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The First Letter of Peter
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First lecture: The literary character and integrity of 1 Peter. Its structure.

a) The literary character and integrity of 1 Peter

- language and style

1 Peter has been forwarded to us as a document written in an elegant Greek. It belongs to the documents of the Koine type of language (in contrast to the somewhat uncontrolled Asian style and the historicizing style of Atticism: Achtemeier, 2). The author expresses himself freely in the various modes and constructions of the Greek language of the time. Besides Luke, he is the only NT author who uses εἰ with the optative (3,14.17). He likes comparisons, often introduced with ὡς, alliterations, synonyms, parallelisms and the like (Achtemeier, 3). Even if the particle ἄν is missing, he shows himself to be an author who is well-educated in the use of the Greek language and style. These observations are important for the question of authorship, but we shall postpone it to the end of the introduction.

- literary genre and integrity

Although 1 Peter presents itself formally as a letter, beginning with a prescript and ending with a salutation, modern criticism has tried to identify behind the document earlier sources or parts. A number of authors think that an earlier document ended after 4,11. One reason is that from this moment on persecution seems to have become a reality, while it was only a possibility in the first half of the letter (cf. 2,12.19f; 3,14.16f; 4,1.4). The other reason given is the doxological conclusion in 4,11 which seems to indicate the end of a first letter. Both arguments have nevertheless been contested. The talk about suffering in the society in 1,3 – 4,10 leaves open the possibility that some kind of persecution or opposition already occurred (it is in fact supposed at least in 4,4). Doxological formulas can occur also in the middle of NT letters, as is evident from Rom 1,25; 9,5; 11,36 etc. (Achtemeier, 60). Thus they are no decisive arguments for the end of a letter.

There have been several efforts to see in 1 Pet a text which originally was not a letter. Without the opening verses 1,1-2 and the concluding verses 5,12-14 it could be an early Christian document related to conversion and baptism. One opinion sees in 1 Peter a baptismal homily extending from 1,3 to 4,11, to which only secondarily 1,1-2 and 4,12 – 5,14 were added (Richard Perdelwitz). Another opinion sees behind 1,3 – 4,11 an early Christian baptismal liturgy (Herbert Preisker and others).

Both suggestions have in common that they give great importance to baptism in 1 Pet 1,3 – 4,11. But this is hard to prove, and typical baptismal terminology is almost completely missing. For the break after 4,11 see above.

As far as a number of Early Christian Hymns might have been integrated into 1 Pet (M.-É Boismard), they cannot be isolated any longer with certainty, and they reflect in any case the language of Early Christian preaching strongly present in the whole of the Epistle.

- 1 Peter as a letter

More recent research is inclined increasingly to accept the integrity of 1 Peter and to see in this early Christian document a letter, similar to other letters in Greco-Roman Antiquity. The address relates it in particular to other circular letters in Judaism and Hellenism (starting from Alexander the Great), but also in the New Testament (cf. the Catholic Epistles or the letter of Acts 15,23-29).

The basic elements of the Greco-Roman private letter are found in 1 Pet: the prescript, a formula of thanksgiving, here as a benediction (1,3), a letter body and an epistolary conclusion. Authors debate about the beginning or ending of several sections. According to Philip L. Tite, the transition to the initial blessing is found in 1,2-3, the transition to the body in 1,10-13. After 1,13, according to Tite, we would have to do already with the “body middle”. This does not respect sufficiently the coherence of 1,13 – 2,10 with the repeated imperatives aorist. After 1,13, there is not a “definite break” (as opined by Tite, 67), but coherence. For this reason, we see in 1,13 – 2,10 the opening of the letter body.

On the other side, it is not recommended to start the “body closing” with Achtemeier already in 4,12. Here, the elements gathered by John Lee White can be useful. According to him, the body closing expresses the wish of the writer to communicate with the addressees, it resumes the intention of the writer of the letter, refers to his act of writing and tries to stress the purpose of the writing (cf. White, 41). Almost all of these elements are found in 1 Pet 5,12. Thus, it is recommended to extend the letter body middle until 5,11, with 5,13-14 as the formal epistolary closing.

Major transitions in the letter body seem to be found in 2,10-11 and 4,11-12. In both cases the recipients are addressed as ἀγαπητοί. A third transition can be recognized in 5,1 with the return to particular groups of addressees as in section 2,11- 4,11 and to the subject of “doing right” after the section about suffering in 4,12-19.

On the basis of these observations, we arrive at

b) The structure of 1 Peter

See following page!

The Structure of 1 Peter

- 1,1-2 Prescript**
- 1,3-12 Blessing or Thanksgiving**
(Εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεός)
- 1,13 – 2,10 Body, Opening**
(Διό, Imperatives)
- 2,11 – 5,11 Body, Middle**
- I) Right conduct in the world as strangers 2,11 – 4,11**
- 2,11 f Introduction (address: ἀγαπητοί)
- 2,13 – 3,7 Domestic code
- 2,13-17 citizens (ὑποτάγητε)
- 2,18-25 slaves (ὑποτασσόμενοι)
- 3,1-6 wives (ὑποτασσόμεναι)
- 3,7 husbands
- 3,8-12 Community rule
- 3,13-22 Right conduct in the situation of slander in baptismal union with Christ to whom all angels and powers have been subjected (ὑποταγέντων)
- 4,1-11 Breaking with sin in union with the Suffering Christ; doxological formula
- II) Sharing the Suffering of Christ as Christians 4,12-19**
- 4,12 address: ἀγαπητοί
- 4,19 “doing well”, see I
- III) Right conduct in the community and in the world 5,1-11**
- 5,1-5 Community rule
- 5,1-4 Elders
- 5,5 Young men (ὑποτάγητε); all invited to humility
- 5,6 f Assurance formula (in humility)
- 5,8 f Resistance against the devil in faith
- 5,10 f Final blessing and doxological formula
- 5,12 Body, Closing**
Writing through Silvanus, purpose of the letter
- 5,13-14 Epistolary Closing**
- 5,13-14a Greetings from “Babylon” (cf. 1,1)
- 5,14b Wish of peace (cf. 1,2)

There are elements of a concentric structure in the letter:

The Prescript has common elements with the Epistolary Closing,
the Body Opening as well.

The First Part and the Third Part of the Body Middle correspond in the idea of right conduct and of submission as applied to particular groups.

In the middle stands the exhortation to share the suffering of Christ as Christians (4,12-19).

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Second lecture: The addressees and the theological character of 1 Peter

a) The addressees of 1 Peter

- Geographically

The five geographical areas indicated in 1,1 cover the northern half of Asia Minor, north of the Taurus: Pontus is located along the north-eastern coast of the Black Sea, Cappadocia south of this area, Galatia in the centre of Asia Minor, Bithynia along the north-western coast of the Black Sea and Asia in the West of Asia Minor. There is still a discussion whether these areas are geographical zones or Roman Provinces. The majority of contemporary scholars hold the latter, although Pontus and Bithynia, forming one Roman Province, are named separately. With the exception of Asia, this area did not belong to the Pauline mission. There are no independent news about a Christian population before the time of Trajan, again with the exception of Asia and Galatia (cf. Acts 16,6; 18,23).

- Culturally

The culture of Northern Asia Minor is Roman-Hellenistic in the First Cent. A. D. Local cultures and cults survive, the latter sometimes disguised as Roman cults (cf. Acts 14,8-18 for Lycaonia). The Jewish presence was probably limited to the major towns and markets.

- Religion

The addressees seem to come predominantly from pagan religion. Initially is mentioned their conversion from their lack of knowledge, commanding their desires, and from their idle conduct according to convictions inherited from the fathers to Christian faith (1,14.18). This fits more with converts from paganism than from Judaism. Nevertheless the addressees are seen in the light and in the tradition of Judaism, as a “holy people” (cf. 1,16; 2,9) and a “chosen race, a royal priesthood” (2,9). It is uncertain how far the addressees go back to the Pauline gentile mission. There is no direct reference to Paul, although the theology of the letter is not far from the apostle’s.

- Social background

There are only a few hints to the social position of the addressees. Generally it is held that they belong predominantly to the poorer classes. The main reason is the long and detailed instruction for slaves (2,18-25) with no counterpart for lords or owners. The expression “οἰκέται” in 2,18 on the other hand (in contrast to δοῦλοι) warns to see these slaves only as illiterate workers. The expression means “member of the house” and applies to slaves who belong to the household of rich families and can even be in charge of the education of the children. The instruction for women inviting them to find their prestige not in gold, elegant hair-style and precious clothing points to the existence of rather wealthy women respectively families in the community (3,3). The language of 1 Peter seems also more appropriate to an audience with some Greek culture than to the lowest classes of the population.

- Political background

The programmatic expression of “exiles of the Dispersion” (1,1) describes a situation of the communities of the addressees characterized by a minority status. This may refer in the same time to their religious and their political and social situation. The term itself, taken from Jewish language, points rather to the religious minority status, although this situation obviously has also consequences in the political sphere.

There is a vivid debate whether the addressees experience in fact persecution for the sake of their belief. The question is discussed at length by Achtemeier (commentary, 23-36) under the heading of Petrine authorship. He joins the results of other scholars that no direct persecution of the Christians appears from the text of 1 Peter. This fits well with the growing consensus that there were no organized persecutions of Christians in the Roman Empire before the time of Decius (250 A. D.). What the Christians had to experience was harassing or slander (cf. 2,12; 3,13f.16f; 4,4.12-19; 5,9). If the Christians shall be ready to give account of their hope when they are asked about it (3,15), the context must not necessarily be the one of an official questioning in a court.

b) The theological character of 1 Peter

Most commentators agree that the main thrust of the letter is parenetic. The main purpose of the letter is expressed in the “body closing” (5,12): “By Silvanus a faithful brother as I regard him, I have written briefly to you, exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God; stand fast in it.” This final word combines the indicative (God’s grace) and the imperative (exhorting; stand fast in it). Christian existence is thus rooted in belief in God’s grace which precedes all human effort.

- Christian existence

Christian existence is characterized by the situation of the Christians as “aliens and exiles” (2,11). The terms come from the Old Testament (think of Abraham, Gen 23,4; David Ps 39[38],12). Apparently it is not to be understood in a sociological or political sense, but rather as a description of the existence of the Christians as Christians in this world. As Christians they also have to face resistance. All authors underline the importance of the subject of “suffering” in 1 Peter. The term “persecution / to persecute” does not appear. The best explanation is given by L. Goppelt: The author sees the opposition the Christians experience not under the sociological aspect as “persecution”, but under the theological one as “following” (Christ) and thus not in relation to humans but to Christ (57).

Paul J. Achtemeier sees different dimensions of Christian existence: the past which was characterized by sin from which the addressees were converted, the present in which they experience har-

assment and slander, even violence, and the future to which they are on the road. Thus, one of the leading concepts of the Letter is “hope”.

There is debate about the leading metaphor in 1 Peter. For John H. Elliott, this metaphor is “household” or “house”, already present in the term of *παροικία*, deepened in the metaphor of the “living stones” which are going to form the “spiritual house” (2,5). This proposal is strongly based on linguistic aspects. A more theological proposal comes from Achtemeier according to whom the leading metaphor of 1 Peter is “Israel”, the “people of God”. In fact, the addressees are seen in 1 Peter as God’s people (cf. 2,9), sharing Israel’s destiny of being exiled, but also its hopes on the way to salvation (p. 69-71).

- Christology

Christian conduct and experience is rooted in Christ. There is a consensus in recent commentaries that our letter does not develop an original form of Christology. The only elements which might appear as original is Christ preaching to the Spirits (3,19; cf. 4,6). For the rest, the theological language and ideas of the letter reflect early Christian Christology. Achtemeier tries to systematize the ideas of 1 Peter on this behalf: Christ in the past had to suffer, now he is in his glory, and in the future he is expected to come again. His destiny is more important for the author than his essence. It is the basis for the hope of the Christians who in their suffering can look up to Him who preceded them.

- Ethics

There is again a debate how important is ethics in 1 Peter. For Leonhard Goppelt, the conduct of the Christians in an un-Christian or even anti-Christian world is basic for this letter. This observation is in part confirmed by the analysis of the structure of the letter, treated in lecture 1. But Goppelt himself stresses the connection between ethical conduct of the Christians and the subject of hope in persecution. According to him, there is a dynamism in the letter from right conduct (2,11 – 4,11) to readiness to suffering as Christians (4,12-19). Through their ethical behaviour, the Christians bear witness to their hope and may even convince their adversaries.

It is not quite clear whether the Christians should accept conflict with society on behalf of their conduct or whether they should rather avoid such conflicts wherever it is possible. David L. Balch seems to think that the author invites the readers rather to adapt to ethics of their surroundings in order to avoid unnecessary conflicts. Most authors disagree since the encouragement to conflict is too dominant in the letter. Of course, Christians shall avoid sin in order not to give a pretext to the persecutors to blame them (4,15), but they must also be ready to be criticized because they do not take part in pagan excesses (4,4). This does not exclude that the author follows in his ethical norms largely Hellenistic ethics, particularly in the “household code” of 2,13 – 3,7. Of course, the central

concept of “submission” is reinterpreted by him, as we shall see further on. All Christian conduct, be it in the situation of slaves or married persons, receives its ultimate orientation in Christ

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Third lecture: The author and time and place of composition of 1 Peter. Exegesis of 1,1-2.

a) The author of 1 Peter

The question of authorship in 1 Peter is still a very debated one. For many commentators, it remains the most important question of the introduction. The last example is Paul J. Achtemeier, who dedicates the first 43 pages of his commentary to this question. It remains nevertheless doubtful whether this question deserves this amount of attention, and this for two reasons:

- from the literary point of view

With the shift of paradigm from historico-critical exegesis to forms of interpretations inspired by linguistics and modern literary criticism, the main task of the interpreter is no longer to reconstruct an original message and its original sender, but to analyse a given text. What appears in the text, is the “implied author” speaking to an “implied reader”. The real author remains often unknown, as the original readers of the first generation.

- from the theological point of view

Writings of the NT convey the “apostolic preaching” of the founders of the church. The individual attribution of a single text to an individual author is secondary to the origin of the whole collection in apostolic tradition. The fact that probably none of the four canonical gospels probably goes back – according to contemporary research – to one of the twelve apostles or their immediate disciples, does not diminish their apostolic authority, and the same holds true for those “Pauline” letters which according to modern criticism are to be considered rather post-Pauline (like Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thess, Hebrews and the Pastoral Letters). The authenticity of 2 Peter has been doubted already in antiquity. For the canonicity of a NT Writing it was important for the church 1) that it had an apostle or the disciple of an apostle as its author, 2) that it contained the apostolic faith and 3) that it was accepted by the communities. In cases of doubt, the question of content was decisive, as can be seen in the decisions of the early church about Gnostic writings which bore the names of distinguished apostolic authorities like Peter, John, Thomas, or Philip, but lacked the authentic faith of the primitive church. Vat. II has discussed the question of the apostolic origin of the gospels and has formulated the conviction of the church on this behalf in a very cautious way: The church always held the apostolic origin of the four canonical gospels; what the Apostles had preached according to the commandment of Jesus, they and *apostolic men* transmitted later under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as the fundament of our faith: the fourfold gospel of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (DV 18). Behind the individual gospel, whoever its author was, stands therefore the common fourfold gospel, going back to the preaching of Christ and the first preaching about Christ.

In the ancient church, a first Letter of Peter is mentioned for the first time in 2 Pet 3,1. This is an early testimony, going back (probably) to the first decade of the second century. According to Eusebius (HE 3,39,6), Papias of Hierapolis (shortly after this period) used testimonies from 1 Peter (cf. Elliott, commentary, 148). Irenaeus of Lyons knew it as a Letter of St. Peter and used it. Although the Roman Canon Muratori, about 200, does not mention the letter, it is known to Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Tertullian, who all consider it as canonical (cf. J. Roloff in Goppelt, 1 Peter, 70-72; Achtemeier, 44-46). In the fourth century, the Decretum Damasi (DS 180) and the Council of Carthago, A.D. 397 (DS 186) know two canonical Letters of St. Peter. Since then, Christian tradition transmits our letter as written by St. Peter until modern times, when the authenticity began to be debated.

In the last third of the 20th century, only few authors still hold the authenticity of St. Peter. Of the commentators mentioned on p. 8, only Kelly reserves his judgment. The reasons which rather speak against Petrine authorship can be resumed with Goppelt (66-70):

- the strong influence of the theology of the Hellenistic diaspora in the letter
- the level of competence in Greek language and rhetoric, difficult to be assumed for a fisherman from the Lake of Galilee, even after years in a Greek surrounding, including frequent quotations from the LXX
- the role of "Peter" in communities going back to Pauline mission, and the extension, the form of organization and political situation of these communities speak rather for the period after 64 A.D., year of the presumed martyrdom of St. Peter in Rome.

Some authors have taken resort to the theory of Silvanus (5,12) as the secretary of Peter or the person who after Peter's death wrote the letter in his name and authority. This question has to be discussed in the context of 5,12 and the meaning of $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}$ in this verse. Ultimately such theories do not help much in saving Petrine authorship for 1 Peter, since the more Silvanus acts as author, Peter vanishes.

The readiness to accept pseudepigraphy for 1 Peter may be enhanced by the fact that this phenomenon was widely accepted in the Jewish and Hellenistic milieu of the New Testament. Since early times, pseudepigraphical Letters of Plato and other philosophers circulated without causing disdain or contempt. In Jewish apocalyptic circles, pseudonymity was the rule, and also wisdom writings could be brought into circulation under prestigious names of the past, particularly Solomon. Authors tried to assure themselves by this way attention and respect, and this procedure was not considered a "fake", but a normal literary device. For this position see in particular: Norbert Brox, *Falsche Verfasserangaben. Zur Erklärung der frühchristlichen Pseudepigraphie* (SBS 79), Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk 1975, and further contributions of the same author, quoted comm. p. 4.

b) time and place of the composition

The letter does not indicate directly time and place of its origin. If Petrine authorship is questioned, the situation described in the letter has to give the necessary parameters. As *terminus a quo* appears Peter's probable death in Nero's persecution, A.D. 64. As *terminus ad quem* Goppelt and other authors reckon the next persecution, the one under Domitian in the nineties of the First Cent. A.D. This was a period of relative quiet which makes understandable the exhortation to loyalty in 2,13-17. Pliny the Younger's letter to Trajan (Trajan 10,96,3) mentions cases of action taken against Christians as such in Bithynia-Pontus well 20 years before the redaction of the letter (A.D. 110). This brings us as to a date somewhere in the nineties. This date or even an earlier one (in the eighties) might fit well with the development of church order as reflected in 5,1-4, which does not yet know a monarchic episcopate and speaks of Presbyters as pastors (cf. Acts 20,17-35).

Luke /Acts, the Letter to the Hebrews and the First Letter of Clement, close to 1 Peter in theology and church order, speak also for a Roman origin of the letter. It is confirmed by the mention of "Babylon" as place of composition (5,12), an accepted synonym for Rome since the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (cf. Rev 14,8; 16,19; 17,5; 18,2.10.21; also Josephus Ant X 131 ff.; CD 1,6 on the basis of negative qualifications of the city in Jer 50 f., Ez 24: see EWNT / EDNT ad vocem).

c) The Prescript of the Letter (1,1-2)

At this point we can start with the interpretation of the Letter section by section. The first two verses show themselves to be a textual unit already by form-critical observations. They correspond to the letter format of Early Christian Letters, as we know it in particular from Saint Paul, but cf. also Jas 1,1; 2 Pet 1,1-2; 2 Jn 1-3; 3 Jn 1; Jude 1,1-2.

The text of the two verses does not present any noticeable problems, except some uncertainty about Asia and Bithynia, and the same holds true for the translation.

The structure of the two verses is given by Early Christian Letter Prescript. Whereas James follows in his opening still the Greek formula "A to B *χαίρειν*", Peter follows the Oriental formula: "A to B. Wish of (grace/mercy and) peace".

V. 1.2a The opening formula contains the classical beginning of the address: "A to B". But, as it is observed by the more recent commentaries, these elements have been christianised. The writer introduces himself as "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ". By adopting the name of the most prestigious disciple of Jesus in his lifetime and in the Jerusalem church, the author claims for himself the highest authority. The name "Peter" was given to Simon in the early church of the diaspora and would hardly have been adopted by Simon himself (Brox). With the title of "apostle" Peter places

himself side by side with Paul (James and Jude would refer to themselves only as “servants of Jesus Christ”; cf. 2 Pet 1,1: “Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ”).

The fact that the author does not name Silvanus, “through” whom the letter is sent (5,12), besides him, makes the theory of Silvanus being the “Secretary” or even co-author, difficult.

The geographical area to which the letter is sent, has already been dealt with. The wide range of landscapes contributes to giving our letter the ring of a pastoral circular letter of universal interest.

The threefold characterization of the addressees contributes strongly to the understanding of the letter and not only of the prescript. The addressees are seen as “elect” by God, a dignity which is explained at the beginning of v. 2: it was by God’s previous knowledge and destination, realized by the work of the Spirit of Holiness, by the obedience (of faith) and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (taken from covenant theology: Ex 24,7s, resumed in Heb 12,24) that the Christians were worthy of God’s election. By this election, the Christians were brought into distance towards their surrounding world: they became “strangers of the Dispersion” (Elliott). With these concepts, the author has already introduced important subjects of the whole letter. The terminology has been taken from Jewish self-understanding, but it is fully applied to the Christians as such, another typical element of our letter. For the LXX background of *παρεπίδημος* cf. Gen 23,4; 24,37 (Heb 11,13).

V. 2b The traditional Greek *χαίρειν* has been replaced here by *χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη πληθυνθείη*. The use of *χάρις* in this connection has been prepared by Paul, who uses it regularly in his letters. The common sound may have influenced his wording. The idea that God’s grace or mercy may be with the addressees is traditional; cf. also the mention of *ἔλεος* 1 Tim 1,2; 2 Tim 1,2; Jude 1,2. For the “fullness of peace” cf. Dan 4,1 and 6,26 Theodotion. The traditional character of this formula is enhanced by the fact that it is used in the first instance by Nabuchodonosor and in the second by Darius. This does not diminish the Christian perspective of the greeting and wish. It is underlined in the final greeting of the letter (5,14) where it is explicitly stated: “Peace to all of you that are in Christ”. As it was mentioned previously, the beginning and the end of the letter form an *inclusio* and this way interpret each other.

Summing up, we can say that the author skilfully introduces his readers into the following parts and the main thrust of the letter: the Christians of the communities of Asia Minor are reminded of their vocation, but also of their situation of strangers. Their election by God, their sanctification by the Spirit and their redemption by Christ single them out of this world. They will have to act accordingly. This will be developed in the course of the letter.

Right from the beginning, this aspect will appeal also to modern readers who find themselves in a “diaspora” situation – not only in the sense of being a minority among other religions and denominations, but more profoundly in the sense of being “singled out of this world” and its value systems.

Fourth lecture. The beginning of the Thanksgiving (1,3-9).

The full literary skill of our author appears right from the first section of his letter after the pre-script. If the “relative connection” (“relativischer Anschluss”) can be considered as a kind of relative clause, it is possible to see in the whole section of “thanksgiving” or “praise” in vv. 3-12 one single sentence (Goppelt). We limit ourselves in this lecture to vv. 3-9, leaving vv. 10-12 to the next lecture. Vv. 3-9 may be structured grammatically in the following way:

BNT 1 Peter 1:3 Εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,
ὁ κατὰ τὸ πολὺ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος ἀναγεννήσας ἡμᾶς

εἰς ἐλπίδα ζώσαν δι’ ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκ νεκρῶν,

4 εἰς κληρονομίαν ἄφθαρτον καὶ ἀμίαντον καὶ ἀμάραντον,
τετηρημένην ἐν οὐρανοῖς εἰς ὑμᾶς

5 τοὺς ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ φρουρούμενους διὰ πίστεως εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐτοιμῆν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι
ἐν καιρῷ ἐσχάτῳ.

6 ἐν ᾧ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε,

ὀλίγον ἄρτι εἰ δέον [ἐστίν] λυπηθέντες ἐν ποικίλοις πειρασμοῖς,

7 ἵνα τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως

πολυτιμότερον χρυσοῦ τοῦ ἀπολλυμένου διὰ πυρὸς δὲ δοκιμαζομένου,
εὕρεθῇ εἰς ἔπαινον καὶ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν ἐν ἀποκαλύψει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ·

8 ὃν οὐκ ἰδόντες ἀγαπᾶτε,

εἰς ὃν ἄρτι μὴ ὀρώντες

πιστεύοντες δὲ

ἀγαλλιᾶσθε χαρᾷ ἀνεκκλήτῳ καὶ δεδοξαμένῳ

9 κομιζόμενοι τὸ τέλος τῆς πίστεως [ὑμῶν] σωτηρίαν ψυχῶν.

