.

### a. Craving milk, vv. 1-3

#### Greek NT

<sup>2:1</sup> Ἀποθέμενοι οὖν πᾶσαν κακίαν καὶ πάντα δόλον καὶ ὑποκρίσεις καὶ φθόνους καὶ πάσας καταλαλιᾶς, <sup>2:2</sup> ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα ἐπιποθήσατε, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ αὐξηθῆτε εἰς σωτηρίαν, <sup>2:3</sup> εἰ ἐγεύσασθε ὅτι χρηστός ὁ κύριος.

#### Notes:

This first unit is made up of a single Greek sentence. The core, foundational clause is the admonition to crave milk; see the italicized blue text above. The defining metaphor for this admonition is "like newborn babies" (ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη). In short, believers are to function like newly born infants. But the focal point of the metaphor is its hunger for nourishing milk. In the world of Peter that normally meant the milk provided by the mother. In occasional aristocratic circles, it could also imply the breast milk provided by a "wet nurse" who fed the baby -- usually a female slave.

Peter saw in this image an ideal for believers who need to crave a different kind of milk. A couple of observations about the 'craving.' First,

#### NASB

1 Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, 2 like newborn babies, *long for the pure milk* of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, 3 if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

#### NRSV

1 Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. 2 Like newborn infants, *long for the pure, spiritual milk*, so that by it you may grow into salvation? 3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

#### NLT

1 So get rid of all malicious behavior and deceit. Don't just pretend to be good! Be done with hypocrisy and jealousy and backstabbing. 2 *You must crave pure spiritual milk* so that you can grow into the fullness of your salvation. Cry out for this nourishment as a baby cries for milk, 3 now that you have had a taste of the Lord's kindness.

the very meaning of the verb defines this desire in intense terms. This is not casual or superficial. This desiring of spiritual

milk is to be as intense as a baby is when it gets hungry for milk. The level of intensity is heightened more by the use of the Aorist imperative verb form in the underlying Greek text. Thus Peter powerfully stresses the essential nature of getting spiritual nourishment for a healthy spiritual life.

What is meant by milk? First, the figure of speech stands for nourishment. Milk becomes that which en-



ables us to grow as Christians. This metaphor of milk is defined by two non-metaphorical adjectives which point to the religious significance of the word picture. First, the milk is λογικόν (logikon). Louw-Nida (*Greek-English Lexicon*) define the adjective as meaning “[pertaining to being genuine, in the sense of being true to the real and essential nature of something—‘rational, genuine, true.’](#)”



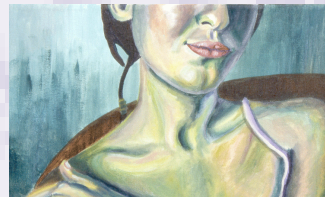
An older, mistranslation of this adjective renders this as “the word.” The NASB follows this with its rendering “[of the word.](#)” This implies that something inside the Word of God is the essence and this is what Christians are to seek. For believers in Peter’s day, “the word” meant one thing: the orally preached gospel about Jesus Christ. Are believers then to just seek the essence of the gospel? I think not. The writers to the Hebrews complained bitterly that he couldn’t move beyond the ABC’s of the gospel, the milk (γάλα), because of the spiritual immaturity of his Christian readers; cf. [Heb. 5:11-14](#). Peter has something else in mind with his use of this image of milk.

In Greek philosophical literature, the Greek adjective is often used with the meaning of ‘rational,’ ‘logical.’ A few English translations will understand the adjective this way; e.g., the Douay-Rheims, “[desire the rational milk.](#)” Much more common in English Bible translation is a derivative definition from this. The milk is non-literal rather than material milk. Thus it is ‘spiritual’ rather than literal. But the Greek adjective for ‘spiritual’ πνευματικός was readily available to Peter and he uses it in v. 5. Something else is in mind beyond just labeling the milk spiritual. Note the NRSV and NLT translations above. But this misses the point of the image.

The only other NT use of this adjective is in Rom. 12:1 where Paul defines presenting our bodies to God as a living sacrifice to be τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν ὑμῶν (your *logiken* service). Quite clearly the idea is that of service / worship that corresponds to what is genuine and true to divine expectation. With that clue, a better understanding of the Greek adjective is that the milk we crave is the real thing, that which is consistent with divine revelation. This definition builds off the Greek philosophical definition. “Rational” in their minds meant what was consistent with the truth. Peter realized that phoney milk would not nourish and could easily be destructive to the believer’s spiritual health.

The second adjective qualifier of milk is ἄδολον (*adolon*). The beginning letter, alpha, is used to define the opposite of the meaning of the root stem of the word. In ancient Greek, δόλος alluded to deceit, cunning, treachery etc. The opposite of that is straight forward, transparent, open, honest. Or in computer terms, WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get). No hidden agendas, no foreign elements diluting down the milk are to be present. All three translations above correctly render this as “pure.” What then did Peter have in mind by this “genuine unadulterated milk”? The most basic sense of the image is the spiritual truths that meet these qualifications. In the immediate context, some of the more important ones were set forth in the preceding passage of [1:13-25](#). Central to these admonitions is the call for believers to live a life of holiness. This grows out of God’s calling and is based on OT principles of holiness, especially Lev. 11:44 et al: “[You must be holy because I am holy.](#)” This spiritual milk that we are to crave is whatever nourishes us into such a pattern of living. That includes the gospel, the Bible and other sources.

A part of the responsibility for seeking this spiritual nourishment is the willingness to ‘get undressed.’ The Greek participle Ἀποθέμενοι (*apothemenoi*) introduces another metaphor attached to the image of newborn babies craving milk. A vital part of spiritual longing for nourishment is taking off the dirty clothes of “[all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander](#)” (πᾶσαν κακίαν καὶ πάντα δόλον καὶ ὑποκρίσεις καὶ φθόνους καὶ πάσας καταλαλιὰς). Without willingness to take this action we will never have a genuine, sustained longing for spiritual nourishment. [These vices](#) listed represent sinful conduct that is inconsistent with Christian commitment. They must be dispensed with!



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The objective of this “newborn baby longing while getting undressed” is stated in the purpose clause following the core admonition: “[so that by it you may grow into salvation](#)” (ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ ἀύξηθῆτε εἰς σωτηρίαν). Spiritual development is the point. The sometimes confusing part is “growing into salvation.” What is meant by this? Is it “measuring up to divine standards so that we can be saved”? Heavens no!

