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The concept of hope in First Peter

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THE CONCEPT OF HOPE

IN FIRST PETER

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by

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CHAPTER I

WORD STUDY OF "HOPE"

Ἐλπίς, sometimes written ἐλπίς,[1] has the basic meaning of "expectation." It is a neutral word with the outcome of the coming event either good or bad. But even in classic Greek, the term connoted mostly the expectation of something good for the one hoping.[2]

Both the content and the manner of the hope is included in ἐλπίς.[3] The fulfillment of this hope may be either in life or after-life--A soldier may hope to be quickly promoted,[4] St. Paul may hope shortly to see his readers. Ovid states that he "shall be raised to immortality above the lofty stars."[5]

Ἐλπίς appears in the Septuagint for the Hebrew words בטח, trust; חסה, flee for refuge; קוה, wait, hope; מחסה, that to which one flees for refuge; תקוה, expectation.[6]

The hope of the Old Testament may have a joyful or a fearful

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[1]Joseph Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Co., c.1889), p. 205.

[2]G. Abbott-Smith, A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament (Edinburgh: T. T. Clark, 1953), p. 147.

[3]G. Kittel, Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 515.

[4]Moulton and Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1919), III, p. 205.

[5]Metamorphoses XV, 871.

[6]Kittel, op. cit., p. 515.

outcome. The hope tends to become a change of states. Out of the concrete idea of trouble in this life, there appears the hope for a trouble-free state. Man looks to the heavens for help. Man's help is someone or something mightier than himself.[7]

Trust and certainty is always in ἐλπίς when the hope is placed in God. "Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in thee" (Ps. 33:22). However, when the hope is not in God, it becomes uncertain and creates anxiety and fear. "So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish" (Job 8:13). The true believer is urged to hope and trust in God.

> But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in Thee (Ps. 5:11).

This hope then becomes the picture of walking hand in hand with God (Ps. 23:4).

The Messianic hope rings clear in the Old Testament. This hope is both positive and negative, but in both senses the believer is blessed. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is" (Jer. 17:7). The positive side of the messianic hope is that the Messiah will come to rule and purify Israel (Is. 9:6). "Let Israel hope in the Lord . . . and He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities" (Ps. 130:7f.). The negative side is that the Messiah will pronounce the punishment upon the godless enemies of God's people, because they had fought against the Jews and incurred God's wrath (Is. 61:2). Included in these two thoughts is the idea that the Messiah will rule over all nations forever.

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[7] Ibid., p. 517.

> And there was given him dominion, and glory, and kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom which shall not be destroyed (Dan. 8:14).

There will be a "Garden of Eden" for the pious and a "Gehenna" for the unjust, either of which is merited by the deeds of the Law which are the fruits of one's faith. Here are the roots for the New Testament Pharisaic religiosity in Judaism wherein ritual and deeds provided one's entrance into the "Garden of Eden."[8]

The messianic hope was not for the individual, but it was for the entire nation. The individual is only considered as part of the whole. ". . . but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel" (Joel 3:16). The non-Jew to become a partaker of the results of the messianic hope must subscribe to the Jewish law, ritual, and circumcision.[9]

Ἐλπίς in hellenistic Judaism ends in death. There is a hope to see one another after death. There are some advantages to be gained by death in war. Horace states that the "Muse does not allow the praise-deserving hero to die: she enthrones him in the heavens."[10] The pious' hope is in God, and here hope has the character of "trust." Hope is, therefore, a general protection and health with help given for specific problems.

Ἐλπίς in the New Testament is used for an exclusively good

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[8] Ibid., p. 521.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Carmina, IV, 8.28.

outcome.[11] The word is used in common speech for an expression of a strong desire for something which may be possible, but not certain. Paul often uses the expression to express his desire to see his reader and speak στόμα πρὸς στόμα. However, the hope is employed mainly for the future of the believer when he reaches his eternal reward in heaven. St. Paul points out that the hope is in future time by saying, "Hope that is seen is not hope" (Rom. 8:24). He also states that the hope rests in heaven, "for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye have heard in the word of the truth of the Gospel" (Col. 1:15).

One must be a believer in Christ to be a partaker of this hope; "Christ is our hope" (I Tim. 1:1). The person "without hope" is the unbeliever according to Paul (Eph. 2:12).

This hope is a comforting hope for the believer, because he is a member of the "Good Shepherd's" flock, who knows His sheep and gives His life for the sheep (John 10). The reason for this comfort is the certainty which the believer has. This hope is certain because God is the source of the hope (II Thess. 2:16). God has worked through Christ to make the world right with Himself. Christ died to pay the debt man incurred because of and by sinning. The believer can see that God is satisfied with Christ's work by the resurrection (I Pet. 3:5), which is God's stamp of approval on Christ's work. Therefore, the resurrection of Christ plays an important role in the theology and preaching of the Apostles. Whereas the Old Testament believers looked for the coming of the Messiah, the New Testament believers looked at Christ's resurrection.

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[11]Abbott-Smith, op. cit., p. 147.

Though comfort and joy are part of this hope which fills the spirit of the one hoping, there is no thought that this hope will make this life a trouble-free situation for the believer. In fact, the opposite is expected and expressed; namely, the believer will partake in sufferings and glories with and like Christ. St. Paul points this out in saying, "And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye also of the consolation" (II Cor. 1:17).

This hope may not always be a logical hope. In other words, the believer rather than hoping should not hope; rather than expecting good, should expect evil. When Lady Reason points to the opposite, the believer remains in his hope. God, Who works above the reason of man, often seems to be working contrary to reason. The illustration of this hope contrary to reason is cited by Paul with the story of Abraham. God had told Abraham that he would be the father of many nations. However, Abraham had barren Sarah for his wife who, like Abraham, was old. Here, by logic and reason, one would be forced to think that hope would be invalid. Paul shows the character of Abraham's faith and hope by saying, "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations" (Rom. 4:18).

The hope of the New Testament is a practical, working hope. It is not a dreamy person sitting upon a mountain contemplating his navel. The New Testament hope makes the one hoping a worker.

> And this hope of the New Testament is throughout a "practical" hope; it is always related to life and action; the eschatological

future indicative is never without its here-and-now present imperative.[12]

As a matter in passing, it may be of interest to note that the Gospels which state the coming of the long-awaited Messiah, which give His teachings, and which fulfilled the expectation of the believing Israelite and supply the motivation for the Christian, do not use the word ἐλπίς . The verb-form appears only five times.[13]

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[12]M. H. Franzmann, "The Christian Hope and our Fellowmen," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVI (November, 1955), 746.

[13]Alfred Schmoller, Handkonkordanz zum griechischen Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: Privilegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1951) p. 162.

CHAPTER II

THE CERTAINTY OF PETER'S HOPE

> The first Easter opened up a new world of unexpected beauty and splendour. Those early Christians were like someone who has climbed a mountain through cloud and driving rain and all the way up has had no view - [sic] and then suddenly, when he is at the summit, the cloud disperses and there is unveiled before him a wide and glorious expanse of country that he has never seen before, the most striking characteristic that distinguished the early Christians from their pagan neighbours was their "hope". . . . The world of ancient Greek and Roman civilization was a world of fascinating beauty . . . but in spite of all the grandeur and charm it was a world without hope. Warmth there was in the enjoyment of the present, but the thought of the future struck chill. Old age was dreaded as the threshold leading out into the dark and cold. Life was a Damoclean banquet, sumptuous indeed but with the threatening sword all the time suspended by a thread. . . . Unlike their pagan neighbours, the early Christians were men of hope, who could look steadily into the future without fear, not with mere resignation, but with eager anticipation. A new dimension had been given to their lives - the dimension of the future, of eternal life.[1]

The singular aspect of Christian hope that makes it the most unique hope ever hoped by man is its certainty. Indeed, men have hoped throughout the ages with strong convictions that their hopes would have their final and ultimate culminations; but only Christianity offers a hope in which its culmination is as certain as the air man breathes, or the sun man sees. There is no "maybe," "if," or "might" in Peter's hoping. The end of the hope is certain, and thus the hope itself is unique.