1. Text and translation

The text of our sections contains a number of variants. One of the most important witnesses is P⁷², going back to the III/IV century (today in the Vatican Library). It differs from other manuscripts, omitting in V. 3 τό and ἡμᾶς, reading in v. 5 ἡμᾶς, in v. 6 ἀγαλλιᾶσαντες instead of ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, but confirming the (bracketed) ἐστίν, reading in the same verse πολλοῖς instead of ποικίλοις, in v. 7 δόκιμον instead of δοκίμιον, but confirming in v. 8 – together with **N B** and other Egyptian mss. – ἰδόντες instead of εἰδότες (Majority text). We follow the proposals of Nestle-Aland and GNT.

The translation presents difficulties mainly at the beginning of v. 6. This has to do with the grammatical structure. The period at the end of v. 5 should be omitted. ἐν ᾧ either resumes vv. 3-5 (most authors) and should then be translated by “In this”, or it refers to ἐν τῷ καιρῷ ἐσχάτῳ in v. 5 (Windisch-Preisker, Schrage, Goppelt; Zurich Bible). This seems to be preferable.

Also in the transition from v. 7 to v. 8 the relative pronoun refers back to the immediately preceding “Jesus Christ”, and in the transition from v. 9 to v. 10 “salvation” is taken up again.

2. Syntactic analysis

The very long construction starts with a nominal clause (“Praised be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”), which is developed in a participial construction (“who has begotten us anew”). The consequences of the “regeneration” are described in the double expression starting with εἰς (“living hope”, “heritage”), both amplified by participles and adjectives. The last word of “salvation .. kept in heaven for us” is taken up in v. 5 by a participle describing the addressees as persons guarded by God in his power for a coming salvation which should be revealed in the last time. To this time seems to refer the ἐν ᾧ at the beginning of v. 6, as we saw above: “in it you rejoice”. The verb of rejoicing is contrasted by the participle “troubled” because of various trials which shall show the genuineness of the faith of the addressees (final clause of v. 7). The glory of Christ, mentioned at the end as the purpose of the trial of the addressees, serves as a link for vv. 8f: Christ, whom the addressees have never seen, they have loved, and in him they have believed, and in this belief they rejoice in unutterable and exalted joy in view of the accomplishment of their faith: salvation.

3. Semantic analysis

With Goppelt, we can divide vv. 3-9 into three subsections: vv. 3-5 the praise of God for rebirth, vv. 6f rejoicing in spite of trials, vv. 8f rejoicing in the situation of faith.

Vv. 3-5: The whole section until v. 12 corresponds in a sense to the Pauline “Thanksgivings”, opening almost regularly (with the exception of Gal) his letters and similar to the thanksgivings with which private letters in antiquity could start, as a thanksgiving to the Gods for the good state of health the partner in correspondence had reported. The formula of v. 3 is found in an almost identical way in 1 Cor 1,3 and Eph 1,3. A praise to God is biblical language (*b^erakhah*), but the connection of εὐλογητός with God as Father and the Lord Jesus Christ is of Christian origin and might go back to Paul himself. As in 1 Cor and Eph, there is a transition from “we” to “you”, in our text in v. 4. The main reason for the joy of the Christians is the fact that God “regenerated” them by virtue of his mercy so that they might have hope based on the resurrection of Jesus Christ (v. 3). While the idea of a “rebirth” or “regeneration” is found elsewhere in Hellenism and Oriental Religions (think of the Treaty “De Regeneratione” in the Corpus Hermeticum), rebirth by virtue of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is of course specifically Christian. The immediate effect is not simply new life, but hope. This is characteristic for our letter, where Christian existence in the world is reflected and hope in a sense takes the place of “faith” in Pauline theology.

The biblical concept of “heritage” (v. 4) is used accordingly. The Christians receive God’s heritage as his children and members of his people rather in the form of promise than in the form of possession. It is kept for them in heaven. But nobody can snatch it away from them, since it is “imperishable”, “undefiled” and “unfading”. All three expressions occur in the Book of Wisdom (6,12; 3,13; 12,1), the alliteration is a Greek literary device.

What holds true for “heritage”, is true also for “salvation”, another term for God’s gift to the faithful, occurring in v. 5. It only will be reserved for them for the last day, or better they will be put in custody until they may enjoy it. They will open themselves for this salvation by faith, which now is placed besides “hope” (v. 3) – see the mention of “love” below (v. 8): a Pauline triadic formula is taken up; cf. also “God the Father”, “our Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 3) and “the Spirit of Christ” (v. 11).

Vv. 6f: As we saw in the syntactic analysis (see above, 2), the much disputed “ἐν ᾧ” is best connected with the preceding ἐν καρῷ ἐσχάτῳ (v. 5). By this way, the temporal aspect remains dominant. If this interpretation is accepted, the following “ἀγαλλιᾶσθε” may receive an aspect of future, as has been seen by some Church Fathers and manuscripts: full joy of the Christians is reserved for the future while actually they may be subject to various trials. The latter expression goes back to early Christian language as becomes evident by the almost identical formula in Jas 1,2. The “δέον” in this context means more than simply “if it cannot be avoided”, but expresses a divine necessity which makes the Christians take part in the trials and sufferings of Christ, as will be developed in the course of the Letter. Also the proof of the genuineness of the faith of the Christians (δοκίμιον) belongs to the language attested in Jas 1,3. The comparison of the faithfulness of the believers with gold or silver purified and tested by fire is biblical (Prov 17,3; Sir 2,5). This faithfulness will become fully manifest in the final revelation (ἀποκάλυψις) of Jesus Christ for the glory of God. The redundant language here (εἰς ἔπαινον καὶ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν) recalls the opening Blessing of Ephesians (Eph 1,5.12.14) and corresponds perfectly to the literary genre of an “Eulogia” at the beginning of a NT Letter.

Vv. 8f: Goppelt sees with good reason a correspondence between vv. 6f and 8f. In both cases, the author speaks of the “rejoicing” of the Christians (ἀγαλλιᾶσθε) in spite of their present experiences: trials and the absence of Christ for their eyes. In a double way, the Christians cannot “see” Christ. They did not see Christ (aorist) since they were not present at his lifetime, and they do not see him now since he is subtracted to their eyes because of their existence of belief. In spite of this, they love him (the indicative is preferable to the imperative, less fitting for a Thanksgiving) whom they did not see. This love has been dealt with in the Gospel of John (8,42; 14,15; 21,15-17), perhaps as a development of the Great Commandment of Dtn 6,4f (cf. Johannes Beutler, *Das Hauptgebot im Johannesevangelium*, in: id., *Studien zu den johanneischen Schriften*, SBAB 25, Stuttgart 1998,

107-120). As in John (and already in Deuteronomy!), love and faith belong to each other. The addressees believe in Christ though they do not see him – this corresponds to the word of Jesus to Thomas in John 20,29. In John, they are “blessed”, in 1 Peter they “rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy”.

The point of arrival of the faith of the Christians will be the “salvation of their souls”. The expression ψυχή which is found here, but also elsewhere in 1 Pet, normally does not mean the spiritual part of the human person and even less the unredeemed part of it as in Paul, but the human person as such or the centre of its decisions (cf. commentators). In this sense, it is used also in 1 Pet 1,22; 2,25; 3,20; 4,19. Only in 1 Pet 2,11, the dualistic use appears.

4. Pragmatic analysis and hermeneutics

Time seems to be a key element in the verses we studied. There was no principal clause with a verb, but the participle ἀνναγεννήσας in v. 3 seems to carry the full weight of a finite verb. In the past, God has regenerated the Christians. This happened on the occasion of their conversion and baptism. From now onwards, they shall live in the tension between the past, characterized by God’s election, and the future they are hoping for. The present is conditioned by these two poles. It is characterized by trials and by the physical absence of Christ, but in the same time by hope and faith and the love of the one who redeemed them. Christian existence is not caused by the decision of persons to become Christians, but by God’s infinite mercy. This fact contributes to the glory of God and in the same time to the confidence of the Christians.

Modern readers might find themselves easily in this description of Christian existence. The times when Christianity was a state religion have passed everywhere. Christians live again opposition and trial. The Lord seems to be far away. But our text inspires hope and confidence. At this point, the consequences of Christian belief for Christian conduct in the world are not yet developed. But they will be made explicit in the course of the Letter.

Bibliography: Cf. the English translation of Goppelt’s important commentary (German original Göttingen 1978):

Leonhard Goppelt, *A Commentary on I Peter*. Edited by Ferdinand Hahn. Translated and augmented by John E. Alsup, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 1993. – PIB XVI 6 26.

Fifth lecture: The end of the thanksgiving: the announcement of salvation (1,10-12)

1. Text and version

The text of the little unit is relatively clear. Codex Vaticanus omits Χριστοῦ in v. 11, making the reading easier. But precisely for this reason the proposal should not be accepted. In the same verse, a number of mss. connect ἐδηλοῦ with το, but this makes the construction clumsy. The first ὑμῖν in v. 12 is confirmed by the second one and should be retained.

For the translation, there are problems particularly in v. 11. εἰς τίνα καὶ ποῖον καιρόν could be translated: “for whom and what kind of time” or “for which and what kind of time”. The second alternative seems preferable: the question is end time; Christ is mentioned afterwards as point of reference. Τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα does not seem to mean “the Christward sufferings” of the Christians (Selwyn), but rather the sufferings awaiting Christ; cf. περὶ τῆς εἰς ὑμᾶς χάριτος in v. 10 (Achtmeier).

2. Two models of interpretation

During the past decades, two contrasting interpretations of our passage have been proposed. The first one sees in the prophets of v. 11 Christian prophets. The main reason for this assumption is the difficulty that nowhere in the Bible it is said that the OT prophets “searched” Scripture in order to find out the time of the Messiah. Also the idea of having the “Spirit of Christ” instructing the prophets of the Old Covenant seems to be unusual. More detailed argument can be found in:

SELWYN, EDGARD GORDON, *The First Epistle of St. Peter*, London: Macmillan 1947;

RIGATO, MARIA LUISA, *Il carisma di interpretare la Sacra Scrittura in profeti cristiani (1 Pt 1,10-12): Ricerche teologiche* 12,2 (2001) 15-49.

Most commentaries since 1970 have held the opposite position that the text is speaking about OT prophets. We find this position among other authors in the commentaries by Schelkle, Goppelt, Schrage, Brox, Achtmeier, and Elliott. According to this position, the author (and the whole letter) is influenced by apocalyptic. This opinion seems to do more justice to the text, and we shall follow it, giving the reasons in the current exegesis.

3. Grammatical analysis

The little section follows vv. 1-9, as we saw previously, and is connected with the preceding verse by a relative pronoun: περὶ ἧς σωτηρίας. The subject is and remains until the end προφήται. It has as predicate ἐξεζήτησαν καὶ ἐξεραύνησαν and serves then as subject for the two participles προφητεύσαντες and ἐραυνῶντες and in v. 12 by οἷς ἀπεκαλύφθη, with the following clauses.

4. Semantic analysis

Before entering into details, it may be useful to look for the semantic axes of the section. Authors point to two structuring elements: space and time.

Spatial categories come in in v. 12, where the text speaks about the Spirit sent down from heaven, world of the angels which want to pay reverence to the salvation granted to the Christians. By this way, the Christians appear opposed to heaven as the world of God, his Spirit and the angels, but nevertheless connected with this world “above” by God’s revelation and salvation.

More strongly attested are in our textual unit oppositions concerning time. The basic difference is between the time of promise and the time of accomplishment. To the time of promise belongs the activity of the prophets, searching about the time to come, and the time of the Spirit announcing the sufferings expecting Christ, but also his glorification(s); it is the time of “apokalypsis” – and this expressions favours strongly an apocalyptic interpretation of the whole section, if not the whole letter. To the time of fulfilment belong the concepts of “announcing” (ἀνηγγέλη, εὐαγγελισαμένων), connected with the temporal qualifier νῦν. Instead of “them”, the text now speaks about “you”, the Christian addressees. At this stage, the Spirit and the angels seem to belong to the present aeon. With good reasons, therefore, Achtemeier, speaks of “apocalyptic eschatology” in our letter and text (105-107).

V. 10: The prophets appear as persons inquiring about a coming salvation which should be granted and prophetically announced to the addressees (περὶ τῆς εἰς ὑμᾶς χάριτος). The verbs ἐξεζήτησαν and ἐξηράνθησαν have led commentators to the assumption that only or mainly Christian prophets could have been in the mind of the author. But it can be shown, that (ἐξ)εραυνάω in particular, connected in John 5,39; 7,52 with searching Scripture, can have a broader sense (see for instance Ps 118,2 Achtemeier). For the rest, the prophets of the OT in the vision of apocalyptic authors seem to have had the gift and the task to announce the future on the basis of their knowledge of God’s torah. Key figures in apocalypics are Baruch and Esra, the latter being in the same time a scribe and a prophet. The Qumran texts are based on the assumption that the words of Scripture and particularly of the prophets contain revelations about the final time to come. This is the basis for texts like 1QpHab, 4Qpatr, 4Qtest, 4QpNah, 11QMelch, 4QMidrEschat, 1QpMich, 4QpJes, 4QpHos etc. The “peshet”, that means the interpretation brings out only what is unfolded in the text, but already present in it. Time categories are prominent in apocalyptic literature since the times of Daniel. In Dan 9,24f, seven “weeks” (of years) are announced as the interval between the present and the coming final judgment and salvation. It is interesting to see that Dan 9,25 seems to be the earliest quotation of Daniel, attested in 11QMelch 2,18 (see: Die Texte aus Qumran, II, Hebräisch/Aramäisch und Deutsch, hg. von ANNETTE STEUDEL, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 2001, 175).

The whole document 11QMelch is characterized by periods of time according to jubilees, in correspondence to the apocryphal book of Jubilees. They all are based in Scripture or revelation, in the Book of Jubilees in the revelation given by God himself or the Angel of his Presence to Moses, the receiver and giver of the Law. Daniel is quoted repeatedly in the texts of cave 4 in Qumran, for instance in 4Q242 (Prayer of Nabonid), 4Q246 (Text about the Son of God) and 4QMidEschat (4Q174 + 4Q177). His fundamental role for the rise of apocalypticism is thus confirmed. Even if he belongs, according to the Hebrew Bible, to the “Writings” and not to the prophets, he may have been considered a prophet in a larger sense by the author of 1 Peter (who speaks not of “the prophets”, but of “prophets”).

V. 11: While v. 10 treated the question in whose favour the prophets of old “searched” to find out the details about the coming salvation, v. 11 describes more precisely these details. For this purpose, the verb ἐξεραυνῶντες is taken up with the verb form ἐραυνῶντες at the beginning of v. 11. The object of the search is the time (which and of what kind) of the coming salvific events. This time is not announced directly by the prophets but by the Spirit of Christ which pre-announces these events. This idea has caused uncertainty among the exegetes, as we saw, since nowhere else the NT affirms that the Spirit of Christ was operating in pre-Christian times and inspired the prophets. But authors point to 1 Pet 1,20 for the idea of the preexistence of Christ which is at the basis of the thought that his Spirit might operate before his life-time. That God spoke in the times of old through the prophets is said in Hebr 1,1, that his Spirit inspired the prophets is expressed in 2 Pet 1,21. In the Qumran texts I found the expression of the “Messiah of the Spirit” (cf. the reference to 11QMelch 2,18, given above). It probably reminds Isa. 61,1 LXX quoted in Lk 4,18.

What the Spirit of Christ attests in advance (προμαρτυρούμενον) are the sufferings waiting for Christ, but also his glorifications. The plural does not prove that the author thinks of the coming glorifications of the faithful, but might be inspired by the idea of repeated glorifications of Christ (in his resurrection, in his ascension etc.; cf. the voice from heaven in John 12,28).

V. 12: The opposition between those who foretold coming salvation and those who should enjoy it was already mentioned. The common element is the Spirit. As it instructed the prophets about the coming salvation, it now inspires the evangelists of the good news of a salvation before which even the angels would like to bow (cf. Hebr 1,14; 2,5.16).

5. Pragmatics

Our texts prepares the readers for the coming section with its moral exhortations. The readers have received God’s salvation, prepared for them already in the time of the OT and announced in the present. Now they will have to live according to it. It will be explained how this could be done.

Sixth lecture: The opening of the letter body. Exhortation to hope and holiness (1,13-21).

1. Context

In the first lecture, we have tried to show that with 1,13 starts the opening of the letter body. This is in contrast to the proposal made by Philip L. Tite (mentioned p. 2) who sees the opening of the letter body in 1,10-13 and after 1,13 a “definite break”, but in accordance with Paul J. Achtemeier. The opening of the letter seems to extend until 2,10. Mainly for practical reasons, we have singled out vv. 13-21. But there are also linguistic elements which recommend this division. In fact, vv. 13-21 seem to form a kind of sub-unit, as has been shown recently by John H. Elliott, *1 Peter* (AnB 37B), New York etc. 2000, 354-381.

2. Structure

Elliott (355) sees in vv. 13-21 a chiasmic structure, which can be outlined in the following way:

A. Hope (v. 13)

B. Holiness (vv. 14-16)

B'. Holiness (vv. 17-21b)

A'. Hope (v. 21c).

“Two internal subunits have ‘holiness’ as their unifying theme: the holiness of the believers, which models that of the holy God who called them (vv 14-16) and the holiness of Christ through whom their redemption was secured (vv 17-21b)” (ibid.)

3. Syntactic and linguistic analysis

The characteristic feature of the section, as compared with the preceding ones, is the use of the imperative aorist:

ἐλπίσατε (13)

ἅγιοι γενήθητε (15)

ἀναστράφητε (17).

Cf. in the following sections ἀγαπήσατε (22) and ἐπιποθήσατε (2,2), with the imperative present οἰκοδομείσθε in 2,5.

Another characteristic construction are the participles. From the first main imperative depend the participles ἀναζωσάμενοι and νήφοντες. Parallel to ἅγιοι γενήθητε is μὴ συσχηματιζόμενοι (which

lacks the complement ἐστῶτε), from the imperative ἀναστράφητε depends the long construction beginning with εἰδότες, with the two participles pass. in v. 21 (προεγνωσμένου, φανερωθέντος) in v. 20 and the one act. in v. 21 (ἐγείραντα).

In general, most of the text is placed in subordinate clauses from v. 16 (a causal clause, a conditional clause and then the long construction vv. 18-21, beginning with a ὅτι-clause, depending from εἰδότες).

All these observations together make our unit an “argumentative text”, corresponding to the overall style of our letter. The purpose is hortatory according to the dominance of the imperatives. The participles parallel to them or directly depending upon them take part in this “reader-orientation”.

Taking up the proposal of structure given above (2), we find the key concept of “hope” in the “frame” verses 13 and 21c and clearly another key concept of “holy/holiness” in vv. 14-16 (four times). In vv. 17-21b the “holiness” of Christ is expressed by synonyms taken from sacrificial language (Christ as “a lamb without blemish or spot”, RSV).

4. Semantic analysis

V. 13: Hope

The verse is linked with the preceding context in various ways. The initial διό refers directly to the preceding verses. The subjects of “hope” (v. 3), “grace” (v. 2) and ἀποκάλυψις (v. 7, cf. 5) have all been prepared in the preceding section. But there are more semantic fields which enter. The idea of “girding the loins” comes from Exodus tradition (Ex 12,11), being “sober” has a number of NT parallels (1 Thess 5,6,8; 2 Tim 4,5; cf 1 Pet 4,7; 5,8), as also “grace”. Already in Luke, “girding the loins” is used metaphorically for the readiness to expect the coming of the Lord with full attention. It is in this sense, that the expression has been taken up in our verse. But more important than readiness is hope, one of the most characteristic terms of our letter, framing also the present sub-unit.

Vv. 14-16: Holiness of the Christians coming from God

The central message of this verse group is found in v. 15: “be holy yourselves in all your conduct”. Whereas the idea of holiness does not seem to be a dominant subject of our letter (in spite of 2,5,9; cf. 3,5), “conduct” is indeed central. Cf. the outline of the letter, p. 3 of our handout. Ἀναστρέφω occurs once in our letter (v. 17), with eight more instances in the NT, but ἀναστροφή has six occurrences in 1 Pet out of 13 in the NT (1,15.18; 2,12; 3,12.16). This fact has led L. Goppelt to the conclusion that Christian “conduct” in the world is the central subject of 1 Pet.

The concept of holiness implies two aspects: consecration to God and for this reason contrast to the world. In early Christian literature it is less cultically than morally qualified.

The exhortation of v. 15 is prepared by an antithesis: As “children of obedience”, that means those who have accepted faith and are ready to live according to its standards, the addressees should not conform themselves to the desires which determined their lives in the time of their ignorance, but instead be holy as the one who called them is holy. The “desires” which determined the lives of the faithful before their conversion seem to be qualified negatively, as elsewhere in the NT, particularly in Paul. The author seems to think of pagans who once followed their lust and desires, excusing in part their behaviour by “ignorance” (cf. Acts 17,30; Eph 4,18). Now, since their conversion, they “shall be holy as I (the Lord) am holy”. The quotation seems to come from the code of Holiness Lev 17-26, more precisely Lev 19,2, but cf. 11,44f. It is somewhat surprising that our letter applies without much ado theological predicates of the people of Israel to the church, even the pagan Christians. This belongs to the particular perspective of our letter.

Vv. 17-21b: Holiness of Christ

As in vv. 14-16 the holiness of God stands behind the claim that Christians should be holy, in the subsequent verses the holiness of Christ serves as model and motive. At the beginning (v. 17) stands again a reminder of the fact that the addressees are children of their heavenly father (as above in v. 14). He has to be seen in the way the Pater Familias has been understood in antiquity: not only showing love and tenderness to his children, but also sanctioning their faults. Therefore, the addressees have to lead their lives as strangers in the fear of their heavenly Father. For the idea of “strangers” see our excursus in lecture 11. In the following verses (18-19), the language is taken in part from the Old Testament. The addressees have been redeemed (an idea going back to Isa 53), not with perishing values like gold and silver (cf. Is 52,3) from their idle conduct inherited from their fathers (alluding to their lives before their decision to adopt faith), but by the precious blood of Christ, the lamb without blemish and spot (vv. 18f). The idea that the Christians had to separate themselves from the value order of their fathers runs against accepted ideas of antiquity where the older is the more trustworthy, particularly in the field of religious convictions. The idea and vocabulary of atonement through blood on the other side is traditional: see Lev 16,14-16.18,f; 17,11. The Letter to the Hebrews applies it to the sacrifice of Christ (Hebr 9,12.14). Jesus as “Lamb” comes from Jes 53,7 in the context of the Fourth Song of the Servant. The alliteration ἀμνός, ἄμωμος, ἄσπιλος corresponds to the style of our document. Ἀμωμος occurs very frequently in the Sacerdotal Code, ἄσπιλος is lacking, but attested elsewhere in the NT (1 Tim 6,14; Jas 1,27; 2 Pet 3,14: ἄσπιλοι καὶ ἀμώμητοι). For Jesus as “Lamb” who takes away the sin of the world see John 1,29, but also 1 Cor 5,7; Rev 5,9.

Christ is described in the following verse (20) as the one whose coming has been known from eternity, but became manifest in the last days. Again, the apocalyptic imagery appears. “The last days”

are the time in which the Christians live. Their salvation in Jesus Christ has been prepared “from the foundation of the world” (cf. Eph 1,4), but realized in history. They will take part in it through faith or rather “confidence”, since this seems to be the dominant element of πίστις κτλ. in our letter. This confidence is put in God, who raised Christ from the dead and gave him glory (both elements are connected only here in the NT, but cf. Acts 3,13.15 taking up Isa 52,13 LXX: Elliott).

V. 21c: Hope

The final clause in v. 21c allows two translations and interpretations: “So that your faith and hope are in God” (RSV and many other versions and commentaries), or: “So that your trust may also be [your] hope in God” (Elliott; Schrage). Since the second noun, ἐλπίδα, seems to be anarthrous (only P⁷² and 1243 have the article), it may be reasonable to think that ἐλπίδα explains πίστιν. This would fit with the tendency of our letter to stress the element of confidence in Christian “faith”.