J. Ramsey Michaels (*Word Biblical Commentary*,

Logos Systems) gives helpful insight:

It appears that Peter has explicitly defined the goal of spiritual growth as σωτηρία because of the latter's intrinsic importance to his argument in chapter one and throughout the epistle. The basic idea in σωτηρία is deliverance, and in a setting of persecution or oppression the hopes of the oppressed would more naturally be set on God's power and will to deliver and vindicate them than on their own spiritual maturity. "Salvation" is future, both here and in chapter one, but the fact that it is woven here into a metaphor of birth, nurture, and growth gives it a distinctive cast. εἰς σωτηρίαν in 1:5 points to a decisive act of God "about to be revealed at the last day" believers are "protected by the power of God, through faith" as they wait for the moment of his interventions, εἰς σωτηρίαν in our passage points to a vindication arising inevitably, almost "naturally," out of the spiritual growth that results from receiving "pure spiritual milk."



to remind his readers of what they experienced from God in conversion. This now serves as an ongoing motivation for craving spiritual nourishment.

What does this admonition have to do with Chris-

tians in our world? Just about everything! The timeless quality of the admonition means it applies equally to any generation of Christians over the centuries. There are dirty clothes that every believer needs to shed. Spiritual undressing is harder than taking off our clothes. Some have almost as many vices need-



ing to be cleaned out of their lives as this ancient Jewish girl has clothes on while dressed for her wedding day, and they are valued about as much as her clothes. Yet we must be willing to get these attitudes and practices out of our lives. Spiritual health will never take place without it.

Also, we need to intensify our yearning for genuinely nourishing spiritual things. Bible study, devotional meditation, Christian ministry -- all these activities and more are expressions of craving. Spiritual milk is available in unlimited quantities. We need to "get milk" like the advertisements of the American Dairy Association. Only our milk is infinitely more nourishing. It prepares us for eternity!



What does this mean? I suggest it means this. Our spiritual nourishment develops us as believers. This development prepares us for the experience of ultimate deliverance on the day of redemption at the close of the age. In short, it gets us ready for Heaven! Thus Peter makes a distinct contribution to the idea of spiritual growth and maturity in the New Testament generally.

The final qualifier of the admonition to crave spiritual milk is at the end of the sentence: "if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good" (εἰ ἐγεύσασθε ὅτι χρηστός ὁ κύριος.). The first class condition protasis nature of this Greek 'if' clause doesn't raise doubt. Instead, it assumes that the readers have already tasted the graciousness of the Lord in their conversion experience (Aorist tense Greek verb). The language Peter uses here draws upon Psalm 34:8 (NRSV):

O taste and see that the Lord is good;  
happy are those who take refuge in him.

The Greek adjective χρηστός (*chrestos*) is rich in meaning and can be expressed in English by a variety of English adjectives: "good" (NRSV); "gracious" (KJV); "kindness" (NLT) etc. Peter's point is

**b. Building God's House, vv. 4-8**

**Greek NT**

<sup>2:4</sup> π ρ ο ` ς ο ` ν  
προσερχόμενοι λίθον  
ζῶντα ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων μὲν  
ἀποδοκιμασμένον παρὰ  
δὲ θεῶ ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον,

**NASB**

4 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of

**NRSV**

4 Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and 5 like living stones,

**NLT**

4 Come to Christ, who is the living cornerstone of God's temple. He was rejected by the people, but he is precious to God

2:5 καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος πνευματικὸς εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον ἀνερέγκαι πνευματικὰς θυσίας εὐπροσδέκτους [τῷ] θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.  
 2:6 διότι περιέχει ἐν γραφῇ, Ἴδου τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον ἀκρογωνιαῖον ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασυνθῆ.  
 2:7 ὑμῖν οὐκ ἔτι τιμὴ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, ἀπιστοῦσιν δὲ λίθος ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες, οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας 2:8 καὶ λίθος προσκόμματος καὶ πέτρα σκανδάλου· οἱ προσκόπτουσιν τῷ λόγῳ ἀπειθοῦντες εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐτέθησαν.

God, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For this is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." 7 This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone," 8 and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.

let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For it stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." 7 To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," 8 and "A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

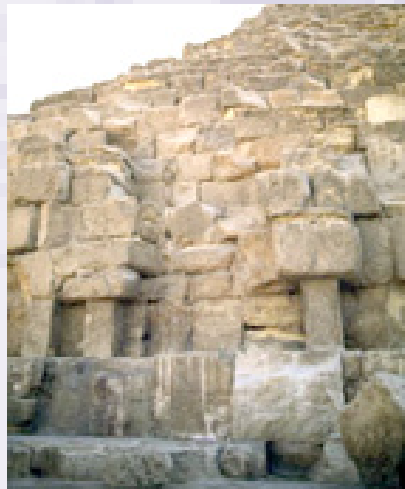
who chose him. 5 And now God is building you, as living stones, into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are God's holy priests, who offer the spiritual sacrifices that please him because of Jesus Christ. 6 As the Scriptures express it, "I am placing a stone in Jerusalem, a chosen cornerstone, and anyone who believes in him will never be disappointed." 7 Yes, he is very precious to you who believe. But for those who reject him, "The stone that was rejected by the builders has now become the cornerstone." 8 And the Scriptures also say, "He is the stone that makes people stumble, the rock that will make them fall." They stumble because they do not listen to God's word or obey it, and so they meet the fate that has been planned for them.

**Notes:**

This second segment links back to the beginning one through the Greek relative pronoun ὃν at the beginning of verse 4. Coming to whom? To the Lord that we have tasted as gracious.

The second core expression, statement 9 in [the block diagram](#), is contained in verses 4-5. The remaining core expressions, #s 10-14 in vv. 6-8, largely amplify via OT quotation the declaration made in statement 9. The amplification in verse 6 (statement 10) sets forth the OT basis for the declaration of the house construction. Out of this comes the implication (statements 11-14), introduced by οὗν in v. 7, of this applying to the believing community now. Peter goes to great pains to stress the inclusion of Gentile Christians in this house construction process.

The **essential point of this section** is that God is building a new house of worship. With the coming destruction of the temple in Jerusalem a few years



after the writing of this letter, Peter's words took on added meaning. The corner stone of this new dwelling place on earth is Jesus Christ. Although rejected by the Jewish 'builders' of his day, God has made him the corner stone. Thus the stones that God is using are those who value this corner stone with faith commitment. This includes both Jews and Gentiles, rather just covenant Israel. Of course, such thinking was utter heresy in first century Judaism. But it was an essential principle of apostolic Christianity. For Peter, this was based in OT scripture.

