

1 Peter Chapter 2

1 Peter 2:1 "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,"

This is actually a continuation of chapter 1.

We see that Peter is still giving instructions on how to live the Christian life.

We must shed the old self that was worldly, and take on the garment of righteousness provided for us by Jesus.

“Laying aside”:

The Christian’s new life can’t grow unless sins are renounced.

When that purging takes place, then the Word does its work (verse 2).

"Malice":

This means badness, depravity, malignity, or trouble.

The Greek word for evil is used 11 times in the New Testament to indicate that wickedness which comes from within a person (verse 16; Rom. 1:29; Eph. 4:31; Titus 3:3).

"Guile":

In the verse above, means trick, craft, or deceit.

We all know a few hypocrites, and pray that we will not be among their number.

They pretend to be believers, but have not really given up their worldly ways.

All of these things spoken of here, including envies and evil speaking, and are ways unbecoming to a Christian.

For those, who have truly dedicated all of their selves to Christ, will not have any of these things in their lives.

1 Peter 2:2 "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"

We all know that new-born babies get their nourishment from milk.

Christians should get their nourishment from the Word of God (Bible).

It should be the desire of our hearts to fellowship with God in His Word each day.

A baby cannot live long without milk, and a Christian cannot grow without their studying the Word of God.

A Christian develops a desire for the truth of God's Word by:

1. Remembering his life's source (1:25; Isa. 55:10-11; John 15:3; Heb. 4:12);
2. Eliminating sin from his life (verse 1);
3. Admitting his need for God's truth (verse 2), "like newborn babies"; (Matt. 4:4);
4. Pursuing spiritual growth, (verse 2, "by it you may grow");
5. Surveying his blessings (verse 3, "kindness of the Lord").

1 Peter 2:3 "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord [is] gracious."

This again, is speaking of feeding on the Word of God.

Just as the milk for the baby is sweet, so is the Word of God.

The study of the Word of God will bring peace to your soul.

The grace of the Lord is sufficient for me.

"Tasted":

At salvation, all believers experience how gracious the Lord is to those who trust Him.

That should compel believers to seek more of that grace in pursuing His Word.

Verses 4-8

"Are built up":

This is the main verb in this section.

The choice of the word shows that the building is not haphazard, but is according to an intelligent plan brought to reality by a Master Craftsman, which sets for the fact of our integration into the body of Christ (verse 5).

The overall design is "a spiritual house," which describes the nature of the body of Christ, that is, a house in which God dwells.

The material used to build the house is figuratively presented "as lively" (lively), "stones".

Christ is also described as being a “living stone” (literally a worked stone” or “a precious stone that is living”).

“Disallowed”:

By Israel but “acceptable” (Greek eklekton entimon, literally “elect and precious) “to God.”

1 Peter 2:4 "To whom coming, [as unto] a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, [and] precious,"

“To whom coming”:

“Coming,”:

In the Greek here means to come with the idea of remaining.

Here it means to remain in Christ’s presence with intimate fellowship (John 15:5-15).

The ever living Stone is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We know that Peter brings this up, because it was the Jews, who rejected Jesus.

If we build upon the Rock (Jesus Christ), we shall not be moved by trials and temptations.

Both a metaphor and a paradox, this phrase from the Old Testament emphasizes that Christ, the “cornerstone” and “stone of stumbling,” is alive from the dead and has a living relationship with saved humanity.

“Disallowed ... chosen”:

The messianic credentials of Jesus were examined by the false religious leaders of Israel and contemptuously rejected (verses 6-8; Matt. 12:22-24; John 1:10-11).

But Jesus Christ was God’s precious and elect Son, ultimately authenticated through His resurrection from the dead (Psalm 2:10-11; Matt. 3:17; Acts 2:23-24, 32; 4:11-12; 5:30-31; 10:39-41).

It, of course, was not just the Jews that rejected Jesus, but mankind in general.

We know that salvation in Jesus is the most precious thing we can receive.

1 Peter 2:5 "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

“Ye also, as lively stones”:

Christians are so closely identified and united with Christ that the very life that exists in Christ exists in them also (Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:3-4; 2 Pet. 1:4).

