

FIRST PETER CHAPTER TWO

A Call to Continued Spiritual Growth (vv.1-3)

Prerequisite to GAP (v.1)

VERSE 1 **Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander** (Ἀποθέμενοι [aor.m.pt.{imper.}m.p., ἀποτίθημι, apothithemi, take off {clothes}; “putting aside”] οὖν [conj.] πᾶσαν [adj.acc.f.s., pas, all] κακίαν [acc.f.s., kakia, evil; hateful feelings, malice] καὶ [conj.] πάντα [adj.acc.m.s., pas] δόλον [acc.m.s., dolos, deceit] καὶ [conj.] ὑποκρίσεις [acc.f.p., ὑπόκρισις, hypokrisis, hypocrisy] καὶ [conj.] φθόνους [acc.m.p., phthonos, envy] καὶ [conj.] πάσας [adj.f.p., pas, all] καταλαλιὰς [acc.f.p., καταλαλιά, katalalia, slander]),

ANALYSIS: VERSE 1

1. The conjunction “therefore” is resumptive, referring back to 1:22ff.
2. Since we are to love one another as members of a new order of humanity, we must continually overcome the indwelling STA.
3. The reality is that we continue to sin and fail due to the inherent weakness of the ISTA.
4. The verb “putting aside” is a participle used as an imperative.
5. The verb evokes the metaphor of taking off clothes (Acts.7:58, where the vb. ἀποτίθημι occurs).
6. The idea is the isolation of the ISTA, which is accomplished via the Rebound Technique.
7. We are to lay aside the old wardrobe, which characterizes our former manner of life.
8. The following verses use this verb in the same way as v.1 (Rom.13:12; Eph.4:22,25; Col.3:8; Heb.12:1; Jam.1:21).
9. Since the items mentioned are sinful, it follows that the “putting aside” is based on the consistent use of 1Jn.1:9.
10. Peter’s list of STA vices is confined to things that are pervasive among men.
11. The list is not intended to be inclusive by any means.
12. All sin should be put aside as one would an unacceptable piece of clothing.
13. The list consists of five vices, three of which are preceded by the adjective “all”.
14. The adjective “all” draws attention to all possible instances and variations of “malice”, “deceit”, and “slander” respectively.
15. The noun “malice”, or “ill will” (κακία), has to do with a mental attitude that is resentful of others.
16. Malice is the desire to cause harm or see harm come to others.
17. It is used in this connection in Mt.22:18, Rom.1:29, 1Cor.5:8, Eph.4:31, Col.3:8, Ti.3:3, and 1Pet.2:1.

18. The nursing and acting out of grudges against particular people or society as a whole characterizes this STA vice.
19. The temptation to fall into this sin was fueled by the mistreatment these believers were suffering at the hands of their persecutors.
20. “Guile”, or “deceit”, would also be a temptation in the face of persecution.
21. Jesus refused to engage in deceit to make His path easier (cf. 2:22).
22. Deceit is the practice of deceiving.
23. It is a form of dishonesty.
24. It is the attempt to cause another to believe an untruth.
25. The synonyms for the verb “to deceive” include: mislead, delude, and beguile.
26. Deceit implies the imposing of a false idea or belief that produces bewilderment in the victim.
27. Deceit is a common temptation for believers, among themselves or in relation to the cosmos.
28. Both “malice” and “deceit” were common temptations brought on by persecution.
29. The remainder of the list shifts from the singular to the plural.
30. In other words, the reading is “hypocrisies”, “jealousies” (envy), and “slanders”.
31. Hypocrisy comes from the Greek plays in which an actor plays a part.
32. It is faking to be what one is not, or to believe what one does not.
33. It is the false assumption of an appearance of virtue or religion (cf. Mt.23:28).
34. This sin especially characterized the Pharisees of Jesus’ time (Lk.12:1).
35. Hypocrisy is incompatible with Christian love (Rom.12:9).
36. Peter fell into this sin at Antioch (Gal.2:13).
37. False teachers are guilty of this sin (1Tim.4:2).
38. Pretense is not compatible with sound wisdom (Jam.3:17).
39. Envy, or jealousy, is a mental attitude sin, a manifestation of the ISTA (Gal.5:21).
40. The religious leaders were jealous of Jesus, which lead to mental attitude murder (Mt.27:18).
41. The last item on the list is, literally, “all slanders”.
42. This particular noun occurs only here and in 2Cor.12:20.
43. It refers to maligning or speaking ill behind one’s back (the old word is “backbiting”).
44. This is a sin of the tongue.
45. The absence of this sin is a mark of maturity (Ps.15:3).
46. Those who spread slander are fools (Prov.10:18).
47. This sin was strongly denounced under the Law (Lev.19:16).
48. There is a curse upon those who practice this sin (Ps.140:11).
49. Slander destroys friendships (Prov.16:28).
50. We are to separate from those who practice slander and gossip (Prov.20:19).
51. David was the object of this sin (Ps.35:15).
52. We are commanded to isolate this sin (Eph.4:31; Col.3:8).
53. Slander is sponsored by the STA (Mk.7:21-23).
54. We should especially avoid the spreading of unsubstantiated rumors and talk.
55. The implementation of v.1 is essential to the intake of BD.
56. James 1:21 presents a parallel to 1Pet.2:1,2.