5. Pragmatics

The Christian message contains the indicative and the imperative. These complementary aspects can be seen also in the first longer sections of our letter. Whereas vv. 3-12 were dominated by the indicative, now, in vv. 13-21, follows the imperative. Again, Christian conduct is rooted in Christian belief. The idea of God’s fatherhood occurs together with the reminder of being children of God. Christian holiness is rooted in the holiness of God himself and of Jesus Christ, the immaculate lamb. No particular admonitions follow so far. What is required is a conduct worthy of the vocation of the Christians. This observation is helpful, since it distinguishes our document from moralizing treatises. Nothing else is required from the Christians than to be what they are.

Seventh lecture: exhortation to mutual love (1,22-25)

1. Context

Our section stands in the middle between vv. 13-21 with their general exhortation to Christian conduct and 2,1-10 with a reminder of Christian existence and an encouragement to live it after breaking with sin. The subject of our verse group is mutual love as concrete form of Christian existence rooted in God's election, his gift of rebirth and his word, a good news that shall not fail.

2. Grammatical structure

At the beginning of the section stands a longer construction comprehending vv. 22 and 23 with the imperative ἀγαπήσατε in the centre. It is preceded and followed by a participle in the perfect: ἡγνικότες in v. 22 and ἀναγεγεννημένοι in v. 23, referring to something which has happened in the past, either by the activity of the addressees or by God's saving action, and remains operative in the present. After the initial διότι in v. 24, the rest of the text consists of a number of main clauses, also due to biblical style which likes coordination (quotation from the LXX). The quotation consists of five lines. The first two are nominal clauses (without copula), the last three are verbal clauses with an opposition between what happened (aor. pass.) and what remains (pres.). The end of v. 25 is again a nominal clause identifying the word of the Lord mentioned in the quotation with the good news which has been preached to the Christians.

3. Semantic analysis

We may start with a short overview of the vocabulary used. The dominant semantic fields are:

- love (φιλαδελφία, ἀλλήλους ἀγαπήσατε)
- the word of God (ὑπακοή τῆς ἀληθείας, λόγος θεοῦ ζῶν καὶ μένων, ῥῆμα κυρίου, ῥῆμα τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν εἰς ὑμᾶς, σπορὰ ἀφθαρτος), opposed to
- flesh and plants which perish (σπορὰ φθαρτή, σὰρξ, ἄνθος, χόρτος, ξηραίνεσθαι, πίπτειν)
- rebirth (ἀναγεγεννημένοι)
- sanctification (ἡγνικότες, καθαρὰς καρδίας)

The only opposition seems to be between what perishes and what lasts, here applied to the word of God.

Vv. 22f: As we saw (above, 2), the central imperative aorist ἀγαπήσατε of v. 22 is framed by two participles in the perfect, one describing human action (ἡγνικότες), one God's saving action in the past (ἀναγεγεννημένοι), both still present in their consequences. The Greek verb ἀγνίζω occurs in the NT repeatedly in cultic connections (The vow of four Jews taken up by Paul by which he becomes a Nasiree: Acts 21,24.26; 24,18) or the Jews coming in pilgrimage to Jerusalem for "sanctifying" themselves (John 11,55). In NT Letters the verb is used in a metaphorical sense and applied to the life of the Christians as separated from the world and dedicated to God (besides 1 Pet 1,22 also Jas 4,8; 1 John 3,3. See EWNT/EDNT sub voce). The parallel in Jas 4,8 is particularly striking, since also there ἀγνίζω is connected with "cleaning" and "heart": καθαρίσατε χεῖρας, ἁμαρτωλοί, καὶ ἀγνίσατε καρδίας. This vocabulary seems to go back to early Christian baptismal instruction as has been opined by several authors (see introduction, p. 1f). The expression τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν ἡγνικότες seems to be parallel to ἀγνίσατε καρδίας in James. In both cases is requested to live in accordance to the own Christian vocation in the acceptance of the word of God. This word is here described as "truth", which merits "obedience". For the word of God as "truth" see JOHANNES BEUTLER, Art. Wahrheit. III. Biblisch-theologisch, in: LThK 3rd ed., vol. 10, Freiburg i. B. etc.: Herder 2001, 933-935.

The decision for faith has dedicated the addressees already to a life according to Christian standards. In the centre stands the love commandment. The love of God, present in Christ, is supposed from the context (cf. 1,8 above). Now the emphasis lies on mutual love. That it should be "sincere" (ἀνυπόκριτος) parallels strongly Paul in Rom 12,10 who speaks of ἀγάπη ἀνυπόκριτος. The context seems to suppose a community with first cases of hypocrisy. Therefore, the author insists upon loving each other "sincerely", with a "pure heart" and "earnestly" (ἐκτενωῶς).

The expression φιλαδελφία merits attention. The word occurs also elsewhere in NT letters: Rom 12,10; 1 Thess 4,9; Hebr 13,1 and 2 Pet 1,7. It is justified to see in it an example of "inculturation" of the Christian message into the Hellenistic world. On the basis of Lev 19,18, the Synoptic Gospels prefer to speak of the "love of the neighbour". The Hebrew background is אָהַבְתָּ . It means the member of the people of Israel and in this sense also the fellow citizen, but seen as a "companion". For the background of the NT term "brother", "sister", see JOHANNES BEUTLER, Art. ἀδελφός, ἀδελφή in EWNT/EDNT I. For φιλαδελφία see the corresponding article in the same dictionary by E. PLÜMACHER. The author underlines the fact that the term comes from Hellenism but is originally applied only to love of physical brothers. Only in the NT its use is enlarged and applied to the fellow members of the Christian community. In this sense, the "inculturation" is more linguistic than conceptual. The Christians live a new "brotherhood", until now unknown.

What has been expressed by the Greek term *φιλαδελφία* is now repeated by the more biblical term of *ἀλλήλους ἀγαπήσατε*. This idea of mutual love in the community as being the concrete form of the love of neighbour particularly in the Johannine tradition is widely accepted. See John 13,34f and other instances in the Gospel (15,12-17) and the Letters of John (1 John 2,3-11; 3,11-24; 4,7-21 etc.; 2 John 5). But this commandment occurs already in Paul (Rom 13,8: mutual love fulfils the whole law). Thus it cannot be seen as a later development of Christ's commandment which was taken from the Old Testament. One may miss the characteristic commandment of love of the enemies as attested in the Sermon on the Mount/Plain (Mt 5,43-47 par. Lk 6,27-35). But at least the idea of renouncing to counter-violence is found also in 1 Peter (2,17), with a parallel in Paul (Rom 12,17-21).

In V. 23, another reason, going back to the past, is given for the conduct of the Christians addressed by Peter: their "rebirth" from God: It goes back to God's saving act proclaimed and accepted in faith. The word of the message is compared with a "seed" (*σπορά*). The expression is hapax in the NT, but the comparison of the word of God with a seed is attested already in the Jesus tradition (Lk 8,11). It is characterized as "living and abiding". Some biblical parallels refer "living and abiding" to God (Dan 6,26; 1 Thess 1,9: Elliott), but here the text and the context favour a connection of the two expressions with the word of God (cf. Hebr 4,12; 1 John 1,1; 2,14 *ibid.* with LaValdière). "Perishable" values had been named already in v. 18, also there opposed to what lasts and has remaining value.

Vv. 24f: The opposition between what perishes and what lasts dominates the two remaining verses of the chapter. A long quotation from Isa 40 is to illustrate it and to back it up. Human flesh and all its glory is compared with the grass and its flowers. The grass withers, and the flower falls upon the earth. The word of God instead abides for ever. Our author follows rather faithfully the text of the Septuagint. This corresponds to his Greek culture which was mentioned in lecture 1 (p. 1). Only small divergences can be noticed: at the beginning the particle *ὡς* has been added to the text for the sake of clarity (in most, but not all manuscripts); instead of *ῥῆμα θεοῦ* in the LXX the text reads in v. 25 *ῥῆμα κυρίου*. That the author does not translate from the Hebrew text is evident from the fact that the MT in Isa 40,6-8 is considerably longer and does not speak at the beginning of the "glory" of humans but of their "grace, beauty".

What makes this quotation important in the context of 1 Peter is the context in Isaiah. The command of God to the prophet to proclaim that human flesh is like grass etc. in opposition to the word of God that abides is inserted between two prophetic oracles at the beginning of II Isa: the oracle of vv. 1-5, taken up in all four gospel (about the "voice in the wilderness") and the one of vv. 9-11, at least alluded to in John 12,15.

The connection between the quotation and its context in Isaiah is established explicitly in v. 25 b: τοῦτο δέ ἐστίν τὸ ῥῆμα τὸ εὐαγγελισθῆν εἰς ὑμᾶς. It echoes the εὐαγγελιζόμενος used twice in Isa 40,9: “Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion, Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah, ‘Here is your God’.” By this way, the ethical exhortation of vv. 22f are still more strongly rooted in the “gospel”, the imperative is rooted in the indicative.

4. Pragmatics and hermeneutics

Before all detailed ethical instructions as they will be found in 2,13 – 3,7, our author takes great care to lay a fundament in the basic Christian message and in the commandment which concerns Christians before all others: the commandment of love lived in the Christian community. In the overall structure of the letter, instructions about the life of the Christians in the community are repeatedly placed side by side with others which concern life in the world “as strangers” and seem to frame them (see our chart, p. 3, above): After the long section about “Right conduct in the world as strangers” (2,11 – 4,11) follows the section about “Sharing the Suffering of Christ as Christians” (4,12-19), after which the texts returns to “Right conduct in the community and in the world” (5,1-11). Christian life starts in the community and is rooted in it. This perspective may not correspond to modern individualism. But it is rediscovered by living communities which want to encourage Christian conduct and witness in the world of today.

Eighth lecture: Living as God's temple and holy people (2,1-10)

With this section ends the Body Opening of 1 Peter. The perspective is still oriented towards Christian life in the community. Only after 2,11, Christian existence in the world will be reflected. The beginning of the new section will be marked clearly.

1. Grammar

The most striking feature of the section is the imperative aorist ἐπιποθήσατε in v. 2. It takes up the series of imperatives aorist in the preceding subsections from v. 13 onwards. There are good reasons to think that also the οἰκοδομείσθε of v. 5 is to be understood as an imperative, in this case present. This is the opinion of most recent commentators, against P. Achtemeier and J. H. Elliott. He points to the following indicatives, describing God's action, but overlooks the preceding imperative(s). Achtemeier's argument that in all other instances in the LXX and the NT, οἰκοδομείσθαι is used in the passive sense, has some weight, but must not be decisive in the actual context.

From v. 6 onwards, God's action is more in the foreground: shift to 1st person singular, indicatives, opposition between the addressees as believers (ὁμείς) and "them" who do not believe. For this reason, the paragraph may be further subdivided into vv. 1-5 and 6-10.

2. Semantics

Again, it may be useful to find out the more important semantic fields before entering into details of interpretation:

- malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy, slander
- newborn babes, spiritual milk, growing up for salvation, tasting
- living stone, rejected by humans, chosen by God, being built up, spiritual house, corner stone, rejected by builders, head of the corner; stone that will make men stumble, rock that will make them fall
- holy priesthood, spiritual sacrifices; holy nation; no people, God's own people, without mercy, with mercy.
- putting away malice etc, coming to the Lord, believing, declaring God's gracious act

The main oppositions are between:

- then and now: life of malice – rebirth, not God's people – now God's people
- you and them: belief – unbelief with all consequences.

Vv. 1-3: The first three verses are determined by the vocabulary of breaking with sins of improper conduct in the community and rebirth with the thirst of new-born babes of milk in a metaphorical sense. The list of faults against love and justice is similar to lists in Col 3,8; Eph 4,31. In both parallel cases “Paul” thinks of members of the community and their behaviour in its midst. We remember also 1 Pet 1,22 where our author asks for sincere love from a pure heart to be lived in the community. A certain contrast may be seen between the situation of the Christians after baptism (symbolically referred to by the imagery of new-born babes longing for milk) and behaviour, which corresponds rather to a life before the conversion. The solution may lie in the thought that neo-converts had still to appropriate the rules of Christian conduct. They had to free themselves (ἀποθέμενοι) from the evil works which determined their lives and to adopt a life-style fitting for Christians. With the image of new-born babes (βρέφη), our author seems to refer to members of the community only recently received into its midst (S. Légasse s. v. βρέφος in EWNT/EDNT). The word means a very small child, an infant, in this case still longing strongly for the mother’s breast. The “spiritual”, genuine milk expected from the mother stands for the nourishment the Christians find in the process of their conversion. Luke speaks of βρέφη (instead of παιδία) in 18,15, underlining the smallness of the children brought to Jesus for blessing, praised by him and presented as models (ibid.). In the Petrine text, not only feminists will appreciate the elements of a “motherly” God (complementing the πατήρ ... ἀναγεννήσας of 1,3).

By the milk received from the mother (or nurse) the children should grow towards salvation. A first scriptural quotation tries to motivate to this thirst of salvation. It is taken from Ps 33,9 LXX. The original contains an exhortation and reads: γεύσασθε καὶ ἴδετε ὅτι χρηστός ὁ κύριος. Our author drops the καὶ ἴδετε and transforms the imperative into an indicative med. in a conditional clause. The wording χρηστός instead of χριστός, read by many manuscripts, should be retained with **ⲛ B C Ψ 1739 M** sy. Κύριος must be taken in the Christian sense as referring to Jesus Christ because of the following v. 4. The conditional clause has the meaning of a causal one: “for you have tasted the kindness of the Lord” (RSV). It gives the reason why the Christian neo-converts should break with their past and long for the milk of their salvation. Their conversion is based on personal experience: that the Lord is good.

Vv. 4-5: After the imagery of the new-born babes there is a shift towards symbolism taken from temple construction. Elements of the quotation of Ps 117,22 LXX in v. 7 are anticipated and developed. The opposition remains between “then” and “now”, in difference to the following verses. The faithful are now to approach the living rock, rejected by humans, but chosen by God: evidently Christ. And they are to become living rocks themselves, going to be built up as a spiritual house. The imagery is not completely original, since it occurs also in Eph 4,12 (cf. Mt 16,18).

At this point, the metaphor changes, and the text moves to more personal categories (prepared by the adjective “living”). The faithful become a “holy priesthood”, destined to offer spiritual offerings, pleasing to God through Jesus Christ. By this way, the idea of “holiness” is taken up from 1,15f. and the exhortation to “sanctify themselves” from 1,21. For further details about the “royal priesthood”, taken up in v. 9, see the next lecture!

Vv. 6-8: From here onwards, the opposition will be between the addressees (“you”) and those who do not believe (“they”). It is contemporaneous, not based upon succession in time. Διὸ περιέχει ἐν τῇ γραφῇ means “For this reason, it is contained in Scripture” (περιέχω can be used in an intransitive way according to W. Bauer, Dictionary). Now follows Isa 28,16 LXX in slightly modified form. The quotation is a late insertion into the Book of Isaiah with a messianic and eschatological ring (cf. Jerusalem Bible). From the quotation, two concepts are taken up in v. 7: ἔντιμον and ὁ πιστεύων: ὑμῖν οὖν τιμὴ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν. By faith, the addressees take part in the honour of the stone honoured by God. The opposite, unbelief, leads to the second scriptural quotation. It comes from Ps 117,22 LXX and seems to be connected with the previous one by the Jewish technique of *Gezerah shawah*, that means a connection by means of a common key word, even if it is understood and used differently in the two instances. The common concept is the one of “stone”. But also the concepts of the “corner stone” and the “head of the corner” are similar. In the context of unbelief, the quotation from Ps 117,22 makes only sense in connection with Is 8,14, quoted in v. 8. Jesus is the stone, whom the builders rejected, but who became the “head of the corner”, and in the same time “a stone that will make men stumble, a rock that will make them fall.” In the original context, the “stone which makes stumble” is the Lord who makes the houses of Israel and Judah stumble. The author of 1 Peter uses the text in a christological way by the connection with Ps 117, the last Psalm of the Great Hallel to be recited at Passover (cf. Mk 14,26) and understood in a messianic way at least in the time of the Second Temple. Cf. its use also in the Synoptics in the context of the Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen Mk 12,10 par. Mt 21,42; Lk 20,17. Those who do not believe stumble since they do not believe in the word (of Christian preaching). And this does not happen by chance, but since “they have been destined for it” (εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐτέθησαν). By this way, to God’s election (cf. 1,1.4f) corresponds a destination to unbelief – always respecting human freedom (the speculative problem of the relation of God’s destination and human free will is not treated in the Bible; there are only complementary statements).

Vv. 9-10: In the last two verses of the paragraph, the text moves back to those who believe, the addressees. Their privilege is described by four expressions, taken from or at least inspired by the OT: they are “a chosen race”, a “royal priesthood”, “a “holy nation” and “God’s own people”. The first title resounds Isa 43,20, the next two Ex 19,6; 23,22 LXX, the last one Isa 43,21 (cf. Mal 3,17).

From here comes also the continuation: ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε. In the Deutero-Isaian context, the people which God had formed for himself should praise his mighty deeds in the liberation from the slavery of Babylon. In 1 Peter, the idea is applied to the liberation from sin and salvation in Christ. A double imagery follows: being led from darkness to light and becoming God's people after having been no people at all, having found mercy after finding no mercy. The first imagery is traditional, particularly in post-conversional exhortations (cf. Acts 26,18 the task of Paul, 2 Cor 4,6; Eph 5,8; 1 Thess 5,4), the second double expression comes directly from Hosea (1,6.9: 2,25). Again, prophetic words of the Old Testament concerning Israel are simply applied to the Christian community. Further questions about the relation of this "New Covenant Community" to the Old Covenant one are not asked.

It should be noted that the connection of Is 28,16 with Hosea (2,1.21) is traditional as is evident from Rom 9,25-33. Probably also the other quotations in 1 Pet 2,6-10 belong to an early Christian collection of christological texts of the OT. This might be the reason why our author expands more freely some ideas, particularly the one of the "priesthood" of the believers, but also the subject of "stone(s)", in vv. 4-5 (cf. Elliott).

3. Final reflection

As we saw at the beginning of section 2, two different kinds of oppositions seem to characterize our text: the opposition of "then" and "now", and the opposition of "you" and "they". The former one seems to be the more basic one. It corresponds to the overall orientation of our letter. By their call to faith, they break with their past, get built into the temple of God, become God's holy people and his holy priesthood and pass from darkness to light. This transition is not anything realized simply once and for ever, but has to be lived, as vv. 1-5 show.

By the very decision to belong to God's people and to be built upon the corner stone, Christ, the faithful are also in contrast to those who do not believe and for whom Christ becomes a stumbling-block. This contrast may lead to conflict as will appear in the remainder of the letter.

By its basic structure, our textual unit places the Christians in time and space: they leave the house of slavery, they also leave their moral misconduct, they leave the world of darkness and approach the living stone, upon which they are going to be built themselves. By this way, they also will be in contrast to those who do not obey the word of preaching, according to the example of Christ, the stone whom the builders rejected but who became the corner stone and the head of the corner.

Ninth lecture: A Royal Priesthood

The title which the author of our letter gives to the members of addressees “a royal priesthood” (1 Pet 2,9), with the parallel expression “a holy priesthood” (v. 5), has given rise to various controversies. We may distinguish in particular 1) the linguistic problem, how to translate the expression, and 2) the theological problem, how to understand it.

1. The linguistic problem

In recent times, two alternative translations of the expression βασιλείου ιεράτευμα (and correspondingly of ιεράτευμα in v. 5) have been proposed:

- “royal residence, priestly community”
- “royal priesthood”

We shall analyse them one by one.

a) “royal residence, priestly community”

The authors who defend this version are among others E. G. Selwyn (see above, p. 17); J. N. D. Kelly (see above, p. 8); John H. Elliott (see *ibid.*); *id.*, *The Elect and the Holy: An Exegetical Examination of 1 Peter 2:1-10 and the phrase *basileion hierateuma* (NovT 12), Leiden: Brill 1966.*

These authors generally recognize the dependence of 1 Pet 2,9 upon Ex 19,6, but think that in NT times at least βασιλείου was understood as “royal palace”. This is the most frequent use in the LXX (23 times) over against use as an adjective (4 times: see Elliott, commentary, 436). The texts to which Elliott refers and which understand βασιλείου in Ex 19,6 as “royal palace” or detach it at least from the following ιεράτευμα are among others the following (the first two from Philo taken from the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, the third to fifth from *Bible Works for Windows 4*):

Abr 56.1 to Abr 58.1 56 συγγενές μὲν ἀιδιότητος ἀφθαρσία, ἐχθρὸν δὲ θάνατος. χρῆ μέντοι μῆδ' ἐκεῖνο ἀγνοεῖν, ὅτι τὸν μὲν πρῶτον ἄνθρωπον τὸν γηγενῆ πατέρα τῶν ἄχρι τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ φύντων εἰσήγαγε, τὸν δὲ μόνον ἐκ τῆς τοσαύτης φθορᾶς ὑπολειφθέντα πανοίκιον ἕνεκα δικαιοσύνης καὶ τῆς ἄλλης καλοκάγαθίας τοῦ νεάσοντος αἰθις καινοῦ γένους ἀνθρώπων, τὴν δὲ περίσεμνον τριάδα καὶ περιμάχητον ἐνὸς εἴδους ἐπιλεγομένου "βασίλειον καὶ ἱεράτευμα καὶ ἔθνος ἅγιον" (Exod. 19, 6) οἱ χρησιμοὶ καλοῦσι.

Sobr 66.1 to Sobr 67.5 66 νασμένος Ἰακώβ, ἀγγέλοις ἀλείπταις, λόγοις, χρώμενος. οὗτος τῶν δώδεκα κατάρχει φυλῶν, ἃς οἱ χρησιμοὶ "βασίλειον καὶ ἱεράτευμα θεοῦ" (Exod. 19, 6) φασιν εἶναι κατὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸν πρῶτον Σὴμ εὐλογία, οὗ τοῖς οἴκοις ἦν εὐχὴ τὸν θεὸν <ἐν>οικῆσαι: βασίλειον γὰρ ὁ βασι67 λέως δῆπουθεν οἶκος, ἱερὸς ὄντως καὶ μόνος ἄσυλος.

BGT 2 Maccabees 2:17 ὁ δὲ θεὸς ὁ σώσας τὸν πάντα λαὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀποδοὺς τὴν κληρονομίαν πᾶσιν καὶ τὸ βασίλειον καὶ τὸ ἱεράτευμα καὶ τὸν ἀγιασμόν

BNT Revelation 1:5 καὶ ἀπὸ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ μάρτυς, ὁ πιστός, ὁ πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν καὶ ὁ ἄρχων τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς. Τῷ ἀγαπῶντι ἡμᾶς καὶ λύσαντι ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ, 6 καὶ ἐποίησεν ἡμᾶς βασιλείαν, ἱερεῖς τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ αὐτοῦ, αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας [τῶν αἰώνων]: ἀμήν.

BNT Revelation 5:9 καὶ ἄδουσιν ὥδῃν καινὴν λέγοντες· ἄξιός ἐστι λαβεῖν τὸ βιβλίον καὶ ἀνοῖξαι τὰς σφραγίδας αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἐσφάγης καὶ ἠγόρασας τῷ θεῷ ἐν τῷ αἵματί σου ἐκ πάσης φυλῆς καὶ γλώσσης καὶ λαοῦ καὶ ἔθνους 10 καὶ ἐποίησας αὐτοὺς τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν βασιλείαν καὶ ἱερεῖς, καὶ βασιλεύσουσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

In all these instances, βασίλειον(α) is taken as an independent unit and not linked with ἱεράτευμα. A further argument could be that in all the other instances of 1 Pet 2,9, the adjective follows the substantive and not the other way round (cf. the survey in Goppelt, 153, n. 65).

The texts and arguments alleged to by Elliott and the other authors do not seem to be plainly convincing. In both texts quoted from Philo, the βασιλειον ιεράτευμα of Ex 19,6 LXX is replaced by βασιλειον καὶ ιεράτευμα. The same holds true for 2 Macc 2,17. This καί is not found in 1 Pet 2,9 and should not be read into the text too easily. In Revelation, in both instances we read βασιλείαν which is not the same thing as “royal palace” and proves only that the author of Revelation did not connect the two expressions. The two texts quoted from Jubilees do not seem to be convincing either (at least according to the German translation of P. Riessler, *Altjüdisches Schrifttum außerhalb der Bibel*, Heidelberg: Kerle ²1966: none of them speaks of a royal palace).

b) “royal priesthood”

Most modern translations and commentaries hold the opposite opinion and understand “βασιλειον ιεράτευμα” as “royal priesthood”. If we can take for granted that our author follows here Ex 19,6 (cf. 23,22) LXX and this text translates Ex 19,6 TM *ממלכת כהנים*, we have in the Hebrew original a connection with status constructus which is to be interpreted with all probability as a connection of two related concepts, not independent ones (“royal priesthood” or “priestly government”).

