



The First Letter of Peter

Bible Study Session 7

1 Peter 2:1-8



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Greek NT

2.1 Ἀποθέμενοι οὖν πᾶσαν κακίαν καὶ πάντα δόλον καὶ ὑποκρίσεις καὶ φθόνους καὶ πάσας καταλαλιάς, 2 ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα ἐπιποθήσατε, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ αὐξηθῆτε εἰς σωτηρίαν, 3 εἰ ἐγένευσασθε ὅτι χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος.

4 Πρὸς ὃν προσερχόμενοι, λίθον ζῶντα, ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων μὲν ἀποδοκιμασμένον παρὰ δὲ θεῷ ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον 5 καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος πνευματικὸς εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον, ἀνενέγκαι πνευματικὰς θυσίας εὐπροσδέκτους θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ· 6 διότι περιέχει ἐν γραφῇ· Ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον ἀκρογωνιαίον ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυνοθῆ. 7 ὑμῖν οὖν ἡ τιμὴ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν· ἀπιστοῦσιν δὲ λίθος ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας 8 καὶ λίθος προσκόμματος καὶ πέτρα σκανδάλου· οἱ προσκόπτουσιν τῷ λόγῳ ἀπειθοῦντες· εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐτέθησαν.

Gute Nachricht Bibel

2 1 Macht darum Schluss mit allem, was unrecht ist! Hörst auf zu lügen und euch zu verstellen, andere zu beneiden oder schlecht über sie zu reden. 2 Wie neugeborene Kinder nach Milch schreien, so sollt ihr nach dem unverfälschten Wort Gottes verlangen, um im Glauben zu wachsen und das Ziel, eure Rettung, zu erreichen. 3 Ihr habt doch schon gekostet, wie gültig Christus, der Herr, ist.

4 Kommt zu ihm! Er ist der lebendige Stein, den die Menschen als unbrauchbar weggeworfen haben; aber bei Gott ist er ausgesucht und wertvoll. 5 Lasst euch selbst als lebendige Steine zu einem geistigen Haus erbauen, zu einer Priesterschaft, die Gott geweiht ist und die ihm, vermittelt durch Jesus Christus, Opfer darbringt, Opfer geistiger Art, an denen er Gefallen hat, nämlich den Opferdienst des ganzen Lebens.

6 In den Heiligen Schriften heißt es: »Auf dem Zionsberg lege ich einen Stein, einen ausgesuchten, wertvollen Grundstein. Wer auf ihn vertraut, wird nicht zugrunde gehen.«

7 Wertvoll ist dieser Stein für euch, die ihr auf Jesus Christus vertraut. Aber für die, die ihn ablehnen, gilt:

»Der Stein, den die Bauleute als wertlos weggeworfen haben, ist zum Eckstein geworden. 8 An ihm stoßen sich die Menschen. Er ist zum Felsblock geworden, an dem sie zu Fall kommen.«

An ihm stoßen sich alle, die dem Wort Gottes nicht gehorchen. Doch so hatte es Gott für sie bestimmt.

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.

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.

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Introduction to Study.

Peter opened the letter body with a series of admonitions in 1:13-25 that continue in 2:1-10 but begins transitioning into profound doctrinal affirmations about Christ and the nature of the believing community as the new People of God instead of Israel. This leads up to the climatic affirmations in 2:9-10 that provide marvelous assertion that believers, Jews and non-Jews, in Christ now are God's own special people upon whom His blessings are poured out. It's a wonderfully powerful affirmation of the blessings and responsibilities that believers have in the family of God. And certainly merits our careful attention.

The first part of 2:1-10 both continues the admonitions pattern but begins transitioning into the spiritual concepts that fully dominate verses 9-10. In this study we will give attention only to the first eight verses, in order to keep the study from becoming too long.

I. Context and Background¹

The background of verses one through eight play some role in the exegesis of the passage, but not a dominating role as is sometimes the case.

a. Historical

External History. In the UBS 4th revised edition of the Greek New Testament, only one variation of wording in the existing copies of the Greek text is considered important enough for analysis. And it stands as a later attempt at writing stylistic improvement over the wording of the original text.² This is in verse three where the introductory conjunction *εἰ* is replaced by *εἴπερ*, with essentially the same meaning of 'if' or 'since.' Thus no shift in meaning takes place.

The critical apparatus of the Nestle-Aland 27th rev. edition Greek New Testament lists twenty separate places where variation of wording exists, but they do not impact the meaning of the text and are considered insignificant.³ Thus from this overview we can conclude that this text in its original form was carefully preserved

¹Serious study of the Bible requires careful analysis of the background and setting of the scripture passage. Failure to do this leads to interpretive garbage and possibly to heresy. Detailed study of the background doesn't always answer all the questions, but it certainly gets us further along toward correct understanding of both the historical and contemporary meanings of a text. This serious examination of both the historical and literary background of every passage will be presented in summary form with each of the studies.

²"The reading *εἰ*, supported by early representatives of the Alexandrian type of text (P72 κ^* A B), was improved stylistically in later witnesses by using the more subtle *εἴπερ* (κ C K P Ψ 81 614 1739 vg syr^h), which among New Testament authors occurs only in Paul." [Bruce Manning Metzger and United Bible Societies, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, Second Edition a Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament (4th Rev. Ed.) (London; New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 619.]

³As an example of three such instances note Michaels comments:

1.a. In most of the ancient MSS, the first two items on this list ("malice" and "deceit") are singular and the last three plural, but the tendency of a few MSS is to make some or all of the last three singular as well. The evidence is strongest in the case of "hypocrisies," which is singular (*ὑπόκρισιν*) in B κ 1 and two Old Latin versions, yet the plural *ὑποκρίσεις* is to be preferred. "Malice" and "deceit" are set apart from the items that follow by the repetition of "all" (*πᾶσαν* and *πάντα*, singular in Greek). It is more likely that the singular *δόλον* ("deceit") would influence scribes to make "hypocrisy" singular (because of their similarity in meaning) than that the plurals at the end of the list would influence a change in the opposite direction. The credibility of B in this verse is not enhanced by its unique scribal error *φόνους* ("murders") in place of *φθόνους* ("jealousies").

2.b. The words "to salvation" (*εἰς σωτηρίαν*) are omitted in the majority of later MSS (cf. KJV/AV), perhaps because a salvation to which one might attain by spiritual growth seemed inconsistent with a distinctly eschatological salvation waiting to be revealed at the last day (1:4; cf. 1:9). The phrase is found in all the earlier and better MSS and should be retained.

3.c. A number of ancient MSS (p72 K L and others) read *Χριστός* ("Christ") instead of *χρηστός* ("good" or "pleasing"), in line with a wordplay very common in early Christianity (BGD, 887; TDNT 9:488-89). The effect of this variation is to turn a scriptural allusion into a confessional formula ("that the Lord is Christ" or "that Christ is Lord"; cf. 3:15). The earliest of the MSS that does this (p72) also inserts *ἐπιστεύσατε* after *ἐγέυσαθε* as an unmistakable indication that "tasting" means believing

in the centuries of being copied by numerous scribes.

Internal History. The time / place markers inside these verbs are numerous but revolve around the two figurative images of an infant and the Jerusalem temple, as signals of Christian commitment.

Childbirth in the ancient world was challenging.⁴ From every indication, infant mortality was high in ancient Greco-Roman society, with estimates of between five and ten percent of the babies not surviving their first month.⁵ Although Egyptian society appears not to have made extensive use of them, most other ancient societies employed a midwife for delivery of the infant. The feeding of infants in the ancient world was virtually always by breast-feeding, either by the mother and/or a 'wet' nurse in some aristocratic circles. Typically this was the primary, if not exclusive, source of nourishment for the infant during the first three years of its life. The language of Peter in verses one through three plays off this backdrop with the image of a hungry infant clamoring for milk.



Building construction in the ancient world made use of a cornerstone as the starting point for placing all the other stones in the construction of a masonry foundation.⁶ This is rather different in modern construction where such a stone is more ceremonial than integral to the construction of the building. In the ancient method, the cornerstone played a crucial role in the proper construction of a building. In verses four through eight, Peter uses the image of both the construction of the temple of God and Jesus as cornerstone for vehicles to describe who believers are spiritually. Additionally the role of the priesthood in this temple is important to Peter's presentation. Clearly in the background is the Jerusalem temple, known as Herod's Temple, and the idea of its construction. The concept of cornerstone comes out of Psalm 118:22, which is quoted often in the New Testament.⁷

b. Literary

Literary Form (Genre). At the *broad genre* level 2:1-8 stands as a part of the letter body and reflects the nature and purpose of ancient letter writing as a 'substitute presence' of the sender of the letter. The occasional nature of ancient letters, i.e., written to specific individuals in a specific geographical place dealing with specific issues at the time of the writing, must not be overlooked. At the *narrow genre* level, our text stands as general paraenesis, i.e., moral exhortation to specified patterns of behavior. The content of the text does not allow for further delineation of more specific forms of paraenesis.



in Christ. *χρηστός*, found in all other significant MSS, as well as the LXX passage to which Peter is alluding (Ps 33[34]:9a [8a]), is without question the correct reading.

[J. Ramsey Michaels, vol. 49, *Word Biblical Commentary: 1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 82.]

⁴For an interesting but rather blunt account of pregnancy and childbirth in the ancient world, see "Pregnancy and Childbirth," *Women in the Ancient World*. The article focuses on ancient Egyptian women but includes Greek and Roman perspectives as well.

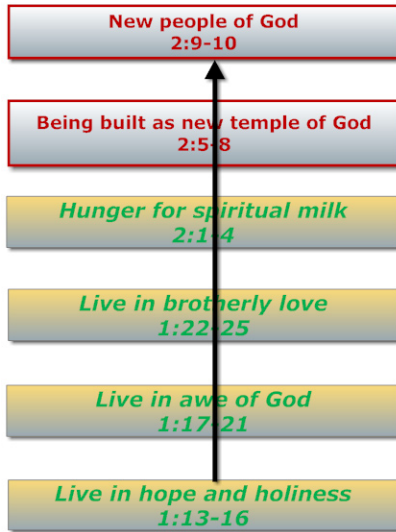
⁵For some helpful background, see Valerie French, "Midwives and Maternity Care in the Roman World," in *Helios*, New Series 13 (2), 69-84.