The foundation thesis (statement 9) is "you indeed as living stones are being built into a spiritual house" (αὐτοὶ ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος

πνευματικός). The “you” is Peter’s targeted readers who were both Christian Jews and Gentiles. One point of difference of assessment by scholars is over the mood form of the verb οἰκοδομεῖσθε (*oikodomeisthe*). From the spelling of this present tense verb it can be understood as indicative (‘you are being built’) or imperative (‘let yourselves be built’). The above translations reflect this different understanding with NASB and NLT opting for the indicative while the NRSV assumes the imperative. In my opinion the weight of evidence from the other use of this verb in verse 7 slightly favors the indicative. The plural “you” can be taken as you individually are being built up as in personal spiritual growth. But more likely the plural you should be taken collectively, i.e., you as a believing community are being built collectively into God’s temple. The imagery of stones together forming the house argues decisively for this view. Peter, like the other NT writers, has little concern for individual religious experience. The religious community is the overwhelming preoccupation. Individuals become important and gain identity as they connect to the community.

The controlling metaphor is “as living stones” (ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες). Placed in the sentence pre-field in the Greek, it has special emphasis. The stones that God is using for the construction of this new temple are not marble or granite. Rather, these stones are people, people committed to the corner stone Christ, who is also a living stone. The radicalness of this idea had its beginning with Jesus’ teachings in places such as Mt. 16:18, “I will build my church” (οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν). Since that promise of the Lord was directed mainly at Peter originally -- “upon this rock” (ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ) -- he certainly understood as time passed the significance of the Lord’s promise made that day.

The house that God is building is “spiritual” (οἶκος πνευματικός), rather than material. Herod’s temple in Jerusalem had been under construction for decades before it was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70.

The objectives of this new temple is twofold: (1) “to be a holy priesthood” (εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον) and (2) “to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (ἀνερέγκαι πνευματικὰς θυσίας εὐπροσδέκτους [τῷ] θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). In a mix-



ing of metaphors, Peter declares that believers are at the same time the stones making up the building and the priesthood functioning inside that building by making sacrifices to God. The background language is the temple in Jerusalem: a building with priests making sacrifices inside it. But now the guidelines for acceptable sacrifices are not the OT sacrificial

code governing which animal could and could not be offered up. Instead, what is acceptable to Jesus Christ becomes the parameter for sacrifices that God will accept. Christ is the channel through we as Christian priests make our offerings to God.

Paul’s use of this word picture is somewhat different but contributes understanding here; in [Rom. 12:1](#) he declares:

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Verse 6 (statement 10) sets up the scripture basis for what Peter has just declared. The passage is taken from Isa. 28:16. But as many have argued, the likelihood is that Peter was using this text out of a “Book of Testimony” developed in early Christianity. Evidence exists in the Church Fathers which suggests that a series of OT scripture passages were brought together as proof texts arguing for the Christian faith and for Christ as the promised Messiah. Paul, for example, will make use of Isa. 28 in Rom. 9:33 but with a different application of it. The first century Qumran community also made use of this text for their views of the new Jewish community they sought to build. In any case, Peter saw in this passage an allusion to Christ in the new corner stone that Isaiah promised. Additionally the believer entrusting himself to this divinely esteemed corner stone would never be ashamed or embarrassed because of it.

This then implied (οὕτως) for Peter an application to his readers in verse 7. To believ-



ers this corner stone Christ is esteemed and valued, even though ‘rejected by the builders.’ Again he reached back to Ps. 118:22 for a scrip-

ture text. In the text the “builders” reject the corner stone; Peter associates these with “unbelievers.” He adds Isa. 8:14 in verse 7 indicating that the “stone” became problematic leading to stumbling and offense. These ‘builders’ = ‘unbelievers’ stumbled at the word in disobedience (οἱ προσκόπτουσιν τῷ λόγῳ ἀπειθοῦντες). The richness of the verb προσκόπτω used as a participle here cannot be expressed adequately in English. It conveys the idea of kicking against something and hurting one’s foot, leading then to anger and rejection of the object that was kicked. These unbelievers had kicked Jesus, the center piece of the oral word (τῷ λόγῳ), i.e., the Gospel message, and realizing that all this kick did was ‘hurt their foot’ they turned on the rock Jesus in anger and rejection. At the heart of their kicking Jesus was a intentional disobedience (to God). Jesus became offensive to them and thus they had no intention of obeying him in faith commitment. The historical identity of these rejectors ranges from the Jewish leadership in Jerusalem who had Jesus executed to the non-believing Gentiles in the world of the initial readers of this letter in the region of ancient [Anatolia](#).

Peter then adopts a traditional stance with his final relative clause that reaches back to modify the

preceding principle instead of any preceding word: “for this they were destined” (εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐτέθησαν).

How does all this relate to us today? *First*, the beautiful imagery of Christians comprising a new temple of God is astounding. Indeed, we are the living stones of God’s community of faith, His new house of worship. *Second*, we become these living stones in God’s house through commitment to Jesus Christ, the corner stone of this new temple. We stand as believers who esteem and cherish Christ. *Additionally*, together we form also a holy priesthood engaged in ministry actions as sacrificial offerings being lifted up to God through Jesus Christ. Holy means set apart to God in righteous living and service. *Finally*, we shouldn’t be too surprised that even in our day individuals who kick against the corner stone Christ become angry in their rejection of him. They engage in building other ‘houses’ and want nothing to do with being a ‘living stone’ in God’s new house. Often that anger against Christ spills over into hostility toward the disciples of Christ.



### c. **Becoming God’s new people, vv. 9-10**

#### **Greek NT**

<sup>2:9</sup> Ὑμεῖς δὲ γένος ἐκλεκτόν, βασιλείον ἱεράτευμα, ἔθνος ἅγιον, λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε τοῦ ἐκ σκότους ὑμᾶς καλέσαντος εἰς τὸ θαυμαστὸν αὐτοῦ φῶς· <sup>2:10</sup> οἵ ποτε οὐ λαὸς νῦν δὲ λαὸς θεοῦ, οἱ οὐκ ἠλεημένοι νῦν δὲ ἐλεηθέντες.