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[1]C. E. B. Cranfield, The First Epistle of Peter (London: SCM. Press, 1950), p. 22.

The certainty of the Christian hope rests in the activity of the Triune God, Who will bring about the conclusion of the hope in His own time (I Pet. 5:16). There is no other influence acting upon this hope. Angels and Prophets would have loved to know or help, but God had decreed that this is entirely His own work. Christ, according to His human nature, did not know the time of the Last Day. Man has entirely and completely nothing to do with the hope of Peter. And for this very reason, it is a unique, different hope. Every pagan hope until this time had some element of man in and with the hope. Either man was the norm, the source, the acting one, or the waiting, passive subject which by doing nothing would someday in some way have the inspiration and insight to reach again to the First Cause. But man, in any and every case, was expected to do something to earn his reward.

In this section, the author will explore the expressions and thoughts which indicate the reasons for Peter's certainty. The gem of certainty, this unique aspect, will be placed before the mental eye in verbal pictures and turned from time to time in the light of intellectual searching so that the reader may extract the various thoughts and shades of thought which constitute Peter's certainty. Several threads will lead away from the central point to guide the student to an understanding of Peter's certainty.

The object of Peter's hope is σωτηρίαν ἑτοίμην. Σωτηρία is related to the word σωτήρ, a term which was applied by the Greeks to designate a helper, a general who delivered some people, a god. Zeus, Asclepius, Isis, Artemis bear the title. Thus Peter takes the term for a general deliverance and uses it for the eternal deliverance. He expresses his certainty for the deliverance by qualifying the

deliverance with ἑτοίμην . The project is finished and only needs to be unveiled when God choses the καιρῷ ἐσχάτῳ . Man could have nothing to do with this project; because when man hears about the project, it is something that is already finished by God. It is as a monument which is under a canvas only waiting to have the canvas removed. Peter is therefore urging his readers to "humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (I Pet. 5:6).

God will not fail Peter's reader, because the readers are ἐκλεκτοῖς by the combined action of the Trinity: namely, προγνώσιν... πατρός, ῥαντισμὸν αἵματος Ἰησοῦ, ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος . In other words, God the Father had a blueprint which God the Son completed; God the Holy Ghost introduces man to the work of the Son which will reflect the blueprint of the Father; and the final reward will be realized and materialized when the Father chooses the time He would like. Thus the reader is one "picked out."

This term was characteristic of Israel. It is now applied to the New Israel in the new aeon. The word is shaded by two hebrew words: בָּחַן, "to compare, examine and then select" (Is. 48:10), and בָּחַר, "to search out." The readers are selected by God, not because of their own beauty will excel their fellowmen, not because this would be the only means for God to possess something so wonderful as man, but because God does this. The reason for this selection is one of the thoughts which are above human reason. Man can only take this thought of selection and comfort himself with the benevolence of his Creator, Planner, Redeemer, "Shepherd and Bishop" of his soul. Therefore Peter may call the readers "God's chosen generation, priesthood belonging to

a King, God's nation" (I Pet. 2:9). He also informs the reader that he has been called out of darkness to receive God's mercy. The readers, before knowing God, could have been called οὐκ ἠλεημένη as was Hosea's daughter (Hosea 1:6). However, God in His πολύ mercy (I Pet. 1:3) -- not by man's deeds for this would be very uncertain -- selected us.

This selection for salvation is not something haphazard but "known before the foundations of the earth" (Mk. 8:31). Man's salvation alone is predestined by God. Man's damnation is man's own fault. "God would have all men to be saved" (Jn. 3:17). Faith grasps the doing and dying of Jesus like the hand takes the food from the plate. Peter does not agree with Calvin. "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" (I Pet. 2:8). This does not support the second part of Calvin's double election. This is merely an axiom. If Christ is not accepted, He shall be the ruin of man; yet not He, but the rejection of Him, or unbelief, is man's ruination.

> εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐτέθησαν to which also they were appointed [sic] by the divine ordinance, as Christ was appointed (τίθημι, v.6) [sic] to be the Stone. The will of God decrees the ruin of unbelief, as surely as the exaltation of faith.[2]

Thus we dare not say that some are appointed to damnation for this makes God a liar. God is not loving; He is not just if He allows a man to be born to eternal death.

ῥαντισμὸν αἵματος Ἰησοῦ is another cause for Peter's certain hope. The sprinkling of blood is very pregnant with symbolical

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[2]Francis Beare, First Epistle of Peter. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1947), p. 100.

meaning to the culture, people, and writings of the Old and New Testament periods. The sprinkling of blood in the Old Testament showed the establishment of a covenant between God and His people (Ex. 24:8). Now the new Israel which, like the old Israel, being founded in the wilderness, conquering enemies through and with God's direction, having trust in God, seeing God in the tabernacle of His son (John 1:14), is selected for and to God and His people for a royal priesthood because of, and signified by, the vicarious suffering and the glorious rising of the Christ. The readers are termed the "Children of God" and may consider and term God their "Father" (Pet. 1:11ff.). Faith then is the empty hand of the bankrupt, condemned sinner who appropriates to himself the merits of Christ. Peter assures the readers, though in a common New Testament negative manner (Acts 12:18, 19:23), that they "shall not be put to shame" (Pet. 2:6) because and by their faith. There is no need to doubt that Christ's sufferings and death were not sufficient, because ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ ἐκ νεκρῶν. ἐκ νεκρῶν might mean the "realm of the dead" in the Hebraic concrete sense. The resurrection was a sign of the Messiah according to the Old Testament (Hos. 2:6) as Paul points out saying, "He rose, according to the Scriptures" (I Cor. 15). In the resurrection we see that the Devil is dethroned, and death now means the beginning of life because the King of Life has replaced the King of Death. One may wonder if the Christian gives an indication of his weak faith when weeping at a funeral of a dear friend who died in the arms of Christ. The excuse is often given that it is human nature to do so. However, it is also human nature to offend God, to break the commandments, to be self-interested and self-centered. These things we term sin. When one asks the motivation for

the weeping at the grave, it is evident to the objective-thinking person that the reason is selfishness. The better part of wisdom indicates that the departed person has only begun to live. He has reached the goal of life, the ultimate in living, the greatest adventure in perfection. This writer hopes that someone will write some theological tome upon the subject.

Peter continues to dwell upon the resurrection by stating that the reader becomes a part of this resurrection through baptism. We do not believe that Peter argues for sacramentarianism. On the contrary, he states that washing with water merely removes the physical filth from the body. Faith in Christ, who died for man, went through the waters of death and was raised up out of death into life so that man may live unto God as those that are alive from the dead. As an analogy to Baptism, Peter gives the illustration of the Ark. It is a very fitting analogy. One quickly notes the points of comparison in the externals: namely, water, few saved, God's commands, God's direction and selection, and life as the reward. At times the benefits of Baptism are rejected. Some will refuse to baptize little children. These same people will not deny that circumcision was administered to children to show that they were part of the chosen race. This was the only way the grace of God could come to children. They could not read the Scriptures; they could not understand preaching or the significance of the sacrifices. God in His grace and love provided a manner and way for the little ones to come into His Kingdom, into His family. How this is possible and explainable to man's little mind is not to be questioned or offered as a valid

reason for rejection.[3] Let God be Lord.