⁶"The **cornerstone** (or **foundation stone**) concept is derived from the first stone set in the construction of a masonry foundation, important since all other stones will be set in reference to this stone, thus determining the position of the entire structure. Over time a cornerstone became a ceremonial masonry stone, or replica, set in a prominent location on the outside of a building, with an inscription on the stone indicating the construction dates of the building and the names of architect, builder and other significant individuals. The rite of laying a cornerstone is an important cultural component of eastern architecture and metaphorically in sacred architecture generally." ["Cornerstone," *Wikipedia* online]

⁷Cf. Mt. 21:42; Mk. 12:10; Lk. 20:17; Acts 4:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:7.

Literary Context. As the outline of First Peter illustrates, 2:1-8 stand as a part of the subunit 2:1-10, which in turn is a part of 1:13-2:10, the first major section of the letter body. In this opening section Peter lays on the table a series of admonitions detailing the kind of ideals believers are to live by in serving Christ. He brings this to a climax in 2:9-10 with the declaration of our being the new people of God, and thus obligated to live by God's standards and expectations. As such this material continues to express the profoundly rich concepts about being a follower of Christ.

First Peter 1:13-2:10



Outline of Contents in First Peter:

- Praescriptio: 1:1-2**
 - *Superscriptio, 1:1a*
 - *Adscriptio, 1:1b-2a*
 - *Salutatio, 1:2b*
- Proem: 1:3-12**
 - *Core, 1:3a*
 - *Expansion, 1:3b-12*
- Body: 1:13-5:11**
 - *Holy living 1:13-2:10*
 - *Ideals 1:13-25*
 - *Privileges 2:1-10*
 - *Obligations 2:11-3:12*
 - *Civic 2:11-17*
 - *Haustafeln 2:18-3:7*
 - *Social 3:8-12*
 - *Persecution 3:13-5:11*
 - *Encouragement 3:13-4:11*
 - *Explanation 4:12-19*
 - *Proper Conduct 5:1-11*
- Conclusio: 5:12-14**
 - *Sender Verification, 5:12*
 - *Greetings, 5:13-14a*
 - *Benedictio, 5:14b*

Literary Structure. The thought flow in this text is more complicated grammatically but can be visually presented by the Block Diagram of the original Greek text that is reflected in the English translation below.

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2.1     Therefore
        having shed off all evil
                and
                all guile
                and
                hypocrisies
                and
                envies
                and
                all slanders
2.2     as newly born infants
7       desire the undefiled spiritual milk
        by it
        so that you...may grow
2.3     into salvation
        since you have tasted
                that the Lord is gracious.

2.4     To whom coming
        a living stone
                indeed rejected by men
                but with God chosen
                esteemed

2.5     also
        as living stones
8       you yourselves are being built into a spiritual house
        for a holy priesthood
        to offer up spiritual sacrifices
                well pleasing to God
                through Jesus Christ;

2.6     wherefore it stands
                | in scripture:
                |---|
  
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| Behold,
 a stone is laid
 | in Zion
 | a cornerstone
 | chosen
 | esteemed,
 | and
 the one believing...will not be ashamed.
 in Him

2.7 Therefore
 9 **to you He is precious**
 who believe;
 but
 a stone whom the builders rejected
 10 **to disbelievers...This One has been turned**
 | into a head of the corner
 2.8 | and
 | a stone of stumbling
 | and
 | a rock of offense,
 who stumble
 by disobeying the word;
 11 **for which they were destined.**

As the block diagram above illustrates, the flow of thought internally moves in a three-fold direction. It begins with the admonition to be hungry like infants (#7, vv. 1-3), then moves on to two sets of affirmations. The first, #8 in vv. 4-6, declares that believers are being built as God's new temple, and the second, #s 9-11 in vv. 7-8, amplifies the scripture quote from Psalm 118 by asserting Christ as the cornerstone of this new temple of God.

II. Message

The above natural division of the text provides the basis for our study, and is reflected in the outline below.

a. Be like hungry infants, vv. 1-3

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.

2.1 Ἀποθέμενοι οὖν πᾶσαν κακίαν καὶ πάντα δόλον καὶ ὑποκρίσεις καὶ φθόνους καὶ πάσας καταλαλιὰς, 2 ὡς ἄρτιγέννητα βρέφη τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα ἐπιποθήσατε, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ αὐξηθῆτε εἰς σωτηρίαν, 3 εἰ ἐγεύσασθε ὅτι χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος.

Notes:

This single sentence in the Greek text makes a single point that is expanded in four different ways beyond the core admonition.

Core Admonition: τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα ἐπιποθήσατε. Both the verb meaning and the tense / imperative mood of the verb stress intensive, decisive action. Thus Peter puts extra emphasis on the importance of this responsibility. A distinctively Pauline used verb (with 7 of 9 uses) in the NT, Peter finds it suitable to express the high level intensity of desire appropriate to his admonition.⁸

⁸“ἐπιποθέω fut. ἐπιποθήσω; 1 aor. ἐπεπόθησα (ποθέω ‘long for’, s. next entry; Hdt. et al.; LXX, Philo) **to have a strong desire for someth., with implication of need, long for, desire τι someth.** (Pla., Protag. 329d; Plut., Agis 798 [6, 2]; Lucian, D. Deor. 4, 3; Ps 118:131, 174; Tat. 20, 1) γάλα milk **1 Pt 2:2.** τινά someone (Hdt. 5, 93; Diod S 17, 101, 6; Epict. 3, 24, 53; Sir 25:21) πάντας ὑμᾶς **Phil 1:8; 2:26** (v.l. π. ὁ. ἰδεῖν). ὑμᾶς **2 Cor 9:14.** W. inf. foll. (Philo, Abr. 87 ἐ. θεὸν ἀνευρεῖν) τὸ οἰκητήριον ἐπενδύσασθαι **2 Cor 5:2.** ἰδεῖν τινα **Ro 1:11; 1 Th 3:6; 2 Ti 1:4.** πρὸς φθόνον ἐπιποθεῖ τὸ πνεῦμα **Js 4:5** is difficult because of the problem posed by uncertainty in the tradition concerning the correct reading of the verb: κατοικίζω text (causative) and κατοικέω v.l. (intr.), but the mng. of the verb is clear; if κατόκισεν is read, one can render either *the spirit that (God) has caused to dwell in us yearns jealously* or (God) *yearns jealously over the spirit that he has put in us*; if κατόκησεν *the spirit that has taken up abode in us yearns jealously*. See MDibelius ad loc. (w. lit.). AMeyer, D. Rätsel des Jk 1930, 258f; ASchlatter, D. Brief d. Jak. ’32, 248–53.—CSpicq, RB 64, ’57, 184–95. B. 1162. TW. Spicq. Sv.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Bible Study: Page 5*

What is it that believers are to desire so intently? τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα is the answer. The τὸ...γάλα, 'milk,' is clear and corresponds to the comparative clause (cf. expansion 2 below), comparing this desire to that of a newly born baby.⁹ The literal meaning of milk is clear, but obviously Peter is not talking about mother's milk for a new baby here. The figurative meaning is what is intended, but what is that? The core idea of milk is nourishment with food that is healthy. So the image points to something healthy and nourishing.

The two qualifying adjectives through some light on the figurative meaning of milk: λογικὸν ἄδολον. The second adjective ἄδολον points to something without deceit.¹⁰ That is, this milk is WYSIWYG.¹¹ This milk is 'pure' (NRSV; NLT; TEV; ESV; Message), 'pura' (BDA), 'pur' (Segond), 'without guile' (ASV), 'true' (BBE), 'sincere' (KJV), 'unadulterated' (HCSB), 'unverfälschten' (Elberfelder 1905; GNB), 'lautern' (Luther Bibel 1912, 1984). As these translation examples illustrate expressing the precise idea in a modern western language is not easy. The literal meaning of the adjective is closer to 'unadulterated' but the dilemma of translators is what is 'unadulterated' milk?¹² Most opt for the reverse positive idea of 'pure' rather than the negative literal 'impure.' The idea, however, is clear. This milk is not contaminated with impure properties; it comes straight from the source without any corruption.

The first adjective λογικὸν is the really challenging modifier.¹³ Two categories of meaning are possible: 1) reasonable and 2) spiritual. In the other of the two NT uses in Rom. 12:1 'reasonable' is the most likely meaning, while most translators opt for the second category 'spiritual' here. The disconnect between reason *Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 377.]