#### **NASB**

9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but

#### **NRSV**

9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

#### **NLT**

9 But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are a kingdom of priests, God’s holy nation, his very own possession. This is so you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. 10 “Once you were not a people; now you are the people of God. Once you received none of God’s

now you have RECEIVED  
MERCY.

mercy; now you have  
received his mercy.”

### Notes:

This final segment in verses 9 and 10, statement 15 in the Block Diagram, is one lengthy sentence in the Greek text. **The foundational expression** moves toward the literary form of [a virtue list](#). In the ancient Greco-Roman world often philosophers and others would set forth lists of moral qualities they perceived as essential for successful living. The NT writers frequently made use of this pattern to list qualities essential for faithful discipleship. Peter's list here isn't quite a virtue list since the qualities mentioned are intended to provide spiritual labels for the living stones who as God's new temple also become God's new people. Thus, the background for these qualities isn't Greek philosophy as was sometimes the case for the vice and virtue lists. Instead, a collection of OT scripture passages first labeling the covenant people of Israel are now re-applied to the Christian community of Christian Jews and Gentiles.

In verse 10, Peter adds his interpretative comment to the passages with two pairs of antithetically placed relative clauses: 'not then... but now.' The two sets then stand in relation to one another in step parallelism. That is, the second set advances the ideas of the first set.

The identifying list is as follows:

1. **“chosen generation”**  
γένος ἐκλεκτόν  
from Isa. 43:20 (cf. also Deut. 7:6 and 10:15)
2. **“royal priesthood”**  
βασιλειον ιεράτευμα  
from Ex. 19:6 (cf. also 23:22 LXX) and Isa. 61:6
3. **“holy nation”**  
ἔθνος ἅγιον  
from Ex. 19:6 (cf. also 23:22 LXX)
4. **“a people for special possession”**  
λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν  
from Isa 43:21, Ex. 19:5 (cf. also 23:22 LXX),  
Deut. 4:20, 7:6, 14:2

These build off aspects of the house construction metaphor previously, but emphasize spiritual aspects of the Christian community as the new Israel.

Additionally, Peter draws from Isa. 43:21 (cf. also 42:12) to highlight the mission of this new Israel: **“in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light”** (ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε τοῦ ἐκ σκότους ὑμᾶς καλέσαντος εἰς τὸ θαυμαστὸν αὐτοῦ φῶς). Our mission



is call attention to God's greatness, not our own. The old Israel failed to do this; the new Israel is given the opportunity to succeed through Christ.

Finally, Peter's comments in verse ten sum up his point:

Once you were not a people, - \_\_\_\_\_  
but now you are God's people; + \_\_\_\_\_  
once you had not received mercy, - \_\_\_\_\_  
but now you have received mercy. + \_\_\_\_\_

The marvelous truths here affirm our position before Almighty God. For Peter's initial readers who suffered rejection as outcasts from the society around them, such affirmations were tremendous. And they remain so for believers today. We have been given privilege as God's people. This means we have been made the objects of God's mercy. Not because of something we have done nor because of who we are. We are the blessed people of God because of Christ to whom we have committed everything we are and possess. Our obligation now is to proclaim that message far and wide.

## Greek NT

<sup>2:1</sup> Ἀποθέμενοι οὖν  
πᾶσαν κακίαν καὶ πάντα  
δόλον καὶ ὑποκρίσεις  
καὶ φθόνους καὶ πάσας  
καταλαλιᾶς, <sup>2:2</sup> ὡς  
ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη τὸ  
λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα  
ἐπιποθήσατε, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ  
αὐξηθῆτε εἰς σωτηρίαν,  
<sup>2:3</sup> εἰ ἐγεύσασθε ὅτι  
χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος.

<sup>2:4</sup> πρὸς οὖν  
προσερχόμενοι λίθον  
ζῶντα ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων μὲν  
ἀποδοκιμασμένον παρὰ  
δὲ θεῶ ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον,  
<sup>2:5</sup> καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡς λίθοι  
ζῶντες οἰκοδομεῖσθε  
οἶκος πνευματικὸς  
εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον  
ἀνερέγκαι πνευματικὰς  
θυσίας εὐπροσδέκτους [τῷ  
] θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.  
<sup>2:6</sup> διότι περιέχει ἐν γραφῇ,  
Ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον  
ἀκρογωνιαῖον ἐκλεκτὸν  
ἔντιμον καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ'  
αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασυνθῆ.  
<sup>2:7</sup> Ὑμῖν οὖν ἡ τιμὴ τοῖς  
πιστεύουσιν, ἀπιστοῦσιν  
δὲ λίθος ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν  
οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες, οὗτος  
ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν  
γωνίας <sup>2:8</sup> καὶ λίθος  
προσκόμματος καὶ  
πέτρα σκανδάλου· οἱ  
προσκόπτουσιν τῷ λόγῳ  
ἀπειθοῦντες εἰς ὃ καὶ  
ἐτέθησαν.

<sup>2:9</sup> Ὑμεῖς δὲ γένος  
ἐκλεκτόν, βασιλείον  
ἱεράτευμα, ἔθνος ἅγιον,  
λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν,  
ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς  
ἐξαγγείλητε τοῦ ἐκ  
σκότους ὑμᾶς καλέσαντος  
εἰς τὸ θαυμαστὸν αὐτοῦ  
φῶς. <sup>2:10</sup> οἱ ποτε οὐ λαὸς  
νῦν δὲ λαὸς θεοῦ, οἱ  
οὐκ ἠλεημένοι νῦν δὲ  
ἐλεηθέντες.

## NASB

1 Therefore, putting  
aside all malice and all  
deceit and hypocrisy  
and envy and all slander,  
2 like newborn babies,  
long for the pure milk of  
the word, so that by it  
you may grow in respect  
to salvation, 3 if you have  
tasted the kindness of  
the Lord.

4 And coming to Him  
as to a living stone which  
has been rejected by  
men, but is choice and  
precious in the sight of  
God, 5 you also, as living  
stones, are being built up  
as a spiritual house for a  
holy priesthood, to offer  
up spiritual sacrifices  
acceptable to God  
through Jesus Christ. 6  
For this is contained in  
Scripture: "BEHOLD, I  
LAY IN ZION A CHOICE  
STONE, A PRECIOUS  
CORNER stone, AND  
HE WHO BELIEVES  
IN HIM WILL NOT BE  
DISAPPOINTED." 7 This  
precious value, then, is  
for you who believe; but  
for those who disbelieve,  
"THE STONE WHICH THE  
BUILDERS REJECTED,  
THIS BECAME THE  
VERY CORNER stone,"  
8 and, "A STONE OF  
STUMBLING AND A  
ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for  
they stumble because  
they are disobedient to  
the word, and to this  
doom they were also  
appointed.