God the Father had the blueprint. God the Son made the atonement. God the Holy Ghost provides the sanctifying action, ἁγιασμῷ (I Pet. 1:2). This word comes from ἁγιάζω , ἅγιος , and in the Old Testament, קדש. The word means "to set apart, dedicate for divine purposes." This is a subjective genitive in which God is the motivator. God sets apart these people for service to Him. The word "holy" oft times indicates a moral purity. This is the external which the Pharisee would present to the public. When Christ was part of that public, He termed such men "whited tombs." Christ was a soul-searcher. He sought to find out why man did what he did. That is one, if not the reason why the Widow's mites met with greater approval than did the show of gifts others presented. God set men aside. "The Spirit of Glory and of God resteth upon you . . . on their part He is evil spoke of, but on your part He is glorified." (I Pet. 4:14). While the readers were yet unbelievers, the Holy Ghost "wrought upon them that they might obey the truth, and sprinkled upon them the blood of Christ by which they would be cleansed."[4] The Holy Ghost created that faith which grasps the hope of salvation. It is as if the wrath of God, showered down toward man and Christ's doing and dying, pays the debt of man's sin--covers and protects man. (I John 2:2). It is as if God looked at the worm termed "man" through the magnifying glass of Christ's cross and there saw the saint. It is the strange paradox which makes the Christian <u>simul iustus et peccator</u>. This comes about through faith. Faith produces the

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[3]Howard Ferrin, <u>Strengthen Thy Brethren</u> (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1942), p. 143.

[4]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 15.

certainty of hope. Faith and hope are often one of the same things in Scriptures.

> It is clear that there is an intimate connection between hope and faith, so much so that they are almost synonymous in many places. Hope and faith can never be conceived the one without the other. Hope follows from faith. Hope deals with the "not yet" aspect of trust in God's promises. Hope is faith projected into the not yet consummated, but certainly expected, future. Rom. 15:13: "Now, the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,". . . . Our Confessions attempt to state the specific difference in this way: "If, however, anyone wishes to make a distinction, we say that the object of the hope is properly a future event, while faith has to do with future and present matters, and accepts in the present the forgiveness of sins as set forth in the promise." Werner Elert: "Here faith takes the form of hope, which in the specific sense of faith in the future and of patient expectation becomes a criterion of the Christians." Elert's remark that "there can be no Christian love where there is no Christian faith" may with equal validity be changed to read, "there can be no Christian hope where there is no Christian faith."[5]

In summary one might state that the difference between hope and faith is that hope looks to the future. Hope begins where faith ends at the grave. More correctly, both faith and hope end at the grave, for in both actions there is an element of being incomplete. Death introduces man into the state of the complete.

Another view, as we turn the gem of Peter's certainty of hoping, is reflected in the title he chooses to call himself, "apostle" (I Pet. 1:1). Ἀπόστολος comes from the word ἀποστέλλω. In the whole Greek tradition, ἀποστέλλω shows direction and goal. στέλλω and πέμπω are colorless, neuter words. They often have an object and a subject; but with these two ingredients, ἀποστέλλω is usually used. Ἀποστέλλω appears about seven hundred times in the Septuagint for the Hebrew word שלח. In the intertestamental

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[5]Herbert Bouman, "The Christian Hope," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVI (April, 1955), 244.

period, as well as in Rabbinic literature, the term is employed in the same sense as in the Septuagint. In the New Testament, the word appears one hundred thirty-five times with only fourteen appearances in the Epistles. The word indicates authority, goal, and direction. The authority comes from the fact of being sent by one who has authority. When the sender is God, as in this case, the authority of the person sent is obvious. God has sent him for His purpose. Thus Peter links his authority in the same sense that Moses, the Prophets, and John the Baptist linked their authority. Peter's ultimate goal is to express this certain hope so that the readers may be partakers of eternal life which is founded in the work of Christ. He comes announcing the grace of God to the readers. He comes as one who is sent rather than as one who was a disciple. Yet in the address of this letter, Peter states that he was an eyewitness to Christ's sufferings and glories (I Pet. 1:1f). But if he were asked his badge of authority, he would point to the purpose of God (Acts 9). He comes announcing an "inheritance."

This Κληρονομία is just the opposite of Israel which was "perishable" because of enemies. Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians conquered Palestine, carried off the people time and time again. In fact the history of the Jews is anything but glorious. One often wonders why God chose a race which was almost always in slavery. Yet God works in a mysterious way. The conquerors of the Jews and other nations have come and gone, some have faded into oblivion, yet the Jew remains to this day. Israel was often "defiled" by sin; the new Israel will have no sin. Again one wonders and marvels at the mercy and grace God showed in protecting, keeping, and continuing to love and want the Jewish race to be the race of His Son in His earthly life. The new Israel will not

"fade." The old Israel did fade by destruction from man and nature. But this will not be the fate of the new Israel. It will remain. It is out of the reach of man and enemies. Nature can not reach it to cause it to remain anything but wonderful. It is not placed on earth under the laws of earthly things, it is ἐν οὐρανοῖς. The readers themselves are φρουρουμένους. This is a term from the military vocabulary (I Pet. 1:5). The soldiers "guarded" the tomb of Christ. Those watchmen could not keep the Christ in the tomb. But what about those watching over the Christians? Peter states that they are guarded by the δύναμει θεοῦ (I Pet. 1:5). There is no one or anything greater than God. None can defeat Him, stop His action, or change His plans (Rom. 8:31ff.). Christians "are not left to their own resources; they are being guarded by God's power, and this is the guarantee of final victory."[6]

However, "V-E day" has not come for the Christian. Peter indicates that the reader is still in the arena of battle and that he should expect to suffer (Pet. 5:10). How often one can hear Christian men and women complaining of their fate in life. Yet, when one turns the gem of Peter's hope, a thread of the certainty of his hope appears in the suffering of the Christian. "The keynote of this Epistle is to be found in the word suffering. In fact, some form of the word suffer occurs sixteen times in this short letter."[7] The reader need not view suffering as a strange happening to him, but receive suffering as an honor, knowing that the Spirit of God supports them in all

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[6]Beare, op. cit., p. 58.

[7]Ferrin, op. cit., p. 125.

trials (I Pet. 4:12ff.). This tension between the old and the new aeon, between glory and suffering, between man and flesh, between man and his God is but a sign of things to come. It is the mark of this struggle to do the things of God.[8] This is just the opposite of the worldly man who harbors the "illusion that man's noblest and most indispensible work is the pursuit of happiness, the illusion that we are somehow entitled to this happiness."[9] On the contrary, the reader of Peter's Epistle is to expect ποικίλοις trials. ποίκιλος is used of Joseph's coat of many colors. The trials may be in the home, arena, among friends, in court, or alone. The trials might deal with the relationship between husband and wife, between slave and master, friend and friend. Peter encourages the reader to bear them; for in the light of the eternal happiness, the greatness of that joy, the length of that time will make these troubles only seem and really be but a little while. This is a wonderfully different and unique thought which only Peter expresses. The implications of a hope bringing the thought of suffering is not something one would expect from a hope that hopes in a good outcome. But Peter views this hope as a mark of one's belief. One almost hears Peter say, "Show me your faith in your suffering." Others had taken wonderful thoughts into mind to consider their lot which fate had given them. Civil pride, manliness, greatness could be motives and manners in which to view the rough roads of life. But to think of trials, many different types and stresses as a sign and part of hope, is the unique pattern

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[8]A. Nygren, Commentary on Romans (Philadelphia: Muhlenburg Press, 1949), p. 335.

[9]M. H. Franzmann, "The Christian Hope and Our Fellow Man," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVI (October, 1955), 832.

which Peter brings to bear. The oft-cited, almost worn-out, illustration of a cloth in which man in this life only sees the under side of a mass of strings in various colors, but after death he is shown to be a masterful piece of weaving from the upper-side, might serve well to bring out Peter's thought in this respect.