⁹“γάλα, γάλακτος, τό (Hom.+) milk

a. as material fluid **1 Cor 9:7**; B 6:17. W. honey as sign of fertility 6:8, 10, 13 (cp. Ex 3:8, 17; 13:5 al.; Lucian, Saturn. 7, Ep. Sat. 1, 20; Himerius, Or. 13, 7 W. ῥεῖν μέλι καὶ γάλα; Dio Chrys. 18 [35], 18 Indian rivers, in which milk, wine, honey and oil flow). As product of human mammary gland γάλα τ. γυναικῶν (Hippocr., Mul. 8: VII, p. 206 L.) ApcPt, Fgm. 2 p. 12, 24 (s. πήγνυμι 3). Of extraordinary circumstance [ὅτι τραχηλοκοπη]θείσης τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ γάλα ἐξῆλθεν when (Paul) was beheaded, milk came out from him (evidently in contrast to blood) AcPI Ha 11, 1.

b. fig. (cp. Philo, Agr. 9 ἐπεὶ δὲ νηπίος μὲν ἐστὶ γάλα τροφή, τελείους δὲ τὰ ἐκ πυρῶν πέμματα, καὶ ψυχῆς γαλακτώδεις μὲν ἂν εἶεν τροφαὶ κτλ., Omn. Prob. Lib. 160, Migr. Abr. 29 al.; Epict. 2, 16, 39; 3, 24, 9. For Hebraic associations s. FDanker, ZNW 58, '67, 94f) of elementary Christian instruction **1 Cor 3:2**; **Hb 5:12f**. τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γ. the unadulterated spiritual milk **1 Pt 2:2** (Sallust. 4, 10 p. 8, 24 of the mysteries: γάλακτος τροφή ὡσπερ ἀναγεννωμένων). S. HUsener, Milch u. Honig: RhM 57, 1902, 177–95=Kleine Schriften IV 1914, 398ff; ADieterich, Mithraslit. 1903, 171; RPerdelwitz, D. Mys. 1911, 56ff; KWyss, D. Milch im Kultus d. Griech. u. Römer 1914; FLehmann, D. Entstehung der sakralen Bedeutung der Milch: ZMR 22, 1917, 1–12; 33–45; ESelwyn, 1 Pt. '46, ad loc. and 308f; BHHW II 1215f; Kl. Pauly III 1293f.—DELG. M-M. TW.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 186.]

¹⁰“ἄδολος, ον ‘without deceit’ (Pind. et al., but mostly act., ‘honest’, so also as adv. Wsd 7:13 and Jos., Ant. 1, 212; Just., D. 125, 1 ἄδόλως) pass. unadulterated (esp. in pap and ins since III B.C.; e.g. PHib 85, 16f [261 B.C.]; 98, 19 [261 B.C.]; POxy 729, 19; BGU 290, 13; 1005, 5; 1015, 13; PTebt 105; SIG 736, 100; Philo, Rer. Div. Her. 95) of milk 1 Pt 2:2.—FDölger, Ac I 1929, p. 170, 39.—DELG s.v. δόλος. M-M.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 21.]

¹¹What You See Is What You Get.

¹²“The guileless milk of the word (to logikon adolon gala). The phrase is ‘unquestionably difficult’ (Hort 1898, 100) but in the light of its context refers to ‘the divinely-given nourishment supplied by the Gospel’ (Selwyn 1947, 154).” [John H. Elliott, *1 Peter: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 399.]

¹³“λογικός, ἦ, ὄν ([adv. λογικῶς Ath. 27, 2] a favorite expr. of philosophers since Aristot.; SIG 803, 5. Not LXX, but oft. Philo, Just., Tat., Ath.) pert. to being carefully thought through, thoughtful λογικὴ λατρεία a thoughtful service (in a dedicated spiritual sense) **Ro 12:1** (the cognitive aspect anticipates the phrase εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ; cp. Herm. Wr. 1, 31 λογικὴ θυσία; 13, 18; 21; Epict. 1, 16, 20f the singing of hymns is the sacred service of a human being, as a λογικός=one endowed with reason; 3, 1, 26 τὸ λογικὸν ἔχει ἐξαιρετον· τοῦτο κόσμει καὶ καλλῶπιζε. Philo, Spec. Leg. 1, 277 God places no value on sacrificial animals, but on τοῦ θύοντος πνεῦμα λογικόν. TestLevi 3:6 λ. καὶ ἀναίμακτος προσφορά [v.l. θυσία]; Ath., 13, 2; Eus., HE 4, 23, 13; cp. the exhortative pattern of Plut., Mor. 478de.—Rtztst., Mysterienrel. 3 328f; Ltzm., Hdb. exc. on **Ro 12:1**; BSchmidt, D. geistige Gebet, diss. Bresl. 1916; OCasel, Jahrb. f. Liturgiewissensch. 4, 1924, 38ff; CMoule, JTS n.s. 1, '50, 34f). Most likely τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα **1 Pt 2:2** is to be taken in a related way pure spiritual milk; it is to be borne in mind that λ. means spiritual not only in the sense of πνευματικός, but also in contrast to ‘literal’, w. the mng. ‘metaphorical’ (cp. Pel-Leg. p. 20: the bishop is the shepherd τῶν λογικῶν προβάτων τοῦ Χριστοῦ; Eus., HE 1, 1, 4 ἐκ λογικῶν λειμώνων; s. DMcCartney, ZNW 82, '91, 128–32, w. emphasis on Hellenic connection of reason and verbal communication).—DELG s.v. λέγω B 2. M-M. TW.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 598.]

and spirituality in western thinking may create some of the translation delimita. The ancient world saw in the adjective **λογικός, ἢ, ὄν** a signal of something beyond the material that belonged to a higher level.¹⁴ This

¹⁴“The basic metaphor is ‘pure milk’ in the sense of milk from a mother’s breast; at one level λογικόν simply shows Peter’s self-consciousness about using metaphorical language (somewhat like the τῆς διανοίας ὑμῶν of 1:13). Instead of relying on the metaphor by itself to carry the meaning, he adds λογικόν as a reminder that he is speaking metaphorically (much as we might add the words ‘so to speak’). The force of the term is that Peter is referring not to literal mother’s milk but to milk in a ‘higher’ (i.e., metaphorical) sense. λογικός, however, meant more to Peter’s contemporaries than what is usually meant by ‘metaphorical’ today. Its primary meaning was ‘rational’ or ‘spiritual’ in the sense of that which distinguished the human or divine from merely material things or from animals (cf. Epictetus, Diss. 1.16.20; 3.1.26; Philo, Migr. Abr. 185). In particular, it was used in connection with the spiritualizing of cultic terminology or practice (BGD, 476; G. Kittel in TDNT 4:142–43; in the NT, cf. Paul’s λογικὴν λατρείαν or ‘spiritual worship,’ in Rom 12:1; in Hellenistic Judaism, cf. T. Levi 3.6, with reference to worship offered by the angels; in Hellenistic literature, cf. especially λογικὴ θυσία in Corp. Herm. 1.31; 13.18, 21). A few verses later, however, when Peter himself wants to spiritualize the language of temple and sacrifice, he uses not λογικός but πνευματικός for ‘a spiritual house’ and ‘spiritual sacrifices.’

“For this reason it is possible that there are other factors at work in the choice of λογικός here. The KJV/AV rendering, ‘sincere milk of the word’ (a considerable departure from Tyndale’s ‘that reasonable mylke which is with out corrupcion’), seems to presuppose a twofold wordplay: first, between ἄδολον and δόλον (v 1); second, between λογικόν and λόγου (1:23). The former is unmistakable: ‘pure milk’ is apparently understood as the spiritual food that guards against the vices listed in v 1, deceit in particular. The latter is not so immediate or obvious, yet the parallel with James 1:21 (where the positive side of ἀποθέμενοι is receiving ‘the implanted word [λόγον] that is able to save your souls’) gives it a certain plausibility. If this parallel is made determinative, then instead of speaking, like James, of longing for the ‘implanted word’ (or, in his own terms, for the ‘word of the living God’) Peter is introducing the metaphor of milk to much the same effect, while retaining ‘word’ as an adjective (λογικόν) rather than a noun (cf. Bigg, 126–7; Kelly, 85).

“It is doubtful that the readers of the epistle would have noticed such a subtle connection. Although Peter may have chosen λογικόν with 1:23 still in mind and may even be using milk as a metaphor for the proclaimed ‘message of the gospel’ (1:25), the translation ‘milk of the word’ is too explicit (cf. Hort, 100). It shifts the emphasis from ‘milk,’ where it belongs, to ‘word,’ where it does not belong. The purpose of λογικόν is not to interpret and thereby dissolve the metaphor, but simply to underscore the fact that it is a metaphor (i.e., that Peter is speaking not of literal milk but of a more excellent, although undefined, ‘spiritual’ milk). The same considerations make it unlikely that Peter is referring to an actual liturgy in which new converts were given milk and honey as a part of their initiation (cf. Hippolytus, Apost. Trad. 23.2, 7; Tertullian, adv Marcionem 1.14, De Corona 3.3: in the pagan mystery religions, cf. Sallustius, De Deis 4; see H. Schlier in TDNT 1:646). Not only is honey unmentioned in 1 Peter but the basis of Peter’s metaphor of milk is obviously not liturgy (as in v 5) but life: the nurture of children on then mothers’ milk.

“What then is the ‘pure spiritual milk’? The uses of the metaphor in 1 Cor 3:2 and Heb 5:12–13, where ‘milk’ is elementary Christian teaching, could suggest that here too it refers to the instruction needed (both elementary and advanced) for the believer to ‘grow up to salvation’ (this is possible even if λογικόν is not intended to define it as such explicitly). Broader parallels yield a broader understanding of the milk metaphor. In the early collection of hymns known as the Odes of Solomon, Christ says of those who are his own: ‘I fashioned their members, and my own breasts I prepared for them, that they might drink my holy milk and live by it’ (Odes Sol. 8.14: OTP 1:742). Another ode testifies: ‘A cup of milk was offered to me, and I drank it in the sweetness of the Lord’s kindness. The Son is the cup, and the Father is he who was milked: and the Holy Spirit is she who milked him’ (19.2; cf. also 35.5: ‘And I was carried like a child by its mother; and he gave me milk, the dew of the Lord. And I grew strong in his favor, and rested in his perfection’ [OTP 1:752, 765]). The image of milk from the breasts of the Lord is used in a variety of ways in the Odes of Solomon, almost always in some relation to his mercy or kindness (cf. also 4.10; 14.2–3; 40.1). The Semitic roots of such mother/father imagery can be seen in the Qumran hymns, or Hodayoth, whether used of God himself (1QH 9.35–36) or of his surrogate, the leader of the community (1QH 7.20–22: cf. Paul in 1 Thess 2:7).