Importance of Basic Doctrine (v.2)

VERSE 2 like newborn babes (ὡς [*conj./compar.*] ἀρτιγέννητα [*adj.nt.p.*, ἀρτιγέννητος, *artigennetos*, *newborn*; *hapax*] βρέφη [*n.nt.p.*, βρέφος, *brephos*, *baby*]), **long for the pure milk of the word** (ἐπιποθήσατε [*aor.act.imper.2.p.*, ἐπιποθέω, *epipotheo*, *long for*, *yearn*] ἄδολον [*adj.nt.s.*, ἄδολος, *adolos*, *pure*; *hapax*] γάλα [*acc.nt.s.*, *gala*, *milk*] τὸ λογικὸν [*def.art.acc.nt.s. w/adj.acc.nt.s.*, λογικός, *logikos*, *spiritual*; 2X: *Rom.12:1*; “*of the word*”]), **so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation** (ἵνα [*conj./result*] ἐν αὐτῷ [*prep.w/inst.nt.s.pro.*, *autos*, “*by it*”] ἀύξηθῆτε [*aor.pass.subj.2.p.*, ἀύξάνω, *auzano*, *grow*] εἰς σωτηρίαν [*prep.w/acc.f.s.*, *soteria*, *salvation*]),

BD is Only for Believers (v.3)

VERSE 3 if you have tasted (εἰ ἐγεύσασθε [*part./condit.* + *aor.mid.ind.2.p.*, γεύομαι, *geuomai*, *taste*; *first class condition*]) **the kindness of the Lord** (ὅτι χρηστός ὁ κύριος [*conj./coord.* + *adj.n.m.s.*, *chrestos*, *kind*, + *def.art.w/n.m.s.*, *kurios*, *lord*; *literal translation*: “*that the Lord is kind*”]).

ANALYSIS: VERSES 2,3

1. Peter introduces a metaphor to underscore the importance of building a strong spiritual foundation through the assimilation of basic doctrine.
2. The words “like newborn babes” presuppose the previous mention of the doctrine of regeneration (1:23).
3. The metaphor’s point of comparison is a baby’s strong and instinctive longing for a mother’s milk.
4. The imperative “long for” is recognition of strong positive volition towards that which is necessary to spiritual growth and survival.
5. To a newborn baby such longing is totally natural and inevitable.
6. But the longing for the “pure milk” of which Peter speaks is something which must be commanded (not so with a baby), and something on which believers must fasten their attention and effort, like Ph3 hope or righteous conduct or fear of God or love for each other (cf. 1:13,15,17,22).
7. The “pure milk” to which Peter calls them is basic doctrine.
8. As newborns are suited only to milk, so spiritual newborns are in need of the ABCs of BD (cf. Heb.6:1).
9. More advanced doctrine corresponds to solid food (cf. Heb.5:12,14).
10. The milk (basic doctrine) of which Peter speaks is further described as “pure”.
11. This adjective emphasizes the purity of the doctrine that results in good spiritual health and growth.
12. “Pure milk” is a metaphor for the expression “sound doctrine”, or “sound wisdom”, mentioned in Scripture (Job.11:6; 12:16; Prov.2:7; 3:21; 4:2; 8:14; 18:1).