9 But you are A  
CHOSEN RACE, A royal  
PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY  
NATION, A PEOPLE FOR  
God's OWN POSSESSION,  
so that you may proclaim

## NRSV

1 Rid yourselves,  
therefore, of all malice,  
and all guile, insincerity,  
envy, and all slander. 2  
Like newborn infants,  
long for the pure, spiritual  
milk, so that by it you may  
grow into salvation? 3 if  
indeed you have tasted  
that the Lord is good.

4 Come to him, a living  
stone, though rejected by  
mortals yet chosen and  
precious in God's sight,  
and 5 like living stones,  
let yourselves be built  
into a spiritual house, to  
be a holy priesthood, to  
offer spiritual sacrifices  
acceptable to God  
through Jesus Christ. 6  
For it stands in scripture:  
"See, I am laying in Zion  
a stone, a cornerstone  
chosen and precious;  
and whoever believes  
in him will not be put  
to shame." 7 To you  
then who believe, he is  
precious; but for those  
who do not believe, "The  
stone that the builders  
rejected has become the  
very head of the corner,"  
8 and "A stone that makes  
them stumble, and a rock  
that makes them fall."  
They stumble because  
they disobey the word,  
as they were destined to  
do.

9 But you are a chosen  
race, a royal priesthood,  
a holy nation, God's own  
people, in order that you  
may proclaim the mighty  
acts of him who called  
you out of darkness into  
his marvelous light. 10  
Once you were not a  
people, but now you

## NLT

1 So get rid of all  
malicious behavior and  
deceit. Don't just pretend  
to be good! Be done with  
hypocrisy and jealousy  
and backstabbing. 2 You  
must crave pure spiritual  
milk so that you can grow  
into the fullness of your  
salvation. Cry out for this  
nourishment as a baby  
cries for milk, 3 now that  
you have had a taste of  
the Lord's kindness.

4 Come to Christ, who  
is the living cornerstone  
of God's temple. He was  
rejected by the people,  
but he is precious to God  
who chose him. 5 And  
now God is building you,  
as living stones, into his  
spiritual temple. What's  
more, you are God's holy  
priests, who offer the  
spiritual sacrifices that  
please him because of  
Jesus Christ. 6 As the  
Scriptures express it, "I  
am placing a stone in  
Jerusalem, a chosen  
cornerstone, and anyone  
who believes in him will  
never be disappointed."  
7 Yes, he is very precious  
to you who believe. But  
for those who reject him,  
"The stone that was  
rejected by the builders  
has now become the  
cornerstone." 8 And the  
Scriptures also say, "He  
is the stone that makes  
people stumble, the rock  
that will make them fall."  
They stumble because  
they do not listen to  
God's word or obey it,  
and so they meet the fate  
that has been planned  
for them.

the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.

are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

9 But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are a kingdom of priests, God's holy nation, his very own possession. This is so you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. 10 "Once you were not a people; now you are the people of God. Once you received none of God's mercy; now you have received his mercy."

## Greek Text Diagram

2.1 οὖν

Ἀποθέμενοι πᾶσαν κακίαν  
καὶ  
πάντα δόλον  
καὶ  
ὑποκρίσεις  
καὶ  
φθόνου  
καὶ

2.2  
8 τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα ἐπιποθήσατε,

πάσας καταλαλιᾶς,  
ὡς ἄρτιγέννητα βρέφη

ἐν αὐτῷ  
ἵνα... αὐξηθῆτε

2.3  
εἰς σωτηρίαν,

εἰ ἐγεύσασθε

ὅτι χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος.

2.4  
πρὸς ὃν προσερχόμενοι  
λίθον ζῶντα

μὲν  
ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων  
ἀποδοκιμασμένον  
δὲ  
παρὰ θεῶ  
(ὄντας) ἐκλεκτὸν  
ἔντιμον,

2.5 καὶ

9 αὐτοῖ...οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος

ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες  
πνευματικὸς  
εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον  
ἀνενέγκαι πνευματικᾶς θυσίας  
εὐπροσδέκτους  
τῷ θεῷ

διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

2.6 διότι

10 περιέχει  
ἐν γραφῇ,

Ἴδου  
τίθημι... λίθον  
ἐν Σιών

ἀκρογωνιαῖον  
ἐκλεκτὸν  
ἔντιμον

καὶ

ὁ πιστεύων  
ἐπ' αὐτῷ

οὐ μὴ καταισχυθῆ.

11 <sup>2.7</sup> οὖν  
ὑμῖν ἡ τιμὴ (αὐτὸς ἐστίν)  
τοῖς πιστεύουσιν,  
δὲ  
12 ἀπιστοῦσιν λίθος (αὐτὸς ἐστίν)  
ὄν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες,  
13 οὗτος ἐγενήθη  
εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας  
2.8 καὶ  
14 (οὗτος ἐγενήθη) λίθος προσκόμματος  
καὶ  
πέτρα σκανδάλου·  
οἱ προσκόπτουσιν  
τῷ λόγῳ  
ἀπειθοῦντες  
εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐτέθησαν.  
15 <sup>2.9</sup> δὲ  
Ἵμεῖς (ἐστὲ) γένος ἐκλεκτόν,  
βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα,  
ἔθνος ἅγιον,  
λαὸς  
εἰς περιποίησιν,  
ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε  
ἐκ σκότους ὑμᾶς  
τοῦ...καλέσαντος  
εἰς τὸ θαυμαστὸν αὐτοῦ φῶς·  
2.10 οἱ ποτε οὐ (ἦσαν) λαὸς  
δὲ  
-- νῦν (ἐστίν) λαὸς θεοῦ,  
οἱ οὐκ (ἐστίν) ἠλεημένοι  
δὲ  
-- νῦν (ἐστίν) ἐλεηθέντες.



ἐγεύσασθε reaches back to their conversion experience as the initial tasting of the graciousness of Christ. This then becomes a motivation to craving for milk.