That in the case of βασιλειον ιεράτευμα the adjective precedes the noun instead of following it as in the other instances in 1 Pet 2,9 (γένος ἐκλεκτόν, ἔθνος ἅγιον, λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν) is due to the fact that the text follows Ex 19,6 LXX, also in word order.

All four expressions see the people of God in personal categories as a “chosen race”, “holy nation”, “a people belonging to God”. If βασιλειον were taken as a fifth, independent unit, it would be the only one which does not fit into this semantic field. In the same time it would break the sequence of constructions noun + adjective (or supplement). For these and other reasons we follow the “majority” opinion, understanding βασιλειον ιεράτευμα as “royal priesthood”.

2. The theological problem

Luther, in his commentary on 1 Peter, understands the ιεράτευμα ἅγιον of 1 Pet 2,5 and the βασιλειον ιεράτευμα of 1 Pet 2,9 as proofs for the idea of the “universal priesthood of all faithful”. Many authors since have followed him, not only in protestant churches, but also in the Catholic one. It seems that Luther saw in our texts an argument against ordained ministry, which Luther rejected, at least in its sacramental form. The question has been controversial for a long time, and only recently a consensus seems to have been reached.

Most authors today agree that the texts of 1 Pet 2 do not speak of a category of Christians, for instance the laity over against ordained ministers. From the context, as we studied it, appears clearly

that our author has in mind the whole of the communities in northern Asia Minor to which he writes. No distinction between is made between a “universal priesthood” of all or in particular of the laity and an ordained ministry of the “priests” in the strict sense. For this reason, the protestant tradition cannot refer to this text for a universal priesthood of all faithful instead of ordained ministry. And the Catholic tradition should not find here an argument for the legitimacy of a universal priesthood of all Christians and the laity in particular besides ordained ministry, since the text simply does not mention it. What the text suggests is a “priestly” dimension of all faithful (not individually, but as the people of God), whatever may be held in the question of ordained priesthood. See for this view Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, n. 10:

“Christus Dominus, pontifex ex hominibus assumptus (cf. Hebr. 5,1-5), novum populum *fecit ...regnum et sacerdotes Deo et Patri suo* (Apoc 1,6 ; cf. 5,9-10). Baptizati enim, per regenerationem et Spiritus Sancti unctionem consecrantur in domum spiritualem et sacerdotium sanctum, ut per omnia opera hominis christiani spirituales offerant hostias, et virtutes annuntient Eius qui de tenebris eos vocavit in admirabile lumen suum (1 Petr 2,4-10).”

Tenth lecture : The beginning of Body Middle (2,11-17)

1. Context

As it was explained in the first lecture, with 1 Pet 2,11 begins the body middle, extending until 5,11 and consisting of three main parts:

- right conduct in the world as strangers (2,11 – 4,11)
- sharing the suffering of Christ as Christians (4,12-19)
- right conduct in the community and in the world (5,1-11)

2,11f form a kind of general introduction into the first part of body middle,

2,13-17 introduce into the long section about civil and domestic obligations (2,13 – 3,7).

2. The introduction into 2,11 – 4,11: 1 Pet 2,11f

With the initial Ἀγαπητοί, the beginning of the new main section is clearly marked. Cf. the following ἀγαπητοί in 4,12. With παρακαλῶ, also Paul can start a new main part of a letter (cf. Rom 12,1; 1 Thess 2,8; cf. Eph 4,1). The designation of the addressees as “aliens and exiles” takes up basic ideas of the letter occurring right from the beginning (cf. 1,1.17). The whole complex of ethical exhortations following until 4,11 will have to be understood under this heading. Even those exhortations which concern life in the community (like 3,8-12) are connected by their context (3,13-22) to the impression which the faithful create among those persons with whom they have to live.

The exhortation of 2,11f can be divided into two halves:

- the negative exhortation (ἀπέχεσθαι) in v. 11 and
- the positive exhortation (ἔχοντες) in v. 12, with the following ἵνα-clause.

The negative exhortation takes up the idea of a tension between “flesh” and “soul” (ψυχή) or “Spirit” (πνεῦμα), ascribing the “desires” (ἐπιθυμίας) to the “flesh”. Whereas Paul in Gal 5,16-25 opposes “Spirit” and “flesh”, our author uses “soul” and “flesh”, with his preference for ψυχή shown also elsewhere (cf. 1,9 above and our remarks in this context). The opposition between the two tendencies is emphasized in our letter even more strongly as in Paul, since the desires of the flesh “struggle” against those of the “soul”.

The positive exhortation starts with a favourite expression of our author: “conduct” (ἀναστροφή) – see the imperative ἀναστράφητε in 1,17 and our explanations given there. What has only been hinted at in 1,17, namely that the addressees “lead their lives” among gentiles (the verse speaks of “exiles”), is spelled out here explicitly.

The conduct of the Christian addressees has to be “good”. Whoever attributes to them evil works should be convinced by their good works that he is wrong, and he should give honour to God – if not now, so at least on the “day of (God’s) visitation”. With “doing evil works” (κακοποιῶν) and “good works” (καλὰ ἔργα), a basic opposition is expressed which goes back rather to Hellenistic ideas than to Judaism. In Judaism, “good works” mean works which go beyond the strict observance of the Torah like giving alms. This cannot be the sense of the opposition in our context, since the whole of ethical conduct seems to be at stake. From the Hellenistic background of our letter, “good” works are those which correspond to civic and domestic obligations, while “evil works” would mean failing in these areas (cf. Goppelt ad loc.).

That those who slander the members of the Christian community, observing their “good works”, should “praise” God, finds a striking parallel in Mt 5,16. But there are also differences: In Mt, the “good works” mean those which correspond to the Torah reinterpreted by Jesus (cf. Mt 5,17-20.21-48). The praise to God will be expressed immediately, that means as soon as the human persons who observe the disciples of Jesus see their good works. In 1 Peter, however, there may be a delay of the discovery of the goodness of the works of the Christians: it may be reserved for the “day of visitation”, probably the day of final judgment. This change of perspective may be due to the situation of the Petrine Christians who see themselves exposed constantly to slander and opposition without too much hope that this situation might be changed still at their lifetime.

3. Loyalty towards the Emperor (2,13-17)

With 2,13 begins a kind of “household code” which extends until 3,7. Right conduct in society is explained by three characteristic examples: right conduct as citizens, right conduct of slaves and right conduct of wives and husbands. That the list is not complete but rather serves as a series of examples results from the fact that for instance the relation parents – children is not reflected about. The author seems to choose examples where Christian conduct was in particular exposed to pagan criticism. This fits into the general orientation of the letter and the body middle in particular.

“Household codes” appear in NT letters in postpauline times. Other examples are Eph 5,21 – 6,9; Col 3,18 – 4,1; Tit 2,9f in the context). The origin of such codes will be treated later in the context of “Hellenistic ethics in 1 Pet” (lecture 14). The subject seems to come from Hellenistic-Roman popular philosophy, particularly from stoicism, the linguistic form of the imperatives seems to reflect more apodictic law as documented in the OT tradition: Goppelt. For the discussion about “household codes” cf. now JOHANNES WOYKE, *Die neutestamentlichen Haustafeln. Ein kritischer und konstruktiver Forschungsbericht* (SBS 184), Stuttgart, Kath. Bibelwerk 2000.

In NT letters, exhortations concerning right conduct towards civil authorities is rarely connected with obligations in the “house” proper. Our “Petrine” author seems to have selected these obligations as examples for right conduct in the society since they were of primary importance for the apology of the Christians in non-Christian society of the Roman Empire. Parallel passages are Rom 13,1-7; 1 Tim 2,1-3. At the basis of such reflections seems to stand Jesus tradition as documented in the pericope about paying taxes to Cesar (Mk 12,13-17 par.; Mt 17,24-27).

Vv. 13f: With ὑποτάγητε, a key concept for the rules of 1 Pet concerning right conduct in society is chosen. Cf. our survey of the structure of 1 Peter on p. 3 of this manuscript. It will be taken up in the instructions for the community in 5,5 and find a christological perspective in 3,22 (see there). The sense does not seem to be “submissiveness” but rather “subordination” in accordance with structures given by creation. That is why the general term chosen by the author for the object of the ὑποτάσσεσθαι is πᾶσα ἀνθρωπίνη κτίσις. Only then, the Emperor (βασιλεύς as the term for the Roman Emperor accepted by this time) as the “person having authority” is mentioned. Cesar does not deserve reverence because of himself, but “because of the Lord”: for our author Christ as mediator of creation. Goppelt underlines with good reason that our author does not speak of a divine origin of the authority of Cesar as such, but subordinates the Emperor to “all human creature”. This may be due to the fact that in Asia Minor by this time the cult of the Emperor was established more and more and the Christians had to find their way between loyalty and distance because of their faith. As Cesar does not derive his authority in a special way from the divinity, also his messengers, the procurators and other state officials have only human dignity. They are sent, not by God, but by the Emperor to punish the wicked and to praise (not: reward) the good. This corresponds to judicial power in antiquity, beyond modern categories.

Vv. 15f: The “will of God” is not directly connected with the authority of the rulers, but with the lives of the Christians. By their proper conduct (ἀγαθοποιούντας), the ignorance of those who slander them should be convicted and their mouths should be shut. The Christians are seen not as slaves in a totalitarian system, but as “free persons”. This is further developed in an opposition concerning the inner attitude of these “free persons”: they should not take their liberty as a pretext for malice, but practice it as “servants / slaves” of God. With the subject of “liberty”, our author takes up another key term of Hellenistic thought. Cf. GERHARD DAUTZENBERG, Freiheit im hellenistischen Kontext, In JOHANNES BEUTLER, ed., Der neue Mensch in Christus. Hellenistische Anthropologie und Ethik im Neuen Testament (QD 190), Freiburg etc.: Herder 2001, 57-81. The Christians use their freedom as persons created by God and subject to his will. By this way, the origin and the limits of Christian liberty are described. In the context of rules about conduct in civil society, of course, the concept of “liberty” is of importance, particularly in the historical circumstances of the time.

V. 17: The final verse of the subsection consists of four imperatives with a preceding acc. object: the first imperative follows those of chapter 1 and 2,2 in being in the aorist; the three following ones are in the present tense, expressing continuing conduct and attitude. While the first and the fourth imperative have the same verb (τιμᾶν), the second and third are not linguistically connected so that a chiasm is not fully developed (Achtmeier). It may be said, that the “outer” imperatives concern rather life in society, whereas the “inner” ones the attitude towards the fellow Christians and God.

If the little series starts with “honour all person”, this imperative plays down again any particular honour which should be attributed to Cesar as Cesar. If and as far as Cesar is to be honoured, this has to be the case in the context of all human persons, being God’s creatures (cf. v. 13).

In the middle stand the exhortations concerning right attitude towards the fellow Christians and God. The word “ἀδελφότης” is reserved to our author and occurs only again in 5,9. It means the fellow Christians in sense as ἀδελφός / ἀδελφή is used in the NT (cf. our article in EWNT / EDNT). The “fear” is here reserved to God, not the Emperor. Also under this respect, our letter differs from Paul in Rom 13,1-7. For more correspondences and differences cf. Achtmeier, “Excursus: 1 Peter 2:13-17 and Romans 13:1-7”, 180-182.

A further limitation of the exhortations concerning Cesar should be seen in the mention of “Babylon” in 5,13. Cf. also what we said about the apocalyptic language in ch. 1.

Eleventh lecture: Living as Aliens and Exiles

Calling the addressees “aliens and exiles” in 2,11, the author of our letter has chosen two expressions which during the past decades have caused a vivid discussion. Two main positions have emerged.

1. The sociological approach

ELLIOTT, JOHN H., *A Home for the Homeless. A sociological exegesis of 1 Peter, its situation and strategy*, London: SCM 1982; = Spanish: *Un hogar para los que no tienen patria ni hogar*, Estella: Verbo Divino 1995 (PIB XVI 4 23.1);

ID., *1 Peter (AncB 37B)*, New York 2000;

VAN RENDBURG, FIKA J., *Christians as ‘resident and visiting aliens’: implications of the exhortation to the πάροικοι and παρεπίδημοι in 1 Peter for the church in South Africa*: *Neotestamentica* 32 (1998) 573-583.

a) approach

Elliott chooses for his approach the sociological method, combined with a reflection about the religious dimension of the subjects of being “aliens” and “strangers” in 1 Peter.

b) starting point

The starting point is the connection of two major subjects in 1 Peter: “πάροικος” and “οἰκία”. According to E., both concepts are related: the first describes the relations of the faithful *ad extra*, the second *ad intra*: those, who are “the house of God”, by this very fact are “aliens and strangers” in their social context.

c) context

Πάροικος is found together with παρεπίδημος at the beginning of the long first section of 1 Peter which describes the interaction of the faithful with their social surrounding 2,11, prepared in 1,1. Παροικία is also mentioned in 1,17. Οἶκος occurs in 2,5 and 4,17 in sections which describe the relation of the addressees towards their social context (2,4-10; 4,12-17). E. ascribes both concepts to the same semantic field, together with other related concepts. According to him, both are connected also from the sociological and theological point of view.

d) Πάρουκος and cognates in 1 Peter

Linguistically a “πάρουκος” is “someone who is living in the neighbourhood”, an “alien”. The word is related to the Greek noun “οἶκος”. It means someone who does not live in his house. From the social and political point of view, such a person is to be placed between the “citizen” (πολίτης) and the “stranger” without almost any rights (ξένος). The same usage can be observed in the OT. “Strangers” have to be respected, since also Israel was living as a people of strangers in Egypt, later Babylon. To be πάρουκος, can also be applied to the relation towards God: 1 Chr 29,15 in a prayer of David, cf. Ps 38(39)12, LXX; 118 (119), 9.19 LXX. E. understands these passages in the same time as religious and social concepts (ἐν τῇ γῆ means “in the land” and not “on earth”); cf. Ps 119 (120),5-7 (παροιμία in the literal sense). The sense is never merely religious.

Παρεπίδημος accentuates the transitory character of a dwelling, πάρουκος the social position.

Διασπορά means the Jewish dispersion in the Hellenistic world (LXX). The Hebrew equivalents are *galuth* and *golah*.

Πάρουκος can receive a spiritual meaning in Hellenistic Judaism, particularly in Philo. It means being on the way to the eternal home. A similar perspective is found in the NT Letter to the Hebrews. Otherwise, the sociological and political meaning are dominant. According to the German sociologist Max Weber, the Jews are a “people of Parias”. In the NT, the predominant usage of πάρουκος seems to be the literal one (Luke-Acts), with some modification in Eph 2,19. Also for 1 Peter, E. prefers the literal understanding of the term: the Christians share the position of the Jews of the Diaspora with limited rights, but in a better position than simple strangers (cf. John 7,35; Jas 1,1; 1 Pet 1,1). They are people living outside their own country.

The translators, according to E., overlook generally the social and political dimensions of the concepts under study. They see the addressees as strangers in this world, on the way to their eternal home. But this does not seem to be the perspective of our letter. The “desires of the flesh” of 2,11f. do not see the Christians in a cosmological conflict, but rather in a social and political one with their concrete surroundings: the pagans. Also in 1,17 there is no talk of a heavenly home. The διασπορά of 1,1 describes also according to L. Goppelt the social situation of the Christians in their communities made up of former Jews and Gentiles. The text does not allow to speak of “pilgrims” or “exiles”. The best translation of πάρουκοι according to E. would be “resident aliens”, of παροιμία “alien residence”, of παρεπίδημοι “visiting strangers”.

Summing up these results, it should be said that for the author of 1 Peter, the terms of πάρουκος and cognates should be taken in the literal and not (primarily) in the metaphorical sense.

2. The theological approach

FELDMEIER, REINHARD, *Die Christen als Fremde. Die Metapher der Fremde in der antiken Welt, im Urchristentum und im 1. Petrusbrief* (WUNT 64), Tübingen: Mohr / Siebeck 1992.

a) Positive exposition

Feldmeier starts, like Elliott, with a survey of the usage and meaning of *πάροικος* / *παροιμία* and *παρεπίδημος* in antiquity. According to F., *πάροικος* in pagan texts has mainly the meaning of “neighbour”, a person living nearby. Only secondarily it can have the meaning of a citizen with limited rights living outside his own country. This connotation seems to be prevalent in the LXX, where also *παροιμία* occurs for the first time. *παρεπίδημος* has a more strongly social meaning and designates a person living only temporarily in a certain area or region. The expression remains rare. It seems to be of importance that 1 Pet uses it twice in a privileged position (1,1; 2,11). Both expressions designate persons who are not at home in their social context and who enjoy only limited rights. If used by these persons themselves, the terms also express a certain distance of the persons involved towards their social setting (20-22).

Antiquity knows a philosophical use of *πάροικος* and *παρεπίδημος*. The texts are found in the Pythagorean school, but also in a letter attributed to Platon (Axiochus) and with the Stoics. Human person as such is “a stranger and a bypassing person”. This idea has not only positive connotations. Behind it is found Greek dualism of body and soul. The idea of being a stranger in this world can also be used in an ethical way. There does not seem to be a direct influence of the Greek idea on 1 Pet.

On the other side there seems to be a direct influence of the Greek OT on our letter. In Gen 23,4, Abraham says to the Cananeans “*Πάροικος καὶ παρεπίδημος ἐγώ εἰμι μετ’ ὑμῶν*”. The two terms occur together in Ps 38,13 LXX where the praying person designates himself as a “passing guest” and a “sojourner” before God to whom he cries. This latter usage is of primary importance since it shows the use of the two terms as a self-designation of the Israelite in a metaphorical sense before God. Accordingly, in post-exilic time the whole people of God can be designated as “aliens” and “sojourners” before God in a prayer attributed to David in 1 Chron 29,15. Cf. Ps 118,19 LXX. In all these texts, we are very close to 1 Pet.

In the Apocrypha, the idea of being strangers in the land of Israel is not attested. Israel lives as a community of citizens with full rights in the promised land. In Qumran, the perspective is different. The community lives in exile. Cf pHab 11,6; 1 QS 8,13ff, CD 6,4-6! Separation from Israel and conversion are closely connected. – Philo knows the sage as living as a stranger in this world. He is at home not in the sensual world, but in the intelligible one. Cf. among other texts ConfLing 75-82. This idea may have been influenced by the fact that the Jews in Alexandria lived as an ethnic minority among the Gentiles, but also Platonic ideas are reflected.

In the NT, the idea of the Christians living as strangers in this world is not dominant and occurs at a rather late period. Only in the 2nd century it becomes influential. The first text attesting the idea is Paul's Letter to the Philippians (3,20) where the Christians are designated as citizens of a heavenly city; cf. Gal 4,26. According to Eph 2,19, the Christians are no longer ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι. They belong to a heavenly kingdom. In difference to the above texts, 1 Pet stresses more strongly the negative aspect of the separation of the Christians from their social context. The Letter to the Hebrews emphasizes the life of the OT witnesses as aliens (Hebr 11), starting with Abraham (Hebr 11,8-10). Cf. the conclusion in Hebr 11,13: "These all died in faith, not having received what was promised, but having seen it and greeted from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles (παρεπίδημοι καὶ ξένοι) on the earth." The expression ξένοι is stronger than πάροικοι and stresses the element of not belonging to the country where a person lives. There seems to be an influence of Philo in Hebrews, but also of Jewish Apocalypticism. In difference to 1 Pet, in Hebrews the idea of being strangers is not (yet) directly applied to the Christians (cf. 92f).

Looking back, we can say that there is an influence of the LXX on 1 Pet. Identity is given by identification (with the patriarchs and the OT people of God). The experience of the faithful as being in contrast to society is founded in the idea of their divine election and the divine promises (96). From the side of Judaism, there is an influence of (cosmological and anthropological) dualism. A paraenetic use of the idea of being a stranger is prepared already in Philo (the sage as a stranger in this world). The stranger as representing an elite in contrast to society is prepared in Philo and at Qumran. How these ideas have reached 1 Pet is widely unknown.

In NT perspective, the eschatological dimension is important. The Christians were reborn (1 Pet 1,3). They remain παρεπίδημοι in this world. In difference towards other NT texts, 1 Pet sees the Christians mainly in a negative way as "strangers and sojourners". The idea of a heavenly citizenship is not developed. The Christians do not return to where they belonged. On the other side, they

are directly addressed as “strangers and sojourners”, an element which is not found elsewhere in the NT.

Coming to 1 Pet, we can say that the Christians of the communities addressed by our author do not seem to be exposed to full-fledged persecution, but only to tensions with their surroundings. Actions taken against them seem to have been caused primarily by the masses of people and only secondarily by the civil authorities. The main reason for opposition against the Christians seems to have been their “atheism” and “hate of humankind”, as contemporary texts show (Pliny, Tacitus, Suetonius, Celsus in Origen, Minucius Felix). In Roman eyes, the Christians lacked morality. They spread a dangerous “superstition” which undermined the fundamentals of Roman society. They were “obstinate”, and so their resistance to Roman society had to be opposed. In the impression of being “different” and as such a menace to society, the Christians shared the fate of the Jewish community in antiquity. Part of the opposition they found is rooted in the Jewish origin of their belief.

b) Critique of the approach of J. H. Elliott

In appendix 2, Feldmeier enters into controversy with the contribution by J. H. Elliott. He appraises the social dimension of “πάροικοι and παρεπίδημοι” underlined by Elliott, but thinks that this element has been overemphasized. One basic idea of Elliott – the semantic connection and central meaning of πάροικος and οἶκος – does not stand to critical investigation. Both terms do not occur together in our letter, and a relation of the two is nowhere developed. The dominant concept expressing the identity of the Christians is their being a “holy nation, God’s own people” (2,9). It cannot be proved that the designation of the Christians being “strangers” and “sojourners” was given to them by their fellow citizens. If it had a negative ring, it is difficult to understand why the author should have used it in a positive way right from the beginning of the Letter (1,1) and then again at the beginning of the main section (2,11).

Also from the social point of view, the analyses of Elliott are subject to doubts: if there was at all a social group of πάροικοι in Greco-Roman society at the end of the first century, the Christians of 1 Pet could hardly have belonged as such to this category. To their communities belonged also slaves, and these communities seem to have been composed by citizens of various categories.

The polemics of Elliott against any idea of the Christians of 1 Pet being in “pilgrimage” seems to be overstressed. Eschatology is a dominant factor also in our letter, and although the “heavenly home” of the addressees is not mentioned, their belonging to it as God’s own people cannot be denied.

Twelfth Lecture: Domestic Code – Slaves (2,18-25)

1. Context

With 2,18 the domestic code proper starts with the exhortation of the slaves. In 3,1-7, wives and husbands will be exhorted. Notice the characteristic ὑποτασσόμενοι/αι in 2,18 and 3,1, to which corresponds the participle συνουκοῦντες in 3,7.

2. Grammar

The independent participle in v. 18 is a characteristic feature not only of Paul, but also and in particular of Peter: cf. F. BLASS – A. DEBRUNNER – F. REHKOPF, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht ¹⁵1979, nr. 468,2. Further examples are 2,12; 3,1.7 (see above); 3,9; 4,8.10.

Another striking feature of the section is the shift between 2nd person pl., 1st person pl. and 3rd person sg. The dominating form is 2nd person pl., which occurs in vv. (18-19) 20-21 and 24d-25. It is interrupted by 1st person pl. in v. 24c and 3rd person sg. in v. 19 and 21b – 24b.

These verses 21b – 24b have elements of a hymnic fragment: four times a relative pronoun stands at the beginning: ὃς in v. 22, 23 and 24 at the beginning, οὗ in v. 24c. Cf. Phil 2,6; Col 1,15; 1 Tim 3,16, in all cases at the beginning of a hymn.

Nestle – Aland indents the whole section vv. 21-25 as a given fragment, but against this hypothesis speaks the fact that the section starts and ends with 2nd person pl., with the move to 1st person pl. and 3rd person sg. in the middle (see above).

3. Semantics

Roughly there could be distinguished three semantic fields in our section:

- servants and their service towards their masters
- doing good or evil / sinning
- suffering

Very skilfully, our author has connected these themes with each other. The service of the slaves shall be offered also to wicked lords, and the slaves should not be subject to reproach because of their misconduct. This brings in the subject of “sin”, which is then developed in the terminology of the “Suffering Servant” of Isa. 53. This way, also the theme of “suffering is introduced and treated.

4. Detailed analysis

Vv. 18-20: At the beginning stands the exhortation of v. 18. Vv. 19-20 give the reason for being subject even to wicked masters with an inclusion of *τοῦτο ... χάρις*.