13. A steady diet of basic doctrine results in spiritual growth to the next stage and beyond.
14. Basic doctrine enables the new convert to grow through the stages of childhood to adolescence.
15. Growth depends upon the purity of the doctrine learned and the willingness to grow based on application.
16. The noun “salvation” refers to Ph1 adjustment to God.
17. The believers to whom Peter wrote were in various stages of growth.
18. All believers, regardless of spiritual level, should “long for” basic doctrine.
19. Verse 3 carries the implication that only believers can assimilate or comprehend BD.
20. What is taught explicitly in 1Cor.2:6-14 is implied here.
21. The phrase “if you have tasted” is a first class condition, which means “if you have tasted (and you have)”.
22. The verb “tasted” means to experience and is use here and in Heb.6:4,5 of experiencing salvation.
23. The verb is also used of Christ’s experience in bearing sin (Heb.2:9).
24. Tasting is also analogous to GAP (Job.34:3).
25. The object of the verb here is “the kindness of the Lord”.
26. Their first experience with doctrine was when they heard and believed the pure milk of the gospel.
27. The message of salvation is basic doctrine.
28. You cannot know if a thing is good unless you taste it.
29. The noun translated “kindness” is also used as a synonym for “good/goodness”.
30. The Hebrew for the LXX of χρηστός is *tobh* (cp. Ps.34:8a “O taste and see that the LORD is good”).
31. Peter had in mind Ps.34:8a when he wrote v.3.
32. In alluding to Ps.34:8a he is applying the verse to the favorable experience his readers had when they first heard and believed in the gospel of their salvation.
33. Peter changes the aorist imperative of the LXX of Ps.34:8a to an aorist indicative.
34. Instead of inviting his readers, as the psalmist did, to “taste and see (learn by experience) that the Lord is good”, he assumes that they have already done so in their recent history (first class condition).
35. Plato uses the word for food also, and Peter carries out the metaphor in milk, as in Lk.5:39 where the noun “good” is *chrestos*.
36. Those who have heard and believed know that the Lord is “good/kind”.
37. Only those who have tasted Ph1 “milk” (the gospel) have experienced the “kindness” of the Lord.
38. God in His mercy, or kindness, is revealed specifically in Jesus Christ (cf. Ti.3:4-6).
39. Negative volition repudiates the sensation upon the palate of their ears (cf. Rom.2:4).
40. Peter’s audience had indeed tasted, and the experience excited the appetite for more, to which he exhorts them in v.2.

Participation in an Elite Community (vv.4,5)

VERSE 4 And coming to Him as to a living stone (προσερχόμενοι [*prep.mid.pt.n.m.p.*, *proserchomai*, *come to, approach*] πρὸς ὸν [*prep.w/acc.m.s.*, *hos*, “to Him”] λίθον ζῶντα [*acc.m.s.*, *lithos*, *stone*, + *pres.act.pt.acc.m.s.*, *zao*, *live*; “living stone”]) **which has been rejected by men** (μὲν ἀποδοκιμασμένον [*part./contrast*; *as in*: *on the one hand, followed by “but”*, + *pf.pass.pt.acc.m.s.*, ἀποδοκιμάζω, *apodokimazo*, *reject {after evaluation}*]), **but is choice and precious in the sight of God** (ὁὲ [*conj./advers.*] ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον [*adj.acc.m.s.*, *eklektos*, *chosen*; “choice”, + *adj.acc.m.s.*, *entimos*, *valuable*; *precious*; *esteemed*] παρὰ θεῶ [*prep.w/dat.m.s.*, *theos*; “in the sight of God”, or “before God”]),