The **second controlling metaphor** in the passage is 'housing construction.' This surfaces initially in statement 9 and provides the foundational metaphor through statement 12. Out of this figure of speech comes the word picture of 'stones.' Two senses of the Greek word λίθος are made. (1) Stone refers to Christ. (2) Stones refers to believers. The distinction between those uses surfaces with the singular and plural numbers of the word, as well as Christ being the 'corner stone' in the building under construction.

The beginning statement 9 declares that believers, i.e., the initial targeted readers, are being built into a house (οἶκος). This house is a spiritual house (πνευματικὸς) indicating the building in mind here is a new temple. The mix of metaphors begins with the first expansion element, an adverbial temporal participle phrase indicating that as the believers are coming to Christ they are being built, i.e., entering into the construction process. The Christ that they are coming to is himself a living stone who has been rejected by men but is valued and esteemed before God. The second expansion element is the comparative phrase, also in the sentence pre-field: "as living stones." They themselves are coming into this construction process as living stones.

The two expansion elements in the sentence post-field indicate purpose or objective. First, the propositional phrase indicates that the objective of this construction process is for a spiritual priesthood which is also holy. Secondly, the infinitival phrase indicates that the objective is to offer up spiritual sacrifices with which God is happy. These offerings are made through Jesus Christ.

A causal expression (διότι) follows statement 9 and is based on an OT quote taken from Isa. 28:16. This quote is said to "envelope" (περιέχει) the ideas contained in statement 9. The following two statements (#s 11 & 12) are seen as inferences / implications drawn out of statement 10 particularly. This is signaled by the use of the inferential conjunction οὖν to introduce these statements. The contrastive declarations 'believers' / 'unbelievers' largely flesh out the implications of the first pre-field expansion of statement 9 and as augmented by the Is. 28:16 quote. As such they become applicational commentary applying the truths to the writer's world of those who believe in Christ and those who reject Christ. Each side of the contrast is developed largely through OT citation. The believing side (v. 7; statement 11) is based upon Ps. 118:22. The disbelieving side (v. 8; statement 12) is based upon Isa. 8:14. The metaphors of constructing and stones are the common links used to connect these to the writer's developing concepts.

The **final structure determining metaphors**, statement 15, builds off Peter's application of a series of OT labels for the covenant people of Israel. These are drawn from Isa. 43:20 (cf. also Deut. 7:6 and 10:15) for 'chosen generation'; Ex. 19:6 (cf. also 23:22 LXX) and Isa. 61:6 for 'royal priesthood'; Ex. 19:6 (cf. also 23:22 LXX) for 'holy nation'; Isa 43:21, Ex. 19:5 (cf. also 23:22 LXX), Deut. 4:20, 7:6, 14:2 for 'a people for special possession; and Isa. 43:21 (cf. also 42:12) for 'you might proclaim virtues.' The titles, originally applying to the Israelites in covenant, Peter now applies to believers. The two relative clause modifiers serving as commentary make this reapplication based upon believers now having become God's people and having received God's mercy. This application is made generally with the core statement 13. But it is dramatically re-enforced the the synomyous parallel relative clause couplets which themselves stand as antithetical parallels (not .. but now).

This final basic metaphor naturally grows out of the preceding one on house construction. As God is building His new temple for habitation, the people whom He now inhabits naturally can be defined by the same labels used for the OT covenant people among whom He dwelt previously by inhabiting the temple and previously the tabernacle. The difference now is that the people become His temple rather than the temple being a material construction for His presence.

These two metaphors, OT labels and house construction, are deeply linked to the craving for milk while taking off the 'dirty clothes.' The new movement called Christianity at Peter's time of writing was like a baby just beginning the process of development and growth.

## Greek Text Analyzed

### 2:1

Ἀποθέμενοι : Pres (Desc) - Mid (Reflex) - Ptc (Adv: Temporal / Modal) - Nom - M - P - ἀποτίθημι - (while) taking off

οὖν : Post positive coordinate conjunction introduction inferential independent clause - then, therefore

πᾶσαν : Adj (Attrib) - Acc - F - S - πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν - every

κακίαν : 1 - Acc (Dir Obj) - F - S - κακία, ἡ - evil action

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two direct object nouns - and

πάντα : Adj (Attrib) - Acc - M - S - πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν - every

δόλον : 2 - Acc (Dir Obj) - M - S - δόλος, ὁ - action of deceit

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two direct object nouns - and

ὑποκρίσεις : 3 - Acc (Dir Obj) - F - P - ὑπόκρισις, -εως, ἡ - hypocritical actions

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two direct object nouns - and

φθόνους : 2 - Acc (Dir Obj) - M - P - φθόνος, ὁ - actions of envy

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two direct object nouns - and

πάσας : Adj (Attrib) - Acc - F - P - πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν - all

καταλαλιάς : 1 - Acc (Dir Obj) - F - P - - evil speaking actions, slanderous speech acts

### 2:2

ὡς : Subordinate conjunction introducing conjunctory adverbial comparative dependent clause - as, like

ἀρτιγέννητα : Adj (Attrib) - Acc - N - P - - newborn, newly born

βρέφη : 3 - Acc (Dir Obj) - N - P - βρέφος, -ους, τό - babies

τὸ λογικὸν : Adj (Attrib) - Acc - N - S - λογικός, -ή, -όν - spiritual, reasonable

**Louw - Nida: # 73.5**

pertaining to being genuine, in the sense of being true to the real and essential nature of something—'rational, genuine, true'

ἄδολον : Adj (Attrib) - Acc - N - S - ἄδολος, -ον - undecitful, lack of pretense, w/o impurities , "mixed with foreign matter"

γάλα : 3 - Acc (Dir Obj) - N - S - γάλα, γάλακτος, τό - milk

ἐπιποθήσατε : 1 Aor (Const) - Act - Imp (Com) - 2 - P - ἐπιποθέω - crave, desire intensely

ἵνα : Subordinate conjunction introducing conjunctory adverbial purpose dependent clause - in order that, so that

ἐν αὐτῷ : Pers Pron - Loc (Sphere) - M - S - αὐτός, -ή, -ό - in Him

αὐξηθῆτε : 1 Aor (Const) - Pass (NAE) - Subjunc (Potential) - 2 - P - αὐξάινω - you may grow, develop

εἰς σωτηρίαν : 1 - Acc (Measure) - F - S - σωτηρία, ἡ - into deliverance, salvation

### 2:3

εἰ : Subordinate conjunction introducing conjunctory adverbial conditional clause, 1st class protasis, - if