“Milk, like blood, or water, or wine, is a natural and appropriate symbol of life (cf. Clement of Alexandria’s ingenious attempt to equate milk with the ‘blood of the Word’ in Paed. 1.6: e.g., ‘Thus in many ways the Word is figuratively described, as meat, and flesh, and food, and bread, and blood, and milk. The Lord is all these, to give enjoyment to us who have believed on Him’ [ANF, 2.221]). The life of God as the believer’s present possession is not a major theme in 1 Peter as it is in John or 1 John (when ζωή is mentioned in 1 Pet 3:7 and 10, it is seen more as a future than as a present reality). Yet ‘living’ (ζῶν or ζῶσαν) is a key adjective in the epistle, whether applied to God himself (1:23), the Christian hope (1:3), or Christ as ‘living stone’ and believers as ‘living stones’ (2:4–5). The contrast of life with death was implicit in Peter’s polemic against paganism, and especially in the contrast between the sowing of perishable and imperishable seed in 1:23, with its accompanying quotation from Isa 40:6–8.

“It is doubtful, however, that the significance of ‘pure spiritual milk’ for Peter can be summed up in just one word or concept. It can be understood to represent divine mercy or grace as easily as divine life. Not only the parallels in the Odes of Solomon but the larger framework of the first major section of 1 Peter (1:3–2:10), in which a reference to mercy both begins (1:3, ‘in his great mercy’) and ends the argument (2:10, ‘now you have received mercy’), gives force to this interpretation. In the immediate context, the result of tasting the ‘spiritual milk’ is trading out ‘that the Lord is good’ (i.e., χρηστός, ‘kind, loving, benevolent’ [BGD, 886]).

milk then is no ordinary milk with earthly origins. Its source is from God and its potency for creating spiritual health is enormous.

Expansion 1: Ἀποθέμενοι οὖν πᾶσαν κακίαν καὶ πάντα δόλον καὶ ὑποκρίσεις καὶ φθόνους καὶ πάσας καταλαλιὰς. The conjunction οὖν draws an inference from the preceding paragraph in 1:22-25. What was implicit there is now made explicit by the sentence in vv. 1-3.

The first expansion of the core admonition to long for milk is set forth by an alternative image of getting undressed. The undressing, Ἀποθέμενοι, is an antecedent action (Aorist tense Greek participle) that works in tandem with the longing for milk. Before the longing can reach the necessary level, certain things need to be removed from the believer's life. This 'undressing' alludes to conversion which included a genuine expression of repentance from sin. At that moment we made a commitment to clean up our lives.

What were we to remove like old dirty garments? A list of 'vices'¹⁵ follows as the direct object of the participle: "all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander."¹⁶ The number specification of the words in the list merits noting. The first two traits, πᾶσαν κακίαν καὶ πάντα δόλον, are singular, but the last three are plural, καὶ ὑποκρίσεις καὶ φθόνους καὶ πάσας καταλαλιὰς. The first, second, and fifth traits are qualified by the adjective πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν. More literally the translation reads, "every evil, and every deceit, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all slanders." One impact of this structuring is to highlight expressions of these traits, and not just the abstract trait itself. The more general traits are listed in the first two and expressions of evil and deceit reflect themselves in various expressions of hypocrisies, envies, and slanders. Peter's point is that such patterns of behavior have no place in the believer's life and should have been removed at conversion.

Expansion 2: ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη. The second major expansion of the admonition sets up the comparative reference for the admonition. The longing for milk is to be compared to that of a ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη. The adjective ἀρτιγέννητα, only used here in the New Testament, stresses just born and limits the reference to a baby at birth, not during the first two or three years of life.

Can implications about the image of 'baby' be drawn here? An older commentary tradition saw the image as suggesting that Peter was speaking to new converts at their baptism in this admonition. But this is not warranted by the image, and the larger context argues against it, and thus it has largely been rejected in recent years by commentators. More likely the image is a faint echo of Jesus' use of little children and their 'child-like faith' as models for believers. But it could simply be Peter reaching out to a natural comparison from the every day world of his time to find a comparison to graphically illustrate the principle of intense desire. I tend to favor the latter option as the more likely one.

Expansion 3: ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ αὐξηθῆτε εἰς σωτηρίαν. The objective of this longing for spiritual milk is stated as "so that in Him you may grow into salvation." The image of longing for milk like newly born babies is continued by this dependent purpose clause, although the exact meaning of the connection between "grow" and "salvation" remains unclear.¹⁷ The surface level meaning of 'growing into salvation' seems clearly contradictory to the teaching of the New Testament elsewhere on salvation.¹⁸ The solution from the context is to understand

In light of 1:25 there can be no doubt that the medium by which the milk is received is the proclaimed message of the gospel, but the milk itself is more appropriately interpreted as the sustaining life of God given in mercy to his children." [J. Ramsey Michaels, vol. 49, *Word Biblical Commentary: 1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 86-89.]

¹⁵For more details on vice lists in the New Testament, see my "New Testament Vice Lists" at cranfordville.com.

¹⁶"The list of vices begins with πᾶσαν κακίαν and πάντα δόλον, each a rather general term in itself and each generalized still further by being put in the singular with πᾶς; in other lists, cf. πᾶσαν ῥυπαρίαν in James 1:21; πᾶσα πικρία and πάση κακίᾳ in Eph 4:31; also 1 Clem 13.1, 35.5). The effect is to subsume under the general headings of 'malice' and 'deceit,' respectively, all possible instances and variations of these evil qualities (cf. BGD, 631.1aβ). κακία can refer either to evil or wickedness in the most inclusive sense, or (only a little more specifically) to malice or ill will (BGD, 397.1a, b]). The distinction is not (as the translations 'malice' or 'ill will' might suggest) that the second category has to do with evil intentions not realized in practice, but that it has to do with certain antisocial attitudes and behavior. κακία could be summarized as 'mischief' or 'bad blood,' the nursing and acting out of grudges against particular people, or against society as a whole." [J. Ramsey Michaels, vol. 49, *Word Biblical Commentary: 1 Peter*, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 85.]

¹⁷This was sufficiently problematic so that later manuscripts following the Byzantine text tradition omitted εἰς σωτηρίαν, so that the clause read simply "so that in Him you may grow." But the overwhelming weight of the earliest and most reliable manuscripts favors its inclusion rather than omission.

¹⁸σωτηρία, ας, ἡ (Trag., Hdt.+)

1. **deliverance, preservation**, w. focus on physical aspect: fr. impending death, esp. on the sea (IMaronIsis 11; Diod S 3, 40, 1 λιμὴν σωτηρίας; 2 Macc 3:32; GrBar 1:3; Philo, Mos. 1, 317; Jos., Ant. 7, 5; 183; Ar. 3, 2) **Ac 27:34; Hb 11:7**. Of the deliverance

'salvation' as the eschatological realization of salvation in final judgment.¹⁹ Peter has already used σωτηρία three times, 1:5, 9, 10, with the eschatological emphasis. Thus logically it would continue to have this meaning here in the fourth and final use of the term in the letter.²⁰

of the Israelites fr. Egyptian bondage (Jos., Ant. 2, 331) **Ac 7:25** (διδόναί σωτηρίαν on the part of a deity: Menand., Col. Fgm. 292, 5=1, 5 Kō.). Survival of a hand punished by fire GJs 20:3. A transition to mng. 2 is found in **Lk 1:71**, where σωτηρία ἐξ ἐχθρῶν ἡμῶν deliverance from the hand of our enemies is expected (cp. Ps 105:10 and ApcPt Rainer ἐν σωτηρία Ἀχερουσίας λίμνης, where the ref. is to a baptism marking the beginning of life in Elysium); 1 Cl 39:9 (Job 5:4).—S. λίμνη, end.