VERSE 5 you also (καὶ αὐτοὶ [*conj./adjunc.* + *pro.n.m.p.*, *yourselves*]), **as living stones** (ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες [*conj./compar.* + *n.m.p.*, *lithos*, *stone*, + *pres.act.pt.n.m.p.*, *zao*, *live*]), **are being built up as a spiritual house** (οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος πνευματικὸς [*pres.pass.ind.2.p.*, *οἰκοδομέω*, *oikodomeo*, *build*, + *n.m.s.*, *oikos*, *house*, + *adj.n.m.s.*, *pneumatikos*, *spiritual*]) **for a holy priesthood** (εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον [*prep.* + *acc.nt.s.*, *hierateuma*, *priesthood*, + *adj.acc.nt.s.*, *hagios*, *holy*]), **to offer up spiritual sacrifices** (ἀνενέγκαι πνευματικὰς θυσίας [*aor.act.infin.*, ἀναφέρω, *anaphero*, *offer up*, + *adj.acc.f.p.*, *pneumatikos*, *spiritual*, + *acc.f.p.*, *thusia*, *sacrifice*]) **acceptable to God through Jesus Christ** (εὐπροσδέκτους [*adj.acc.f.p.*, *euprosdektos*, *acceptable*] [τῷ] θεῷ [*def.art.w/dat.m.s.*, *theos*] διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [*prep.w/gen.m.s.*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSES 4,5

1. The author now comes to his main thought, that as Christians they form an elite community assured of God’s protection for time and eternity.
2. His opening words, “And coming to Him” (pres.mid.pt.m.p. of *proseuchomai*), are a further echo of Ps.34:5a, of which the LXX reads “Come to Him and be enlightened”.
3. So, suddenly switching from his picture of Christ (“the Lord”) as being the Christian’s spiritual sustenance, he represents Him as “a living stone”.
4. The “coming to” he speaks of is their initial experience of salvation.
5. It corresponds to the “tasting” of v.3.
6. There is an apparent and intended contradiction between “living” and “stone” (cf. “living hope” in 1:3 and “living word” in 1:23).
7. Peter’s metaphor is based on his understanding of certain O.T. texts (Ps.118:22 and Isa.28:16, quoted in vv.6,7) and upon the teaching of Jesus in Mt.16:17-19 and Mk.12:10.
8. Christ is the “living stone” based on who He is and on the fact of His resurrection.
9. Peter goes on to describe the Lord as a “stone which has been rejected by men”.

10. This is, of course, based on Jesus' treatment at the First Advent when the leaders of Judaism and the Roman authority rejected His claims and crucified Him.
11. This occurred in fulfillment of the Messianic prophecy of Ps.118:22, which was appealed to as a major proof text by the early Church (cf. Acts.4:11) to document Jesus' identity as the chosen Messiah.
12. The contemptuous discarding of "the stone" directly alludes to the Lord's rejection and execution and, by implication, to the sufferings of the Asian Christians.
13. Though "rejected by men", God had a sovereign and eternal purpose with respect to "the stone", which Peter develops more fully in the verses to follow.
14. In contrast to human judgment, the "stone" is characterized as "choice and precious in the sight of God".
15. The adjective translated "choice" (ἐκλεκτός) means "chosen/elect" and refers to the eternal purposes of God for His Son.
16. "Choice" is an unacceptable translation.
17. The adjective "precious" (ἐντιμος) could better be translated "esteemed/distinguished" (cp. Lk.7:2; 14:8; Phil.2:29).
18. It is not the same word found in 1Pet.1:19, translated "precious".
19. A better translation of this phrase is: "chosen and highly esteemed in the sight of God".
20. The center of interest is Jesus Christ as the Stone, but not (at least at this point) as either the cornerstone or foundation of the building.
21. In v.5 Peter moves on with the words "You also" to include the Asian Christians in the metaphor.
22. They, too, are "living stones", and like Christ, the "living stone", they are chosen and precious.
23. The shift from the singular to the plural of this phrase comes as naturally to Peter as a shift from Christ the *eklektos* to Christians as *eklektoi* (cf. 1:1).
24. The basis for the shift is the statement of v.4 that says "coming to Him".
25. To believe in Jesus Christ and belong to Him is in some sense to be like Him.
26. Only momentarily does Peter focus attention on believers individually (i.e., as a plurality of "stones"), for his real interest is in their corporate identity.
27. The corporate identity of the readers is summed up in the phrase "a spiritual house".
28. "Spiritual house" (οἶκος πνευματικὸς) is a predicate nominative because it is only in being "built up" that the many "stones" are identifiable as one "spiritual house".
29. The building material of this house is made up of stones that are living.
30. The words "are being built up" refers to incorporation into this "spiritual house".
31. As the individual "stones" come into existence in connection with personal regeneration, they are immediately and passively incorporated into "a spiritual house".
32. So the phrase "are being built up" (pres.pass.ind.2.p.) has its fulfillment in current positional sanctification.
33. In an ordinary building the stones do not build themselves up, they require human effort.
34. Within this extended metaphor the stones require a builder, who in this case is God who, via the BHS, enters believers into union with Christ.
35. The prepositional phrase "for (εἰς) a holy priesthood" indicates the purpose of the "house".
36. What is the relation between "spiritual house" and "holy priesthood"?
37. The use of "priesthood" in v.9 as a distinct designation for the people of God argues for a close connection between "spiritual house" and "holy priesthood".

