

1 Peter 1:1-2

Outline of 1 Peter:

- Grace means *Security* – 1:3 - 12
- Grace means *Sobriety* – 1:12 - 2:10
- Grace means *Submission* – 2:11 – 3:12
- Grace means *Suffering* – 3:13 – 4:19
- Grace means *Service* – 5:1 – 11

Theme: To encourage faith and endurance in the face of persecution within a pagan culture.

Key verse: *“Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.”*

Simply put – *Christ gives hope in hurtful times.*

Peter *informs* his readers regarding their living hope (1:13-25).

Peter *exhorts* his readers to hopeful living despite their life circumstances (2:13- 4:11).

Peter *comforts* his readers in the midst of their fiery ordeal (4:12-5:14).

Verse 1

Peter an apostle – The word ‘*apostle*’ means messenger. Peter as one of the original twelve had full apostolic authority. The requirement for apostleship was relationship with Jesus and being an eyewitness of His resurrection (Acts 1:21-22).

Of Jesus Christ – This phrase is only attached to the NT office of apostle and implies the importance of their office and authority.

To those who reside as aliens – This word carries both the ideas of temporary residence and alien nationality. Peter uses this word again in 2:11 along with the word “strangers” to designate that our true citizenship is in heaven and the millennial kingdom and ultimately the new heavens and earth. See Ephesians 2:19, Hebrews 11:9, 13, Philippians 3:20-21.

Scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia – The word “scattered” is *dispora* and is only used here and in James 1:1 and John 7:35. While James and John use the word in a literal sense Peter not only uses it literally but also applies it to all believers who are displaced into the wilderness of a harsh and hostile world.

Who are chosen –NASV Verse 1; *Elect* – KJV Verse 2

Why the different placement of the word? The actual Greek word order of verse one is: *“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect sojourners of the dispersion of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, (Verse 2) according to the foreknowledge of God...”*

Elect or chosen is an adjective that modifies “sojourners”. The question is *what is “according to the foreknowledge of God...”*

The KJV and NASV translate “*elect*” as a noun, that is, “*elect ones*” while the actual Greek word order and word form (adjective) suggests “*elect sojourners*”.

God’s divine foreknowledge refers to the whole thought of verse one. The fact that they are “*aliens*” and they are “*scattered*” does not take God by surprise. Knowing that they are “*choice sojourners*” according to God’s foreknowledge is a great source of comfort. To many of the readers who were Jews these terms would bring up memories of God’s chosen people Israel. They would understand that Peter thought of them as having a privileged status before God. This word, *eklektos*, is used often in the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament to refer to Israel. Note Psalm 105:6, 106:5, Isaiah 42:1, Isaiah 65:9.

In 2:4 Peter calls Jesus “*eklektos*” when he says He is a “*...living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God.*” He also uses “*eklektos*” again in 2:6 referring to Jesus and in 2:9 referring to the believers he is addressing.

“To ‘elect’ something, simply means to ‘choose’ it, and *there isn’t a single verse in the Bible that says God elects individuals for eternal life or for eternal death*. When you look up the passages dealing with God’s elections or choices, you find they are to *service and privilege*, not to *eternal life*. In sum, biblical election is vocational: God chooses people, places and things to serve Him in a task or mission.”

Shawn Lazar (Grace in Focus, September & October 2014)¹

“The phrase ‘*chosen sojourners*’ thus becomes a two-word sermon to Peter’s readers: they are ‘*sojourners*’, not in an earthly sense... but spiritually; their true homeland is heaven... Yet they are ‘*chosen*’ sojourners, ones whom the King of the universe has chosen to be his own people, to benefit from his protection, and to inhabit his heavenly kingdom.”

Wayne Grudem (1 Peter, Tyndale NT Commentaries)²

Verse 2

According to the foreknowledge of God the Father – The noun *foreknowledge* only occurs two times in the NT. Here and in Acts 2:23. The verbal form appears five times: Acts 26:5; Romans 8:29, 11:2; 1 Peter 1:20, 2 Peter 3:17.

The noun is *prognosis* which simply means forethought.

The verb is *proginosko* which means to have knowledge beforehand.

This foreknowledge relates to their status as “*elect sojourners of the dispersion*”. Their present circumstances are in full accord with the divine foreknowledge of God the Father. This is meant to be a great comfort to them as they understand God is at work in their lives had has deliberate plans and purposes for them.

By the sanctifying work of the Spirit – The work of the Holy Spirit in our lives is to set us apart from the world by giving us the power to live for Christ. Their existence as “*elect sojourners*” is being lived in the realm of the sanctifying work of the Spirit.

And be sprinkled with His Blood – In most OT sacrifices the blood was sprinkled on the altar or on the mercy seat. However on several occasions the blood is sprinkled on people (Exodus 24:5-8, Exodus 29:21). The reference here probably relates to Leviticus 14:6-7 which relates to the sprinkling of blood on someone for cleansing. Note David’s request in Psalm 51:7 to be “*purified with hyssop*”. This parallels 1 John 1:7 where the blood of Christ continually cleanses us from sin. This cleansing is not for eternal justification, that occurs once for all time (Hebrews 9:11-12, 10:10, 12, 14) but for daily walk.

Peter describes here a life lived in accordance with the divine plan of the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit and by the continual cleansing from the defilement of sin by the application of the blood of Christ in their daily walk. Father, Son, and Spirit are all involved in our daily walk!

May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure – Grace and peace are God’s freely given, undeserved favor toward his people. Peter asks that it would be multiplied to them; that all their moments would be filled with God’s undeserved spiritual blessings.

¹ Lazar, Shawn, Election for Baptists, Grace in Focus Magazine, Vol. 29, Number 5, Sept./Oct. 2014. p. 5.

² Grudem, Wayne A., *1 Peter*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, IVP, England, 2009. p. 53.