V. 18: The definite article *Οἱ οἰκέται* stands for the vocative. Commentators remark the difference between *δοῦλος* and *οἰκέτης*. Elliott even thinks that a linguistic link with *οἶκος* is intended. This is not very probable, but it remains true that *οἰκέτης* expresses more clearly the belonging of the slave to the house or family and less his inferior position. *ὑποτασσόμενοι* is the recurring exhortation in this domestic code (cf. 2,13; 3,1.5). We shall deal with this exhortation in the context of “Hellenistic ethics in 1 Pt” (Lecture 14). The term *δεσπόταις* stresses again the relation of dependence and submission. These “lords” or “owners” can be “good” and “gentle” or “perverse”. Even in this case the servants owe them submission.

V. 19: This submission is required not only by reason, but also by conscience before God. Apparently our author takes the existence of slavery as given by God. Even unjust treatment has to be accepted for reason of conscience. We shall come back to this perspective later. The concept of “suffering” prepares already the christological section in vv. 21-25.

V. 20: In the meantime the term of “enduring” (*ὑπομένειν*) is chosen twice. Two alternatives are offered: enduring bad treatment as a consequence of bad conduct and as punishment, or enduring hardships without one’s misconduct, even after good behaviour. The latter one merits God’s favour, the former not.

We remember the importance of “doing good” for 1 Pt (see above, v. 14). The subject will come back again, when persecution is mentioned (see below, 3,13.16f; 4,19).

Vv. 21-25: The movement now shifts from exhortation to christological argument. The fourfold relative clause is framed by remarks addressing the slaves in the community (21, 24c-25).

V. 21: This verse is still addressing directly the readers. It moves from imperative to indicative. The readers are reminded of their vocation (cf. 1,15; 2,9; but also 3,9; 5,10). Particularly in 1,15 the vocation to good conduct had been underlined. It takes a concrete form in following the example of Christ in his passion. For “walking in the footsteps” cf. Rom 4,12; 2 Cor 12,18.

V. 22: from here onwards starts the christological section inspired by the Fourth Song of the Servant Isa 52,13 – 53,12. Our verse is taken almost literally from Isa 53,9, with the only exception that *ἀνομίαν* of the LXX is replaced by *ἁμαρτίαν* and the characteristic *ὅς* is placed at the beginning. In suffering without guilt, Christ has become the model of the suffering servant / slave of the Petrine community.

V. 23: This verse is introduced by a second “ὅς”. There is no direct reference to Isa 53, but rather an influence of the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5,39); cf. Rom 12,19-21. Evildoing has not to be answered by evildoing. Misconduct has to be answered with calm (cf. John 18,23). Confidence in the just judgment of God is prepared in Jer 11,20.

V. 24: The third “ὅς” brings back to Isa 53. That Christ bore the sins of the many is announced in the word about the Servant in Isa 53,4.12. The same idea is echoed in John 1,29. It is basic for early Christian soteriology. That Christ took the sins unto his body is found in Col 1,22; cf. Hebr 10,10. The movement from the atoning action of Christ to the life of the Christians in justice has a Pauline ring, cf. Rom 6,11.18. The healing of the faithful through the wounds of the Servant comes again from Isa 53, here v. 5. The sentence is introduced by a fourth use of the relative pronoun (οὗ).

V. 25: A quotation from Isa 53,6 closes this section. The readers are compared to lost sheep. The idea evokes chapters like Ez 34, cf. Jer 23 and prepares the ground for the concept of the shepherd, applied to Jesus (as in John 10,1-18). The opposition of “once upon a time” and “now” is taken up from the beginning of the Letter (cf. 1,14-18). The “lost sheep” are to find their true shepherd and “bishop” (overseer, warden) of their souls in Christ. A pre-Christian usage of ἐπίσκοπος is prepared in Job 10,12 LXX; Wisd 1,6.

Generally speaking, vv. 21-25 are less and less concerned with slaves as slaves, and this may speak for a pre-Petrine origin of this group of verses, although no clear consensus has been reached thereupon till now.

5. Diachronic comparison

In Paul, no paraenetic passage is dealing with slaves. In fact, Paul has no domestic code as such. The conviction that in Christ all Christians have the same dignity is expressed most clearly in Gal 3,28; cf. 1 Cor 12,13. In the Letter to Philemon, Paul invites his addressee to free his slave Onesimus and to gain him as a brother in Christ. A similar thought appears in 1 Cor 7,21. Of this perspective, very little seems to have survived in 1 Peter.

Much nearer to our passage in 1 Pt is Col 3,22-25. Slaves should be obedient to their masters, and this for the Lord. A sincerity of heart is required beyond purely external obedience. The service done to the earthly masters is done to the Lord himself who will also reward them.

The idea is taken up in Eph 6,5-8. Again, the service of the slaves is required to be a service done to the Lord. All, the slaves and the free persons, will receive their reward. New is in Ephesians (6,9), that an exhortation of the masters is added. They should remember that they as the slaves have a master in heaven and that before him there is no distinction of persons (προσωπολημψία).

In 1 Tim 6,1f the case of slaves of Christian masters is addressed expressly. Again, the institution of slavery is not put into question. In general, slaves should respect their masters, so that Christianity is respected. If the master is a Christian, he should be respected as a brother in Christ and someone loved by God. In this perspective, no change of the situation of slaves is envisaged any longer.

The same holds true for the section about slaves in the Letter to Titus (2,9f). The framework are here various groups in the community: elders and elderly women, and then also slaves. Their status is not questioned. They should be submissive in order to gain respect for the teaching of the Saviour Jesus Christ.

Modern readers will question such texts on the basis of the idea of all human persons being children of the same Father in heaven, an idea spelled out more concretely by Paul, but seen only insufficiently by the later authors of the New Testament.

13th Lecture: Domestic Code – Wives and Husbands (3,1-7)

1. Context

With our text, the “domestic code” continues. After the section about slaves (2,18-25) now wives (3,1-6) and husbands (3,7) are exhorted. Instructions given to parents and children are missing (cf. Col 3,20f).

2. Grammar

Again, the exhortations are found in the form of participles having the force of an imperative (v. 1 ὑποτασσόμεναι, v. 7 συνοικοῦντες, ἀπονέμοντες). Since these absolute participles are incomplete nominal clauses (with an ἐστῶτε to be added), the emphasis is more on what the addressees have to be than on what they have to do. The subject shifts in vv. 1-2 from the wives to their unbelieving husbands and in vv. 3-4 back again to the wives or more precisely to their “order” of hairdressing and clothing. In vv. 5-6, exemplary wives of the past are echoed, with Sarah in particular.

3. Semantics

Vv. 1-2 start with the dominant idea of “being subject” (ὑποτασσόμεναι). In vv. 3-4 comes in the idea of κόσμος, applied to the hairstyle and clothing of the wives. This concept prepares the third unit, vv. 5-6, where ἐκόσμου is predicated of the holy women of the past. Here also ὑποτασσόμεναι from v. 1 is taken up again, forming a kind of inclusion with the beginning of the paragraph. – The exhortation of the husbands is semantically linked to γυναῖκες in v. 7 by σκεῶς γυναικεῖον, a difficult expression, but not a unique one in the NT (cf. 1 Thess 4,4). The prefix ὑπο- in vv. 1 and 5 is replaced by συν- (twice) in v. 7. Subordination is replaced by common life, although with the “weaker gender”. Its weakness should not be a reason for disdain or abuse, but for respect.

4. Detailed analysis

Vv. 1-2: the exhortation for the wives inserts itself into the larger context of the Christians’ readiness to “be subject” to legitimate authority (cf. 2,13). It is not discussed, and no particular reason is given for the submission of the wives to the husbands. Apparently such an attitude was required by Hellenistic ethics.

The motive given is of missionary character. By their “conduct” (ἀναστροφή, cf. 1,17), they should win over also non-believing husbands to Christian faith. This perspective fits well into the general perspective of our letter, where the Christians should convince their compatriots by their right conduct even in difficult situations of the legitimacy of Christians claims. Cf. 3,16!

Vv. 3-4: The correct conduct of Christian wives is now illustrated. There is an opposition between external appearance and internal attitude. The external appearance of elegance with polished hairstyle, jewellery and expensive clothes is contrasted with the beauty of the heart and of the spirit. Such a soft and peaceful spirit is worthy of respect before God. Clothing, elegant hairstyle and jewels belong to values which pass. Here, the author comes close to James 5,1-3; cf. 2,2-5.

Vv. 5-6: The concept of “κοσμεῖν” makes the bridge from vv. 3-4 to 5-6. The holy women of the past “adorned” themselves by their obedience to their husband like Sarah towards Abraham. They received their reward, as is apparent in the case of Sarah. She received her son. All of them did not fear any threat. Also this way, they became models for the Christian wives of the time of 1 Pt.

V. 7: The text now turns to the Christian husbands. If the construction is the same as in 3,1, the participle should also have the value of an imperative. This means that “live together” is an exhortation, qualified by “considerately”. The weaker situation of the wife (or: “vessel”) obliges the husband to respect her instead of abusing her weakness. The reason given is not simply philosophical but theological: the wives are “coheirs” of God’s promises, of his gift of life. Here, we are very close to Paul (cf. Gal 3,28). Only if the Christian husbands live according to the standards of their vocation, they can hope that their prayers will be heard.

5. Diachronic comparison

a) Col 3,18f

The earliest and shortest parallel to our text in 1 Pt is found in Col 3,18f. It has served as a basis also for Eph 5,21-24.25-33 (see below, b). As in 1 Pt, submission is required by the wives. Different from 1 Pt, a motif is given: ὡς ἀνῆκεν ἐν κυρίῳ. The verb refers to what is befitting (in imperfect), the expression “in Christ” seems to echo Paul, but refers now to right conduct. No theological development is given, in contrast to Eph with its enormous ideological surplus. The husbands are requested to love their wives. This goes beyond the relation of the stronger and the weaker, the lord and the person who has to obey. As far as this aspect comes in, the husbands are required not to be harsh with their wives. – As a whole, the passage in Col is relatively moderate. Submission of wives to husbands is accepted, but counterbalanced by the command given to the husbands to love their wives. Here, a relation of equality comes into perspective.

b) Eph 5,21-24.25-33

Our author seems to have developed the data of Col 3,18f in the framework of his theology and cultural tradition. The section starts with a certain contradiction: “Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ”, followed immediately by the exhortation to the wives: “Wives be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord”, which is not followed by a similar command given to the husbands to be subject to their wives, which would follow logically. In fact, our author seems to be influenced strongly by the idea of a superiority of man over against woman, which endangers the principle of v. 21. Not only Hellenistic influence is attested here, but also some kind of early Christian theology based on Paul, but going far beyond. While the image of the body of Christ as used in Rom 12 and 1 Cor 12 does not speculate about Christ as the head, this idea appears for the first time in Col 1,18. The Letter to the Colossians does not use this enlarged image in order to explain the relation of wives and husbands. This comparison is reserved to our text in Eph 5,23-24. It appears less and less acceptable to modern readers, and this is the reason why young couples of our days normally reject Eph 5 as a reading for the ceremony of wedding.

As in Colossians, the husbands are exhorted to love their wives (v. 25). They should love them as Christ loved and purified his church. This idea again is dangerous since it supposes the wives to be something unclean, which has to be purified. In the following verses, the wives are seen as the “flesh” of the husbands. The idea comes from Gen 2,24, quoted in v. 31. It has the disadvantage that the interpersonal union between husband and wife appears too strongly as a carnal one. Mixed up with the idea of Christ being the head of the body = wife the comparison remains debatable. Some improvement is achieved towards the end, when the husbands are exhorted again to love their wives and the wives to fear their husbands. Here at least the interpersonal relation comes into focus again.

c) 1 Tim 2,8-15

The next text might lead us already into the 2nd century AD. It starts with an exhortation concerning behaviour in the Christian assembly. The men should pray peacefully and without strife. As to the women, again their correct conduct starts with their appearance: their hairstyle, their clothing and their use of jewels. Here, we are very close to 1 Pt 3,3-5. Modesty and simplicity is required and the verb “κοσμεῖν” is used in this context as in 1 Pt 3,5.

The text becomes more problematic in the following verses 11-15. The women in the community should be considerate and also subject to the men present there. The “ἡσυχία” (calm, quiet) is interpreted as remaining silent. Teaching is expressly forbidden to women by the authority of “Paul”. The passage could refer back to 1 Cor 14,34 – a text today doubted in its authenticity. A theological reason for this essential inferiority of woman with regard to men is found in the fact that according

to the Bible, not Adam was created first and that not him, but Eve was led astray by Satan in paradise. So women can be saved by giving birth to children and good Christian conduct in faith, love and sobriety. This kind of ideology which tries to base male predominance on Scripture will appear convincing to hardly anybody nowadays.

d) Tit 2,2-5

Our last text belongs to the group of Pastoral Epistles attributed to Saint Paul as well. The context are exhortations concerning right conduct in the community according to its main groups. The elder men should be considerate etc., the elderly women should equal them in decent conduct. They should teach the younger women how to love their husbands and their children (this is important since in the parallel texts there is generally talk about the love of the husbands towards their wives) and how to be subject to their husbands. It is striking how regularly this idea of submission of the wives to their husbands occurs in almost all of our texts. We will have to deal with this observation in the next lecture. The motif for the right conduct of the younger women is again also missionary: The word of god should not be discredited. In this view, the text of the Letter to Titus shows some similarity with the one of 1 Pt. The exhortation for young men in vv. 6-8 does not contain many original ideas, but ends with the same idea that evil talk about the Christians should be met with their exemplary conduct.

14th Lecture: Hellenistic Ethics in 1 Peter

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1. The Hellenistic background of ethics in New Testament letters

For 1 Peter is valid what can be said of New Testament letters in general: that the ethics is influenced by Hellenistic popular philosophy rather than by the schools of philosophers. This aspect is developed among other authors by DIETER ZELLER, *Konkrete Ethik im hellenistischen Kontext*, in BEUTLER, ed., *Der neue Mensch in Christus*, pp. 82-98. Z. comes to the result: "The contacts of epistolary ethics with cynic-stoic popular philosophy which have been affirmed since a long time ago are weaker than previously presumed; they did not materialize on a technical level. New Testament letter literature adopts only 'degraded philosophoumena', and this happens not in the paraenetic sections, but in longer, argumentative paragraphs like 1 Cor 6,12 – 7,31. We had the impression that vulgar ethics which is also formally different (not diatribe, but proverbs) merits more attention. Thus, the specific Christian message is mediated by 'common sense'." (98)

WOLFGANG SPEYER underlines in his contribution "Hellenistisch-römische Voraussetzungen der Verbreitung des Christentums" in the same volume (11-38) the Roman element in the background of New Testament ethics. The specific interest of the Romans in morals finds here its equivalent.

2. The domestic codes (Haustafeln)

ELENA BOSETTI gives a good survey of research done till 1987. Over against earlier contributions, which saw these NT texts under the particular influence of some contemporaneous schools like the Stoics, a broader approach has been chosen by more recent authors. Among these authors is found the book of David L. Balch, with which E. Bosetti agrees substantially, and this all the more, since his findings are corroborated by the studies of D. Lührmann. Thus, we may be allowed to sketch briefly the results of D. L. Balch.

Balch traces back the earliest origins of NT household codes to classical Greek philosophy. Already for Platon, human society is based on order and this means also on authority. In his *Republic* as well as in his *Laws*, Platon supposes a structured society with a subordinated position of slaves, wives and children. The Middle Platonists continue this tradition, and the ideas are taken up as late as the fragments of Stobaeus in the context of household management.

Of great importance for the development of the household codes are Aristotle, the Peripatetics and some later independent writers (Philodemus, Areius Didymus and Cicero). In his *Politics*, Aristotle distinguishes between civil and domestic obligations, but sees a link between both. Cities are made up by villages, and villages by families. The investigation of the rules of conduct in society has to start with the smallest unit: the family. Here, three kinds of relations are given: “master and slave, husband and wife, father and children”. A fourth element may be added: the administration of wealth (Pol. 1253a, 37). This division seems to have become very influential. The closest parallel in the NT is Col 3,18 – 4,1. For Aristotle, there is no doubt that the master rules the slave, the husband the wife and the father the children (1260a). Slaves, wives and children are denied the full capability of taking free decisions. In the *Nicomachean Ethic*, the authority of the master over against the slave is regal in type, the authority of the husband towards the wife is aristocratic (VIII 1160f). The obligations of the stronger side (master, husband, father) do not fall directly under the virtue of justice, since the corresponding subjects enjoy their rights only in a limited way (V 1134b). If in a state the role of women is insufficiently or defectively circumscribed as in Sparta, the whole commonwealth can be endangered. An echo of Aristotle’s ideas is found in the Peripatetic school in the *Great Ethics* and in Theophrastus (2nd half of 2nd Cent. B. C.), possible author of the Ps.-Aristotelian work *Concerning Household Management (Oeconomicus)*. The Epicurean Philodemus takes a distance from the Peripatetic school and thinks that only the question of wealth is relevant for the wise man. Family life may disturb a person in following his economic advantage. Areius

stands much more in the tradition of Aristotle in his development of household ethics, and so does Cicero, who refers himself to Plato and Aristotle alike and takes a distance towards the Stoics, since they, according to him, are contradictory in questions of virtue (practised in the search for one's own perfection or also the one for the benefit of society).

The topic of "household management" is taken up in later schools which bring us nearer to NT times: Eclectic Stoics, Hellenistic Jews and Neopythagoreans. Of particular interest are of course Philo and Josephus. Different from opinions held in earlier times, Philo does not seem to be original in the development of household codes but depends on Greek philosophical thought. This becomes particularly apparent in his comment on the Decalogue where he interprets the command to honour one's parents fully along the lines of Greek philosophical tradition, in particular Platonic ideas where a unity is seen between civic and domestic obligations (cf. *Spec. Leg.* II.225-227). Fl. Josephus gives in his *Contra Apionem* an apology of Jewish belief in the form of an encomium which includes the appraisal of the role of slaves, wives and children in Jewish society according to the standards of the time. The Neopythagoreans also reflect earlier philosophical convictions about the role of slaves, women and children and integrate these ideas into the larger framework of civil order. (Cf. *Callicratidas*, *On the Happiness of Households*).

Balch attributes great importance to "Greco-Roman Criticism of Eastern Religions", to which he dedicates a whole chapter (V). He sees a connection between such a criticism and the opposition which Judaism as well as Early Christianity found in Greco-Roman society. This may be the most debatable aspect of his study (cf. E. Bosetti). According to him, Oriental cults as the one of Dionysos or of Isis raised suspicion particularly in Roman society and the Senate. Since Judaism and Christianity were rather unknown entities, they could easily be subject to the suspicion of illicit practices like sexual aberrations or murder.

This is the reason why Balch thinks that we find in 1 Peter repeated exhortations to avoid slander and to meet questioning by the presentation of good works and immaculate conduct. This holds true in a particular way for those persons who deviated from common convictions by becoming Christians like slaves belonging to pagan owners or wives of non-Christians. This, according to Balch, explains, why such emphasis is given to correct conduct of such slaves even towards wicked masters and of Christians wives towards pagan husbands. The question remains how far the tendency of 1 Peter in this regard is apologetic. Other authors see a more missionary orientation. From a systematic point of view it should be said that ethics can never be a means for a purpose.

One final word about linguistic parallels to the idea of “submission” so prominent in our texts. The concept does not seem to come from the Greek Bible since the LXX never uses ὑποτάσσομαι in the context of family life or domestic order. The closest parallels are found in Plutarchus and Ps.-Callisthenes. The famous text of Plutarchus reads as follows:

Conjugalia praecepta 142.D to Conjugalia praecepta 142.E Οἱ πλούσιοι καὶ οἱ βασιλεῖς τιμῶντες τοὺς φιλοσόφους αὐτούς τε κοσμοῦσι κάκεινους, οἱ δὲ φιλόσοφοι τοὺς πλουσίους θεραπεύοντες οὐκ ἐκεῖ 142.E νους ποιοῦσιν ἐνδόξους ἀλλ’ αὐτούς ἀδοξοτέρους. τοῦτο συμβαίνει καὶ περὶ τὰς γυναῖκας. ὑποτάττουσαι μὲν γὰρ ἑαυτὰς τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἐπαινοῦνται, κρατεῖν δὲ βουλόμεναι μᾶλλον τῶν κρατουμένων ἀσχημονοῦσι. κρατεῖν δὲ δεῖ τὸν ἄνδρα τῆς γυναικὸς οὐχ ὡς δεσπότην κτήματος ἀλλ’ ὡς ψυχὴν σώματος, συμπαθοῦντα καὶ συμπεφυκότα τῇ εὐνοίᾳ.

The rich persons and the kings who honour the philosophers decorate themselves and these persons; but the philosophers who serve the rich do not tribute honour to them but present themselves as less honourable. [From here translation by Babbitt, Balch 99] So it is with women also; if they subordinate themselves to their husbands, they are commended, but if they want to have control, they cut a sorrier figure than the subjects of their control. And control ought to be exercised by the man over the woman, not as the owner has control of a piece of property, but, as the soul controls the body, by entering into her feelings and being knit to her through goodwill. – An Italian translation of this text is found in Adinolfi, p. 93.

A similar text is found in Ps.-Callisthenes (about Alexander the king, I.22.19-20), quoted by Balch, p. 98. An early example of the idea of submission of wives is found in a fragment of Euripides (Oedipus), Fragg 54 (= Clement of Alex. *Strom* IV 8,633), according to Neuer Wettstein II/2, p. 1361: “An intelligent woman is completely subject to her husband, the stupid one, by lack of intelligence, despises him.”

It is obvious, that such ideas about the inferiority of women (slaves or children) do not stand up to modern criticism. They have to be judged on the basis of Christ’s mission and message to men and women alike and his liberating action. Within the corpus of the New Testament letters, texts like Gal 3,28 remain the basis for contemporary criticism. This is held not only by feminist authors like Ulrike Wagener, but also by the vast majority of today’s commentators and interpreters.

15th Lecture: Final Exhortation Concerning Community Life (3,8-12)

1. Context

Vv. 8-12 bring to an end the exhortations of the household code (2,18 – 3,7) and of the whole section 2,11 – 3,7. In particular, 2,11-12 are taken up as far as right conduct of the Christians as such is treated before any particular rules concerning conduct in civil society (2,13-17) and in the house. The initial Τὸ δὲ τέλος in 3,8 insinuates that vv. 3,8-12 form rather the conclusion of the preceding paragraph than the beginning of a new one. The idea of a reward in heaven and on earth corresponds well to the ethical imperatives of the preceding context.

2. Syntactic and linguistic observations

In analogy to the “pending” participles of 2,18; 3,1.6.7 there seem to be also “pending” adjectives at the beginning of our section in v. 8 and the following participles in v. 9. See above for the examples given. An alternative proposal made by Achtemeier (220) is that all these participles and now adjectives depend on the imperatives of 2,17. We had a similar example in 1,3-12 where we followed L. Goppelt in considering the whole construction being one phrase with a long sequence of relative clauses.

As to the vocabulary particularly of v. 8, there is a certain tension between an elevated number of *hapax legomena* in the New Testament (ὁμόφρονες, συμπαθεῖς, φιλάδελφοι, ταπεινόφρονες) and traditional ideas within New Testament literature.

The long quotation taken from Ps 34(33),13-17 follows strongly the text of the Septuagint with some minor modifications. The main difference between the text of 1 Peter and of the Septuagint is that the whole passage vv. 10-11 in 1 Peter 3 consists of imperatives in the 3rd person Singular while in the Septuagint is found the 2nd person Singular. The question from where our author draws his different version is difficult to decide (cf. Achtemeier). While it is possible that he followed a different version of the LXX or that he quoted from memory, the opinion that he slightly modified the text of the LXX in order to adapt it more to his purposes has much to commend itself. Thus, we shall rather presume that this was the case. The difference for the interpretation is rather small, since in any case the extant text of 1 Peter 3,10f fits well the purpose of the letter and the actual context of the passage.