38. Verse 9 interprets or clarifies v.5.
39. In the metaphor the “spiritual house” and the “holy priesthood” are one and the same.
40. Under the Law the Temple was the place for the priesthood.
41. In the metaphor believers of the CA are both the house (the “Temple”) and the primary occupants of the house (the priesthood).
42. So Peter identifies all believers of the present dispensation as having full membership in a special priesthood.
43. The phrase “spiritual house” is matched by the phrase “spiritual sacrifices”.
44. To offer up such sacrifices the recipients of this letter must first be constituted a “spiritual house” and a “holy priesthood”.
45. By the way, our connection with Christ, the “living stone”, which “stone” happens to be the chief cornerstone (vv.6,7), is that we share in all that He is, including the fact that He is a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Heb.7).
46. A distinct corporate identity with Jesus Christ is essential to the offering of authentic Christian worship.
47. The work of priesthood is to offer sacrifices.
48. The phrase “spiritual sacrifices” draws attention to sacrifices that are not actual ceremonial observances, just as the “house” is not an actual physical structure.
49. What is the reality behind this aspect of the metaphor?
50. If “spiritual sacrifices” are not actual ceremonial sacrifices, what are they, and how are they offered?
51. The two most pertinent N.T. parallels to the offering of “spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God” is Rom.12:1 and Heb.13:15,16.
52. Romans 12:1 calls believers to an all-out commitment to do the will of God.
53. The Hebrew’s text references a two-pronged testimony of praise to God and good deeds toward those in need.
54. From these two citations it is apparent that “spiritual sacrifices” refers to a wide range of divine good production and not just things that are traditionally associated with formal worship, such as praise and giving of money.
55. So the “spiritual sacrifices” that we, the members of the royal priesthood, are to “offer up” are inclusive of all acts of divine good.
56. This is especially apparent from the Rom.12:1 citation.
57. Just being filled with God the HS fulfills the requirement of “a living and holy sacrifice”.
58. That is what it means “present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice”.
59. The adjective “acceptable” (εὐπροσδέκτους) has to do with both that which is offered up and the manner in which it is offered up.
60. The thing offered up must be Biblically prescribed and the individual believer priest must be in fellowship.
61. Terminology similar to “acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” is similar to several N.T. passages that speak metaphorically of sacrifice (Rom.12:1; Phil.4:18; Rom.15:16; Heb.13:16).
62. The concluding phrase “through Jesus Christ” corresponds to the “through Him” of 1:21 (cp. 4:11).
63. Everything we do as a part of service and worship is through our great high priest.