Immigrants in Our Own Land, Citizens of God

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The letter known as 1 Peter is no longer a New Testament "stepchild," as John Elliott famously called it,[1] but is rather the subject of numerous studies and is rich in theological nuance and implications. This is hardly the place to attempt to fully explore the wealth of this letter,[2] but it is the appropriate setting to summarize its instruction and in doing so to highlight its theological perspective and major exegetical issues. That is the limited but still ambitious goal of this article,[3] which will in general follow the structure of this circular letter.

Letter Opening

The first thing that one notices about 1 Peter is the addressees: those addressed are "immigrants" or "resident aliens" and yet they are "chosen" or "elect." They are a "diaspora," but in provinces in which they were once very much at home (1 Pet 4:3-4). And this theme of being "immigrants" is repeated multiple times in the letter, as is the language of being a chosen people. The point of 1 Peter is that there has been a change: chosen by God, those addressed have

obeyed or submitted to the rule of Jesus the Anointed One and have been made holy by the Spirit, the imagery being that participating in the being set aside as holy that Moses did to the people of Israel, although this time the sprinkling is with the blood of Jesus rather than animals of lesser phyla. The addressees are a new people, a holy people, and yet still live in their original communities, which, as will become clear, is part of the problem.

We learn how this happened in the thanksgiving, 1 Peter 1:3-12. These largely-Gentile men and women have been "born anew," another repeated concept in the letter. Unlike John 3:3, where "born again" is a *misunderstanding* of Jesus, here the image is taken very seriously. They have been born again (1 Pet 1:23) of an imperishable "sperm,"[4] that is "the living and abiding word of God."[5] They are now "children [of God]" (1:14), even if they once lived in ignorance, following the empty or foolish way of life of their patrimony.[6] They are newborn babies (1 Pet 2:2) drinking spiritual milk. They who were not a people are now a "chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" (2:9-10, echoing Exod 19:6). In other words, they who were largely Gentiles are now God's renewed people, receiving the promises and titles of Israel.[7] And, as a result, they are now foreigners in the lands of their birth (notice how 2:11 follows right on 2:9-10) and are treated as such by their former compatriots.[8]

That being the case one can now understand the strategy of the thanksgiving. Jesus did die, and 1 Peter will refer to the death of Jesus as an example for the suffering community, which is living an *imitatio Christi* even if their suffering is more rejection and ostracism than execution, but Jesus is resurrected, ascended, and presently rules, so there is hope, a hope that permeates the letter. The people have been estranged from their earthly inheritance, but they have one stored in heaven, not because they will go there to receive it, but because it will be there when Jesus is revealed as king. They feel vulnerable, but they are in fact guarded by God. In other words, 1 Peter deftly reframes their situation in terms of their being God's chosen people, God's family, one with Jesus (terms that will be significant later in the letter). And that means that while suffering is their present situation, it has a purpose—their honor status when the reigning Jesus the Anointed One is revealed. Notice that in 1 Peter it is not that Jesus will come back to reign, but that his presently unseen reign will be revealed. And that is the time of their salvation. Salvation, in 1 Peter, is a present process with a future fullness, not a past event.[9]

Body Opening

The body opening of the letter, 1 Peter 1:13 – 2:10, focuses on the implications of this new identity. The addressees are to focus their minds on the favor that will be theirs when Jesus is revealed as divine ruler and king. In other words, eschatology determines ethics. Grace or favor is *future*, when Jesus is revealed, and so all of their present life should be lived in the light of this reality on which their mind is focused.

They are re-born (the point of which birth is probably baptism, which is explicitly mentioned in 1 Pet 3:21) and therefore have a new Father. This means that their values or ethics should not be those of their pagan birth family, but those of their new Father, a Father who is holy (and what that means is described in the Hebrew Scriptures, 1 Peter being very familiar with them in Greek translation) and whose ethics, like that of any good *pater familias* of the Greco-Roman world, determines the ethic of the family. Significantly, this call to holiness was first spoken in the Torah to God's Hebrew family (e.g. Lev 11:45), which, as will be made clear later in 1 Peter, is the family that these former pagans now continue in this present age. They were part of a pagan family and so lived those values; they are now ransomed (which suggests that as pagans they were captives or exiles in a different sense than that in which they are presently exiles, perhaps captives of the devil, since he is mentioned in 1 Peter 5). The ransom price is the blood of Christ (exactly which "lamb" is being thought of is indeterminate, in part because lambs were used in multiple sacrifices and in part because the language is deliberately designed to repeat an initial alpha for effect).[10] The paragraph finishes with a reference to the greater "theodrama;" that is, to the whole narrative of God's history with this world, for the Messiah was planned all through the drama, but the implied readers are privileged to live in the "end of the times" or "end-times," in the period when Jesus was manifested (i.e., in his life, death, and resurrection).