3. Detailed analysis

V. 8: The initial *Τὸ δὲ τέλος* seems to resume the whole section from 2,11. The following *πάντες* seems to stand parallel to the various groups mentioned before: slaves, wives and husbands. As far as now everybody in the community is addressed, the text refers back in particular to 2,11f. The five adjectives making up the exhortations of the remainder of v. 8 can be divided into two groups: the first three of them express virtues practiced in social interaction, the last two individual virtues. While the first three adjectives are found only here in the New Testament, their thrust is attested elsewhere in the NT. Authors point in particular to Pauline letters as Rom 12,10-16 (cf. Goppelt ad locum). *Τὸ ὁμόφρονες* corresponds *τὸ αὐτὸ φρονοῦντες* in Rom 12,16; *το συμπαθεῖς (εὐσπλαγχνοί)* corresponds *χαίρειν μετὰ τῶν χαιρόντων, κλαίειν μετὰ κλαιόντων* in Rom 12,15, *το φιλάδελφοι* corresponds *τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ ... φιλόστοργοι* in Rom 12,10, *το ταπεινόφρονες* corresponds *μὴ τὰ ὑψηλὰ φρονοῦντες, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ταπεινοῖς ...* in Rom 12,16. The reason does not seem to be that 1 Pt used the text of Romans but that a common tradition stands behind both. For *φιλάδελφοι* see also *τὴν ἀδελφότητα ἀγαπάτε* in 1 Pt 2,17.

V. 9: Also for the exhortation of not answering to evil treatment with evil actions goes back to early Christian tradition. The most relevant texts are Rom 12,17; 1 Thess 5,15. The exhortation to bless the persecutors goes back to Luke 6,28; Mt 5,44; Rom 12,14. The answer to *λοιδορία* (reviling) not by reviling but instead of blessing is prepared in 1 Cor 4,12. The concept of *εὐλογία* allows the transition to the reward promised to those who live according to their vocation. They shall “inherit” God’s blessing.

Christian readers may think here spontaneously of the eternal “inheritance” promised to the faithful as an eschatological gift. If this aspect is stressed, there will be a tension between this promise of eternal “inheritance” and the promise of “seeing good days” in the quotation from Ps 33 in v. 10. With Achtemeier, we may however try to be careful with the idea of a heavenly “inheritance” of the believers. They have been promised God’s favour right from the beginning. They are his people, re-born, a royal priesthood, chosen by the Lord, sanctified by his Spirit. This means that in spite of 1,4f where again the “heritage” seems to be promised only for the apocalyptic future, it seems to have a connotation of “realized eschatology”.

V. 10: With this verse starts the long quotation taken from Ps 34(33),13-17. The author of our letter follows the text as attested by the Septuagint rather faithfully. One of the more striking differences is the fact that he prefers to report the series of imperatives not in the 2nd person Singular like the LXX, but in the 3rd. The reason seems to be the introduction of the series of imperatives in Ps

34(33),13: τίς ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος ὁ θέλων ζωὴν ἀγαπῶν ἡμέρας ἰδεῖν ἀγαθὰς; It would have been more natural also for the LXX to continue the argument and give the answer to the question in the third person. This is precisely what our author does – either independently or dependent from a different Greek text.

We already mentioned the tension between the reward of “seeing good days” and the promise of “inheriting” God’s blessing (see above, v. 9).

The invitation to avoid evil talk fits well with the exhortation of avoiding reviling and answering evil with evil (v. 9).

V. 11: Also in this verse, Peter follows the text of the LXX faithfully with the only major difference of remaining in the 3rd person Singular. The δέ after the initial imperative is not attested by the majority of the mss., but of the older tradition as it seems. Again, the subject is very appropriate for the preceding context in 1 Peter. The concept of “peace” had not been used, but it belongs to the vocabulary of corresponding early Christian paraenesis (cf. Mt 5,9; Mk 9,50; Rom 12,18; Hebr 12,14). As at least the last two examples show, this kind of exhortation does not concern exclusively conduct in the community, but refers also to interaction with outsiders (see below, 4).

V. 12: For the remainder of the quotation, the author of 1 Peter takes unvaried the text of the LXX with the only exception that he introduces an initial ὅτι which makes the argument stronger. The series of biblical parallelisms is broken up at the end of the quotation, since Peter still quotes the action of God against the evildoers, but does not spell out the details of God’s punishment: that he will erase the memory of them for all eternity. Perhaps the tone of this Psalm verse seemed too strong for our author in the present context. Thus, he decided to break up the rhythm of parallelisms maintained until here.

4. Final reflection

Looking back to our section, the question arises whether all the exhortations of the author concern only conduct of the members of the community within community life. There are three reasons to doubt that this is the case.

First, the text itself reminds in a way the vocabulary of sections where there is talk about the Christians being subject to reviling and slander from outside (cf. 2,12; 4,14). These phenomena occur inside the community, but they are supposed to be lived by the members of the community from outside.

Second, some parallel texts given above like Rom 12,18; Hebr 12,14 seem to apply to the situation where Christians have to live in peace not only with other Christians but with humans persons of all kinds, with everybody.

Third, the context in 1 Peter itself suggests that the author might gradually move from obligations of the Christians inside the community to others which apply to interaction with surrounding society. As commentators point out, the following verses 3,13-22 etc. speak about the experience of evil treatment by outsiders and “suffering” from them (3,14.17f). Under this respect, our section 3,8-12 could have the function of a transition from community obligations to others lived in the context of concrete society. The household code itself thought of situations where Christians lived together with non-Christians (as the servant of a non-Christian lord with this lord or the wife of a non-Christian husband with him). Both aspects can never separated completely as long as Christians and Christian communities live in this world.

16th Lecture: Right Conduct in the Situation of Slander (3,13-22)

1. Context

After the civil and household code and the verses about Christian conduct in general (2,13 – 3,12), the text now moves to a more specific topic: right conduct in the situation of slander and reviling. This aspect has already been prepared in the preceding verses: In v. 9, the experience of bad treatment and reviling has been mentioned already, and in v. 12 there was talk about the evildoers, who will have to face God's judgment. Our text reaches even further back to 2,11f, where the author spoke about right conduct among the gentiles. It should shut the mouth of those who spoke badly about the Christians and make them praise God on the day of his visit. We are back to this perspective now from 3,13 onwards.

2. Grammar

The style of this paragraph is not without elegance. Twice we find the Optative, otherwise extremely rare in the NT: in v. 14 and 17. In both cases, the full weight of this construction is intended. Sufferings of the Christians remains a concrete possibility, but it remains open in the eyes of the writer where it will materialize (L. Goppelt).

Longer constructions alternate with shorter ones: after two similar short conditional constructions in chiasmic arrangement (13a-14b) follows a longer period (14c-16). V. 17 is relatively short, v. 18 more complex, and so are 19-20 and 21-22. In the centre, seem to stand the imperatives of vv. 14c-16, prepared by 13a-14b and followed by v. 17.

3. Semantics

There is a relatively cohering semantic field of “good / evil doing”, “suffering (evil)” and giving account of one's hope in vv. 13-17. On the one hand is found:

κακόω, καταλαλέω, ἐπηρεύω, κακοποιέω,

on the other side there are:

τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ζηλώτης γίνομαι, δικαιοσύνη, ἀγιάζω, πραΰτης, φόβος, συνείδησις ἔχω ἀγαθὴν, ἀγαθὴ ἀναστροφή.

Verses 18-22 are dominated by the subject of the suffering of Christ and his redeeming work, compared with the saving of the generation of Noah, typos of baptism, followed by resurrection, ascension and exaltation of Christ.

There are however also common elements, which connect both groups of verses:

συνείδησις ἀγαθή, πάσχειν, Χριστός, δίκαιος, ἄδικοι: cf. δικαιοσύνη in 14.

The concept of ὑποτάσσομαι in v. 22 refers back to its use in 2,13.18; 3,1.5 and is taken up in a new, christological sense.

It seems to be justified, after all, to consider vv. 13-17 and 18-22 as subunits, as is also seen by L. Goppelt, N. Brox, W. Schrage, P. Achtemeier, and J. H. Elliott. The paragraph about Christian readiness to live according to ethical standards befitting for them in spite of suffering (vv. 13-17) finds its christological argument in the example of Christ the redeemer (vv. 18-22).

4. Detailed analysis

a) The suffering of Christians (vv. 13-17)

Right from the beginning, the section shows literary contacts with the book of Isaiah.

V. 13: The rhetorical question in this verse seems to be inspired by a similar one in Isa 50,9, belonging to the Third Song of the Suffering Servant: “Does anyone start proceedings against me?” This has been taken up literally in Rom 8,34. In our context of 1 Pt the question has become more general: “Who can harm you?” And it is linked with a condition: the addressees have to be “zealous for what is right”. (L. Goppelt gives references for the use of this formula or equivalents in Greek philosophy: Epictetus, Hellenistic Judaism: Philo, and the NT: Tit 2,14). The forensic context may still be found behind this question. Nobody can reproach or even accuse the Christians if they are zealous for what is right.

V. 14: The idea of the suffering of people who did nothing wrong but instead have been committed to justice, is now developed further: It may be, that the Christians to whom the letter is addressed, have to suffer precisely because they have followed justice. In this case they will enjoy the promise of Christ made to those “who are persecuted for the cause of justice” (Mt 5,10). Even the form of the “Beatitude” is maintained although a direct influence of the word of Jesus in Matthew on Peter cannot be proved. The saying may just have been part of early Christian tradition transmitted in the community.

With the exhortation “have no fear of them, nor be troubled”, the author moves back to the book of Isaiah. Is 8,12 LXX is quoted literally. It belongs to a discourse of Isaiah, inspired by God, which

encourages the Israelites not to be afraid in a situation of menace. Again, the Christian community of 1 Pt sees itself in continuity to the experience of the people of God in the Old Covenant.

V. 15: The beginning of this verse is taken from the following verse in Isaiah, but with one important modification in line with our observations made concerning v. 14: “hold in veneration the LORD” in Isaiah becomes in 1 Pt: “in your hearts reverence CHRIST as Lord”. For the Christian author, the κύριος of the Isaian text is found in Jesus the Lord. To sanctify him fulfils also the first petition of the Our Father: “Hallowed be thy name” (Mt 6,9 = Luke 11,2). In this case, even within the NT tradition a word which refers to God the Father is applied to Christ.

When the Christians live according to Christian standards, they will also be able to give account about their belief or rather their hope. No contradiction between their word and their deeds would have to be feared. Authors discuss the question whether the questions of the outsiders would necessarily have to be thought of as taking place in forensic situation. Most actual commentators agree that this assumption does not follow from the wording of the verse. If our authors speaks rather about giving account of one’s “hope” than of one’s “belief”, he remains faithful to the importance given to Christian hope in his letter right from the beginning (1,3.13). With good reason, this part of 1 Pt 3,15 has become very important for Christian apologetics and mission strategy. The more it becomes difficult to preach the Christian message immediately, the more important it becomes to invite outsiders to reflect about the Christian way of life and about what enables it according to the witness of the Christians.

V. 16 continues this idea underlining some important aspects of such a Christian “apologetic”. The Christians should not “boast” of their treasure of belief and hope and also of immaculate conduct, but should be soft and full of reverence (to the partners of dialogue?). Otherwise, their testimony may become counterproductive. Only if the Christians live their lives of faith in modesty, they will be able to falsify the accusations directed against them by their foes. The best counterargument is always the ethically correct conduct of the members of the community “in Christ”. Authors see the importance of the formula “in Christ” in our letter. As is known, it is used outside this letter almost exclusively by Paul, although in a different sense. In Paul, the formula expresses the existence of the Christians in Jesus the Christ because of their belief, which justifies them. In our text, the formula is applied to Christian conduct, according to the overall perspective of the letter. In 5,10, the expression will be applied to the calling of the readers to faith “in Christ”, in 5,14 comes very close to Paul, since we read in the final salutation: “Peace to all of you that are in Christ”. A direct influence of Paul on “Peter” in this formula is generally not accepted.

V. 17 applies a well-known principle to the Christians: that it is better to suffer injustice than to do it. It can be traced back to classical Greek philosophy, since it is attributed to Socrates according to

Platon (cf. the reference to Gorgias 508 C in Goppelt, ad locum). Only the wording is now reformulated in the Christian sense: If God wishes, Christians must be ready to suffer (πάσχειν) evil rather than to do it.

b) The suffering of Christ (vv. 18-22)

Authors recognize in vv. 18-22 parts which are more strongly influenced by early Christian hymns and others which seem to be prose. More recently, W. Dalton (see next lecture) has proposed to see in vv. 18 and 22 fragments of an early Christian hymn, separated by literary and theological expansions added by our author. This proposal helps to explain the section more coherently.

V. 18 speaks the language of early Christian hymns or homologies. For Christ suffering for our sins “once and for all” cf. Hebr 9,26.28. His justice is also underlined in Acts 3,14. That he gave us free access to God is expressed in Eph 3,14. The opposition of “flesh” and “spirit” in the last two lines of the verse should not be taken in the sense of Platonic dualism, but of biblical anthropology as forms of existence: Christ who was brought to death according to the flesh, his earthly existence, was restored to life in his spiritual, heavenly existence by virtue of his resurrection. Rom 1,3-4 comes very close to this perspective. It is an ancient formula known to Paul and adopted by him.

V. 19: Here seems to start a kind of digression, which belongs to the most difficult “cruces interpretum”. We follow the proposals by Dalton, together with the majority of contemporary authors. Ἐν ᾧ means in this perspective “in it (in this Spirit)” and not “while”. The καί retains its full force in the sense of “even”. The πνεύματα seem to be real spirits, “those in prison”, according to Jewish apocalyptic writers fallen angels who had sinned with the daughters of humans (cf. Gen 6,1-4) and become guilty. It is to such spirits that, according to Hen 12-15, Henoch announced their final judgment. This idea seems to have been taken up by our author. In this case, κηρύσσειν does not have its more frequent meaning in the NT as “preaching the Good News”, but, as in Lk 12,3 a more general one as “announcing”.

The meaning of the verse becomes clearer now. The author seems to have used an early Christian tradition speaking about Christ’s proclamation of his own victory over the evil spirits by virtue of his being raised from the dead and his ascension which made him pass through the lower spheres of heavens, traditional home of the evil spirits. For the details see our next lecture. A “descensus ad inferos” of the soul of Christ between his death and his resurrections does not seem to find support any longer in this perspective.

V. 20: A connection between the sin of the angels according to Gen 6,1-4 and the events of the flood and the saving of Noah and his family is already found in the book of Genesis itself (cf. Gen 6,5-8). This idea was further developed in Second Temple Judaism, particularly in Hen 10-15. But

cf. also Jud 14-15, where Henoch announces to the generation of the flood God's judgment, and the use of this tradition in 2 Pt 2,4-5. Here, we are very close to the thought of 1 Pt, as it seems. Even the saving of "eight" souls is mentioned. The Jewish tradition used by our authors did not foresee a conversion of the evil spirits but only the proclamation of their judgment. The same meaning seems to be given here where the text calls the spirits mentioned in v. 18 "ἀπειθήσασιν".

The purpose of vv. 19-20 seems to be twofold: proclaiming Christ's superiority over all spirits, powers and mightes (cf. v. 22) and preparing the baptismal typology of the ark.

V. 21: This imagery is now unfolded. The water of the flood points to the water of baptism. But baptism does not work automatically but supposes and allows the conversion of heart and conduct, which brings us back to the main thrust of our letter. The water of baptism does not just wash away dirt from the body but enables the conscience to be elevated to God expecting from him the gift of conversion by virtue of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

V. 22: The new mention of the resurrection seems to bring the readers back to the series of christological statements of v. 18. At the end, Christ had been proclaimed as "put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit". We had interpreted this formula as referring to the resurrection of Christ. It is followed by his ascension and exaltation at the right hand of God (cf. Ps 110,1). The exaltation is mentioned first, but it supposes Christ's ascension to heaven, and it is precisely by this passing of Jesus through the spheres which were commonly thought of hosting the evil spirits that he shows himself superior to them, that means to all angels, powers and mightes. By this conviction, the Christians can have confidence also in the present situation of distress.

We may recall once again the use of the verb "ὑποτάσσομαι" in this context. Even if the Christians to whom the letter is addressed have to be subject to their masters as slaves or to their husbands as wives or even to every human authority as given by God (2,13), this authority of the human dignitaries find its limits in the fact, that all powers and mightes have been subjected to Christ by virtue of his resurrection, ascension and exaltation. The Christians can assure themselves that no given human or even heavenly authority will be able to oppose itself to Christ the lord.

5. Conclusion

If the given interpretation is correct, the debated section about Christ and his "proclamation to the Spirits" is not a corollary about Christ's descent to Hades after his death and about purgatory. It has to be understood in line with the interpretation given to the First Letter of Peter in general: the purpose of the Letter is to assure Christians menaced in their minority status that their Lord is superior to all powers of this world in heaven and on earth. Thus, they can endure.

17th Lecture: Christ's Proclamation to the Spirits

Cf. W. DALTON, *Christ's Proclamation to the Spirits. A Study of 1 Peter 3:18 – 4:6*. Second, Fully revised edition (AnBib 23), Rome 1989.

1. Short sketch of the interpretation of 1 Pt 3,19

The decisive question has been in the course of the centuries who were the "spirits" to whom Christ made proclamation. They are classified by Dalton (27) this way:

"(1) The first reply says that the spirits are the souls of Noah's contemporaries dwelling in the lower world, to whom Christ's soul made proclamation during the *triduum mortis*.

(2) The second reply maintains also that they are Noah's contemporaries, but regarded as alive and on earth at the time of the flood. To these Christ, pre-existent in his divinity, made proclamation through the person of Noah.

(3) The third reply holds that the spirits in prison are the fallen angels associated in Jewish literature with the wickedness preceding the flood."

Most adherents to the first answer suppose that Christ preached to the contemporaries of Noah in order to convert them. "This is the view which is by far the most strongly represented among the early Fathers and writers of the church up to the time of Augustine." (28) It is mentioned however that up to Clement of Alexandria, this preaching of Christ was not thought of as connected with a descent of Christ to the underworld. This idea became standard only later. Other authors from antiquity onwards thought that Christ preached to Noah's unbelieving contemporaries, who had been converted before their death. This idea is found already in Justin. Another variant thinks that Christ descended to the world of the dead to proclaim the condemnation of Noah's unbelieving contemporaries (41). This doctrine was known to Thomas Aquinas and prevailed in Orthodox Lutheranism until the end of the 18th century.

The main representative of the second answer is St. Augustine. It is based on reflection about human responsibility in the act of faith and the concrete way the pre-existence of Christ may be thought of. Thus, it won adherents in the following centuries, among others also St. Thomas Aquinas. In post-reformation times, S. Robert Bellarmine developed the doctrine of a descent of Christ to purgatory in order to announce to the souls kept in this place their salvation – a theory generally rejected by Protestantism.

The third answer was given in two different forms. After one opinion, Christ preached to the Spirits = fallen angels between his death and his resurrection. One version of this opinion believes that he

spoke to them as the pre-existent one. This opinion is still indebted to Augustine. Main representative is F. Spitta (1890). According to a similar opinion, Christ himself went to proclaim his message to the angels between his death and his resurrection. This opinion was held by E. G. Selwyn and Bo Reicke. According to the other alternative, Christ proclaimed his message to the Spirits on the occasion of his ascension. This opinion was first held by G. Gschwind (*Die Niederfahrt Christi in die Unterwelt*, Münster 1911), taken up by H. Schlier and R. Bultmann as well as by J. Daniélou. It is at the basis of the dissertation of W. Dalton. In the first edition of this work, D. still held the view that Christ announced to the evil spirits their eternal doom. Now, with N. Brox, he would leave the content of the message more open and see at its centre Christ's victory over all powers of evil (48). Precisely this way, this message would serve the purpose of 1 Peter: reassuring the community.

2. Elements of the interpretation of 1 Pt 3,18-20

The most relevant information comes from the Book of Henoch. There, Henoch himself appears as the one who proclaims to the fallen angels of Gen 6,1-4 their eternal judgment. The missing element of their being in prison is supplied by the Second or Slavonic Book of Henoch (7,1-3); see also CD 2,18-20 etc.; Jub 5,10; less clearly TNeft 3,5 etc. (Dalton, 170-172).

Some further questions still need development (cf. Dalton, chapter VIII, p. 177-188):

- a) the place of the fallen angels: according to 2 Hen 7,1-3 it seems to be the second of the seven heavens. Thus, Christ would meet these Spirits easily on his way to the right hand of the Father (in the seventh heaven);
- b) the time of Christ's proclamation: it seems to be connected with his ascension to the Father. Different from the tradition of Acts 1, a number of NT texts place the ascension on the day of Easter: cf. Lk 24,51; Joh 20,17; Eph 4,8-10; Col 2,15; see also Eph 1,20f. The exaltation of Christ is generally connected with the submission of the world of the spirits;
- c) the content of Christ's proclamation: it does not seem to be the Gospel in view of the conversion of the spirits, but rather Christ's victory over all powers; cf. Eph 6,11f; 1 Cor 15,24-27; this way Christ proclaims salvation for all mankind;
- d) the importance of Christ's proclamation in the context of 1 Peter: the text does not seem to encourage the readers to mission, but rather assure them of Christ's superiority over all hostile powers. This way, the tradition of 1 Pt 3,18-22 serves the overall purpose of the Letter: to assure a group of communities in dispersion and distress of Christ's victory he already achieved over all powers of evil and to strengthen their faith.

18th Lecture: Breaking with Sin in Union with the Suffering Christ (4,1-6)

1. Context

This unit does not stand in itself independently. It follows the line of thought initiated in 3,13 with the subject of Christian existence in a world which opposes Christ and the Christians. It finds its natural (preliminary) conclusion in 4,11, the doxology. In difference to 3,13-22, our section now shifts interest from Christology to teaching about Christian conduct rooted in the life, death and resurrection of Christ. In the following verses 7-11, eschatology comes more strongly into the foreground, although a clear connection between Christian conduct and the coming of the end, announced in v. 7, is not explicitly developed.

2. Grammar

One striking feature of our section is the lack of the indicative. The only examples occurring are in v. 1 πέπαιται, in v. 4 ξενίζονται, in v. 5 ἀποδώσουσιν and in v. 6 εὐηγγελίσθη. A missing ἐστίν in v. 3 may be added. This fact makes our section a strongly argumentative one, in accordance with the overall purpose of these verses being an exhortation directed to the community. On the one side, there is a considerable number of participles (in v. 1 παθόντος, παθών, in v. 3 παρεληλυθώς, πεπορευμένους, in v. 4 συντρεχόντων, βλασφημοῦντες, in v. 5 ἔχοντι), on the other a good number of infinitives (in v. 2 βιώσαι, in v. 3 κατειργάσθαι, in v. 5 κρῖναι). Notice also the imperative ὀπίσασθε in v. 1 and the conjunctives κριθῶσιν and ζῶσιν, depending on ἵνα, in v. 6.

The other important observation from the linguistic point of view is the shift in time from past over present to future:

past: the suffering of Christ and the suffering of the Christians in v. 1, living according to the desires of men (v. 2), doing the will of the Gentiles before the time of their breaking with sin (v. 3); Christ has been preached to the dead (v. 6);

present: making up one's mind (v. 1), estrangement of the Gentiles that the Christians do no share any longer their immoral conduct (v. 4);

future: living according to the will of God for the rest of life (v. 2), the judgment which the Gentiles have to face for their conduct (v. 5) and universal judgment of all in the earthly existence in opposition to the life received from God by the work of the Spirit (v. 6).

Of course, the temporal semantic fields can be distributed to Christ and the Christians: semantics.

As far as nouns are concerned, two observations can be made:

first: vv. 1-2 and 6 are characterized by the opposition of “flesh” (σάρξ, three times in vv. 1-2, once in v. 6) and “Spirit” (πνεῦμα, once in v. 1 and once in v. 6). These verses appear therefore as framing verses;

second: there is a long series of substantives (six) in v. 3, a list of vices of the Gentiles; the attitude of the addressees towards these vices and the account which the Gentiles will have to give for them are discussed in vv. 4-5. “Catalogues of vices” (“Lasterkataloge”) with similar vocabulary are also found elsewhere in the NT, in particular in Pauline letters: see Rom 13,13; Gal 5,19-21. While the word οἰνοφλυγία is hapax in the NT, as also πότος, the words ἀσέλγεια and κῶμος are also attested in Paul. Our author, therefore, is not original in the description of pagan vices, but he is in the use of such lists of vices in the orientation of his readers.

3. Detailed analysis

Vv. 1-2: The section starts with a reminder of Christ who had to suffer. 3,18 comes into mind, where it was said that Christ “was brought to death according to the flesh, but brought back to life in the Spirit”. We remember, that σάρξ for our author does not have an anthropological, but rather an existential meaning: it means human existence in its weakness, exposed to temptation, suffering and death. In the case of Christ, his passion is intended, which brought him to physical death before he was brought to life again by virtue of God’s Spirit.