Other than being a mark of the Christian life, these trials have a disciplinary value in that this suffering is "necessary" to produce the δοκίμιον of the reader's faith. δοκίμιον is used of metals and people. It is that part which is tested, approved, and then accepted. Peter shows that the suffering to the Christian is as fire to gold. The fire is hot, the process seems endless, the time is long, and if the gold would have a voice, one might only guess as to what the sounds would be. Yet the refiner's fire is making the gold more and more precious. The time is long but the final product is worth the effort. Using this illustration to show God as the Refiner, Peter states that the gold-refiner's product will in the end perish. However, when God is the refiner, His product will never perish. Faith will last forever (I Pet. 1:6). Character "is not made of luxuries. . . . Our Father is the refiner of gold; He seeks our purification."[10] And that is just exactly what persecution does. The Old Testament Israel was its purest after each infliction; that is, until it fell again. One often asks why the Christian church, though a hole-in-the-wall circle of believers, did not fade away when Judaism and Paganism where flourishing with mighty temples, many priests, and great rituals. The theologian replies that God was protecting the church. That is quite true. The

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[10]H. Ferrin, op. cit., p. 27.

historian often states that the means God used to protect the church was the flame of persecution. The other religions faded because their lot was too easy. They became rusty and flabby as would the runner who would refuse to exercise. But Christianity was under constant fire outside and inside the church. It would, therefore, seem that Christian people would take another look at their lots as Christians, thank God for the chance to build and to grow in their faith through the fire of persecution, trial, suffering or anything that would make the life seem like "picking up your cross and following Me" rather than "taking it easy and waiting for me."

Peter continues and adds to his concept of suffering by adding the example of Christ. Christ is to serve as an inspiration in suffering and as an example in behavior while suffering.

Rejection is a part of suffering. The Master was rejected by ἀνθρωπων . Note that Peter expands the term of the original quotation from "builders" (Ps. 118:22) of a nation -- the leaders -- to all mankind. He might have even thought of himself, the denier. But if Christians were to "put on Christ" (Acts 4:11, Eph. 2:20) should they not also expect some manifestation of rejection to be part of their lot?

When and if rejection should come, Peter cites Christ as having the proper behavior patterns that are to be expected. There are two qualities which are expected. The first is to "bear patiently" their lot as did Christ (I Pet. 2:20). It would be too numerous to attempt to cite all of the situations in which one could view the Incarnate of God bearing His lot patiently among and with men. One need only read the Gospels with the intent to pick out cases and situations where the Master bore patiently the ramblings of his disciples, the Pharisees and

people in their attempts to defeat, capture, enthrone, and impress Him. And then when one views the Christ in Passion Week, he sees the second point of not "reviling" those who attempt to harm Him (I Pet. 2:23). How easy it would have been for Christ to overcome his tormentors, step down from the cross, or eliminate any who would attempt to oppose Him. He never uttered a word of scorn. In fact, He prayed for His enemies.

Peter adds the motivation of reward to the reader. The reader who may be suffering will follow the Master in His Ascension to the great glory which shall be shared with all of the sons of God. But while the readers are yet in the arena of battle, Christ's Ascension is linked with blessings for the Christian. There will be gifts from the Holy Ghost (John 16:7ff.). Christ is the Intercessor for Christians. (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24). Christ is the High Priest standing before God offering the greatest sacrifice to God (Heb. 8:1). Also there is Christ in power, rule, and kingship (Acts 7:55; Phil. 2:9ff.). Therefore, though suffering for a little while, the reader will also reach heaven as Christ (I Pet. 3:22); and there, promises Peter, "Ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (I Pet. 4:13). Paul's statement is a summary of this when he stated: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

The final shade of Peter's certainty of hope is given by the eager anticipation of the prophets and angels. It is a common fact that if others have convictions which are equal with yours in outcome, situation, and content, it serves to establish you in your own belief that what you believe is true, and its outcome must be certain.

Peter states that the prophets of the Old Testament sought "in what

kind of an age" the Christ would endure His sufferings and glories for mankind and thereby obtain the needed duty which man was to make to appease God (I Pet. 1:11). The prophets were men of God. These men were given the honor to point to the Messiah. They were thought to have the greatest knowledge of the Messiah. And yet with all of their insights, Peter elevates his readers above the prophets of old saying that they searched to find out in what kind of an age the Messiah would come. Indeed the readers knew that full well. Peter was an eye-witness of that age. The readers might have seen the Christ at one time or another themselves.

Note also that Peter uses the plural of sufferings and glories. He must have been thinking of the individual incidents in Christ's life. Peter must have been reflecting over the glorious days when the Master was with them. Those were the days which Peter wished would return. And thus as he reports this single phrase, he reports it as if in retrospect.

Yet far greater than the prophets are the angels who did not have any insight on the plan of God the Father. Christ Himself in His human state did not know of the day and hour for the Last Day. The angels would have sincerely wanted to "stoop down and look intently" or "take a peek," which is the meaning of παρακύψαι, at God's plan and time of salvation (I Pet. 1:11). However, this plan was entirely God's doing. There is nothing haphazard about what God would do. God did not choose to have any other person in and with His plan in order that no blunder would be done, no mistake made, no possibility of uncertainty to creep into the divinely made and executed plan of the redemption of mankind. And because of this very fact that Peter constantly points and refers

all things in salvation to God, Peter can and does present this hope which is uniquely different in that the final materialized anticipation is definitely certain for him and his reader.

This then is the gem of certainty which Peter in great zeal and with great pains attempts to explain fully and completely to give to his reader. He wants his reader to form as firm a conviction as he himself has formed so that in all things the reader may be sure and certain. However, the first step to make within a person is the foundation. Thus Peter urged his readers to do some clear, hard thinking to establish their foundation in the certainty of hope. He thought of no better way to establish this than to show them that God had a blueprint. Christ and the Holy Ghost were to play the active roles in the blueprint. The Former was to be the center attraction of the leading role. The Latter was to proclaim Him and His deeds in every and any manner which He could do. Thus the "one sent," Peter is sent forth to do the proclaiming of God to those who are "strangers" on this earth traveling to their heavenly and their eternal home. They, as well as their home, are constantly and continually being guarded and watched over by the "power of God" itself. Thus there neither is, nor can there be, any possible uncertainty in this hope of salvation which was planned in and for eternity though it must pass through the period of time to which man is confined. These then, in summary, are the content, threads, and shades of Peter's certain hope which is presented in his First Epistle. In the next section, this author intends to lead the reader into the object of Peter's hope.

CHAPTER III

THE OBJECT OF FIRST PETER'S HOPING

Having discussed the texture and composition of Peter's hope, we proceed to that for which Peter hopes. It may be stated in an introductory manner that Peter spends very little effort in attempting to draw a definite picture of his object of hope. One could say that the smallest portion of this Epistle is spent in description. Without a doubt, this is why the concept of heaven is timeless in the conception of man. Peter must have known that an attempt to explain and define this unknown and unseen territory reserved for God's elect would be futile. However, he still attempts to draw a warm, soul-pricking thought to substantiate his certainty of hope. Therefore, he takes the emotion-packed, thought-filled term Κληρονομία and applies this as the object of his hope.

The term Κληρονομία is a natural term for Peter, a Jew. The term is used time and again in the Old Testament to express a possession that is given. The term has its roots in the Hebrew word יָרַשׁ meaning "take possession or occupation" of anything or place. It is used of Moses' coming to the promised land (Deut. 4:21); and Ahab wanting Naboth's vineyard (I Kings 21:3f.). Also the Hebrew word יְרֻשָּׁה lends flavor to Κληρονομία . This term was used of Mt. Seir when it was given as a possession to Esau by יָרַשׁ (Deut. 2:5).