2. salvation, w. focus on transcendent aspects (LXX, Just., Iren; cp. Herm. Wr. 7, 2 [on salvation through gnosis s. GLuck, SBLSP 24, '85, 315–20]; Ael. Aristid., Sac. Serm. 3, 46 p. 424 Keil ἐγένετο φῶς παρὰ τῆς Ἰσιδος καὶ ἕτερα ἀμύθητα φέροντα εἰς σωτηρίαν; the Hymn to Attis in Firmicus Maternus, De Errore Prof. Relig. 22, 1 Ὁαρρεῖτε μύσαι τοῦ θεοῦ σεσωσμένου. Ἔσται γὰρ ὑμῖν ἐκ πόνων σωτηρία [HHepding, Attis, seine Mythen u. sein Kult 1903, 167]. The Lat. 'salus' in the description of the Isis ceremony in Apuleius corresponds to the Gk. σωτηρία [GANrich, Das antike Mysterienwesen 1894, 47f; Rtzst., Mysterienrel. 3 39]). In our lit. this sense is found only in connection w. Jesus Christ as Savior. This salvation makes itself known and felt in the present, but it will be completely disclosed in the future. Opp. ἀπόλεια **Phil 1:28** (Mel., P. 49, 356; on the probability of military metaphor s. EKrentz, in Origins and Method, JHurd Festschr., ed. BMClean, '93, 125f); θάνατος (cp. Damasc., Vi. Isid. 131: through Attis and the Mother of the Gods there comes ἡ ἐξ ἄδου γεγονυῖα ἡμῶν σωτ.) **2 Cor 7:10**; ὄργη **1 Th 5:9**. W. ζῶη 2 Cl 19:1; ζῶη αἰώνιος IEph 18:1. σωτηρία αἰώνιος (Is 45:17) **Hb 5:9**; short ending of Mk; ἡ κοινὴ ἡμῶν σωτ. Jd 3 (SIG 409, 33f ἀγωνιζόμενος ὑπὲρ τῆς κοινῆς σωτηρίας); σωτ. ψυχῶν salvation of souls **1 Pt 1:9** (σ. τῶν ψυχῶν Hippol., Ref. 10, 19, 3); cp. vs. **10** (ESelwyn, 1 Pt '46, 252f). σωτηρία ἢ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν MPol 22:1. ἢ τῶν σωζομένων σωτ. 17:2 (ἢ σ. τῶν μετανοούντων Did., Gen. 71, 28; σωτηρία τῶν ἀγαθῶν Hippol., Ref. 7, 28, 6; ἢ τῶν ἀνθρώπων σ. Orig., C. Cels. 4, 73, 13). On κέρασ σωτηρίας **Lk 1:69** s. κέρασ 3. σωτηρίας as objective gen. dependent upon various nouns: γνῶσις σωτηρίας **Lk 1:77**; ἐλπίς σωτ. (TestJob 24:1; cp. Philemo Com. 181 οἱ θεὸν σέβοντες ἐλπίδας καλὰς ἔχουσιν εἰς σωτηρίαν) **1 Th 5:8**; 2 Cl 1:7; ἐνδειξίς σωτ. **Phil 1:28** (opp. ἀπόλεια). τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν **Eph 1:13**. ὁ λόγος τῆς σωτηρίας ταύτης **Ac 13:26**. ὁδὸς σωτηρίας way to salvation **16:17**; περιποίησις σωτ. **1 Th 5:9**. ἡμέρα σωτηρίας (quot. fr. Is 49:8) of the day when the apostle calls them to salvation **2 Cor 6:2ab** (cp. the mystery in Apuleius, Metam. 11, 5 'dies salutaris' = 'day of initiation'). Christ is ὁ ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτ. **Hb 2:10** (ἀρχηγός 3). ὁ θεὸς τῆς σωτ. μου 1 Cl 18:14 (Ps 50:16).—Used w. verbs: ἔχειν σωτηρίαν Hv 2, 2, 5; 3, 6, 1; m 10, 2, 4; 12, 3, 6. κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν **Hb 1:14**. τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σωτ. κατεργάεσθαι **Phil 2:12** (κατεργάζομαι 2). σωτηρίας τυχεῖν τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰ. **2 Ti 2:10** (τυχεῖν σωτηρίας; Diod S 11, 4, 4; 11, 9, 1). εἰς σωτηρίαν for salvation (i.e. to appropriate it for oneself or grant it to another) **Ro 1:16**; **10:1**, **10**; **2 Cor 7:10**; **Phil 1:19** (ἀποβαίνω 2); **2 Th 2:13**; **2 Ti 3:15**; **1 Pt 2:2**. πόρρω ... ἀπὸ τῆς σωτ. 1 Cl 39:9 (Job 3:4). τὰ ἀνήκοντα εἰς σωτηρίαν the things that pertain to salvation 1 Cl 45:1; B 17:1 (cp. SIG 1157, 12f).—σωτηρία is plainly expected to be fully culminated w. the second coming of the Lord **Ro 13:11**; **Hb 9:28**; **1 Pt 1:5**.—(ἢ) σωτηρία without further qualification=salvation is also found **Lk 19:9** (cp. GJs 19:2); **J 4:22** (ἢ σωτ. ἐκ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐστίν); **Ac 4:12** (cp. Jos., Ant. 3, 23 ἐν θεῷ εἶναι τ. σωτηρίαν αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐν ἄλλῳ); **Ro 11:11**; **2 Cor 1:6**; **Hb 2:3** (τηλικαύτη σωτ.); **6:9**. ἢ σωτ. ἡμῶν 2 Cl 1:1; 17:5; B 2:10.—Christ died even for the salvation of the repentant Ninevites in the time of Jonah 1 Cl 7:7; cp. vs. 4.—σωτηρία stands by metonymy for σωτήρ (in the quot. fr. Is 49:6) τοῦ εἶναι σε εἰς σωτηρίαν ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς **Ac 13:47**; B 14:8. On the other hand, for a circumstance favorable for our attainment of salvation ἡγεῖσθαι τι σωτηρίαν **2 Pt 3:15**.—In the three places in Rv in which σωτ. appears as part of a doxology we have a Hebraism (salvation as victory intimately associated w. God; Pellingworth, BT 34, '83, 444f; cp. Ps 3:9 and PsSol 10:8 τοῦ κυρίου ἢ σωτηρία) **7:10**; **12:10**; **19:1**.—LMarshall, Challenge of NT Ethics '47, 248–66; HHaerens, Σωτήρ et σωτηρία dans la religion grecque: Studia Hellenistica 5, '48, 57–68; FDölger, Ac 6, '50, 257–63.—DELG s.v. σωτ. RLoewe, JTS 32, '81, 341–68 (ins pp. 364–68). DBS XI 486–739. M-M. TW. Spicq. Sv.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 985-86.]

¹⁹“The purpose of (ἵνα), and therefore the reason for, such a desire is given in the second half of the sentence: the milk for which the readers are so heartily to yearn is the means (ἐν αὐτῷ)⁵⁸ of further growth. The antecedent of αὐτῷ in this context is most likely γάλα, although it could grammatically also have a masculine antecedent, viz., θεός ('God') or, less likely, χριστός ('Christ').⁵⁹ Given the author's keen awareness of the nearness of the parousia and the final judgment, it is more likely that σωτηρία ('salvation') refers to eschatological deliverance than to Christian maturity.⁶⁰ The point is that the purpose of yearning for and holding to God's word is a growth (αὐξηθῆτε) whose goal (εἰς is here telic) is one's deliverance at the time of the final divine judgment.” [Paul J. Achtemeier and Eldon Jay Epp, *1 Peter: A Commentary on First Peter*, Hermeneia—a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1996), 147.]

²⁰Also helpful is an analysis of the different verbs used with the prepositional phrase εἰς σωτηρίαν: εἶναι (to be; Act 13:47, Rom. 1:16, 10:1); ὁμολογεῖται (Rom. 10:10); ἀποβήσεται (Phil. 1:19); σοφίσει (2 Tim. 3:15); ἀπεκδεχομένοις (Heb. 9:28); κατεσκεύασεν (Heb. 11:7); φρουρουμένους (1 Pet. 1:5); αὐξηθῆτε (1 Pet. 2:2). The wide variety of verbal expressions to which the prepositional phrase εἰς σωτηρίαν highlights both the diversity of idea capable with the noun σωτηρία, as well as the very unusual nature of using αὐξηθῆτε (grow into salvation) with the noun. Something can exist 'for salvation,' confession for salvation can be made, prayers can turn into deliverance for imprisonment, the scriptures can wisen us up for salvation, we can wait for salvation, an ark can be built for deliverance, we are being protected for salvation. But to grow into salvation seems unnatural, and out of the normal range

The prepositional phrase ἐν αὐτῷ can mean either ‘by it,’ i.e., by the γάλα, or, ‘in Him,’ i.e., in Christ or God (cf. 1:23). In the context more likely is the first meaning: by the nourishing milk we grow up.

The point of the purpose clause then seems to be to stress that the spiritual nourishment gained from the Word matures us (grows us up) in anticipation for standing before God in final judgment so that we are fully prepared to face that divine scrutiny of our life. Probably the idea is somewhat akin to Paul’s rather obscure statement in Phil. 2:12, μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε (“*work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*”). For Paul, ongoing faithful commitment is essential to deepening the deliverance from sin that prepares us for final judgment. For Peter ongoing nourishment from the Gospel is critical for preparing us for final deliverance at the Second Coming. Complementary ideas from two apostles.

Expansion 4: εἰ ἐγεύσασθε ὅτι χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος. The last major expansion also continues the longing for milk image with the verbal expression for ‘tasting.’ Incentive for this longing for milk is driven by having tasted something that made us hungry. The Aorist tense verb ἐγεύσασθε stresses action prior to the longing. And it reaches back to our conversion. In coming to Christ we ‘tasted’ something really delicious that made us want more.

What was it that we ‘tasted’ that was so good? The answer is found in the direct object clause ὅτι χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος. In conversion we ‘tasted’ the graciousness and kindness of the Lord! Peter here echoes Ps. 34:8, “*O taste and see that the LORD is good*” (γεύσασθε καὶ ἴδετε ὅτι χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος). The imagery of ‘tasting’ stresses ‘experiencing’ something.²¹ In conversion we experienced the χρηστὸς of the Lord. That is, we discovered the kindness of God toward us. The profound richness of this adjective makes it almost untranslatable.²² In conversion²³ we met a gracious God who showed us ultimate kindness by cleansing us from our sins, and relieving us of its guilt.

The conjunction εἰ²⁴ is better translated as ‘since’ rather than as ‘if.’ This conjunction sets up a first class conditional protasis in ancient Greek, which was the way to express a certain assumption. Peter assumes

of ideas for σωτηρία, as used in the New Testament especially for spiritual deliverance.

²¹“‘To taste’ here is a figure of speech, which means to ‘experience’ (Brc), or ‘to come to know something’ (Arndt-Gingrich [AG]). Most translations have retained the metaphor; however, the TEV has dropped it in favor of a straightforward translation: you have found out for yourselves.” [Daniel C. Arichea and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the First Letter from Peter*, UBS handbook series; Helps for translators (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 53.]

²²χρηστός, ἦ, ὄν (χράομαι; Trag., Hdt.+; ins, pap, LXX; En 32:1; TestSol; TestJob 13:6; TestBenj 3:7; Just.; Ath.; superl. Just. A I, 4, 1) gener. ‘useful, beneficial’

1. pert. to that which causes no discomfort, easy (PsSol 8:32 of divine judgments; Jos., Ant. 3, 98 of news) ὁ ζυγός μου is easy to wear **Mt 11:30** (metaph.).

2. pert. to meeting a relatively high standard of value, fine οἶνος (Plut., Mor. 240d; 1073a; Hippiatr. II 66, 16; Abercius ins 16; cp. En 32:1 ‘fine’ nard) **Lk 5:39** the old is (just) fine = the old suits me fine (the Greek is normal, and it is not necessary to assume an Aramaism, but s. μέγας **9:48** and B-D-F §245; v.l. has the comp. χρηστότερος [Philo, In Flacc. 109; Jos., Ant. 8, 213]).