It is not quite clear, in which sense the Christians to whom our author writes, also “have suffered in the flesh”. The most obvious meaning seems to be that they, like Christ and for the sake of Christ, had to suffer: see 3,13.17. As far as they allow themselves to be transformed into Christ, take part in his suffering and share his mind, they also start a new existence. Here comes in the idea of baptism as the door to conversion and a new existence. Many authors would emphasize the baptismal ring of our passage. On the other hand, the new existence of the Christians in our context is not linked to baptism as such, but to the experience of suffering with the suffering Christ. This union with Christ is of course based for Christians on baptism, but this connection is not made explicit in our actual context. The famous passage Rom 6,1-11 to which also the margin of Nestle-Aland refers, is different. Also here, there is talk about breaking with sin in the context of conversion. But, unlike 1 Peter, Paul links directly breaking with sin with dying with Christ symbolically in baptism. Precisely this link is missing in 1 Peter. Here rather suffering as such is the way the union of the Christians with Christ is lived and experienced, and as far as these experiences follow the decision to adhere to Christ they also mean a decision of faith against sin, once and for ever taken in baptism.

Apparently, for our author, the moment of conversion coincides with the moment of the beginning of the experience of suffering as a Christian. Thus, from now onwards the Christians have to renounce to their merely human desires in order to live for the rest of their lives according to the will of God (v. 2). For ἐπιθυμία see 1,14; 2,11. In 1,14 the “desires” are those the addressees had in the time of their ignorance, in 2,11 they are characterized as “desires of the flesh”. Cf. also 4,3. Again, the concept is not used anthropologically, but existentially. This means that not human desires as such, but only human desires as far as they have not been integrated into the personal life of a believing person are seen and qualified negatively.

V. 3: the author sees the lives of his addressees divided into two periods: the one in which they were still subject to the typically Gentile debauches: in eating, drinking, sexual aberrations, even in cult, and the period after their conversion when they broke with this kind of life. The concept of χρόνος links in this sense vv. 2 and 3, with the description of the new life of the Christians preceding the one of their former life when they still indulged to licence.

V. 4: In the eyes of the author, these vices are “wild profligacy” (RSV). But the Gentiles wonder why the Christians do not share any longer this uncontrolled way of life and revile them for this reason. It may be that Gentile criticism was based on a cultural judgment that the Christians were “enemies of mankind” since they did not share Gentile culture in general and Gentile religion, including the cult of the Emperor, in particular. Cf. the reference to Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.44 in Achtemeier. But it could also be that Gentile criticism was referred to Christian absence in Hellenistic life-style as far as festivities were concerned which easily lead to debauch.

V. 5: Those who slander the Christians on behalf of their absence from Gentile way of life will have to face a judgment. It is not clear whether they will be judged because of their immoral way of life or because of their slander towards the Christians (Achtemeier). It is not quite clear either who is the one who will judge “the living and the dead”. According to early Christian eschatology one expects rather Christ having this function than God himself.

V. 6: This would go well along with the beginning of v. 6, where it is not indicated who has been preached to the dead. From other examples where εὐαγγελίζομαι in the Passive is used in NT letter literature (Gal 1,11; 1 Pt 1,25) it is reasonable to assume that the content is the gospel or Christ.

The whole verse is full of difficulties. Achtemeier (287) lists four in particular:

“(1) the determination of who preached what (εὐηγγελίσθη), (2) the resolution of the ἵνα clause with its parallel constructions, (3) the identity of the dead (νεκροῖς), and, (4) the relation of this verse to 3,19.”

- (1) The answer to (1) has already been dealt with. In any case Christ does not seem to be the subject of preaching, but rather the subject matter.

- (2) The $\epsilon\upsilon\alpha$ clause seems to have its final sense. The departed shall not only be judged as humans, but also be brought to (eternal) life by God.
- (3) The “dead” have found various interpretations, in part in analogy to the explanation of 3,19. The best proposal seems to be to see in them the dead at the time the letter was written (Dalton, Fitzmyer, Achtemeier and others). When final judgment comes, not only the living, but also the dead will find eternal life. Cf. 1 Thess 4,13-18.
- (4) If this interpretation is correct, no direct link is given with 3,19, although in the past this connection was assumed frequently (cf. Dalton, chapter 2).

4. Outlook

On the basis of the preceding exegesis of 1 Pt 4,1-6 it seems clear that the author intends again to strengthen his communities in faith and in the readiness to endure opposition and slander. God’s or Christ’s judgment stand over human judgment. The Christians have to take a clear decision with regard to Gentile culture and cult. They will have to endure opposition and slander on this behalf, but their existence in the Spirit will make them stronger than their adversaries, and it will prevail.

19th Lecture: Eschatological Exhortations and a Doxology (4,7-11)

1. Context

With this short section, the larger context from 3,13 onwards comes to a preliminary end. In difference to the exhortations in 3,13 – 4,6, the emphasis now moves from conduct towards surrounding society to conduct in the community. It may be asked whether this aspect is the dominant one or the fact, that our author introduces this section with a reference to the end which has come (4,7). We shall see that both aspects are closely connected, also against the NT background of such exhortations.

There is no doubt that with verse 11 the context from 2,11 comes to an end. This is also assured by the doxology in this verse and the address of the readers in 4,12. Nevertheless we remained sceptical towards the proposal of Achtemeier to see in 4,12 the beginning of the “Body Closing”. Cf. in this regard our introductory lecture no. 1. Reading 4,12 – 5,11 (next doxology) as Part III of Body Middle allows us to see better the connection of this section with the preceding context. Christian conduct in a hostile world will remain the dominant subject.

2. Philological observations

In difference to the preceding paragraph, our verses are more homogeneously structured. While there was only one imperative in vv. 1-6, there is a greater number in vv. 7-11. The exact number is difficult to indicate, since sometimes verbal forms have to be added mentally.

The section starts with the imposing indicative “Πάντων δὲ τὸ τέλος ἤγγικεν” in v. 7. The perfect tense indicates the coordinates of the section: living out of the past (the coming of the end) which is operative in the present and should be put into practice from now onwards. Until the final “ἔστιν” in v. 11, there is no more indicative in the section. The imperatives now prevail, and this fact makes our paragraph strongly directive. On the one hand, there are the explicit imperatives σωφρονήσατε and νήψατε in v. 7. On the other hand, there are elliptic constructions as we saw them previously (cf. 1,22; 2,18; 3,1 etc.) where ἔστῶτε may be added. Such independent participles or adjectives (if they are not thought of as being dependent on the last finite verb) are found in v. 8 (ἔχοντες) and v. 9 (φιλόξενοι). In v. 11, two imperatives 3rd person Singular may be added mentally (λαλείτω and διακονείτω). This way, the directive character of the section appears clearly.

One further characteristic feature of our verses is the occurrence of conditional constructions: εἴ τις, twice in v. 11. They will remind us of similar expressions in similar contexts in Paul who uses instead εἴτε - εἴτε (cf. Rom 12,7f).

3. Semantic observations

There are three main semantic fields in our text:

- time and eternity

At the beginning and the end of the textual unit, we find references related to time. The section starts with the announcement of the coming end of time (v. 7). Related to this announcement are the verbs of “keeping sane” and “keeping sober” as fitting for persons expecting the coming end. In the last verse (v. 11), eternity comes in. God should be honoured “for ever and ever”. Already from v. 8, the eschatological tension seems to fade. It may be that the connection of eschatology with paraenesis is traditional but no longer in the foreground for the author. By this way, another motive for Christian conduct in the community would have to come in.

- Christian conduct in the community

Mutual love is named first among the rules of Christian conduct in the community. The reason given is not eschatology but forgiveness of sins. Then comes hospitality, and then comes a reference to the manifold gifts of God, specified in speaking the word, and serving.

- God’s various gifts and his honour

The second semantic field is already related to the third one: the various gifts of God and his honour. The key words are χάρισμα and χάρις, later δόξα. The various gifts of God given to the faithful must be ministered well, that means, that the Christians have to be “good stewards of God’s various grace”. This semantic field has strong roots in Pauline and Deutero-Pauline theology, as we will see. This may be one reason why it is not too strongly connected with the first two. Also the final doxology is traditional and stands in a certain contrast to the temporal orientation of the beginning in v. 7, as we saw.

4. Verse by verse analysis

V. 7: The sections starts with an eschatological outlook. The coming of the “end” (τέλος) makes part of Christ’s preaching (cf. Mark 13,7.13 par.) and early Christian expectation (1 Cor 10,11; 15,24; Rev 21,6; 22,13). A link with Christian readiness to vigilance is attested in Rom 13,12ff. For being “sane” and the right way of “φρονεῖν” see Rom 12,3; Tit 2,6; for being sober and vigilant cf.

Lk 21,36; 1 Thess 5,6.8. This semantic field is in itself rather coherent and well rooted in early Christian preaching from the time of Jesus onwards.

V. 8: This way of argument is, however, given up from v. 8. It is true that exhortations to mutual love among brothers belong to the standard admonitions in farewell discourses of NT times. See especially John 13,34f; 15,7-12; 17 in the Farewell Discourses of Jesus according to John and my reference to Jewish parallels in “Habt keine Angst” (SBS 116, Stuttgart 1984), 15-19. But different from John 13-17, 1 Peter is not a testament but a letter, and thus the framework of such a farewell discourse is missing. The argument in v. 8 is rather of sapiential character. Prov 10,12 is quoted rather according to the Hebrew than to the Greek text of the Septuagint.

KJV Proverbs 10:12 Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.

BGT Proverbs 10:12 μῖσος ἐγείρει νεῖκος πάντας δὲ τοὺς μὴ φιλονεικοῦντας καλύπτει φιλία

WTT Proverbs 10:12
 תְּכִסֶּה אֱהָבָה: כָּל־פְּשָׁעִים מִדָּוָר תְּעוֹרֵר מִדָּנִים וְעַל כָּל־פְּשָׁעִים

Whereas in the LXX, “friendship” or “love” protects those who do not like strife, in the TM as in 1 Peter, “love covers a lot of / all sins”. Close to the wording of the TM comes the text of Aquila and Theodotion according to Field, Hexapla: καὶ ἐπὶ πάσας ἀθεσίας (Symmachus ἀδικίαν, E’ ἀδικίας) καλύψει ἀγάπη. For the wording of “covering sins” see also Ps 32,1 and James 5,20. In early Christian tradition see 1 Clem 49,5; 2 Clem 16,4. The idea that love covers a lot of sins is not connected to eschatology and seems to have its roots in sapiential thinking as Proverbs show.

Vv. 9f: The following verses mark a transition to a different kind of argument. The invitation to be hospitable without reluctance initially lacks a motive. The exhortation as such belongs to early Christian paraenesis as parallels show (cf. φιλοξενία Rom 12,13; Hebr 13,2; φιλόξενος 1 Tim 3,2; Tit 1,8). Particularly the two texts from the Pastoral Letters show that this virtue makes part of a catalogue of virtues which are appreciated in Hellenism. On the other side, hospitality was particularly needed in social groups like the one of 1 Peter where minorities try to give each other support, also in travelling, starting from the missionaries who had to be received properly.

The reason given by our author, anyhow, is not of practical or general ethical nature, but rather theological. The author refers to a doctrine developed by Paul, particularly in Rom 12,6-8 and 1 Cor 12,28-31, in both cases developed out of the image of the “body of Christ” of which the Christians are members, each with a specific gift from God for the benefit of the community. 1 Peter 4,8f does not take up this Pauline connection and limits itself to the idea of different “gifts” bestowed on each Christian by God for the well-being of the community. A parallel text is Eph 4,4-12, closer to Paul insofar as the idea of the body of Christ serves as a basis for the treatment of the manifold gifts of God. Also for this difference, it does not seem to be probable that our author drew immediately on

Paul as sometimes had been proposed. In Ephesians, the Pauline influence is stronger. This is why this letter is also considered to be strictly Deutero-Pauline, different from 1 Peter.

The idea of the “good steward” of God’s grace is also traditional and can be found in Luke 12,42; in 1 Cor 4,1f Paul considers himself to be a “steward” of God’s mysteries, in Tit 1,7 is required that the bishop be an “impeccable steward of God”. Here, in 1 Peter, the “manifold grace” of God shall be lived in sincere mutual service. Hebr 6,10 comes next here.

V. 11: Two examples are now given how the members of the Petrine communities should be “good stewards of the manifold grace of God”. They are not far from the Pauline precedents. Paul would generally range the gift of the proclamation of the gospel first in the series of gifts of God, see Rom 12,6f; 1 Cor 12,8.28; cf. Eph 4,11. But also “serving” in a general sense ranges top, see Rom 12,7; 1 Cor 12,5; Eph 4,12 as a general term. For the similar construction εἶ τις, twice, in 1 Peter and εἴτε, twice, in Rom 12,7f, see above, section 2, p. 73. In both examples, given by “Peter”, the use of one’s gift should be in accordance to God, the giver, either in ministering the word of God or in serving in the power of God. This brings the paragraph to its conclusion. By practicing God-given activities, the Christians give honour to God, the giver. Since these gifts are bestowed upon the Christians in the Christian community of believers, this honour will be given to God through Jesus Christ. It is not quite clear, whether the following doxological formula is referred to God or to Christ. The difference is not great. A similar formula appears in Rom 11,36 and 16,27, a possible later addition to Romans, and has a liturgical ring. See also Eph 3,21; Phil 4,20; 2 Tim 4,18; 2 Petr 3,18; Jud 25. In 1 Pt see 5,10f, where the calling of the Christians to the δόξα of God is mentioned and κράτος is attributed to him “for ever”. The double formula of “δόξα καὶ κράτος” appears also in Rev 1,6; cf. similar texts in Rev 5,13; 7,12. Generally, such doxological formulas do not mark the end of a document but rather of a section.

5. Final reflection

The shift in our text from Christian conduct in society towards Christian conduct in the community may somewhat be surprising. Nevertheless, it seems to be justified, also in view of the overall orientation of our letter which tries to strengthen the Christians in their situation of alienation and opposition. A satisfying response to the question about the hope and belief of the Christians cannot be given alone with reference to their life in society. In 4,1-6, the author had described the difference of the life of the Christians as compared to the lives of their compatriots. Here, the focus seems to be on the individual moral life of the single Christian in society. In 4,7-11, Christian life as lived in the community comes into focus. Both dimensions make up Christian life as such.

20th Lecture: Sharing the Suffering of Christ as Christians (4,12-19)

1. Context

As mentioned before, at this point starts the third part of Body Middle, extending from 4,12 to 5,11. Some basic concepts are taken up from the preceding context, in particular the idea of “suffering” (πάσχειν), cf. 3,13-17.18; 4,1 and “glory” (δόξα), “being glorified” (δοξάζεσθαι), cf. 4,11. They will also be found in the next sections up to 5,11. We may distinguish vv. 12-19, our section, 5,1-5 “Elders, younger ones and all Christians” and 5,6-11 “final exhortations”. In all three of them “suffering” and “glory” comes in:

4,12-19: “suffering” vv. 13, 15, 19, “glory”, “being glorified” vv. 13, 14, 16

5,1-5: “suffering” v. 1, “glory” v. 1

5,6-11: “suffering” vv. 9, 10, “glory” v. 10.

These observations make this third part of Letter Body more coherent than would appear at the first glance. Particularly the verses 5,1-5 about Elders, younger people and all members of the community appear less intruded than might appear at the first look.

2. Grammatical observations

As in the preceding section, imperatives characterize strongly our paragraph. They are found in several main clauses (vv. 12 and 13 in plural, vv. 15 and 16 in singular with τις, v. 19 in plural again). A promise is expressed in a nominal clause v. 14 (μακάριοι with elliptic ἔστε), the announcement of future judgment in the same construction v. 17. The only indicative in a verbal main clause appears in v. 18 in a quotation from the OT. Thus, the directive character of the section is established again. Some frequency of conditional clauses (vv. 13, 15, 17, 18) and of other subordinate clauses (ὅτι v. 13, ὅτι v. 14, 17) show the argumentative character of these verses.

3. Semantics

If we remain with the verbs employed, we can observe that, besides suffering, verbs of internal attitude or experience characterize strongly our section. We notice “wondering” in v. 12, “being ashamed” in v. 16 and “rejoicing” in v. 13 (twice), besides “being blessed” in v. 14. To “suffering” belongs also “reviling” in v. 14, cf. the noun “trial” in v. 12. More active attitudes of the Christians are “glorifying God” in v. 16 and “offering one’s soul in right conduct” in v. 19.

This brings us to another semantic field: good and evil doing. Christians can suffer for being wicked, as murderers, thieves or mischief-makers, or they can suffer just for being Christians (vv. 15f). Correspondingly, God's judgement can come upon those who have accepted the word of God or others who didn't, upon the just or the impious and sinners (vv. 17f).

If the two semantic fields are taken together, it emerges that Christians should not be embarrassed by their experience of suffering and that they only should take care that they suffer for the right cause: to belong to Christ as "Christians".

4. Detailed analysis

Vv. 12f: The section starts with an address of the readers ἀγαπητοί as in 2,11, thus marking the beginning of a new unit, although not the Body Closing as proposed by Achtemeier. The basic exhortation is not to be estranged but to rejoice. The possible estrangement is underlined by the adjective ξένον. Not an action is thus required at this point but an internal attitude, almost a feeling: the readers should rather rejoice when they experience the "burning" test of temptation. Also the "joy" to which the Christians are exhorted is expressed twice, even three times (with ἀγαλλιώμενοι), and thus underlined. Joyfully they should accept sharing the sufferings of Christ as an anticipation of the glory of Christ in which they should participate as well.

The idea is easier expressed in words than lived. But it is announced by Jesus himself in the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Mt 5,11f). In both texts, an outlook to the end is enclosed as a motif for joy and confidence.

V. 14: Even the "beatitude" of Mt 5,11 finds its parallel in our text. The readers may be called blessed if they are reviled "in the name of Christ". The expression is unusual because it generally means acting on behalf of Christ and not suffering for his sake. But the sense is quite clear from v. 16 which speaks of suffering "as Christians". It may be that some memory of the original meaning of "*christos*" is still kept since the following quotation of Is 11,2 LXX speaks of God's Anointed One, upon whom God's Spirit rests. If the Christians suffer "in the name" of Christ, the Anointed One, they will also share his blessing, that God's Spirit rests upon them as it remained upon Christ to whom they belong. The additional expression "Spirit of glory" is not derived from Isaiah but rather results from the concept of "δόξα" in v. 13: God's glorious Spirit will rest upon them as it rested upon Christ the Messiah. Cf. Luke 4,18; John 1,33 where the idea that God's Spirit rests upon Jesus is expressed as well, in Luke with a direct quotation from Isa. 11,2.

V. 15f: The next two verses belong together. Again, the scope is not to exhort the readers to certain forms of action, but rather to encourage them to accept opposition in the right spirit. Two forms of suffering of Christians are envisaged. The one is described in v. 15. In this case, Christians are punished because of evil conduct. Four examples of such reprehensible conduct are named: murder, theft, evildoing in a broader sense and being ἀλλοτριεπίσκοπος. This word is unique in biblical and classical Greek before the NT and only echoed occasionally in the Church Fathers (Epiphanius for instance). The first two cases suppose actions against the decalogue, the third seems to be broader in sense, although difficult to ascertain. The fourth expression can mean either being a “busybody” or someone who enters into the affairs of another person with the purpose to enrich himself. Reasons for this interpretation (mainly from the use in the Church Fathers) are given by Achtemeier who favours it.

The alternative would be that someone suffers for the sake of Christ, more precisely for being a “Christian”. The word occurs only three times in the New Testament. The other two instances are Acts 11,26 and 26,28. In all cases, the expression seems to come from non-Christians. This does not exclude that from early times, the Christians themselves would also use this name for themselves. The exhortation for the case of being reviled as a Christian is twofold: not being ashamed but glorifying God through this name. Again, no particular activity is required but only the readiness to accept suffering for the name of Christ without shame and even with pride. Being associated to Christ in suffering is an honour, first to God, but then also – as might be added – to the suffering person him- or herself (as the opposite of being ashamed).

V. 17: From now onwards, the focus shifts from actual experience to eschatology. Experiencing suffering as a Christian makes part of final judgment. That this judgment starts with the members of the people of God themselves does not have direct NT parallels, but some prelude in the OT (cf. Ez 9,6; Jer 32,29 etc.: Achtemeier). The idea itself that Christian suffering does not only prepare final judgment, but initiates it seems to be original in our letter. The argument is of the type of Qal wahomer or *a fortiori*: if already the faithful Christians are put on trial, how much more would have those to fear who refused to believe in the Christian message? The case of persons who did not hear the Christian message does not seem to come into the mind of the author. It may of course be thought of legitimately by modern readers.

V. 18: The same argument is taken up in the next verse with another scriptural quotation. Again, it is an *a fortiori* argument: “If the righteous man is scarcely saved, where will the impious and sinner appear?” Authors point to the fact that the quotation from Prov 11,31 does not correspond to the Hebrew text but only to the Greek one of the Septuagint. In the Hebrew text, the righteous person in the land or country is opposed to the impious and the sinner. The Septuagint has already dropped

the reference to the “land” ארץ and replaced it by the neutral μόλις, which then is taken up by our text. Thus, the important point is that if already Christians take part in final judgment by their trials how merciless will be this judgment for those who give themselves to impiety and sin?

V. 19: The final verse sums up the preceding ones. Again, the scope is not just “good conduct” as the last word might suggest, but rather “recommending one’s soul to God, the faithful creator, in good conduct” in the case of suffering according to the will of God. Of course, our author remains faithful to his intention of exhorting the Christians in Asia Minor to immaculate conduct in their pagan and hostile context. But the stress is on faith, hope and trust rather than on moral perfection. The last words of Jesus come into mind according to Luke 23,46: “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit” (cf. Ps 30,6 LXX). It is in this attitude that also the Christians should suffer outrage or even death in perfect confidence in God their creator and redeemer.

5. Outlook

Read in this way, our section inserts itself perfectly into the preceding context. From the beginning, “Peter” exhorts his readers to remain faithful to their vocation even in a hostile context. They are reminded of their dignity of being God’s chosen people or race, a royal priesthood. They are inspired to hope and invited to give account of this hope. Thus, our letter is not a treaty on morals. Ethical behaviour comes in, but rather as a prerequisite for salvation from judgment, and not as an independent topic or even less as the most important doctrine of the letter (slightly overemphasized by L. Goppelt). The Christians who suffer as Christians will have nothing and nobody to fear since their creator and their redeemer, Jesus Christ, are on their side and will help them to overcome all trials until the day of their eternal glory which they will share with Christ and with God himself.

21st Lecture: Community Rule (5,1-5)

Before continuing the general exhortation given to the whole of the community, the author singles out two particular groups giving them instruction about their specific roles (5,1-5a). We find a similar reference to the Elders towards the end of 1 Timothy (5,17-19, cf. 5,1-2) and the Letter of James (5,14f), but here in a different context (the case of sickness). A reference to the respect due to the persons in charge of the community in a general sense may be part of final exhortations of early Christian Letters. The first example is 1 Thess 5,12f, but cf. also 1 Cor 16,16.

1. Text and translation

The text of this literary subunit is not always certain. Some variants in v. 1 may be due to stylistic correction: the insertion of a second τούς after Πρεσβυτέρους οὖν and ὡς instead of ὁ before the word συμπρεσβύτερος. More difficult are the problems of v. 2. Nestle-Aland retains with some hesitation a long version after the first seven words, but puts ἐπισκοποῦντες in square brackets, because of its omission in **N**^{*}, 323 and sa, together with κατὰ θεόν also in B. On the other side, the overwhelming majority of the textual witnesses retain ἐπισκοποῦντες. The omission may be due to a tension between the noun πρεσβυτέρους and the verb which makes us think rather of ἐπίσκοποι. As to the formula κατὰ θεόν, Nestle-Aland opts for this reading against the Byzantine majority text on the basis of rich documentation in the earlier tradition, starting with *P*⁷² and codex Alexandrinus, early Egyptian textual witnesses. The μή instead of μηδέ later in this verse, attested in A and some other manuscripts may be due to the wish to avoid twice μηδέ shortly one after the other (cf. v. 3).

The omission of v. 3 in codex B (Vaticanus) remains isolated and is not respected in the modern text editions. It may be a case of haplographia where the writer identifies the μηδέ with the following μηδ', skipping what follows.

In v. 5, the additions after Ὁμοίως are all (except the δέ in **N**^{*}) of later origin and can be disregarded. The reading ἀλλήλοις later in this verse should be read because of its attestation in the oldest witnesses **N** A B and some relevant minuscule codices together with the Latin, Syro-Peshitta and Coptic tradition.