In later Jewish thinking, the Κληρονομία is used to designate Palestine with rule in Jerusalem where the temple stood as a

visible manifestation of God being with and ruling over His people and the entire world. Rabbinic literature also agrees with this thought. It adds the thought of time associating the world dominion with the Messiah. No doubt this was one of the reasons why Jesus was not accepted as the Messiah when He came into the world. This may also explain why the Magi came to the capital city in search of the "King of the Jews" (Matt. 2).

In the New Testament, Κληρονομία is used of the kingdom "not of this world," heaven, the place where God is, the place where Christ shall greet the elect with "Well done thou good and faithful servant." Many passages do support this thought, such as "So that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs (Κληρονόμοι) in the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:7); and "Listen my beloved brethren, has not God chosen those who are poor in this world to be rich in faith and Κληρονόμους of the kingdom which He promised" (James 2:5).

Peter takes three adjectives in an attempt to draw an abstract picture based of concrete opposites. Drawing on the past history of the Jewish people, he describes the "inheritance" with glowing terms which again are overflowing with meaning, especially to a people who have no fatherland.

This Κληρονομία ἐστὶν ἀμίαντον, pure, undefiled, unstained by evil (James 1:27; Heb. 7:26). The Promised Land of the Old Testament had been that in its original state. But all too soon, idolatry, immorality, murder, disobedience and vice had corrupted the relationship of His people to God. The people had time and again turned their backs on their Shepherd and became a "people not mercied," a "people not loved" (Hosea). Other gods took the place of the true and only God.

The history of the Jewish people was not one of rulers, but of slaves. Only a brief Indian summer of rule under David and Solomon gave the Jew a glance to the coming rule of the Messiah. Therefore, Peter, with a very vivid comparison, uses a term which promotes, on the one hand, despair by reflection, and, on the other hand, excites enthusiasm by looking to the future. The term denotes God and His place which is given to His Elect at the time when He selects to materialize His creation. Peter, almost as a doxology, states in effect ὁ διατηρήσας τὸν ἑαυτοῦ τόπον ἀμίαντον (II Maccabees 15:34).

The second term Peter uses to describe this inheritance is ἀμάραντον, "durable, untouched by death" (I Pet. 1:4). Peter in using this term shows his Jewish heart and his Christian situation. Every Jew would be looking for a place where death would not hang over his head in a Damoclean fashion, where Jerusalem, and not Roma aeterna, would be the queen city. The Jew could look back on social, political, theological, economic, and personal persecution which the race had received from Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, and Roman empires. The Jewish heart of Peter was looking forward to the time when the Roman yoke could and would be thrust off and lost from its sight. Peter also demonstrates the Christian situation of his time. Lady death was near at hand for any and every Christian. Peter states that the "fiery trial" (I Pet. 4:12) should be accepted and expected. It is only left to conjecture as to what this trial might contain. Did he mean the day-to-day contacts where the Jew would be as willing to stone the Christian as to greet him? Or did Peter think of the arena or oil-soaked Christian bodies used as torches? Indeed, the Christian lot in this world of Peter was quite the opposite and quite a vivid and real comparison for

future glory in contrast with present reality.

Also there is in this term from the classic Greek the picture of the amaranthine flower which blossoms throughout the year. This might add a third aspect to Peter's personality, that of being a naturalist as was the Master who considered the lilies, the birds, and the foxes. There might also be the influence of Amos the great rustic and rural writer of the Old Testament who constantly and consistantly presents a gallant array of illustrations taken from Mother Nature.

The third adjective Peter uses to describe this inheritance is ἀφθαρτος, "imperishable" from a ravaging force, and, in a positive sense, "immortal." This term could be a summary term of "pure" and "undefiled." Whereas those terms demonstrate a passive element, this term is an active term with direct roots in God's activity. This word is used of things (I Cor. 9:25) and persons (I Cor. 15:22). As has been stated, the Old Testament Israel had been ravaged by human and natural forces. But the New Israel is above nature's rule and beyond the reach of man. Consequently, with God as the sole determining force in the creation of something good, there is nothing that is able to hinder or cause imperfection in the ultimate creation.

In summary of these terms, one could see where the Jewish-Christian reader of Peter's Epistle might say at the time of departure to his inheritance, "I am leaving the land of the dying to enter the land of the living."

Cranfield offers a very concise summary:

> In every true Jewish heart the thought of that inheritance (the promised land, Canaan; Deut. 34) [sic] stirred emotions too deep for words. Yet that inheritance could not truly be described as INCORRUPTIBLE, AND UNDEFILED, AND THAT FADETH NOT AWAY. Too often had it been ravaged by invading armies, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Greeks, Romans. Too often had it been defiled by Israel's own

> sins. Too often had its beauty faded, blasted by war or pestilence, or drought, God's chastisements of His rebellious people. The inheritance, about which the Apostle is speaking, is a new Canaan, one that cannot be ravaged by hostile armies or defiled by sin, one whose beauty is fadeless.[1]

With a great deal of reluctance, the writer would like to place his small opinion in this section concerning the concept of heaven. It is his belief that heaven can not be defined, nor can any picture even remotely attempt to describe this future crown of life. The bodies and minds will be perfect in this state. Joy will be glorified bliss. Evidence of man's change is seen in this life. At the age of four, the baby's delight is himself. At the age of sixteen, the girl is boy-crazy. At the age of thirty, the home is the center of man's joy. At the age of seventy, companionship is desired above all. School is an awful menace at the age of seven or seventeen; at seventy, it is considered one of the heights of life. If man in his normal, earthbound, mundane existance tends to change his values and important ventures, what would be the change when the sinner becomes a confirmed saint? Can the lad of seven have any vision or understanding to the extent that the man of seventy would have on the issues of life, love, problems, joys, and values? If not, then how may the finite mind be filled with so much audacity as to attempt to exact a picture of the infinite plan of God? Therefore, it is the writer's opinion to hold no knowledge in a concrete form as to the content of heaven but to confine his thoughts and actions on leading a life which is definitely affected by that aspiration's consummation. This the writer feels might be visibly substantiated by the discourses of Christ wherein one finds very few pictures of the

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[1]C. B. Cranfield, The First Epistle of Peter (London: SCM Press, 1950), p. 24.

eternal reward but very many imperative statements concerning this present, here-and-now situation. Enough said.

The culmination of this hope is in future time. Earthly existence is of a transitory nature which is ordered by and finds its terminus in time. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why Peter addresses his readers as παρεπιδήμοις (I Pet. 1:1),[2] a term which has the transitory coloring of "stranger" (παρεπιδήμος Gen. 23:4). This term was applied to Abraham denoting his legal state of no rights in a foreign land. The word is akin to πάροικος from which the term "parish" is derived.[3] Thus, Peter's reader is to consider himself as one who has been traveling from birth waiting to enter into a state of bliss and perfection. He is to consider himself in the "arena of combat"[4] in which his foes may be and are anyone and everyone. His spirit is not to be vindictive, seeking hate or revenge, he is to be actively submissive to those according to rank.

However, though classified a "stranger" and though in the "arena of combat," he does have divine protection. He is being "watched over, kept on deposit," τετηρημένην (I Pet. 1:4) and "guarded," φρουρουμένους (I Pet. 1:5) by θεός . The latter term was used of the guards watching over Christ's tomb. Therefore, this military term is applied to God's careful scrutiny of His children until he allows them to partake of his κληρονομία which is the σωτηρίαν ψυχῶν (I Pet. 1:9).

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[2]Edward Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (London: Macmillan & Co. LTD., 1946), p. 118.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Francis Beare, First Epistle of Peter (Oxford: Blackwell, 1949), p. 100.

σωτηρία means "to be saved or escape from one's enemies." Here the term denotes all of God's operation through and because of His divine and overflowing grace, χάρις .