Conversion for 1 Peter is "obedience to the truth," similar to Paul's definition of it as submission to Jesus as resurrected Lord (Rom 10:8b-10). That obedience is visible in love, which is not an emotional feeling for the others in the family, but which is what one might call family loyalty, or, as Thomas Aquinas would later define it, "Seeking the good of the other as other." And the reason is that the re-born one is part of a new *ethnos* or new family: one

is born anew, not of corruptible sperm, but of incorruptible, the word of the living God.[11]

The ethical implications of new birth are brought up again in 1 Peter 2:1: live ethically, throwing out the old behavior and desiring "the pure milk" appropriate to newborn babies, resulting in their growing up into a "salvation" or "deliverance" that is future. The re-born have tasted this milk in the kindness or graciousness of "the Lord,"[12] so the image is redolent of the behavior of a newborn that has tasted his or her mother's milk.

But 1 Peter shifts images very quickly and merges metaphors. "The Lord" is a rejected stone (as the implied readers are rejected) but chosen by God. They are built into a temple ("spiritual house") in which Jesus is the cornerstone.[13] But they are also the priesthood in this temple that is offering sacrifice "through Jesus the Anointed One."[14] This idea is, quite naturally for 1 Peter, supported by Scripture, perhaps *testimonia*, but the scriptural culmination comes when the titles of Exodus 19:6 are applied to these former pagans with promises of Hosea applied to them as well. The ancient theodrama in which Israel plays such a prominent part finds its fulfillment in this latest chapter, the reborn people of God, without any sense of irony or discontinuity.

Body Middle

The body middle (2:11 – 4:11) helps the implied readers wrestle with the tension that is set up with their living in a pagan earthly society while fully submitted to God's now and coming king, Jesus the Anointed One. The believers are now indeed immigrants and exiles in the lands of their birth, and this sets up a tension with the surrounding culture that tries to force them to conform to its values and behavior. In contrast, 1 Peter states that the Christian behavior of his addressees is to show them honorable or virtuous,[15] even though their pagan neighbors might only acknowledge this fact at the final judgment: there is no "feel good fast" in 1 Peter, but rather an inner peace and joy in the light of a future expectation.

When it comes to rulers, "Be subject for the Lord's sake." In other words, the ruler (i.e., the Roman emperor, perhaps Nero, in the setting of 1 Peter, or local representative or client king) has no ultimate claim or authority. Therefore "be subject" does not include behavior of which Jesus the Anointed One

would not approve. But the ruler does do a job for God in dampening down evil, for even a poor ruler is better than anarchy. Thus, while technically free (a follower of Jesus belongs to another people than the local populace and is under another ruler) the believer fits in as much as possible so that even in pagan eyes he or she will be seen to be virtuous. One even gives honor to the ruler, ("Mr. President," "Your Majesty")—that is not disloyalty, for one does that to all human beings in this same passage. But one is not the slave of the ruler, but the slave of God. And when it comes to God, he is the one and only being that one reverences. The relationship to the state is a dance, a dance that 1 Peter knows that the pagan world will often not appreciate, but it is an attempt to find some common ground, if only on terms laid down by God.

Household slaves (the setting of 1 Peter is urban, and that is where most slaves would be household slaves) are also to "be subject" to their masters. But while there was not much other choice in the ancient world (Romans, in particular, were very sensitive to any hints of resistance among slaves and they met such a threat, or even hint, of *stasis* with the ultimate punishment), 1 Peter transforms the necessary subjection in three ways. First, it is done "mindful of God" (RSV) and "seeking God's approval" (1 Pet 2:20 RSV). Second, the same patient obedience is shown towards the just and the overbearing masters, towards those who were kind and those who punished one for doing good.[16] Third, when a slave does suffer unjustly, the situation is reframed as identification with Jesus so long as the slave shows the behavior of Jesus. In other words, the slave has been healed by Jesus and brought into his flock, but in this identification in suffering the slave enters into the salvific mystery. That gives deep meaning to what otherwise could appear to be meaningless. Reframing is a powerful psychological technique simply because it brings the person into contact with a new reality, and in this case the reality is ultimate reality.