Jesus is the Cornerstone, and we are the building blocks.

The word translated lively here, could better have been translated living.

He (Jesus), is living, and we are living as well.

Together we build the house.

God will tabernacle with men.

We are, in a sense, His dwelling place.

“Built up a spiritual house”:

Metaphorically, God is building a spiritual house, putting all believers in place, integrating each one with others, and each one with the life of Christ (Ephesians 2:19; Heb. 3:6).

“A holy priesthood”:

Old Testament priests and New Testament believer-priests share a number of characteristics:

1. Priesthood is an elect privilege (Exodus 28:1; John 15:16);
2. Priests are cleansed of sins (Lev. 8:6-36; Titus 2:14);
3. Priests are clothed for service (5:5; Exodus 28:42; Lev 8:7; Psalm 132:9, 16);
4. Priests are anointed for service (Lev. 8:12, 30; 1 John 2:20, 27);
5. Priests are prepared for service (Lev. 8:33; 9:4; 23; Gal. 1:16; 1 Tim. 3:6);
6. Priests are ordained to obedience (verse 4; Lev. 10:1);
7. Priests are to honor the Word of God (verse 2; Mal. 2:7);
8. Priests are to walk with God (Mal. 2:6; Gal. 5:16, 25);
9. Priests are to impact sinners (Mal. 2:6; Gal 6:1);
10. Priests are messengers of God (Mal. 2:7; Matt. 28:19-20).

The main privilege of a priest, however, is access to God.

“Offer up spiritual sacrifices”:

Spiritual sacrifices mean God-honoring works done because of Christ under the direction of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the Word of God.

These would include:

1. Offering the strength of one's body to God (Rom 12:1-2);
2. Praising God (Heb. 13:15);
3. Doing good (Heb. 13:16);
4. Sharing one's resources (Heb. 13:16);
5. Bringing people to Christ (Rom. 15:16);
6. Sacrificing one's desires for the good of others (Eph. 5:2);
7. Praying (Rev. 8:3).

There is no more physical sacrifice.

Jesus fulfilled all of the sacrifice for us.

This is speaking of the spiritual, and not the physical sacrifice.

This is not a sacrifice of obligation.

It is a sacrifice of love.

Jesus is the High Priest, and all believers in Christ are priests unto God.

The sacrifice that we offer up unto God is praise.

Verses 6-8

Three Old Testament passages employing the "stone" metaphor are used by Peter to show that Christ's position as chief cornerstone of the new spiritual house was foreordained by God.

That same stone is also going to be the stumbling stone that brings down the unbelieving in judgment (Matt. 21:42, 44).

1 Peter 2:6 "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded."

You can see from the following Scripture that Zion, which is symbolic of the church and figurative is in the realm of the New Covenant as Sinai is the realm of the Old Covenant.

Isaiah 28:16 "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner [stone], a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."

This is speaking of Jesus as Cornerstone and all believers in Christ who make up the church.

"Confounded", in the verse above, means that these Christians will not be confused about what they believe.

They will be established in Jesus.

1 Peter 2:7 "Unto you therefore which believe [he is] precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,"

Jesus is the cornerstone that keeps the church together.

There is nothing more precious than knowing you are saved.

To know beyond a shadow of doubt that you will spend eternity with Him, is precious indeed.

To not believe causes you to be left out.

1 Peter 2:8 "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, [even to them] which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."

"A stone of stumbling and a rock of offence":

This is quoted from Isaiah 8:14.

To every human being, Christ is either the means of salvation if they believe or the means of judgment if they reject the gospel.

He is like a stone in the road that causes a traveler to fall.

The same Stone that the Christian leans upon for strength is the same stone that those who reject Him stumble over and fall.

The verse above seems to indicate, that even some who profess to know Jesus become disobedient and fall on the Stone.

To stumble at the Word, means they do not have an understanding of the Word.

"Stumble at the word": Unbelief is their disobedience, since the call of the gospel to repent and believe is a command from God.

"Also they were appointed":

These were not appointed by God to disobedience and unbelief.

Rather, these were appointed to doom because of their disobedience and unbelief.

Judgment on unbelief is as divinely appointed as salvation by faith.