The time selected for this hope's culmination is the καιρὸς ἔσχατος (I Pet. 1:5). καιρός may mean a "fixed date or period." It is often used in the LXX for מ״ע (Eccl. 3:1,17) and/or ע״ת (I Sam. 13:8,11). It is therefore a specific and designated time for an event to take place. A second meaning is "the right or opportune time" (Acts 24:25; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 5:16). The phrase καιρῷ ἐσχάτῳ may mean the entire New Testament period (I Pet. 1:20; 4:7). However, in this context, the term means the "Last Day, the final resurrection," the day when God reveals his salvation (I Pet. 1:5).

In summary we may state that Peter uses a term long understood and long filled with Jewish theological import. The term "inheritance" brought comforting water to a thirsty, battle-worn Jewish-Christian. This "inheritance" is "pure, undefiled, and imperishable." The Christian stranger on earth is traveling to his real home being guarded and guided every step of the way by his loving Father. The time for the salvation to be revealed to the Christian wanderer is vague and enigmatic to him but very definite and to be left to God's circumspect discretion. All in all, the picture used to describe the heavenly mansions is the Old Testament picture of the ideal Israel which had been God's gift to his chosen people. Now the ideal promised land is given to the new Israel which has been entirely founded and grounded by God's grace.

There is no more fitting statement as to the greatness of these thoughts than expressed by Ferrin:

Think of stepping on a shore and finding it Heaven!
Of taking hold of a hand and finding it God's hand,
Of breathing a new air and finding it celestial air,
Of feeling invigorated and finding it immortality,
Of passing from storm and tempest to an unknown calm,
Of waking up, and finding it HOME.[5]

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[5]Howard W. Ferrin, Strengthen Thy Brethren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1942), p. 32.

CHAPTER IV

THE EFFECT OF THAT HOPING BY FIRST PETER

Having discussed the certain culmination of Peter's hoping in an inheritance which will be revealed when God chooses the proper time, the here-and-now effect of this hope is to be expressed. This is sanctification in the wide sense. This is expressed in Scriptures with various phrases, such as "to do righteousness" (I John 3:7), "to do the commandment of God" (Lev. 28), "to decline from evil and do good" (Ps. 34:15), "walk in the ways of God" (Deut. 8:6), "walk with God" (Gen. 5:22), "fear and love God" (Ecc. 2:18), "to keep the commandments" (Ex. 16:4), "to walk in innocence" (Ps. 81:12), "to offer your members as arms of righteousness of God" (Romans 6:13), "to establish the members as righteousness in sanctification" (Rom. 6:19), "to serve God with a good conscience" (Acts 23:1), and "to serve God in holiness and righteousness" (II Cor. 7:1).

Peter indicates that because of the hope of the reader, endeavor is expected. Christianity is not something lodged solely in the mind, but actively it presents itself to God and the world in a visible demonstration of action. "The approaching cosmic catastrophe is . . . no subject for shuddering aesthetics"[1] but a time for the reader to be a τέκνα ὑπακοῆς . "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind . . . be ye holy" (I Pet. 1:13,15). This implies that the reader

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[1]M. H. Franzmann, "The Christian Hope and Our Fellowman," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVI (October, 1955).

is to be soberly and alertly (I Pet. 1:14) following God's commands.[2] The acts which, according to Peter (I Pet. 4:7), characterized the readers before were: whims and caprices which have no norm or basis for action, drunkenness, debauchery, wild parties and drinking bouts, all lawlessness, and manner of racing life. These characteristics are now to be thrust aside. The readers of this Epistle are to "be holy" (I Pet. 1:15). They are a "called-people of God" (I Pet. 2:10) who are to live in a godly fear. This fear is not that of a criminal before a judge but "that of an obedient child in the presence of a loving father."[3]

Peter continues by using the stone-metaphor and applying it to the readers. He states that they are stones built into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood (I Pet. 2:5). The stone-metaphor is common in Scripture. It is used of the Messiah in the Old Testament. Christ adequately substantiates His Messiahship in the New Testament with His life which demonstrated that, as the Old Testament pictured the Messiah, He was selected by God and rejected and smitten by men.[4] As Christ was the selected and rejected stone, so the Christians with Christ living in them become the selected of God and rejected of men.[5] The phrase "spiritual house" is another way of stating Paul's πνευματικὰς θυσίας

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[2]E. G. Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (London: Macmillan & Co. LTD., 1946), p. 120.

[3]James Gray, Christian Worker's Commentary (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1915), p. 424.

[4]Howard W. Ferrin, Strengthen Thy Brethren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1942), p. 62.

[5]E. G. Selwyn, op. cit., p. 286.

which is the presentation by the Christian of his body, substance, deeds, and praise to God, his Father, and his Lord. It is placing the person "under the mighty hand of God" (I Pet. 5:6).[6]

How does one serve God? Peter's ethics which are derived, inspired, and motivated because of and by his hope, show that service to God is manifested by one serving his fellowman. This service might be, to mention but two manners, the reader's gentle conduct or his φιλόξενοι which was all so important to the early Christians. Christian homes served as churches; also as hotels for missionaries as well as persecution-driven Christians. Christians were so given to hospitality that it was necessary to warn them against those who would take advantage of them.[7]

Therefore, in summary of this section, the Christian was to "lay aside," as one lays aside clothes to take a bath, all malice, guile, hypocrisies, envy, and evil-speaking (I Pet. 2:1) and serve his brother. This hope of Peter is a practical hope; it is related to action and living "The eschatological future indicative is never without its here-and-now present imperative."[8] It reminds one very much of Jesus whose hints and pictures of heaven are very few and sparse; however, how insistent is the recurrence of the demands: "Be sober!" "Be vigilant!" "Keep your lamps lit!" "That one talent which is death to hide" dare not be lodged useless with those who call Jesus "Lord." "Ye have done

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[6]Eph. 5:2; Rom. 12:1; Phil. 4:18.

[7]Didache XI,XII.

[8]Franzmann, op. cit., p. 764.

it unto me," shall be the word at the Great Assize.[9]

This, in general and as an introduction, is the picture of Peter's ethics in relation to his hope. This writer wishes to turn to three specific situations of man: namely, duty to government, marriage, and the pastor.

This writer does not deem it necessary to advance the question and solution of the relation of the Christian to government. That is not in the scope of Peter's writing nor this thesis, for the entire New Testament would needs be consulted. However, a few general statements are in order.

Governments exist by God's will. They exist because of fallen man being selfish and self-centered. They are the badge of man's lost innocence. Scripture does not indicate any preference as to the matter or governmental form. The purpose of government is to punish crime and encourage up-rightness (I Pet. 2:14). Government is part of God's kingdom of providence and not of His kingdom of grace.[10] The Christian key-note is ὑποτάγητε having the right to disobey when government is contrary to God's commands. The form of government will influence the Christian's responsibility. The Christian is to be an example submitting himself to government as did his Lord.

When talking about government, Peter's thought changes from the citizenship in heaven to the particular conditions of the reader confined to the fourth dimension. Peter begins saying, ὑποτάγητε πάσῃ ἀνθρωπίνῃ κτίσει (I Pet. 2:13). There are several significant

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Augsburg Confession XXVIII.

words here. "Submission," the keynote of Christianity as demonstrated in the life of the Master, is used six times by Peter here. Peter seems to prefer the aorist imperative. He uses it twenty-two times.[11] Submission for Peter is intensely active. It is a willingness to be humble. It takes effort to be under the yoke though a way of escape is accessible. κτίσει , the second word, is important. In the Old Testament it is used for a divinely created object. However, here it is used in the classical Greek manner denoting a creation of man as a founding of a city was a κτίσις . Whereas Paul was concerned with the divine origin of government, Peter is more concerned with the divine functions of government.[12] To substantiate this opinion, one needs only remind himself that the emperor at this time was Nero. Peter mentions the office and not the man, the title and position not the human occupying the position. This seems to be an echo of Christ's "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" (Matt. 22:21).