Likewise wives of pagan husbands (and that seems to be the focus of 1 Peter 3:1-6) were legally under the power of their husbands; they are told by 1 Peter to focus on virtues that both followers of Jesus and pagans would see as praiseworthy (although Christians praised those virtues in both male and female believers, while pagans thought them important only for women) and in that way they would emulate the Hellenistic Sarah of the *Testament of Abraham* (at least that is the form in which that version of the

Sarah narrative is available to contemporary readers).[17] Meanwhile, as an addendum, Christian husbands are told to treat their Christian wives, not as pagans would treat their wives, but as equals.

What is the summary of this matter? 1 Peter tells his addressees that it is: Pursue virtue, particularly pursue community-forming virtues, such as love and humility. Then the Sermon on the Mount, and, in particular, the Beatitudes in the beginning of Matthew 5 and the non-retaliation teaching in the end are cited by the technique of *aemulatio*.[18] But, given that 1 Peter sees continuity with and fulfillment of the Hebrew Scriptures in the way of Jesus, this reference is backed up by the citation of Psalm 34:13-17 (with one significant change made to the text).

This leads the author into a summary: generally, pagans will not punish one for exhibiting (Christian) virtue (given its overlap with Stoic and other Greco-Roman virtue teaching), but that is only generally true, not absolutely true, so when one does suffer for one's virtue, identify with the Anointed One—and if an explanation is demanded of one in court, be ready to give it.

The parallel with Jesus is carried farther resulting in a type of reframing of one's life experience when the end of 1 Peter 3 and the beginning of 1 Peter 4 are read together. Jesus suffered to the point of death, condemned in the eyes of the world. But that is only one dimension or sphere, that of "the flesh." (And in that sphere he will only be fully vindicated when his rule is revealed, when all will have to acknowledge his vindicated, exalted status.) In the spiritual dimension or sphere he was vindicated by resurrection. And, using material from the first part of *1 Enoch*, the "Book of the Watchers," 1 Peter points out that in his resurrected state he proclaimed final doom to the "spirits in prison" (which also show up in 2 Peter 2 and in Jude)[19] and ascended to take his exalted place at God's right hand with all other powers and authorities subject to him. In other words, he could not be more vindicated or more exalted.

This reference to the denigration and vindication of Jesus in applied in two ways. First, the reference to the "spirits in prison" takes the author to the Noah narrative and its typological meaning: as Noah and only a few others were saved by means of water, so also water, i.e., baptism, is the means of salvation for the believers. It is not just that the body is washed, but that in the process of that rite one gave a pledge to God from a good conscience (i.e., the pledge was not faked) through [the power of] the resurrection of

Jesus. That is, as in Romans 10:8b-10 referred to above, one pledged one's allegiance to Jesus as resurrected Lord.[20]

Second, the main application is that the believer identifies with the Jesus narrative and uses it to reframe their negative experience. He or she, too, has "suffered in the flesh" or at least set themselves to do so if necessary (and, again probably in baptism, has left behind living according to the human passions as the pagans do, much to the dismay of their pagan neighbors). This identification with Jesus explains why the good news was preached to those who have died in the human sphere. In their death they have lost nothing, for they have simply been judged or condemned "in the sphere of the flesh" according to human beings (which phrase could mean either a human judgment or "the way it goes" with human beings). In truth, the purpose or result of this is that they might live "in the sphere of the Spirit" according to God (i.e., according to God's vindicating judgment or "in the way that God does," which would meaning something like the *theosis* or divinization that one finds in 2 Peter 1:4). Those who have died as believers have lost nothing but have gained everything. This eschatological perspective (not in that it happens in a future end time, but that it happens in a different dimension, the sphere or dimension of God) should be encouraging to the once-native-born-citizens-of-this-world-and-now-immigrants-due-to-Jesus that 1 Peter is addressing.