The Holy Spirit of God teaches us the meaning of the Scriptures.

If we do not receive help from the Spirit, we will not understand fully the Word.

It seems God had appointed them to be part of His spiritual house, but through disobedience, they have missed the mark of being lively stones for Christ.

Verses 9-10

The priesthood of the believer and his unique relationship to God are described by the terms “a chosen generation ... a royal priesthood ... a holy nation.

Thus, the New Testament church stands in a unique relationship to God as did the Old Testament of Israel.

1 Peter 2:9 "But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:"

“Chosen generation”:

Peter uses Old Testament concepts to emphasize the privileges of New Testament Christians (Deut. 7:6-8).

In strong contrast to the disobedient who are appointed by God to wrath (verse 8), Christians are chosen by God to salvation (1:2).

“Royal priesthood”:

Priesthood of Believers.

Every believer has the privilege and responsibility of direct access to God.

In the Old Testament, the family of Aaron was designated as a priesthood to God.

In the New Testament that priesthood becomes the birthright of every Christian.

Like their Old Testament counterparts, believer-priests have the privilege of access to God.

The concept of a kingly priesthood is drawn from (Exodus 19:6).

Israel temporarily forfeited this privilege because of its apostasy and because its wicked leaders executed the Messiah.

At the present time, the church is a royal priesthood united with the royal priest, Jesus Christ.

A royal priesthood is not only a priesthood that belongs to and serves the king, but is also a priesthood which exercises rule.

This will ultimately be fulfilled in Christ's future kingdom (1 Cor. 6:1-4; Rev. 5:10; 20:6).

With privilege comes a twofold responsibility, sacrifice and intercessory prayer.

The sacrifices of the believer are his body (Rom. 12:1-2), his praise to God (Heb. 13:15), his substance (Rom. 12:13), and his service (Heb. 13:6).

The Christian ought also to pray on behalf of others (Col. 4:12).

“Should shew forth the praise of him who hath called you”:

Not only are New Testament believers a “chosen generation” and a “royal priesthood” to show forth His praises now, but they will continue to hold these “offices” in the everlasting future as well (Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14; Revelation 1:6; 5:10).

This is one of the most encouraging Scriptures in all the Bible.

God has chosen us to become His sons.

This generation of people upon whom the end has come, we be the chosen of God to be priests unto Him.

We are His family.

Jesus is High Priest, and we are priests.

All believers in Christ are of the house of Israel.

Christians are the spiritual house of Israel.

Jews are the physical house of Israel.

Christians are this holy nation.

We are a peculiar people as far as the world is concerned.

We are separated unto God. The marvelous Light is Jesus.

Before we come to Christ, we are walking in darkness.

When Jesus takes up habitation inside of us, we are filled with His Light.

He is the Light of the world.

When we are filled with Jesus, we have all Light dwelling within us.

1 Peter 2:10 "Which in time past [were] not a people, but [are] now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

“The people of God”:

The ideas of this verse come from (Hosea 1:6-10; 2:23; Romans 9:23-26), where the reference is explicitly to the calling of a people made up of Jews and Gentiles.

All Gentiles were thought of as dogs by the Jewish people, and that was before Christ came and made them a people.

This then, is speaking of Gentiles who have become spiritual Israel.

The law was not given to Gentiles.

They were not considered God's people.

Jesus Christ is available to all mankind.

His mercy, not only endures forever, but endures to all mankind.

“Now have obtained mercy”:

God generally has temporal mercy and the compassion of common grace on His creation as a whole (Psalm 145:9; Lam. 3:22).

Paul made reference to this when he said that God is the “Savior of all men”.

But God has eternal mercy on His elect church by forgiving their sins and eliminating their judgment (Rom. 9:15; Titus 3:5).

In the Old Testament, the prophet Hosea promised that Israel, though remaining outside of God's blessings for a long period of time, would eventually come under God's mercy.

God's dealing with Israel was somewhat of a pattern for His dealings with the believers under the New Covenant, who previously were outside God's covenant, but have been brought under the mercy of God by faith in Christ (Eph. 2:4-13).