Submission to government is not merely something external. Submission is something inward, active, and definitely including loyalty. The motivation for such submission is stated as διὰ τὸν Κύριον . This may be a scintillating term meaning to recognize that the Lord of redemption is the Lord of mankind, and in service and submission to Him, the Christian actively obeys government. The second part of this phrase may include the <u>imitatio Christi</u>. How well Peter knew of Christ's obedience to Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate, and this submission should, indeed, be followed by His disciples. Further, the phrase, like Paul's

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[11]Selwyn, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 171.

[12]<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 172.

"for conscience' sake," (Rom. 8:5) is a motive far different from the Greek thought "which claimed as a right to sacrifice the individual to the community."[13] The final reason for submission is a practical reason: namely, "to silence the ignorance of foolish men." (I Pet. 2:15). In the verse before this (I Pet. 2:14), Peter summarized the two duties of government: to reward good and punish evil. Even today, we have prisons and purple hearts. This is the scope of government in this section. And to this one must be submissive when government is according to God's commands. But, as Peter and John (Acts 4:19), Christians are to "obey God rather than man." And this willing and exemplary obedience will "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (I Pet. 2:15). "To silence" is used often in the New Testament, or in the cases of Christ silencing the unclean spirit (Mark 1:25), the storm (Mark 4:39), and the Sadducees (Matt. 22:34).[14] In what manner and under what conditions the readers were to do this is left to conjecture. The scene may have been in the courtroom or in the market-place. The accuser would be silenced and would be considered quite foolish when the blameless conduct of the Christian was brought to light. Therefore, Peter believes that it is wiser to prevent a dog from barking before he barks. The conduct of the Christian is to be regulated by a spirit which realizes his conduct is under the hand of his heavenly Father, and though the homeland has not materialized at this time, its rules are in effect.

Peter reminds the readers that Christian liberty is not a license

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[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid., p. 173.

for evil. The Christian is a servant of God, bought by Christ's blood, saved by God's grace. Therefore, the Christian is a living paradox. He is lord of all and subject to none, yet servant to all and subject to everyone; in maximum service, the Christian finds maximum liberty. His submission and subjection are voluntary. To the men of the world, this is a seeming paradox.

In summary of this section, Peter gives the rules of thumb: namely, "Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the King" (I Pet. 2:17). "Fear," which was discussed before, is reserved for God. All men, including the king, are to have the Christian's honor. "Love the brotherhood" is not to be taken as an exclusive term. It denotes the beginning of love. "Love begins at home." Peter, therefore, urges the reader to begin loving the people with whom he associates. It might well apply to the present day when Christians can easily love the African in, and so long as he is in, Africa.

In summary of Peter's remarks about government, Mr. Beare states:

> Christians are not marked out from the rest of mankind by their country . . . speech . . . customs. . . . They dwell in cities . . . following the customs of the region in clothing and in food and outward things of life generally; yet they manifest an openly paradoxical character of their own unseen State. They inhabit the land of their birth, but as temporary residents thereof; they take their share of all responsibilities as citizens, and endure all disabilities as aliens. Every foreign land is native to them and every native land, foreign territory. . . . They pass their days upon earth, but they hold citizenship in heaven.[15]

For the purpose and outline of this paper, our attention is turned to the second relationship of man: namely, marriage and the relationship between man and wife.

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[15]Epistle to Diognetus, 5.

The unique feature presented in this section is that Peter looks on marriage as the giving of one to the other. The wife is not to ask herself what honor the husband owes her because she is the weaker vessel. The husband is not to enter marriage to rule the household, expect honor, and desire service. The partners of marriage are not to concentrate all of their thought on what others ought to give them. This unique feature could be presented to any age and every home: "It is a small wonder when marriage, in which both partners are obsessed with their rights, does not prove much of a success!"[16]

Peter begins the section with ὁμοίως . This is used only to indicate that he has turned his attention to a new item. It does not place the woman in the same class with slaves anymore than the next section (I Pet. 3:7) is meant to place husbands in the class of slaves. "The keyword is subjection; and it is not improbable that ὁμοίως , here and in verse 7 [sic] below, belongs to the Code of Subordination which underlies the passage."[17]

The wife is to render a willing subjection to her husband. It is to be remembered that subjection is not toleration in Peter's thought. It is rather something active; it is something wherein one humbles himself under another motivated by a higher motivation and power. Again the imitatio Christi could be cited, wherein Christ allowed Himself to be nailed to the cross; nails did not hold Him there, love did. This subjection, Peter limits to one man, her husband, ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν.

The entire conduct of the woman is to be purity mingled with

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[16]Cranfield, op. cit., p. 74.

[17]Selwyn, op. cit., p. 182.

piety, ἐν φόβῳ ἁγνήν . Her divine service begins in her daily activity. Her conduct radiates her belief. Faith is something intensely practical and active for Peter.

A sharp contrast is drawn by Peter between the pagan and Christian woman. The pagan would be concerned with externals: namely, ἔξωθεν , ἐμπλοκῆς , κόσμος ; the Christian is interested in κρυπτός , καρδίας , ἄνθρωπος. The jewels and hair are not what constitutes beauty for Peter. This any woman may have. However, the development of the inner person, the hidden beauty which is more precious to God, more enduring to man, is the quality which the woman is to develop. This is a part of her subjection to her own man for his benefit.

There is good reason and great purpose behind Peter's words. Her conduct and development will serve a greater end than would her jewels and hair. Through her conduct the woman might win her husband ἄνευ λόγου to the Word.[18] Without nagging, the Christian woman might win her pagan husband to the faith. Peter well knows that the more one attempts to talk another one into coming to the faith, the quicker and more surely is one of losing that precious soul. It seems as if many of these readers were women with pagan husbands. This conclusion may be drawn from the fact that the section begins with this subject. Also the section for the women is longer than that for the husbands. The length of the section would also seem to indicate that the women needed the pastoral counseling and aid so that they could see their lot in a different light. In this society it can be understood that the woman married to a pagan would have a more difficult time than the man

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[18] Ibid., p. 183.

married to a pagan. Peter wisely does not attempt to change the legal and traditional social standards of the woman, but he gives them new direction, motivation, and light with which to bear the conditions under which they live so that they could give maximum testimony of their faith to the greatest glory of God.

Peter cites Sarah as an example. As Abraham was considered the "Father of Israel" and now the "Father of the New Israel, the Faithful," so Sarah, his wife, was considered the "Mother of the Faithful."[19] These terms are thus applied to the new Israel in the new aeon. She is the example. She had respect for her own husband. She called him Κύριος .

Peter swiftly turns to the husband and with one verse instructs him. It is obvious why the husband would need little instruction, as was discussed above. However, one dare not think that the brevity of this section indicates poverty of thought. Though subjection is not applied to the man with word, the thoughts expressed would present the ideal husband to any wife. Three thoughts are expressed by Peter for the relationship of the man toward his wife.

He is to consider his wife as the weaker vessel. There is nothing derogatory in this term. It was applied to Paul (Rom. 12:8, Heb. 13:7). The thought is simply that the woman is weaker than the man. The man is to consider this and be considerate.[20]

The man is to consider the woman as a joint-heir of heaven. Indeed this is a far cry and a great elevation for the woman from pagan

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[19] Ibid., p. 185.