The follower of Jesus holds an eschatological perspective: "the end of all things is at hand." They are not waiting for the "last days," but are in the last days, with the conclusion or goal (*telos*) close, just as Jesus proclaimed that the rule of God was close (e.g. Mark 1:15). History, according to 1 Peter, has almost reached its goal, so this is no time to give up or to fail. Rather, one should be alert before God and pursue community building virtues (as opposed to the community destroying vices which are "what the Gentiles like to do"). These virtues start with love (again, not a feeling, but seeking the good of the other) which implies forgiveness, hospitality (which is especially needed by exiles), and employing one's gifting for the good of the community in the consciousness that it is a divine gift. The result will be that the (re) new(ed) Israel, the (re)new(ed) people of God, the new community will have such a lifestyle that "God will be honored through Jesus the Anointed One."[21] Our author, then, does just, he honors God with a doxology and on this note the body middle ends with an "Amen."

Body closing

The body closing (1 Pet 4:12–5:5 or 5:11 if the summary is included) draws the theological themes together. As 1 Peter 1:6-7 indicates, the believers are undergoing a "fiery ordeal," being tried by the fire of rejection, slander, and the like in a world in which honor was the highest value and rejection could lead to the loss of livelihood. This "ordeal" is not happenchance or foreign to Christian existence. Rather, as 1 Peter 2 concludes, it is an opportunity to share in the sufferings of Jesus (as opposed to a theology in which he alone suffers and believers reign without suffering). The embracing of the cross is central to Christian existence for 1 Peter. But, as 1 Peter 1:8 indicates, one embraces the cross because with it one embraces the (anticipated) joy of the revelation of Jesus' honor. While in 1 Peter 1:6-7 there is eschatological anticipated joy, joy in the present in the light of the future, here in 1 Peter 4:13 the joy is future in that the public revelation of Jesus as universal Lord is future. Yet there is a "now" as well, for when they are criticized due to their identification with the Anointed One (i.e., *Christos*, who was known to have been executed as a rebel) it is precisely in that dishonoring and rejection that they are blessed, that the "Spirit of honor and of God" or "the honorable Spirit of God" (if read as a hendiadys) rests on them. This is a reframing indeed. Naturally, given the virtues that the follower of Jesus should display, it is inappropriate that they suffer as a criminal, including, interestingly enough, a "meddler" or "busybody." This surely presumes that such charges were not trumped-up (as groups in power often do to justify their persecution). But if the charge is that of being a follower of the "*Christos*," then, while the culture certainly thought that shameful (who would want to be identified with such a malefactor?), 1 Peter exhorts his implied readers to wear it proudly and let their actions bring honor to God (which has previously been defined as an honor that will be attributed to God at the final judgment).

That final judgment has already begun in this purging persecution, this fiery rejection. But rather than limiting it to those who are outside of the faith, 1 Peter points out that it has begun with God's own people, for it is a purification, as he has already written in 1 Peter 1:6-7. If that is what it is, painful as it is for the followers of Jesus, what will the result be when it extends to those who "disobey God's good news?" (Again, especially in 1 Peter the good news is something to be *obeyed*, for it announces that Jesus

is Lord.) This "outcome" or "*telos*" for those disobeying the command, stated or implied, in the good news is suggested in the citation of Proverbs 11:31 LXX.[22] Conclusion: if one is suffering according to God's will (i.e., for one's commitment to Jesus) then by doing right commit oneself to "a faithful Creator" or "a trustworthy Creator." It is interesting that here closed to his conclusion 1 Peter returns to the Father and the beginning of the "theodrama"[23] rather than to Jesus. Perhaps this resumes his earlier references to God as Father, as the origin of the family, although this time under the rubric of the whole creation. Or perhaps it indicates that far from being immigrants in a homeland that has become foreign, they are under the protection of the real landlord of the whole world.

It is time to "bring it on home," so to speak. 1 Peter addresses the elders or presbyters, i.e., the leaders of the various communities, leaders who, if one accepts the Pauline examples, had been appointed by the delegate of Jesus who had founded the community[24] or by that delegate's representative (as in 1 Timothy and Titus). The author places himself in this same category, that of a shepherd appointed by the chief shepherd (taking a humble position and not pointing out that Peter's appointment was unmediated and theirs surely mediated),[25] although he indicates that he has witnessed the sufferings of the Anointed One and is a participant in the honor or glory that is about to be revealed.[26] The two poles of suffering and glory are spanned in the one person; the whole history from Jesus' death to his revelation as Lord is grasped in one embodied phrase.