1 Peter 2:11 "Dearly beloved, I beseech [you] as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;"

“Strangers and pilgrims”:

In this section, Peter called his readers to a righteous life in a hostile world.

Christians are strangers in a secular society because their citizenship is in heaven.

There are 3 perspectives from which Christians can look at their obligation;

1. Strangers (verses 11-12)
2. Citizens (verses 13-17)
3. Servants (verses 18-20)

In (verses 18-25), Peter shows how Christ set the example by living a perfect life in the midst of His hostile environment.

Strangers in the verse above, is speaking of people who are not native to the land.

He is probably speaking to Jews about the Gentile believers in this instance.

“Abstain from fleshly lusts”:

Perhaps more literally “hold yourself away from fleshly lusts.”

In order to have an impact on the world for God, Christians must be disciplined in an inward and private way by avoiding the desires of the fallen nature (Gal. 5:19-21), where “fleshly lusts” (include much more than sexual temptations).

“Which wage war against the soul”:

“War”, i.e. to carry on a military campaign.

Fleshly lusts are personified as if they were an army of rebels or guerrillas who incessantly search out and try to destroy the Christians’ joy, peace and usefulness (4:2-3).

The warfare a Christian is in is between the spirit and the flesh.

Galatians 5:17 "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: So that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

Galatians 5:16 "[This] I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."

1 Peter 2:12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by [your] good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

“Conversation honest”:

This is rich in meaning and implies the purest, highest, noblest kind of goodness.

It means “lovely”, “winsome,” “gracious,” “noble,” and “honorable.”

Having been disciplined in the inward and private side, the Christian must outwardly live among non-Christians in a way which reflects that inward discipline.

“Evildoers”:

The early Christians were falsely accused of rebellion against the government with such false accusation as” terrorism (burning Rome), atheism (no idols or emperor worship), cannibalism (rumors about the Lord’s supper), immorality (because of their love for one another), damaging trade and social progress, and leading slaves into insurrection (Acts 16:18-21; 19:19, 24-27).

We see from this verse, that he is speaking to the Jews about the Gentile believers.

The Jews who are Christians should set an example for the Gentile believers since they were familiar with the law of God and had more background in serving God than the Gentiles had.

Peter is telling them to live good wholesome lives with good works following, so that the Gentiles could see their good work and praise God for their works.

There seemed to be a little feuding between the Gentile believers and the Jewish believers.

Peter was trying to make them realize how important it was to get along with each other.

“Day of visitation”:

A common phrase in the Old Testament (Isa. 10:3; Jer. 27:22), warning of God’s “visitation,” which is His drawing near to people or nations in either judgment or blessing.

In the New Testament “visitation” speaks of redemption (Luke 1:68; 7:16, 19:44).

Peter was teaching that when the grace of God visits the heart of an unbeliever, he will respond with saving faith and glorify God because he remembers the testimony of believers he had observed.

Those who don’t believe will experience the visitation of His wrath in the final judgment.

1 Peter Chapter 2 Questions

1. What were believers to lay aside in verse 1?
2. What are these instructions for?
3. What does "malice" mean?
4. What does "guile" mean?
5. What is a hypocrite?
6. What do new-born babies get their nourishment from?
7. What do Christians get their nourishment from?
8. Who is the living Stone in verse 4?
9. What is the most precious gift we can have?
10. As lively stones, are built up a _____ house.
11. Who is the priesthood in verse 5?
12. What is the sacrifice the Christian offers God?
13. The sacrifice the Christian makes is not of _____.
14. What is Zion in verse 6 speaking of?
15. What does "confounded" mean in verse 6?
16. To the disobedient, what is the Cornerstone?
17. What does verse 8 seem to indicate about Christians who stumble at the Word?
18. What helps us understand the meaning of the Scriptures?
19. All believers in Christ are the house of _____.
20. What is the difference in a believer and a Jew?
21. Who is the marvelous Light?
22. What were all Gentiles thought to be (by the Jews), before they received Jesus?
23. What are two things to remember about the mercy of God?

24. The warfare a Christian is in is between the _____ and the _____.

25. Why should the Jews set an example for the Gentile believers?

26. What shall they behold that will cause them to glorify God?