[20] Ibid., p. 186.

standards. In fact, here is the point in which Christianity undermined the pagan ideals. The pagan thought that only a man had a soul. The woman was little more than a baby factory and maid. Likewise, Christianity undermined the δοῦλος -concept making the slave a brother in Christ. How happy would be the man who considered his wife as immortal then, as well as today, how happy would be the home, how lofty the marriage, the woman, sex, and the man himself.

The final point that Peter makes for the man to consider is that where there is harmony in the home, there is also a good prayer-life.

A fitting summary to this section is supplied by Mr. Ferrin who writes:

> Marriage is the foundation of the home.
> Love is the law of the home.
> Purity is the health of the home.
> Unity is the power of the home.
> The family is the glory of the home.
> Simplicity is the beauty of the home.
> Joy is the atmosphere of the home.
> Hospitality is the blessing of the home.
> Sorrow is the sanctifier of the home.
> The altar is the security of the home.
> Christ is the Savior of the home.
> Heaven is the hope of the home.[21]

The last section with which this chapter will concern itself is the office of the pastor according to First Peter.

Peter begins the section by appropriating to himself three terms: namely, fellow-elder, witness of Christ's sufferings, and partaker of coming glory (I Pet. 5:1). All three terms are significant and deserve attention.

Peter first terms himself an "elder," ἐπίσκοπος. The term has

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[21]Ferrin, op. cit., p. 111.

a three-fold implication. It denotes authority in classical Greek. However, when Peter uses this term, he considers this implication as the least important. If he had thought of his authority, he would have used the word for "command" rather than παρακαλῶ. Also, he terms himself a "fellow-elder." This implication we will dismiss.

Most likely, Peter thinks of applying this term in the sense of his age, the "older one." Verse five brings out this thought more clearly. John also uses this term to denote a like meaning (I John 1:1, II John 1). Peter could be classified a first generation Christian writing to those who came to faith later than himself. Also because of the term "eye-witness" μάρτυς by which he links himself with the other disciples, this sense of the term is more probable.

Seeing that Peter joins himself with the readers by using "fellow-elder," it could be assumed that the term means in general an authorized person who is the leader within a congregation.

The second term which Peter assumes is "eye-witness," μάρτυς τῶν... παθημάτων, thus linking himself with the disciples of Christ. John also emphasizes very vehemently this term and emphasis on "seeing" the Christ (I John 1:1f.). Narajan Vaman Tilak, the Indian poet, attempts to show the implication of this term:

> Hast thou ever seen the Lord, Christ the Crucified?
> Hast thou seen those wounded hands? Hast thou seen His side?
> Hast thou seen the cruel thorns woven for His crown?
> Hast thou, hast thou seen His blood, dropping, dropping down?
> Hast thou seen who that one is who has hurt Him so?
> Hast thou seen the sinner, cause of all His woe?
> Hast thou seen how He, to save, suffers thus and dies?
> Hast thou seen on whom He looks with His loving eyes?
> Hast thou ever, ever seen love that was like this?
> Hast thou given up thy life wholly to be His?

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[22] Ibid., p. 168.

The final title Peter assumes is "partaker of the glory that shall be revealed" (I Pet. 5:1). Thus he links his present duties with his eschatology which is, in reality, the certainty of his hoping.

Peter concerns himself with the "flock of God" (I Pet. 5:3). Peter may have thought of Jeremiah who states, "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; . . . I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. 3:14,15). In the Old Testament, Israel was considered God's flock (Is. 40:10). The rulers were termed "shepherds" (II Sam. 5:2). In the New Testament, Christ is the "Good Shepherd" (John 10:11ff.).

The term is a wonderful term for a congregation. People have many of the characteristics of sheep in a fold. God's flock tends to wander (Is. 53:6). God's flock is weak and helpless (Num. 27:17). God is the true Shepherd of the flock. The pastors are merely caring over God's flock. Peter is careful to point this out: "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear" (I Pet. 5:4), or "flock of God" (I Peter 5:2), or "God's heritage" (I Pet. 5:3). Thus the implications of this thought are both solemn and cheering. Their duty is to God; He defends, feeds, seeks, converts. He will not forsake His own. Yet, these called servants better care well for this flock; they dare not lose one for whom Christ has paid with His precious blood. Therefore, though the church, the "flock of God" extends throughout the entire earth, whether man knows it or not, these elders are to do their work where they are, ἐν ὑμῖν .

What is the inner motivation for their work? Their "oversight," meaning to inspect, to keep watch over, is not to be by force but something that is willingly willful and joyful to be serving the "chief

Shepherd" (I Pet. 5:2). There is no thought of "filthy lucre" to be attached to this high calling. This is not to be a motivation. Peter does not equate poverty and pastor, for indeed, "the laborer is worthy of his hire;" but as for becoming an "overseer" for the sake of social or economic gain, this is not to be considered. There should be a ready mind, ready to be bondservant and bishop, supervisor and slave. Thus he is a slave in the sense that he has duties to Christ for obedience, humility, loyalty, and service; being a slave of Christ, he receives Christ's aid and help. Thus he becomes an example to the flock (I Peter 5:4).

Mr. Ferrin cites an interesting piece of work which stresses the motivation of a Pastor in the following:

> Dear Sir and Brother:
>
> Doubtless you remember the invitation you extended me to come over to Macedonia and help the people of that section. . . . There are several things I would like to learn before giving you my decision.
>
> First of all I would like to know if Macedonia is a station or a circuit. This is important as I have been told that once a man begins on a circuit it is well nigh impossible to secure employment in station work. If Macedonia embraces more than one preaching place I might as well tell you frankly that I cannot think of accepting the call.
>
> There is another important item that you overlooked in your brief and somewhat sudden invitation. No mention was made as to the salary I was to receive. While it is true I am not preaching for money there are certain things that need to be taken into account. I have been through a long and expensive training; in fact I may say with pardonable pride that I am a Sanhedrin man -- [sic] the only one in the ministry today.
>
> The day is past when you may expect a man to rush into a new field without some idea as to the support he is to receive. I have worked myself up to a good position in the Asiatic field, and to take a drop and lose grade would be a serious matter. Nor can I afford to swap dollar for dollar as the saying is among the Apostles.

> Kindly get the Macedonian brethren together and see what you can do in the way of support. You have told me nothing beyond the implication that the place needs help. What are the social advantages? Is the church well organized?
>
> I recently had a fine offer to return to Damascus at an increase of salary, and I am told that I made a very favorable impression on the church at Jerusalem. If it will help the Board at Macedonia you might mention these facts to them, and also that some of the brethren in Judea have been heard to say that if I kept on, in a few years I may have anything in the gift of the church. For recommendation write to Rev. Simon Peter, D.D., Jerusalem. I will say that I am a first class mixer and especially strong on argumentative preaching.[23]

Peter states, in conclusion, that "When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (I Pet. 5:4). The στέφανον was a garland of victory given to the winner of an athletic contest. In Christian usage, it most often connotes a crown of rule.[24] Peter, therefore, adds a reward for faithful service. Indeed, the elder may not be rewarded in this life, but when the Christ comes, that day shall be the day of his reward.

Peter again relates his ethics to his certain hope. Peter is positively certain that the inheritance is ready, prepared and preserved by God, and need only be revealed. There is no "maybe," no "if" in Peter's thinking. The masterpiece is under a canvas, all that is to be done is to have the canvas lifted. In this light of certain culmination of his expectation, Peter sets forth his ethics. Everything is viewed in the light of this hope: "Suffer slave, so did Christ, and you will rise as He did." "She is an heir of heaven with you." "Obey the government for the Lord's sake." Life is viewed as a time of work and

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[23] Ibid., p. 172.

[24] Rev. 4:4; 2:10; 3:11; I Cor. 9:25.

production. Its trials are easily borne, for the end is merely the beginning of life. Death is the door to life. God made it so through Christ. Therefore,

<u>Soli Deo gloria</u>.

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