Shepherds are, then, to tend the flock, which persecution will attempt to scatter. It is God's flock, not theirs. And while this duty was certainly both dangerous and costly, they are to do it: (1) willingly "according to God" or perhaps "in a God-like manner" (which could indicate God's self-giving love), (2) freely (versus greedily, for the money), and (3) exemplarily (versus domineering). In other words, they are to do it like Jesus, whose example has been cited multiple times in this letter. Then Jesus the chief shepherd, when he appears, will give them "an unfading crown of glory/honor." There is a shift of metaphor here in that a chief shepherd should give wages or perhaps a better position. The "crown" was given by a ruler to a victorious general or the like,[27] but this is no laurel garland (as Caesar was pictured with on coins and in statuary) but one that is "unfading," since it is no passing honor. The elders experienced temporary labor and shame, for surely leaders would be

singled out for rejection and calumny, but this is contrasted with permanent honor. The "exiles" or "immigrants" turn out to have leaders like Jesus, for they are really God's people incognito. The sheep are not the usual type of flock.

If there are leaders, there must be followers, who are the younger members of the flock. They are to submit to leadership, i.e., to follow. And everyone is to be humble with respect to others in the community. Humility is a core Christian virtue, which is why Benedict of Nursia could write a chapter on it (chapter 7) in his *Rule*, although he is by far neither the first in church history to assert its importance nor the last. This point of humility is underlined by the use of Proverbs 3:34 LXX.

The final summary uses a catchword connection to the humility mentioned above: the rejection and persecution they are enduring are the "mighty hand of God" so "humble yourselves" under it, for then he will later exalt them. Anxious in the fact of such rejection? Give anxiety to God, since he cares about the addressees. There is, however, one who does not care about them: the devil. He wants to swallow them down. One resists the devil, not directly, but by standing firm in one's commitment to Jesus as Lord, realizing that their experience is not foreign to that of the rest of the followers of Jesus. Our author realizes that shaming, rejection, discrimination and the like as the lot of followers of Jesus was not limited to the north half of Asia Minor. He has a truly apostolic vision for the situation of the followers of Jesus in general. Having exhorted them in the present, 1 Peter immediately summarizes the hope they should have for the future: the present is "a little while" and the future is "eternal glory in Christ." In other words, our author relativizes their present suffering in the light of eschatological hope. And given that he has pictured Jesus as a ruler or "Anointed One," he rightly closes this summary with "to him be sovereignty unto the ages."

The letter closing includes a commendation of the letter carrier, Silvanus,[28] along with the exhortation that their situation of exile and suffering is "the true favor of God" and that therefore they should "stand fast." This is underlined by a reference in the greetings to a person in another place of "exile," "She who is in Babylon, likewise chosen, greets you, as does my son Mark." That "Babylon" is a cipher for Rome, as it is in Revelation 17-18, is generally accepted. The "she" is variously interpreted as either the community in Rome (*ekklēsia* being feminine) or Peter's wife (whom Paul claimed traveled with Peter, 1 Cor 9:5). Mark could be a physical son, of course, but that is less likely unless

it was a son born after Peter started traveling, since Mark is not a common Galilean Jewish name, or Mark could be Peter's "interpreter" (according to Papias), John Mark. What is clear from the sending of greetings is that they knew and were known to at least some in the communities in Asia Minor. Probably the easiest reading is that this refers to his wife and John Mark, for then one has two individuals mentioned in parallel and then one is more in parallel with the Pauline greetings that only name communities ("the church in x's house") if there has been community to community contact. But the point of the phrase is a shared exile, a shared sense of being an immigrant. The implied readers are family in their various communities (thus the "kiss of love," which was a family greeting) even if, perhaps, estranged from their blood families. In this context of exile and hope, the final benediction of "peace" is most fitting.