3. pert. to being morally good and benevolent. This mng. is in keeping w. the Israelite and Hellenic ideal of morality as exhibition of usefulness within the socio-political structure (s. κακός, πονηρός; EWelskopf, Soziale Typenbegriffe im alten Griechenland ’68; KDoover, Greek Popular Morality ’74).

a. reputable (Ath. 36, 1 βίος) ἦθη χρηστά **1 Cor 15:33** (s. ἦθος.—ἦθος χρηστόν also POxy 642; 1663, 11; EpArist 290; Philo, Det. Pot. Ins. 38 ἦθη χρηστά διαφθείρεται).

b. kind, loving, benevolent (Jos., Ant. 6, 92 w. ἐπιεικής; 9, 133 >w. δίκαιος; Herodian 4, 3, 3 and Philo, Leg. ad Gai. 67 w. φιλόανθρωπος; Cass. Dio 66, 18; ins in FCumont, Études syr. 1917 p. 323, 12; POxy 642)

a. of humans (Nicophon Com. [V/IV B.C.] 16; Ps.-Demosth. 59, 2; TestJob 13:6 λίαν μου χρηστοῦ ὄντος) **1 Cl 14:4** (Pr 2:21). εἷς τινα to someone (POxy 416, 2) **Eph 4:32**.

β. of God (Hdt. 8, 111; Sb 158, 1; LXX; PsSol 2:36 al.; Philo, Det. Pot. Ins. 46 al.; SibOr 1, 159) **1 Pt 2:3** (Ps 33:9), Χριστός P72; Dg 8:8. ἐπί τινα to someone **Lk 6:35**. ἐν τοῖς κτλ. among those = to those, who **1 Cl 60:1**.

4. subst. τὸ χρηστόν the quality of beneficence, kindness (Philo, Virt. 160; Jos., Ant. 8, 214; Just., A I, 4, 5 [w. wordplay on Χριστιανοί]; 15:13, and D. 96, 3 [Luke 6:35f]; diff. Ath. 20, 3 τί τὸ σεμνὸν ἢ χρηστόν τῆς τοιαύτης ἱστορίας;) τοῦ θεοῦ **Ro 2:4**.—JZiegler, Dulcedo Dei ’37; CSpicq, RB 54, ’47, 321–24.—DELG s.v. χρησ-. Frisk s.v. γρή. M-M. TW. Spicq. Sv. [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1090.]

²³This is clearly the point of reference, and not the taking of the Eucharist in Roman Catholic interpretation of this where their mistaken theology claims that the elements of communion become the actual body and blood of Christ that are eaten and drunk by the laity and the priests.

²⁴Substituted with εἴπερ in some much later manuscripts in order to intensify the idea of certainty.

the conversion of his readers and that in such an experience they had discovered the goodness of God. That initial experience of God's grace 'whetted' their appetite for more. This assumption stands as important incentive for their longing for the spiritual milk that the Word provides.

Wow! The richness of this admonition with its modifiers envelopes much about the heart of being a developing believer in Christ. Central to spiritual development is the nourishment found in the Gospel of Christ, preached to the first century believers and now preserved for us in the pages of the New Testament. But we must do more than just read these words. We must experience them in transforming and dynamic ways day by day. The perpetual hunger for the milk, the nourishment, coming from the Word keeps us going back to scripture over and over to gain insights and to experience growth and change. And we realize this is mostly pointing us to the day of ultimate scrutiny of our life when we stand before Almighty God in final judgment.

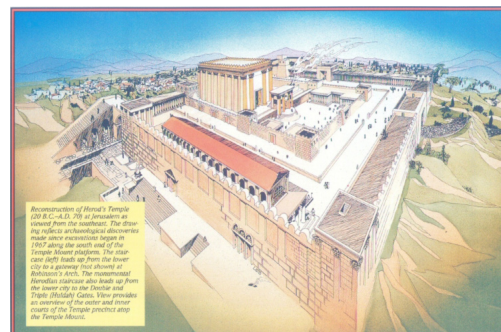
b. You're becoming God's temple, vv. 4-6

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."

4 Πρὸς ὃν προσερχόμενοι, λίθον ζῶντα, ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων μὲν ἀποδοκιμασμένον παρὰ δὲ θεῶ ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον 5 καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος πνευματικὸς εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον, ἀνενέγκαι πνευματικὰς θυσίας εὐπροσδέκτους θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ· 6 διότι περιέχει ἐν γραφῇ· Ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον ἀκρογωνιαῖον ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυνηθῆ.

Notes:

At this point, Peter turns a corner conceptually in the letter body. From 1:13 through 2:3, he has issued a series of admonitions designed to provide direction for living the Christian life. In 2:4-10, he shifts to a series of affirmations about who believers are spiritually the people of God. Much of the terminology for this depiction is borrowed from the Old Testament and signals a profound shift from old covenant to new covenant in that the language of spiritual status initially applied to Israel as the covenant people of God is reapplied to the believing community as the new covenant people of God. The old covenant only included properly circumcised and Torah obedient Jews. But the new covenant people include both Jews and non-Jews around shared commitment to Jesus Christ. This perspective from Peter had earth quake level shock in his day. The extension of the Gospel into the non-Jewish world of the middle first century was highly controversial among Jews, and even among many Jewish Christians.²⁵ It signaled the beginning stage of Christianity separating itself from Judaism as a separate, distinct religion.



Verses 5-8 begin the transition from admonition to declaration, from “here’s what you should be” to “here is who you are.” And who you are is depicted in terms of the temple of God and the people of God. The rich use of figurative language will continue but will revolve around these two stock poles of temple and people. The central role of Christ in this new spiritual status will be underscored repeatedly.

Core Declaration: καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος πνευματικὸς. This first affirmation asserts the spiritual reality that coming to Jesus²⁶ means becoming a part of a spiritual house.²⁷ The present tense

²⁵Especially note Acts 15 where a major split in the early Christian movement over non-Jews coming in Christianity was barely averted. With the continued ‘Judiazing’ efforts of some in the Christian community, Paul especially had to cope with repeated efforts to undermine the apostolic gospel of justification by faith apart from works of law. See Galatians and 2 Corinthians for major discussions of this issue.

²⁶“Now the metaphor shifts from that of nourishment to that of security and honor. Using a phrase that likely comes from Ps. 34:5 (‘Come to him’ in the LXX, using a construction not found in the NT) Peter notes that their conversion was a coming to Christ (so also Matt. 5:1; 18:1; 23:3; Heb. 4:16; 7:25). Christ is a ‘living stone.’ This both introduces the stone imagery that will dominate the next five verses and designates Christ not as a monument or dead principle, but as the living, resurrected, and therefore life-giving one.¹⁶⁷⁷ [Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), 85.]

²⁷The mood form of the verb οἰκοδομεῖσθε is indicative, not imperative, as the NRSV mistakenly translates. Note Michaels’ insightful comments:

Greek verb οἰκοδομεῖσθε ('are being built') highlights this construction as an ongoing process, rather than a single action.²⁸ The passive voice of the verb implies that God is the One doing the building of this temple.²⁹ The intensive pronoun αὐτοὶ ('yourselves') stresses the subjects as the building materials for this building. The καὶ in the adjunctive function, 'also,' stresses the readers as living stones just like Christ, and highlights their being incorporated into God's new temple as an additional divine activity.

The believers are compared to ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες. The idea of a living stone is not found in the Old Testament, or subsequent Jewish intertestamental literature. The modifier ζῶντες stresses not just physical life, but spiritual life, as related images in 2:24 ('we might live for righteousness') and 3:7 ('the grace of life') suggest. Only transformed human beings can serve as building material for God's new temple.

The construction process pertains not to a private residence, but rather to the new temple of God, the οἶκος πνευματικός.³⁰ What is God making the believers as living stones into? Clearly, it is His new temple, that is, His new dwelling place on the earth where He is to be worshipped and served. Thus *the gathered communities of faith* as they meet together in homes, public buildings etc. constitute this new temple of God.

Expansion 1: Πρὸς ὃν προσερχόμενοι, λίθον ζῶντα, ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων μὲν ἀποδοκιμασμένον παρὰ δὲ Θεῷ ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον. This complex set of modifiers underscore several aspects of the building of the new temple of God. *First*, in order to become a part of this new temple, individuals must come to Christ: Πρὸς ὃν προσερχόμενοι. As the construction of the temple is taking place, new building blocks are being created through their coming to Christ. Thus the construction never stops for lack of a shortage of materials. The apostles had experienced this in their diverse ministries all over the eastern Mediterranean world of that time. As the Gospel was proclaimed in cities and towns, people responded in large numbers to the invitation to commit themselves to Christ. These new communities were made up of all kinds of folks, Jews and Gentiles, slaves and freedmen, men and women (cf. Gal. 3:28). Together they form God's new dwelling place where He makes His presence and power known in this world.

Second, Christ stands as the living stone, λίθον ζῶντα, an image stressing His resurrection and continuous life with the Father and with His church on the earth.³¹ At that point Peter picks up the rejection / acceptance contrast that will be stated directly as a quote bringing together a string of OT references from Isa. 28:16 (in v. 6), Ps. 118:22 (in v. 7), and Isa. 8:14 (in v. 8). On the human side Christ as a living stone stands rejected

The verb οἰκοδομεῖσθε continues the imagery of "living stones" and must be understood as an indicative, not an imperative (cf. Hort, 109). Even within a metaphor, stones cannot be commanded to "be built up" (passive) or to "build themselves up" (middle), for that initiative rests with the builder. The metaphor makes sense only if Peter is affirming that in fact Christian believers are being built like stones so as to become a certain kind of edifice.

[J. Ramsey Michaels, vol. 49, *Word Biblical Commentary: 1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 100.]

²⁸Although a few commentators see a shift from individual growth in 2:1-3 to corporate existence in 2:4-10, little evidence in the text signals such a shift. This seems more a western cultural mindset, than an ancient Jewish way of thinking. Commentators without the western cultural background dominating see it differently:

It is clear from both these images that Peter has a high regard for the corporate nature of the people of God. Salvation is not simply an individual matter but involves participation in a community of believers.

[Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary* (Nairobi, Kenya; Grand Rapids, MI.: WordAlive Publishers; Zondervan, 2006), 1545.]

²⁹The Greek middle voice is only a theoretical grammatical possibility, and the context overwhelmingly favors the passive voice. The middle voice concept 'you are building yourselves up into a spiritual house' radically contradicts the theology of salvation set forth elsewhere in First Peter, as well as destroys the metaphor of God as the builder building the temple.

³⁰The adjective πνευματικός ('spiritual') is not so much symbolic or metaphoric as it is intended to indicate its nature: it is the place where the Spirit is to be found.⁸⁵ The context within which it appears — priesthood, sacrifices — suggests an intention here to describe the Christian community in terms of a new temple,⁸⁶ perhaps, in contrast to the old temple, one where God's Spirit is now truly present.⁸⁷ The idea of the community as a new temple is found in the NT⁸⁸ as it is also in some of the literature from Qumran.⁸⁹ [Paul J. Achtemeier and Eldon Jay Epp, *1 Peter: A Commentary on First Peter*, Hermeneia—a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1996), 155-56.]

³¹The designation λίθος anticipates the Scripture quotations in vv 6–8, and at the same time implicitly identifies the κύριος of v 3 as Jesus Christ. The participle ζῶντα does not arise out of the quotations, but it is a feature of Petrine vocabulary (cf. 1:3, 23) and it serves here as a characteristic Petrine signal (like λογικόν in v 2 or πνευματικός in v 5) that he is using the word 'stone' in a metaphorical rather than literal sense (cf. Selwyn, 158; Goppelt, 141; J. Jeremias in TDNT 4:279). [J. Ramsey Michaels, vol. 49, *Word Biblical Commentary: 1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 98.]

by men (ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων μὲν ἀποδεδοκιμασμένον). In contrast on the divine side, Christ stands chosen and esteemed before God (παρὰ δὲ θεῶ ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον). The rejection emphasis stresses the wider rejection of Jesus than just from the Jewish religious leaders in Jerusalem.³² So far as God the Father is concerned, however, this same living stone is both divinely chosen and precious. Already in 1:1 Peter has indicated that his readers are also ἐκλεκτοῖς. So both they and Jesus share the common ground of being divinely chosen by the Heavenly Father. And furthermore this living stone is ἔντιμον, i.e., regarded as very precious, by the Father. For believers, public opinion matters nothing; the only opinion about Jesus that matters is that of God. And Jesus stands at the top of the list with the Heavenly Father. This is the basis of believers then coming to Him for acceptance.

Expansion 2: εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον, ἀνενέγκαι πνευματικὰς θυσίας εὐπροσδέκτους θεῶ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. The metaphor of the building of the temple quickly merges into the activities inside of and the purpose for that temple. The believers then become building blocks of the temple and at the same time they are the consecrated priests who serve God in the temple.³³ Just as the priests in the Jerusalem temple were set aside in dedication (ἅγιον) to God, so also are believers. The objective of this dedicated service is to offer up sacrifices to God. But unlike the temple priests who offered up prescribed animal and cereal sacrifices, believers are to offer up 'spiritual sacrifices' to God through Jesus Christ.³⁴ The nature and quality of Christian sacrifices to God are substantially different from those offered in the Jerusalem temple.

Not only are such sacrifices 'spiritual' in nature, but also they are to be εὐπροσδέκτους θεῶ, i.e., fully acceptable to God.³⁵ In the background stands the OT mandate that the animal and cereal sacrifices had to be

³²“Rejected ... as worthless but chosen ... as valuable is a reference to Psalm 118:22, which is quoted fully in verse 7. In its Old Testament context, ‘stone’ refers either to the temple or Mount Zion. Mount Zion itself could refer to many things: (1) A hill outside Jerusalem, upon which ‘David’s City’ was built; (2) the hill upon which the temple was built; (3) the city of Jerusalem; and (4) the people of Jerusalem, and in an extended sense, the people of Israel. If taken in this fourth sense, then ‘builders’ would logically refer to the rulers of the nations around Israel who did their best to defeat and destroy her. This verse very early in the Christian tradition came to be understood as a prophecy regarding Christ’s suffering and subsequent exaltation; the Gospel writers even record that Jesus himself used it in this way (compare Mark 12:10; Matt 21:42; Luke 20:17). The change of ‘builders’ in the quotation to ‘man’ (verse 4) may have the purpose of signifying that it is not only the Jewish leaders, or the Jewish people who have rejected Christ, but mankind in general, that is, people who do not believe the gospel which is proclaimed to them. The word for stone (*lithos*) here and in verse 5 refers not to a rock or boulder, but to a stone which is already prepared to be used in the building itself. It should not be confused with the cornerstone in verse 6 (Greek *akrogonaiion*).” [Daniel C. Arichea and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the First Letter from Peter*, UBS handbook series; Helps for translators (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 55-56.]

³³“Some might object that believers cannot be both the temple and the priests that minister in the temple, that the mixture of metaphors is intolerable. In reply it should be noted that the fulfillment in Christ transcends the types that anticipate it. Hence, we should not be surprised that believers are both priests and the temple. They are God’s dwelling place by the Spirit and his new priesthood. No internal contradiction is involved since Peter did not refer to believers as priests serving in a literal temple. The spiritual nature of the house does not draw our attention to its immateriality but to a temple inhabited by the Holy Spirit.²²⁰” [Thomas R. Schreiner, vol. 37, 1, 2 *Peter; Jude*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2007), 105-06.]

³⁴“To offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.’ Ἀναφέρειν is thus used, not in classical Greek, nor by St. Paul, but commonly in the LXX. (e.g. Gen. 13:2, 13, of the sacrifice of Isaac), by James (2:21), and in Heb. (7:27, 13:15). St. Peter does not define the sacrifices further than by saying that they are spiritual, as befits the spiritual house and the holy priesthood. The epithet πνευματικὰς distinguishes them from the offerings of the Law; they are not shadows and symbols, but realities, such as spirit offers to spirit, and a holy priesthood to a holy God. It would, however, be pressing the word too far to regard it as excluding all connexion with material objects; for a gift of money is spoken of as a θυσία (Phil. 4:18; cf. Acts 10:4; Heb. 13:16). Purely spiritual acts of self-dedication, praise, faith, are also spoken of as sacrifices (Rom. 12:1; Phil. 2:17; Eph. 5:1, 2); and no doubt no sacrifice is πνευματικὴ without the act of self-surrender. Here, where the sacrifices are those of the community, it seems impossible so to restrict them as to make them merely another name for φιλαδελφία, or for the putting away of all malice or wickedness. The praise and prayers of the assembly of brethren are no doubt meant, but their gifts are not excluded.” [Charles Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark International, 1901), 129.]

³⁵εὐπρόσδεκτος, ον ‘(easily) acceptable, pleasant, welcome’ (s. προσδέχομαι; Plut., Mor. 801c)

1. pert. to being capable of eliciting favorable acceptance, acceptable

a. of things: of offerings (schol. on Aristoph., Pax 1054 εὐπρόσδεκτος ἢ θυσία) προσφορά **Ro 15:16**; of pers. 1 Cl 40:4. Of willingness to give, which is said to be acceptable **2 Cor 8:12**. W. the dat. of the one to whom someth. is acceptable: to people **Ro 15:31**; to God θυσία εὐ. τῷ θεῷ **1 Pt 2:5** (cp. Vi. Aesopi W 8 P. εὐπρόσδεκτον παρὰ τῷ θεῷ τὸ ἀγαθοποιεῖν; Cat. Cod. Astr. VII 178, 6 εὐ. αἰ εὐχαι πρὸς θεόν; SIG 1042, 8 ἀπρόσδεκτος ἢ θυσία παρὰ τ. θεοῦ). ἰλαρότης Hm 10, 3, 1. λειτουργία Hs 5, 3, 8. εὐ. τῷ θελήματι αὐτοῦ acceptable to his will 1 Cl 40:3; τὰ εὐ. what is acceptable to God 35:5.

the best of the best. Just so also for what believers offer up to God; it must represent the very best they can present to God. The priests offered up sacrifices in the temple, but believers as priests go through Jesus, the high priest, in making their sacrifices to God in gathered communities of worshippers.

Expansion 3: διότι περιέχει ἐν γραφῇ· Ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον ἀκρογωνιαῖον ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυνθῆ. At this point Peter introduces a series of ‘scripture proofs’ as the foundation of his declaration: διότι περιέχει ἐν γραφῇ. The series of texts alluded to through verse eight are frequently used in the early church for messianic claims applied to Christ.³⁶ Peter’s use of Isa. 28:16 differs somewhat from the original OT text, which likely reflects a different, unknown text tradition of the LXX:³⁷

<p>therefore thus says the Lord GOD, See, I am laying in Zion a foundation stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation: “One who trusts will not panic.”</p>	<p>διὰ τοῦτο οὕτως λέγει κύριος Ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐμβαλῶ εἰς τὰ θεμέλια Σιών λίθον πολυτελεῖ ἐκλεκτὸν ἀκρογωνιαῖον ἔντιμον εἰς τὰ θεμέλια αὐτῆς, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυνθῆ.</p>
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Peter makes somewhat different use of this text from that of Paul in Rom. 9:33.³⁸ Jesus is now the cornerstone of this new temple that God is building. And the central role of this cornerstone is such that it will confidently hold together the building under construction. And believers can be certain of this!

c. You value Christ as cornerstone, vv. 7-8

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.

7 ὑμῖν οὖν ἡ τιμὴ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν· ἀπιστοῦσιν δὲ λίθος ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας 8 καὶ λίθος προσκόμματος καὶ πέτρα σκανδάλου· οἱ προσκόπτουσιν τῷ λόγῳ ἀπειθοῦντες· εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐτέθησαν.