ἐγεύσασθε : 1 Aor (Culm) - Dep - Ind - 2 - P - γεύομαι - (if) you have tasted

ὅτι : Subordinate conjunction introducing conjunctory substantival object dependent clause - that

χρηστὸς : Adj (Pred) - Nom - M - S - χρηστός, -ή, -όν - tasty, useful, pleasant, kindly, loving, benevolent

ὁ κύριος : 2 - Nom (Subj) - M - S - κύριος, ὁ - the Lord

### 2:4

πρὸς ὃν : Rel Pron - Acc (Measure) - M - S - ὅς, ἡ, ὅ - to whom

προσερχόμενοι : Pres (Desc) - Dep - Ptc (Adv: Temp) - Nom - M - P - προσέρχομαι - coming to

λίθον : 2 - Acc (Dir Obj) - M - S - λίθος, ὁ - stone

ζῶντα : Pres (Desc) - Act - Ptc (Adj: Attrib / Pred) - Acc - M - S - ζάω - living

ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων : 2 - Abl (Agency) - M - P - ἄνθρωπος, ὁ - by men

μὲν : Post-positive particle of contrast and/or emphasis - on the one hand (here: μὲν...δὲ)

ἀποδοκιμασμένον : Perf (Intensive) - Pass (Dir Ag) - Ptc (Adj: Pred- Acc - M - S - ἀποδοκιμάζω - who is rejected / has been rejected

παρὰ...θεῷ : 2 - Dat (Ref) / Loc (Place) - M - S - θεός, ὁ - with God

δὲ : postpositive coordinate conjunction introducing contrasting participle phrase - but

:

ἐκλεκτὸν : Adj (Pred) - Acc - M - S - ἐκλεκτός, -ή -όν - chosen  
ἔντιμον : Adj (Pred) - Acc - M - S - ἔντιμος, -ον - prized, esteemed, valued

## 2:5

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two independent clauses - and  
αὐτοὶ : Intensive Pron - Nom - M - P - αὐτός, -ή, -ό - yourselves  
ὡς : Subordinate conjunction introducing conjunctory adverbial comparative clause - as, just as  
λίθοι : 2 - Nom (Subj) - M - S - λίθος, ὁ - stones  
ζῶντες : Pres (Desc) - Act - Ptc (Adv: Temp; Adj: Pred) - Nom - M - P - ζάω - while living, as living  
οἰκοδομεῖσθε : Pres (Desc) - Pass (NAE) - Ind - 2 - P - οἰκοδομέω - you are being constructed, built up  
οἶκος : 2 - Nom (Pred Obj) - M - S - οἶκος, ὁ - a house, temple  
πνευματικός : Adj (Pred) - Nom - M - S - πνευματικός, -ή, -όν - spiritual  
εἰς ἱεράτευμα : 3 - Acc (Purpose) - N - S - ἱεράτευμα, -ατος, τό - for a priesthood  
ἅγιον : Adj (Pred) - Acc - N - S - ἅγιος, -η, -ον - holy  
ἀνερέγκαι : 2 Aor (Const) - Act - Infin (V: Purpose) - ἀναφέρω - to offer up (in sacrifice)  
πνευματικῶς : Adj (Pred) - Acc - F - P - πνευματικός, -ή, -όν - spiritual  
θυσίας : 1 - Acc (Dir Obj) - F - P - θυσία, ἡ - offerings, sacrifices  
εὐπροσδέκτους : Adj (Pred) - Acc - F - P - εὐπρόσδεκτος, -ον - well pleasing  
[τῷ] θεῷ : 2 - Dat (Ref) - M - S - θεός, ὁ - to God  
διὰ Ἰησοῦ : Proper Name - Abl (Agency) - M - S - Ἰησοῦς, ὁ - through Jesus  
Χριστοῦ : Proper Name - Abl (Agency) - M - S - Χριστός, ὁ - Christ

## 2:6

διότι : Coordinate conjunction here introducing conjunctory causal independent clause - for  
περιέχει : Pres (Desc) - Act - Ind - 3 - S - περιέχω - it contains (surrounds itself)  
ἐν γραφῇ : 1 - Loc (Place) - F - S - γραφή, ἡ - in scripture  
Ἴδου : Interjection, particle of emphasis - behold, "heads up", take note  
τίθημι : Pres (Desc) - Act - Ind - 1 - S - τίθημι - I place, lay  
ἐν Σιών : Indeclinable Geographical Name - Loc (Place) - F - S - Σιών, ἡ - in (Mt.) Zion  
λίθον : 2 - Acc (Dir Obj) - M - S - λίθος, ὁ - a stone  
ἀκρογωνιαῖον : Adj (Pred) - Acc - M - S - ἀκρογωνιαῖος, -α, -ον - at the extreme corner (only found in biblical material)  
ἐκλεκτὸν : Adj (Pred) - Acc - M - S - ἐκλεκτός, -ή, -όν - chosen  
ἔντιμον : Adj (Pred) - Acc - M - S - ἔντιμος, -ον - honored, esteemed, respected  
καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two independent clauses - and  
ὁ πιστεύων : Pres (Desc) - Act - Ptc (Adj: Subst) - Nom (Subj) - M - S - πιστεύω - the one believing  
ἐπ' αὐτῷ : Pers Pron - Loc (Sphere) - M - S - αὐτός, -ή, -ό - in him  
οὐ μὴ : Double negative intensifying the negating impact of these adverbs  
καταισχυθηῖ : Fut (Emph Neg) - Pass (NAE) - Ind - 3 - S - καταισχύνω - he will never ever be put to shame, embarrassed, dishonored, disgraced