Conclusions

This article has been a summary of the teaching of 1 Peter, which means that it has been condensed and has relied on the author's previously published work to fill in the detailed arguments. Yet there has been a continual theme in the article, one focusing on the main theological points of 1 Peter, which is that being born again makes one part of the people of God, a new race, and therefore makes one a stranger in one's own land of physical birth. The believer is in a new family with a new *pater familias*. He or she is in a new political entity, with a new king. But there is more to it than that: this king already rules, and his presently unseen rule will be openly manifested. Therefore, the one who has obeyed the good news lives in expectancy of this open manifestation and that hope determines their life in the present. In that sense eschatology determines ethics. This perspective of having an unseen but active king determines the degree to which they can fit into the culture around them by stressing virtues that both cultures have in common and the necessity of reframing their suffering inflicted by that culture both as conformity to Jesus their Anointed King and as something to be reversed when his rule is openly revealed. This reframing is reinforced by a vision of his resurrection triumph that is to be kept in mind. The result is a consciousness that they are indeed a different people, God's people, God's temple, God's priests, even though, most likely, born in the lands in which they live. They

therefore have a different loyalty than the people around them, which should result in community solidarity under the leadership of their elders as they live in the light of Jesus' rule and their hopeful future.

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1 See John H. Elliott, *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, 2001), 3.

2 Having written *The First Epistle of Peter* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990) and updated it in *A Theology of James, Peter, and Jude: Living in the Light of the Coming King* (BTNT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), this scholar is well-aware that much more could be written. Even John H. Elliott's *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, massive as it is, does not fully explore this letter.

3 Because of this limited goal, virtually nothing will be said about issues of introduction.

4 Many translations use the term "seed," but the first century usage in such a context was for that which a man sowed in a woman (her uterus being thought of as a type of field) that grew into a child. Thus "sperm" is a better translation, since in contemporary usage (in contrast to first century usage) it is the proper term for the male gamete of animals, while "seed" is generally reserved for the reproduction of plants.

5 The Patristic writers, of course, would take this as "Word of God," i.e., Jesus as Word. And there is a sense in which this is true, for 1 Peter clearly indicates that this came about through Jesus. Yet the quotation of Scripture in the next verse with its reference to God's spoken word and the creational reference contained there make it more likely that God's spoken and proclaimed word is intended, although again in Patristic understanding this is also Jesus the Word.

6 This is one indication that the addressees are not thought of as Jewish, for the traditions handed down in the Jewish patrimony are thought of as righteous and people are criticized for not following them. Another indication of largely-gentile origin comes in the next point in this paragraph in that the addressees have become a people of the promise of Exod 19:6, which would not have been something that a Jew would have needed to become.

7 The term "renewed people" is used deliberately, for, given that the author is presented as Simon Peter, a Jew, the addressees are not a gentile-Christian replacement for Israel, but are born again into the people of God (often in the first century thought of as a subset of Jews, a faithful remnant of Israel, such as those gathered by John the Baptist through repentance). They therefore have a heritage in ancient Israel.

8 This author acknowledges Reinhard Feldmeier, *The First Letter of Peter* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2008) as the first scholar to point out this realistic connection between their state of being in exile and their new birth. Once that is realized, the letter's theology makes sense. They are treated as Jews, a foreign people or nation living among "us" (and, while technically legal, Jews were still despised, subjected to harassment, and even to pogroms), but a worse type of Jew in that they had been fellow citizens and now had changed their allegiance and were actively conversionist (at this stage the question as to whether they were "legal" or not in the eyes of Rome had not yet arisen, although in terms of local persecution what Rome thought was a remote and unimportant matter).

9 There is no intention in this article of denying that in the New Testament salvation occurs in the past tense. It does indeed do so. But is also occurs in in the present (as an ongoing process) and in the future. All three tenses occur in the Pauline corpus, but 1 Peter is distinctive in his focusing on the present and future tenses. The same can be said for "grace" or "favor" in 1 Peter.

10 One possibility is that the reference is to the redemption of the firstborn males, which was by a lamb. That would fit the probability that these people did not "come to new birth" all at the same time, but were reborn individually. If it were collective, one might think of the Passover, although in Hebrew the same term means "lamb" and "kid," which is clear in that the Passover animal could be taken from the sheep or the goats. However, in Greek the words are distinct, and our author's Semitisms appear to be Septuagintalisms (some of which have probably slipped into his speech as King James language slipped into the speech of the author of this article), so there is no clear evidence that 1 Peter was aware of Hebrew.