Notes:

This concluding section develops the theme of contrasting the believers’ positive experience of Jesus as cornerstone to those who reject Him as having this spiritual role.³⁹ This is developed through a series

b. of pers. 1 Cl 40:4.

2. pert. to being welcome in a situation, favorable, of a time that is favorable for bringing God’s grace to fruition καιρὸς εὖ.
2 Cor 6:2.—DELG s.v. δέχομαι. M-M. TW. Spicq.
 [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 410-11.]

³⁶V. 6 from Isa. 28:16 found in Rom. 9:33 and Eph. 2:20 as well as here. V. 7 from Psa. 118:22 found also in Mt. 21:42 and Acts 4:11. V. 8 from Isa. 8:14 found also in Rom. 9:33. This has led some to conclude these allusions came more directly from a written collection of OT scriptures understood to refer to Christ circulated in the churches. Although there is clear indication of such a Book of Testimonies in later second century Christianity, no clear evidence exists to suggest such a document was composed and circulated in the first century. More likely, what was collected was done orally and not in written form.

³⁷“Peter’s citation of Isa 28:16 differs from the LXX at several points: the use of τίθημι instead of ἐγὼ ἐμβαλῶ, and of ἐν Σιών instead of εἰς τὰ θεμέλια Σιών; and the omission of πολυτελεῖ and the redundant εἰς τὰ θεμέλια αὐτῆς. The words with which he begins (ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών) are identical to the words with which Paul in Rom 9:33 begins his composite citation of Isa 8:14 and 28:16, and therefore probably based on textual traditions of the LXX derived from earlier Jewish or Jewish Christian adaptations of the Isaiah texts.” [J. Ramsey Michaels, vol. 49, *Word Biblical Commentary: 1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 103.]

³⁸as it is written,

“See, I am laying in Zion a stone that will make people stumble, a rock that will make them fall, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

“The difference between Paul’s use of Isaiah and Peter’s is that what is laid ‘in Zion’ for Paul is a ‘stone of stumbling and a rock to trip over’ (i.e., for the Jewish people), while for Peter it is a ‘choice and precious stone, a cornerstone’ (i.e., for Christian believers, v 7a). Peter too will look at the negative side in due course (vv 7b–8), but for the moment his focus is on the promise the quotation holds for his readers.” [J. Ramsey Michaels, vol. 49, *Word Biblical Commentary: 1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 103.]

³⁹“Peter retains the image of cornerstone to indicate that the church is built on Christ, as foundation, which Paul also emphasizes in 1 Corinthians 3:11: ‘For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.’ In this image, Jesus Christ is both foundation stone and cornerstone, the stone from which the building derives its proper angles.

of three main clauses with expansion elements attached to each, mostly OT quotes.

First Declaration: ὑμῖν οὖν ἡ τιμὴ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν. The positive stance toward Jesus comes from believers (τοῖς πιστεύουσιν), whom Peter identifies as his readers (ὑμῖν). To believers He is precious (ἡ τιμὴ).⁴⁰ In Christ, then, believers being esteemed by God and not shame will come at final judgment through Christ.



Second Declaration: ἀπιστοῦσιν δὲ λίθος ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας 8 καὶ λίθος προσκόμματος καὶ πέτρα σκανδάλου· οἱ προσκόπτουσιν τῷ λόγῳ ἀπειθοῦντες. To those who refuse to believe in Christ (ἀπιστοῦσιν) the scripture allusion from *Psa. 118:22*⁴¹ becomes applicable:⁴²

“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner,”
and also Peter applies *Isa. 8:14*⁴³ to these unbelievers as well:

“A stone that makes them stumble,
and a rock that makes them fall.”

The ultimate point made from the use of these two OT texts is that rejection of Jesus will in Final Judgment come back to ‘bite’ these rejectors. Instead of seeing Jesus as worthless, they should have recognized what God was doing in and through Him, and then come to faith in Him. For without doubt, He will be vindicated at the end as the most significant person to ever walk on the earth. Rejection of Him now will bring about the downfall of the rejectors.

Third Declaration: εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐτέθησαν. Peter’s comment here on the above scripture quotes serves to apply these OT texts to the rejectors of Christ in his day.⁴⁴ Their nature and religious orientation was such that

An alternate reading of ‘capstone’ or ‘keystone’ in place of cornerstone is unlikely, since in Peter’s imagery Christ as stone is also one over whom unbelievers stumble.” [Erland Waltner and J. Daryl Charles, *1-2 Peter, Jude.*, Believers church Bible commentary (Scottsdale, Penn.: Herald Press, 1999), 76.]

⁴⁰“The great majority of commentators have therefore (rightly) understood ἡ τιμὴ as a noun (‘the honor’ or ‘the privilege’) and as subject of the sentence (e.g., with some variations, Hort, 117–18; Bigg, 131; Selwyn, 164; Beare, 124; Kelly, 93). The ‘honor’ or ‘privilege’ to which Peter refers is final vindication before God, the equivalent of never being put to shame (cf. Goppelt, 149); it is the same vindication already described more fully as ‘praise, glory, and honor (εἰς ἔπαινον καὶ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν) at the time when Jesus Christ is revealed’ (1:7).” [J. Ramsey Michaels, vol. 49, *Word Biblical Commentary: 1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 104.]

⁴¹“The first of these quotations (*Ps 117*[118]:22) occurs also in the Gospel tradition (*Mark 12:10* // *Matt 21:42* // *Luke 20:17*), and in each of its NT occurrences follows the LXX word for word. ‘The builders’ in the psalm (οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες), identified in the Gospels as the religious leaders of the Jewish people (cf. *Mark 12:12*; *Matt 21:45*; *Luke 20:19*; also the paraphrase attributed to Peter in *Acts 4:11*), are here understood as citizens and magistrates in Rome and in the provinces (thus presumably Gentiles, *2:12*; *4:3*) who harass Christians in Peter’s community and the communities to which he writes (cf., e.g., the accusers anti questioners of *2:12* and *3:15–16*, the ‘foolish people’ of *2:15*, the cruel masters of *2:18*, the unbelieving husbands of *3:1*, and the revelers and blasphemers of *4:4*.)” [J. Ramsey Michaels, vol. 49, *Word Biblical Commentary: 1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 105.]

⁴²“Peter will elaborate in vv 9–10 on the ‘honor’ reserved for those who believe, but before doing so he introduces two more quotations (*Ps 117*[118]:22 and *Isa 8:14*) contrasting Christian believers with ‘unbelievers’ (ἀπιστοῦσιν), understood in the broadest possible terms as ‘people generally’ (ὕπὸ ἀνθρώπων, v 4) who reject Christ, ‘the living Stone.’” [J. Ramsey Michaels, vol. 49, *Word Biblical Commentary: 1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 105.]

⁴³“Peter’s third quotation (*Isa 8:14*), like the first but unlike the second, differs significantly from the LXX (καὶ οὐχ ὡς λίου προσκόμματι συναντήσεσθε αὐτῷ οὐδὲ ὡς πέτρας πτώματι). The LXX context is one with which Peter shows familiarity (cf. his allusion to *Isa 8:12–13* in *3:14–15*). In each of his references to *Isa 8:12–14*, as well as his citation of *Isa 28:16*, Peter adapts his text with a certain freedom not exercised in connection with *Ps 117*[18]:22 (cf. Paul’s freedom with respect to *Isa 8:14* and *28:16* in *Rom 9:33*). Peter’s adaptation here shows the possible influence of MT (לִוְשֵׁי כֶּבֶד וְרִצְלוֹתַי יִבְנֶה לְיְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ), where ‘stone of stumbling’ and ‘rock of offense’ refer to what the ‘Lord of hosts’ will become to sinful Israel rather than to what He will not become to those who put their trust in Him (as in the LXX). Even apart from any influence of the MT, the contrast already in place in v 7 between *πιστεύουσιν* and *ἀπιστοῦσιν* virtually required such an adaptation. Aside from syntactical changes, the principal difference between Peter’s text and the LXX is the substitution of *σκανδάλου* for *πτώματι*.” [J. Ramsey Michaels, vol. 49, *Word Biblical Commentary: 1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 106.]

⁴⁴“The antecedent of εἰς ὃ is the ‘stumbling’ expressed in the verb *προσκόπτουσιν*. Peter has chosen ἐτέθησαν to match the τίθημι with which he began the first quotation in v 6, so forming an inclusion that makes vv 6–8 a unit. His use of with καὶ accents

they inevitably rejected Jesus, and thus sealed their eternal fate by this action. The 'placing' of Jesus as cornerstone (cf. *τίθημι* in v. 6) means the 'placing' of rejectors whose heart wasn't open to God's action. This is just as true today as it was in the first century.

Peter's exhortation and affirmations in 2:1-8 continue to probe the richness of our salvation in Christ. In this we rejoice with increasing awareness of all that God has accomplished in His saving work. We enjoy blessed privilege as the new temple of God and as the new people of God. Our longing should be to grow spiritually from infancy to adulthood as we anticipate the final judgment of God. This longing is measured by the example of a newly born baby clamoring for milk. Spiritual nourishment comes through the Word of God, that we long to take into our lives.



the repetition ('... and to that they too were appointed'). God is the subject of *τίθημι* and (by virtue of the passive voice; see above, p. 45) the implied agent of *ἐτέθησαν* as well (for *τίθημι* as a sovereign act of God, see Gen 4:17 LXX // Rom 4:17, Isa 49:6 LXX // Acts 13:47; 1 Tim 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11; Heb 1:2; cf. John 15:16). The matching verbs do not represent two distinct 'appointings' but one with a twofold result (cf. Paul's use of *ἔθετο* in 1 Thess 5:9). In the single act of raising Jesus from the dead (1:3, 21), God has laid the 'choice and precious Stone' that means honor and vindication for those who believe, but stumbling and shame for the disobedient (cf. Paul's argument with respect to Israel, Rom 9:21–23).” [J. Ramsey Michaels, vol. 49, *Word Biblical Commentary: 1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 107.]