## 2:7

ὑμῖν : Pers Pron - Dat (Ref) - P - σύ - to you  
οὖν : Postpositive coordinate conjunction introducing inferential independent clause - therefore, thus, in light of this  
ἡ τιμή : 1 - Nom (Pred) - F - S - τιμή, ἡ - the valued one, the honored one  
τοῖς πιστεύουσιν : Pres (Desc) - Act - Ptc (Adj: Subst) - Dat (Appos) - M - S - πιστεύω - to those who believe  
ἀπιστοῦσιν : Adj (Subst) - Dat (Ref) - M - P - ἀπιστος, -ον - to unbelievers  
δὲ : Postpositive coordinate conjunction introducing independent clause standing in mild contrast to the preceding one - but  
λίθος : 2 - Nom (Pred) - M - S - λίθος, ὁ - the stone  
ὃν : Rel Pron - Acc (Dir Obj) - M - S - ὅς, ἡ, ὃ - introducing an adjectival relative clause - whom, which  
ἀπεδοκίμασαν : 1 Aor (Const) - Act - Ind - 3 - P - ἀποδοκιμίζω - they rejected  
οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες : Pres (Desc) - Act - Ptc (Adj: Subst) - Nom (Subj) - M - P - οἰκοδομέω - those building,

the builders

οὗτος : Dem Pron - Nom (Subj) - M - S - οὗτος, αὕτη, τοῦτο - this one

ἐγενήθη : 2 Aor (Culm) - Dep - Ind - 3 - S - γίνομαι - this one has become

εἰς κεφαλὴν : 1 - Acc (Ref) - F - S - κεφαλὴ, ἡ - the head

γωνίας : 1 - Gen (Ref) - F - S - γωνία, ἡ - of the corner

2:8

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two independent clauses - and

λίθος : 2 - Nom (Pred) - M - S - λίθος, ὁ - a stone

προσκόμματος : 3 - Gen (Obj) - N - S - πρόσκομμα, -ατος, τό - of stumbling, offence (stone that causes ...)

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction linking two nouns - and

πέτρα : 1 - Nom (Pred) - F - S - πέτρα, ἡ - a rock

σκανδάλου : 2 - Gen (Obj) - N - S - σκάνδαλον, τό - of offense (rock that causes...)

οἷ : Rel Pron - Nom (Subj) - M - S - ὅς, ἧ, ὅ - introducing adjective modifying relative clause who

προσκοποῦσιν : Pres ( ) - Act - Ind - 3 - P - προσκόπτω - who take offence at (Dat) G-D, 716, lit. 'striking one's foot against a stone'

τῷ λόγῳ : 2 - Dat (Ref) - M - S - λόγος, ὁ - at the word, (=gospel message about Jesus as the corner stone)

ἀπειθοῦντες : Pres (Desc) - Act - Ptc (Adv: Temporal) - Nom - M - P - ἀπειθέω - while disobeying [Some take the participle as adverbial causal and link τῷ λόγῳ as dative of direct object to it, creating the idea: because they disobey the word. The grammatical legitimacy of this is very questionable.]

εἰς ὃ : Rel Pron - Acc (Purpose) - N - S - ὅς, ἧ, ὅ - for which very thing (introduces relative dependent clause referring back to the idea contained the in preceding relative clause)

καὶ : Coordinate conjunction here used in adverbial correlative ascensive function - also

ἐτέθησαν : 1 Aor (Culm) - Act - Ind - 3 - P - τίθημι- they have been laid, i.e., appointed, destined

2:9

Ἑμεῖς : Pers Pron - Nom (Subj) - P - σύ - you

δὲ : Postpositive coordinate conjunction introducing independent clause in mild contrast the preceding clause - but

γένος : 3 - Nom (Pred) - N - S - γένος, ους, τό - a nation, generation, clan

ἐκλεκτόν : Adj (Pred) - Nom - N - S - ἐκλεκτός, -ή, -όν - chosen

βασιλείον : Adj (Pred) - Nom - N - S - βασιλείος, -ον - royal

ιεράτευμα : 3 - Nom (Pred) - N - S - - priesthood

ἔθνος : 3 - Nom (Pred) - N - S - ἔθνος, -ους, τό - nation, ethnic group

ἅγιον : Adj (Pred) - Nom - N - S - ἅγιος, -ία, -ον - a holy

λαός : 2 - Nom (Pred) - M - S - λαός, ὁ - a people

εἰς περιποίησιν : 3 - Acc (Purpose) - F - S - περιποίησις, -εως, ἡ - for possession (by God)

ὥπως : Subordinate conjunction introducing conjunctory adverbial purpose dependent clause - so that, in order that

τὰς ἀρετὰς : 1 - Acc (Dir Obj) - F - P - ἀρετή, ἡ - the virtues, acts of goodness

ἐξαγγείλητε : 2 Aor (Const) - Act - Subj (Potential) - 2 - P - ἐξαγγέλλω - you might proclaim, announce

τοῦ : Article linked to participle below - of the one who

ἐκ σκότους : 3 - Abl (source) - N - S - σκότος, -ους, τό - out of darkness

ὑμᾶς : Pers Pron - Acc (Dir Obj) - P - σύ - you

καλέσαντος : 1 Aor (Const) - Act - Ptc (Adj: Subst) - Gen (Poss) - M - S - καλέω - of the one who called

εἰς τὸ θαυμαστὸν : Adj (Attrib) - Acc - N - S - θαυμαστός, -όν - into his marvelous, astonishing, extraordinary

αὐτοῦ : Pers Pron - Gen (Poss) - M - S - αὐτός, -ή, -ό - his

φῶς : 3 - Acc (Measure) - N - S - φῶς, φωτός, τό - into his light

2:10

οἷ : Rel Pron - Nom (Subj) - M - P - ὅς, ἧ, ὅ - introducing relative adjectival modifying dependent clause - who

ποτε : Adverb of time - once, formerly

οὐ : Negative adverb modifying implicit ἦσαν verb - were not

λαὸς : 2 - Nom (Pred) - M - S - λαός, ὁ - a people

νῦν : Adverb of time - now,

δὲ : Postpositive coordinate conjunction linking two relative clauses with mild contrast between them  
- but

λαὸς : 2 - Nom (Pred) - M - S - λαός, ὁ - a people

θεοῦ : 2 - Gen (Poss) - M - S - θεός, ὁ - God's

οἱ : Rel Pron - Nom (Subj) - M - P - ὅς, ἡ, ὅ - introducing relative adjectival modifying dependent clause  
- who

οὐκ ἠλεημένοι : Perfect (Intensive) - Pass (NAE) - Ptc (Adj: Pred) - Nom - M - P - ἐλεέω - who do not stand  
as objects of divine mercy (implies εἰσίν verb creating periphrastic perfect construction)

νῦν : Adverb of time - now,

δὲ : Postpositive coordinate conjunction linking two relative clauses with mild contrast between them  
- but

ἐλεηθέντες : 1 Aor (Const) - Pass (NAE) - Ptc (Adj: Pred) - Nom - M - P - - who have been made objects  
of divine mercy (implies εἰσίν verb creating periphrastic modified present construction)