11 This reference to the *logos*, or word, is probably not yet the *Logos* = *Christos* identification that would appear early in the Patristic period, for that was dependent upon John 1, which is likely later than 1 Peter. Also,

in this 1 Peter passage in question 1 Pet 1:25, shifts the language to a synonym of *logos*, *rēma*, which shift would not be typical of the Patristic period.

12 Who "the Lord" is (God the Father or Jesus the Anointed One) 1 Peter does not clarify, although in the following verses it is clear that "the Lord" refers to the rejected stone, i.e., Jesus.

13 The date of 1 Peter is disputed, of course, so it is not clear whether the Jerusalem Temple is under the threat of destruction but still standing or long a smoking ruin. But such a reference as this is consonant with Jesus as the replacement of the Temple, a theme that runs through all the gospels, which is one reason why after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple followers of Jesus did not talk a lot about its being rebuilt, for it was already being rebuilt, believer by believer. Of course, in Rev 21 the New Jerusalem itself is a temple, indeed a Holy of Holies, built of and on people, continuing the Patriarchal old in the Apostolic new, with God himself living in its midst.

14 This author tends to use "Anointed One" or "Anointed King" or "God's Anointed King" for *Christos* rather than "Christ" because most, and perhaps all, writers of the New Testament were aware that *Christos* was Greek for the Hebrew usually transliterated Messiah (in English) and of the various Messiah's or anointed individuals in the Hebrew Scriptures, it was the coming rescuer, restorer, and king that was expected in significant parts of first century Judaism. Since *Christos* in itself would make little or no sense to a Greek speaker, it was surely explained as part of the proclamation of the good news (such as in answer to the question, "What does that mean that Peter is saying, 'You are the *Christos*, the Son of the Living God'?") or Christian initiation. Thus, it is this present author's assertion that the readers of the letters, including 1 Peter, who were all initiates, would surely hear *Christos* as Messiah or, in English "Anointed One" or "Anointed King" just as they would have learned to hear "Amen" as something more than a noise one makes in response to a prayer. The common use of it in transliteration in English likely makes scripture readers confuse a title with what they take to be a surname or nickname.

15 This honorable or virtuous is honorable or virtuous according to the norms of the surrounding society. Aristotle and later the Stoics, among others, had described virtuous behavior, and in many cases such behavior coincided with what Christians considered virtuous behavior (which is why the Pauline ethic is often compared to Stoic ethics), although the motivations were different. 1 Peter calls on the commonalities with culture, although in some cases the common value was applied differently by followers of The Way (as followers of Jesus of Nazareth were referred to at least part of the time).

16 Because the slave was "mindful of God" the good that he or she did might well be that of following The Way. That is, since these slaves were part of the household, they were expected to worship the household gods and follow the household behavior (which could include sexual exploitation of both male and female slaves). Following Jesus would mean slipping off to the gatherings of "that Jesus sect" and gently refusing to engage in the worship of household deities, thus undermining both the household and the state. Some masters would tolerate this deviation because they could see other values, such as honesty, in such slave, values which were cultivated by what was in their pagan eyes a Jewish sect. Other masters would try to force the slave to stop their Christian behaviors, recognizing that they were ultimately subversive of their authority.

17 While Genesis is not particularly critical of Sarah, her behavior towards Abraham was a significant embarrassment in the Hellenistic period. She not only told him what to do, but he did what she told him. Various Hellenistic Jewish authors, such as Philo and Josephus, had different ways of handling the embarrassing narratives (or even just leaving them out). Meanwhile modern interpreters have searched for places where Sarah actually calls Abraham "lord," a search largely in vain if one is thinking of that as a serious noun of address. The *Testament of Abraham* shows another way of handling Sarah, which is by making her into the ideal Hellenistic wife. In that document she addresses Abraham as "my lord" multiple times. For further documentation see Peter H. Davids, "A Silent Witness in Marriage: 1 Peter 3:1–7," in *Discovering Biblical Equality* (ed. R. W. Pierce, Rebecca M. Groothuis, and Gordon Fee; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 224 - 240.

18 A most accessible discussion of this rhetorical technique is found in John S. Kloppenborg, "The Reception of the Jesus Tradition in James," in *The Catholic Epistles and the Tradition*. (ed. Jacques Schlosser; Leuven, Leuven University Press, 2004), 93-141.

19 The use of the 1 Enoch, or at least the material now found in 1 Enoch, is the one major text or tradition (they both knew the content of the "Book of the Watchers" either as text or as oral tradition, but may well have known other parts of the work as well) that 1 and 2 Peter have in common. Whereas 1 Peter frequently cites the Hebrew scriptures (in their Greek translation), 2 Peter never does. 2 Peter does refer to narratives found in the Hebrew scriptures but does so only in the form they are found in Second Temple literature. Yet

both 1 and 2 Peter use 1 Enoch, as does Jude. See further Robert L. Webb, "The Apocalyptic Perspective of 1 Peter," unpublished Th.M. thesis, Vancouver: Regent College, 1986, on the use of 1 Enoch, and Peter H. Davids, "What Glasses Are Your Wearing? Reading Hebrew Narratives Through Second Temple Lenses," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 55.4 (2012): 763-771.

20 For the detailed exegesis see Peter Davids, *First Epistle of Peter*, 128-147. While something of an aside in 1 Peter, this has become the major focus of many commentators. This author compares the day of baptism to a wedding day: the couple may or may not have made many promises to one another beforehand, but on the wedding day they officially make the pledges on the basis of which they are declared married and held to be so by their society, and these pledges are made in the context of a powerfully symbolic ceremony, effecting the state of life to which they refer. Whether the analogy holds or not, it is clear that the early accounts of baptism in Patristic literature all include as the central part of the rite the making of a pledge to Jesus as Lord (and often the renunciation of the devil before making that pledge) and the invocation of the Triune name. This was done in the context of dipping into water, although *Didache* 7, arguably the earliest post-New Testament account of baptism presently existing, indicates that while cold running water was preferred, the temperature and amount of water was not an issue. In need, a bit of water could be poured on the head in the Triune name. Whatever the amount and type of water, 1 Peter and the Patristic writers agree that the water + pledge + Triune name combination effects what it symbolizes, i.e. "baptism now saves you."

21 One must remember that throughout 1 Peter the honoring of God by the world at large happens when the Anointed One's rule is revealed. So, in the human sphere this might not be presently actualized, only in the spiritual or divine sphere.

22 See Peter Davids, *First Epistle of Peter*, 172, and the literature cited there. There is no indication that our author knew the Hebrew version.

23 This term for the grand narrative of Scripture that has God as its chief protagonist is frequently used by Bishop Robert Barron in his podcasts (see www.wordonfire.org) but is probably not original to him. It is what Barron uses where N. T. Wright (whose work Barron draws on) would use "metanarrative," although "theodrama" explicitly includes the divine actor in the term.

24 *Apostolos* is Jesus' term for the Twelve and Paul's term for his own office, but it is also Paul's term for delegates of the various believing communities (e.g. 2 Cor 8:23) and perhaps 2 Peter's term for those who found communities (2 Pet 3:2). However, when it comes to appointing people to office, it is only the former two uses of the term (and those they in turn delegate) that function in this way in the New Testament. This is true not only of presbyters and overseers (also translated "bishops"), but also of the appointing of "deacons" (although that translation can be quite misleading) in Acts 6, for while the aggrieved community nominates the candidates, according to the text, the Twelve appoint.

25 This is true whatever one decides about authorship, for the author or ghostwriter certainly writes in the person of Peter.

26 This is a vivid statement in that his participation or sharing in that glory or honor is something that now characterizes him, even if the glory or honor itself is "about to be revealed," i.e. is future, even if imminent. Here the eschatological anticipated joy of 1 Pet 1:6 becomes vivid indeed.

27 The "crown" or garland was also given to the winners in athletic contests, but with (1) the strong emphasis here on Jesus as coming king, (2) the picture of the presbyters as overseers or administrators, and (3) the lack of athletic metaphors, which are only found in other New Testament writers, it is arguable that it is civic and military honors that are in view here, not athletic ones.

28 Since the letter carrier would normally both read the letter aloud and interpret it to the recipients, perhaps answering questions about the author and expanding on some topics, if appropriate, it was important that the addressees know that the letter carrier was fully trusted by the author. That the formula used here indicates the letter carrier and not the amanuensis has been demonstrated by E. Randolph Richards, "Silvanus was not Peter's Secretary: Theological Bias in Interpreting δια Σιλουανοῦ ... ἐγραψα in 1 Peter 5:12," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 43.3 (2000): 417-432.