As to the translation, a double meaning of πρεσβύτεροι in v. 1 should be kept in mind: we use to translate it by “Elders”, but it is opposed to νεώτεροι in v. 5, and thus has also the meaning of “older ones”, “seniors”. The sense is not necessarily institutional, at least not exclusively.

In v. 3, the rare word κατακυριεύω can have the meaning “become lord of” (as in Acts 19,16) or “domineering”. This seems to be the sense here, as in Mk 10,42 par. Mt 20,25. In v. 5, the verb ἐγκομβόμαι, hapax in the New Testament, means “to clothe oneself”.

2. Grammatical style

Again, this section is characterized by imperatives aorist:

ποιμάνετε v. 2

ὑποτάγητε v. 5a

ἐγκομβώσασθε v. 5b.

Another striking feature is the threefold μή(τε) - ἀλλά in vv. 2-3. This feature underlines the argumentative character of our section.

We observe also the threefold apposition in v. 1, underlining the authority of the apostolic writer, as well as the initial causal οὖν in v. 1 and the final causal ὅτι in v. 5, stressing the element of reasoning.

In the temporal structure, the future of κομειῖσθε in v. 4 takes up the idea of coming glory in v. 1 and places the exhortation into an eschatological context.

3. Semantics

Several oppositions are found in our textual unit:

elders or older ones – younger ones

suffering (of Christ) – future glory

shepherd – flock

service by constraint – willingly

for shameful gain – eagerly

domineering – being examples for the flock.

Of course, the last three pairs are relevant for the pragmatics of the text.

4. Verse by verse analysis

V. 1: The section starts with an address to the “older ones/ Elders”. This concept occurs frequently in the New Testament (66 times) and can have various meanings. A short overview, based also on W. Bauer’s Dictionary, can help to see the relevance of these meanings for our textual unit.

Originally, πρεσβύτερος is a comparative of πρέσβυς and means “the older one”. Such a meaning still comes to the fore in texts of the NT where πρεσβύτερος is found in opposition to “younger ones” as in the quotation from Joel 3,1 in Acts 2,17: “your young men will see visions, and your πρεσβύτεροι will have dreams.” Close come 1 Tim 5,1-2 where π. is opposed to νεωτέρους and our text.

The original sense of “older one” is retained also in John 8,5 (all go away, starting from the older ones) and Luke 15,25 (the older brother of the prodigal son). We may think also of texts where the “former generations”, the ancestors are meant by π. as is the case in Mark 7,3.5 par Mt 15,21 and Hebr 11,2.

In the remainder of the NT, the word π. has a more specific sense. Particularly in the Synoptics, the word can mean the “Elders” of Israel, making part of the Sanhedrin and generally opposed to Jesus and his mission (cf. Mark 8,31 par. where they occur for the first time together with the High Priests and the Scribes as the body which plans Jesus’ trial and execution).

From here seems to come the designation of π. for (older) representatives of the Christian community. Luke uses this expression frequently for a group of senior members of the Jerusalem community (cf. Acts 11,30; 15,2 – 16,4), generally together with “the Apostles”. But he also knows “Elders”, as we now should say, as brought into charge by Paul during his first missionary journey (Acts 14,23) or summoned from Ephesus to Miletus in Acts 20,17.

Such “Elders” are found also in 1 Tim 5,17.19; Tit 1,5 (where it is said in v. 7 that the π. should be a good ἐπίσκοπος of his flock, “overseer”, the later technical meaning seems still to be missing) and James 5,14 (the Elders shall lay their hand upon a sick person). It has to be noticed that in 1 Timothy, the author (“Paul”) distinguishes between simply “older men” in analogy to “older Women” and “younger men” and “younger women” (5,1-2). This distinction does not yet appear clearly in our text in 1 Pet 5,1-5.

Further meanings and uses of πρεσβύτερος can be “The Elder” in 2 John 1 and 3 John 1, probably meaning a person of particular dignity out of the immediately post-apostolic generation (see my commentary ad loc.), and the (24) “Elders” of the Book of Revelation, a kind of heavenly counterpart to the ruling body of the earthly community (the sense is not really clear; cf. the many theories referred to in Bauer’s Dictionary).

What is important from this survey for our text, 1 Pet 5,1-5, is the fact that in 1 Peter the original meaning of “older person” is still preserved as appears from the opposition to νεώτεροι in v. 5a. In this combination of the biographical and the institutional aspect, 1 Peter is unique in the NT. The latter is less emphasized than in the Pastoral Letters or Luke’s Acts, which is also remarkable. For the development of the idea of “presbyters” or “Elders” in early Christianity according to the witness of the New Testament see or next lecture.

“Peter” calls himself in v. 1 “fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ”. Συμπρεσβύτερος is found in Greek literature only in Christian texts, although συμβρεβευτής and συμπρέσβης are found (W. Bauer). The meaning of the word in our verse is no too easy to determine. “Peter” certainly belongs to the older generation. That he would classify himself as a “presbyter / Elder” in the same way as the Elders of the Christian communities of Northern Asia Minor remains doubtful because initially he ranges himself among the apostles (cf. 1,1). This means, at least as far as age is concerned, “Peter” is equal to the Elders of the communities he writes to, but in his dignity as an apostle he overrules them. The concept “witness of the sufferings of Christ” probably does not see in him an eye-witness of Christ’s suffering but rather someone who in the sense of the letter shares Christ’s sufferings in his life (N. Brox). In our present context it is related to the way, Christian authority should be exercised. This is developed in the following verses. “Suffering” is connected, as always in our letter, to the theme of “glory”, which shall be “revealed” (cf. 1,5).

Vv. 2-3: The exhortation itself is introduced by the general commandment to “tend the flock of God”. The idea is traditional and goes back to OT prophets like Jeremiah (23) and Ezechiel (34). In the NT, ποιμνιον for the disciples as God’s flock is used in Luke 12,32. An exhortation to tend the flock of God is found besides our text in Acts 20,28f in Paul’s speech to the Elders of Ephesus in Miletus. But cf. also John 20,15-17 in continuation of John 10,1-18. The Participle ἐπισκοποῦντες alludes to the related concept of ἐπίσκοπος, but remains general in the sense of “attending”.

Three oppositions are now used in order to describe the just way of tending the flock:

“not by constraint, but willingly”: while ἀναγκαστῶς is found only here in the NT, ἔκουσίως is also attested in Phlm 14; here, the wish to serve as such is addressed; it has to be κατὰ θεόν;

“not for shameful gain, but eagerly”: this exhortation means independence from economic calculation, a subject also treated elsewhere, although αἰσχροκερδῶς is hapax in the NT, cf. αἰσχροκερδής applied to Presbyters in Tit 1,7 and to Deacons in 1 Tim 3,8;

“not as domineering over those in your charge” has its roots in the example and teaching of Christ according to Mark 10,42 par., cf. also 2 Cor 1,24 and is traditional; the “κλήροι” seem to be the “shares” or gifts given to everybody in the community; for being “examples” to the flock cf. Phil 3,17.

V. 4: The appearance of Christ as the ἀρχιποιμήν of the flock is again formulated in a unique way, but traditional in content; for the “crown” (στέφανος) as reward cf. 1 Cor 9,25; 2 Tim 4,8, James 1,12; Rev 2,10.

V. 5: The mention of the “younger ones” confirms our impression that with πρεσβύτεροι are intended the representatives of the older generation as far as they are in charge of the community. For this double reason, “submission” is recommended. Cf. for the concept 2,13.18; 3,1.5, but also 3,22.

In his final exhortation, “Peter” addresses himself to “all” members of the community. Given its vertical structure, “humility” is required from all, may they be “Elders” or “younger people”. The word ταπεινοφροσύνη is found elsewhere in the NT (cf. Acts 20,19; Col 3,12; Eph 4,2), and with it the idea. The ensuing quotation from the OT (Prov. 3,34 LXX) backs it up. It is used also in James 4,6. You may also think of Mary’s Magnificat Luke 1,52.

5. Conclusion

In the section about the “household code” or “civic obligations” 1 Pt 2,13 – 3,7 we missed an exhortation to parents and children. In a way, this missing element is brought in here. It is no longer applied to the older and the younger generation in the family, but now to both generations in the community. This may be due to the growing importance of community life also for the relation of the generations. The shift of context allows a more specific treatment of the matter. Authority and submission are now seen as practiced in common belief in Christ, model of all good pastors and example of humble service until death. Just this way he received eternal glory, as will those who follow him.

22nd Lecture: Presbyters in early Christian communities

The exhortations concerning “Elders” in 1 Pt 5,1-4 raise the question about Elders or Presbyters in early Christian communities. We cannot give a survey of the vast literature on the subject but only present some of the results. Cf. for short introductions J. ROHDE, in: EWNT / EDNT / DENT sub voce πρεσβύτερος; ἐπίσκοπος. “Classical” studies in German about ministry in the NT are: H. v. CAMPENHAUSEN, Kirchliches Amt und geistliche Vollmacht in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten (BHT 14), Tübingen: Mohr 1953; E. SCHWEIZER, Gemeinde und Gemeindeordnung im Neuen Testament (AThANT 35), Zürich: Zwingli-Verlag 1959.

1. Equivalents in Paul

One of the striking observations concerning “Elders” or “Presbyters” in the New Testament is the fact that the word πρεσβύτερος is completely absent from the authentic letters of Paul, including the Letters to the Colossians and Ephesians and to the Hebrews. As a title for Christian ministers it is also absent from the four gospels. The original Pauline communities do not seem to have had such a ministry.

Of course, the Pauline communities had their ministry. Paramount was the role of the Apostle Paul himself. He teaches, admonishes, takes sometimes disciplinary measures (1 Cor 5,4-5) and gives rules for liturgy (1 Cor 11,17-34; 14,20-40). Besides him, there were from the beginning many fellow workers, men and women, who contributed to the growth of the communities. They are in part named by Paul in the beginning of his letters or mentioned respectively greeted at the end. In his earliest letter, Paul asks his readers explicitly to respect those who “labour (κοπιῶντες) among them”, are “over them in the Lord” (προιστάμενους) and “admonish” them (1 Thess 5,12).

In the Letter to the Romans, Paul comes back to the persons put in charge of the community. In chapter 12, he names among the various gifts bestowed by God upon the members of the community also the gift of being “president” (προιστάμενος, 12,8). It ranks after the gifts concerning the preaching of the word and various services in the community towards the end of the list of special graces. According to the First Letter to the Corinthians, among the many gifts bestowed by God upon members of the communities for their benefit there is also the gift of κυβερνήσεις for “administrators” (1 Cor 12,28). Also here, it does not range top among the gifts listed by Paul, but towards the end, just before “speaking in tongues”, highly valued by at least some Corinthians, but a bit less by Paul. Paul does not have a pyramidal idea of his communities and builds even less such a pyramid from the top.

Towards the end of Paul's literary activity, a structure of ministry corresponding more strongly to later developments comes in sight. The passage always quoted here is Philippians 1,1: Παῦλος καὶ Τιμόθεος ... πᾶσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐν Χ. Ἰ. τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Φιλίπποις σὺν ἐπίσκοποις καὶ διακόνους. This text is the only instance where Paul uses the word ἐπίσκοπος and where he uses διάκονος in an institutional sense (besides possibly Rom 16,1 for Phoebe). Generally it is accepted that this letter attests a development also in the Pauline communities towards a double ministry: the one of "overseers" and the one of "servants", in accordance with Greek secular and religious organizations. Cf. also Did 15,1; 1 Clem 42,4f. Since Paul addresses not only the διάκονοι, but also the ἐπίσκοποι in the Plural, it is generally accepted that we have to do here with a collegial form of community ministry on the highest level (an element taken over in later times by the Presbyterian churches in spite of the difference of terminology: ἐπίσκοποι for πρεσβύτεροι).

2. The Catholic Letters

In the Catholic Letters, "Elders" or "Presbyters" are known as men responsible for the well-being of the community. As we saw, 1 Pt 5,1-4 seems to presuppose "Elders" as opposed to the "younger ones" bearing the responsibility for the "flock" of the Lord. They should follow the example of Christ as the "chief Shepherd". "Bishops" (ἐπίσκοποι) and "Deacons" (διάκονοι) are missing in all of the Catholic Epistles.

The other instance in the Catholic Letters where "Presbyters" occur is, as we saw, James 5,14. Again, a group of "Elders" or "Presbyters" seems to be supposed. Their official function is underlined by the expression "πρεσβύτεροι τῆς ἐκκλησίας". The Genitive makes clear that not just senior members of the community are meant, but officers with some responsibility for the spiritual benefit of the community. Theirs is the task of praying over the sick person and of laying their hands upon such a person and anointing him or her – at least in Catholic and Orthodox tradition the scriptural basis for the sacrament of the anointing of the sick. There is no reason to assume that in these communities there was any other Church authority on top of the Elders. They apparently had all authority needed in a local church in the administration of the word and the sacrament.

3. The Pastoral Letters

Things change in the Pastoral Letters. On the one hand, the author ("Paul") knows, as we saw, Presbyters or Elders as having authority in the community. They are mentioned in 1 Tim 5,17.19. The community is admonished to respect them and not accept any charge against them, if not upon

the testimony of two or three witnesses according to biblical law. Titus is reminded that Paul ordered him to institute in the different local communities Elders as Church leaders (Tit 1,5). This means that, according to the Pastoral Letters, Elders are not only an empirical reality in the communities, but belong to basic community structure. The strange thing is that two verses later, “Paul” describes the obligations of such an “Elder” as obligations of an “ἐπίσκοπος” (Tit 1,7). A similar text is found in 1 Tim 3,2 with the same wording. In Tit 1,7 it appears from the context and from the causal “γάρ” at the beginning of the verse, that in fact the same person is meant by the “Elder” and the “Bishop/Overseer”. This means, a collegial structure seems to be supposed as in 1 Peter. This may allow the conclusion that also in 1 Tim 3,2 the person envisaged is perhaps closer to the “Elder” of 1 Peter than to later monarchical bishops. This results also from the opposition between the “ἐπίσκοπος” of 1 Tim 3,1-7 and the ensuing section about the “deacon” in 3,8-13. It may be justified to see in this passage a parallel to Phil 1,1 with Elders and Deacons as the responsible persons of the community. That the word ἐπίσκοπος has still its original ring of “overseer” results from the fact that the section in 1 Tim 3 is introduced by a reference to the ἐπισκοπή which some candidates may aspire (3,1). Cf. also the larger sense of the word in 1 Pt 2,25.

In another sense, the Pastoral Letters prepare the institutional monarchic episcopate: “Paul” writes his letters to two of his closest fellow workers, Timothy and Titus. He authorizes them to take all the necessary steps for the spiritual well-being of the communities entrusted to them. This responsibility includes, as we saw, the appointment of Elders in the various communities (Tit 1,5). This description of rights and obligations brings us very close to the monarchic episcopate of later times.

4. The Acts of the Apostles

Chronologically, the Acts of the Apostles come close to the Pastoral Letters, and the perspective is comparable. We already saw that Luke used the idea of Christian “Presbyters” residing in Jerusalem in order give the idea of some continuity between the Jewish Supreme Council taking final decisions in Jerusalem and some similar Christian body. It is made up until the end of the so-called “Council of the Apostles” by “the Apostles and Elders” (Acts 15,2.4.6.22.23; 16,4) as the body taking the decision about the conditions of admission of non-Jews to Christianity. Some such body without mentioning the Apostles appears in Acts 11,30. It seems to be significant, that after the dispersion of the Apostles after their council, James and the Elders (of Jerusalem) seem to be the legitimate representatives of the Jerusalem church (cf. Acts 21,18). But this does not necessarily imply that all communities should have such a structure, and particularly the role of James seems to be unique.

That according to Luke, Christian communities should be self-sufficient by the establishment of a group of Elders is apparent from Acts 14,23, as generally noticed. The institution of such a local “hierarchy” is important for Paul’s argument at the Council of the Apostles that God has allowed the foundation of Christian communities in Asia Minor even without a starting point in some Synagogue.

It may be reasonably assumed that at the time Luke wrote his Acts, Christian ἐπίσκοποι already existed, and Luke may have been aware of the terminological, if not institutional problem, how they may have been related to the Elders he mentions more than once. One answer to this question is often seen in Paul’s Farewell Discourse before the Presbyters of the church of Ephesus, summoned by him to Miletus (Acts 20,17-35). After announcing his imminent departure from which he would not come back, Paul admonishes the Elders of Ephesus to be good shepherds of their flock. The wording is here of interest: **BNT Acts 20:28** προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς καὶ παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ, ἐν ᾧ ὑμᾶς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔθετο ἐπισκόπους ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἣν περιεποιήσατο διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου.

It may be that in this instance, the word ἐπίσκοπος does not mean much more than “overseers” in general (cf. RSV). But it may also be, that Luke intended to propose some terminological link between the two titles. In the identification of both designations, Luke is still near to the Pastoral Letters of Paul. A threefold ministry in the church with bishops, presbyters and deacons seems to have come up only in the second century AD, with Ignatius of Antioch being the first impressive witness (cf. Ign Magn 13,1f; Phld 4; Sm 8,1 where Ignatius compares the bishop with God the Father, the presbyters with the council of the Apostles, and the deacons with the will of God and asks for the corresponding respect towards them).

23rd Lecture: Final Exhortations (5,6-11)

1. Context

We treat verses 6-11 of our chapter separately rather for practical reasons. Most authors agree that v. 12 introduces the closing of the letter. A number of authors take also vv. 6-11 together as a subunit (Schelkle, Schrage, Goppelt, Achtemeier). With some good reason, Elliott takes together vv. 5b-11. Brox connects vv. 6-7 still with the preceding context. From this survey we can see that there are reasons for connecting vv. 6-7 with the following context, but also reasons for taking these verses together with the preceding ones.

This impression is partly based on semantic observations. Already in vv. 1-4, our author had exhorted the presbyters not to overlord their flock but show a spirit of service towards them. In V. 5a, the younger men of the community were exhorted to submission towards the Elders. This perspective finds its continuation in the following general rule, directed to all members of the community, to vest themselves with humility (τὴν ταπεινοφροσύνην ἐγκομβώσασθε), with a promise taken from a scriptural quotation that God “gives grace to the humble” (ταπεινοῖς ... δίδωσιν χάριν). Precisely this concept is taken up at the beginning of v. 6: “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God” (ταπεινώθητε οὖν). The sentence extends until the end of v. 7.

From a structural point of view, the exhortations directed to all members of the community after the ones directed to the Elders (vv. 1-4) and the younger men (v. 5a) start in v. 5b. This has led to the division proposed by Elliott.

The reason for starting in v. 6 a new subsection lies in the fact that in vv. 6-11, different from vv. 1-5, the topic is no longer the mutual relation between the groups or members of the community, but the relation towards God and vigilance towards the devil. In this perspective, the root ταπεινο- seems to serve as a kind of “hinge word” between vv. 1-5 and 6-11.

In the larger context, we seem to have in vv. 6-11 the end of “Body Middle” of our letter. Seemingly by an error, this is also affirmed by Achtemeier, 338, according to whom elsewhere in his commentary at this point already the “Body Closing” would come to an end (x).

2. Grammatical features

The little sections knows three acting subjects: the faithful, the devil, and God. The first four verses are characterized by a new series of imperatives aorist (as regularly before). The first imperative in v. 6 is taken up by a participle with the force of an imperative (ἐπιρίψαντες) in v. 7. At the begin-

ning of v. 8 stand two further imperatives, at the beginning of v. 9 is found another one. Always these imperatives are backed up by reasons or scopes: the first imperative in v. 6 by a final clause (ἵνα), the participle with the force of an imperative in v. 7 by a causal clause (ὅτι). The two imperatives at the beginning of v. 8 are followed by an independent main clause with the force of a causal close, the imperative in v. 9 is followed by a reason introduced by the participle “knowing” (εἰδότες). Thus far, the unit is strongly appellative.

While God had already been the subject in the reasons given in vv. 6 and 7, he becomes now subject of the main clause in v. 10 and the person of reference in v. 11. While in vv. 7 and 8, indicatives present occurred, the indicative in v. 10 is in the future (cf. the conjunctive, referring to God, in v. 6b). Two participles point here back to the past: God’s call and the suffering of the Christians. The nominal clause in v. 11 is in a sense timeless, but pointing to the future again, even to eternity. Turning back to the question of subjects, we may observe a move from the members of the community and their adversary to God to whom is due the final doxology.

3. Semantic observations

Two main semantic fields may be distinguished in our textual unit. They are arranged chiasmatically: in vv. 6-7 and 10-11, human relation towards God and God’s saving action and power are in the foreground. There is even a direct *inclusio* between κραταίαν χεῖρα in v. 6 and κράτος in v. 11. To the exhortation to put one’s trust in God in vv. 6f corresponds the promise in v. 10 with the ensuing doxology.

In the middle stand the two verses 8 and 9. In a sense, they develop the subject of μέριμνα of v. 7 as well as the announcement of coming exaltation after humiliation (v. 6). The members of the community are faced with the attacks of the devil ready to devour them like a roaming lion. They are encouraged to be sober and vigilant and reminded of the same fate, which their brothers and sisters have to endure.

Taken together, the expressions of confidence in vv. 6-7 and 10-11 frame the verses dealing with conflict and vigilance and give them a positive outlook.

4. Detailed analysis

Vv. 6-7: The meaning of the exhortation to “humiliating” oneself does not seem to be simply the exercise of the virtue of humility but rather an invitation to confidence. This results from the correlated concept of the “mighty hand of God” as well as from the equivalent in v. 7 where the faithful

are admonished to put their trust in God and entrust him their worries. The reason given is in the first case the expectation of God's intervention in a time to come, in the second the reminder of God's loving care for his people.

Authors (and Nestle's margin) point for v. 6 to Js 4,10 with a very similar wording. It has even been asked whether there is not a possible literary dependence between Js 4 and 1 Pt 5. Already in 1 Pt 5,5 we find the same quotation from Pr 3,34 as in Js 4,6. Now, in 1 Pt 5,6, there is a strong correspondence in wording and thought with Js 4,10. Again, the reference to the menace by the devil is mentioned in 1 Pt 5,8 and Js 4,7. Nevertheless, authors generally refuse to see a direct literary dependence of one text on the other but rather see a common tradition. One reason for this opinion is the fact that the sequence of ideas in both letters is different, as is also in part the flow of thought (particularly concerning the devil). For leaving one's concern to God, there seems to be in 1 Pt 5,7 a reference to Ps 55(54),23 (ἐπίρριψον ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον τὴν μέριμνά σου), but also Mt 6,25(31.34) is not far: μὴ μεριμνᾶτε. For God's care (μέλει) for his creatures cf. Ws 12,13.

Vv. 8-9: That the μέριμνα of the preceding verse has to do with eschatological trial becomes apparent from the following verses. It is identical with the "sufferings" (παθήματα) of the communities in the present time as preparing the eschatological events (cf. 4,12-19). This makes understandable the double exhortation with which v. 8 starts. We already know the exhortation to be "sober" (cf. 4,7). The invitation to be "vigilant" has its parallels in the Synoptic tradition in the context of Jesus' eschatological discourse (Mk 13,37 par.). The word "ἀντίδικος" is used only here in the NT for the eschatological counterpart of God or the faithful, but corresponds to the eschatological background. Διάβολος is used 37 times and is an accepted term for Satan in post-exilic Judaism. Thus, the sufferings of the Christians appear again in an eschatological or apocalyptic context. The comparison of the devil with a roaring lion goes back to Ps 22,14 which is quoted literally (only here in the NT).

Two considerations should help the Christians to face the attacks of Satan: first and before everything else faith in God who is stronger than all powers of this world. And then the consideration that the suffering community is not alone: the "brothers (and sisters)" in the other communities share their experiences. Christians suffering as Christians do not experience anything strange but live the experience of being opposed as Christ, whose name they bear, was opposed and rejected, before his final glory became manifest (cf. 4,13f.).

Vv. 10-11: From the exhortation to being steadfast in opposition and temptation, the author switches back to encouragement. The long list of verbs used underlines the emphasis on this subject. The argument starts from God and his work of salvation: he is the God who called them (an idea expressed in a similar way by Paul in 1 Thess 2,12; 5,24). The purpose of this call was and is the participation of the addressees in Christ's glory. With this concept, the dominant opposition in this let-

ter between “suffering” and glory” is taken up. Another opposition comes in: between the “short time” of suffering (ὀλίγον, cf. 1,6) and “eternal” glory. Rom 8,18 comes into mind (“I consider that the sufferings of this present are not worth comparing with the glory which is to be revealed to us”). Of the four verbs, used by our author for describing God’s saving activity, the first two occur each 13 times in the NT, but only here in 1 Pt, σθενόω occurs only here in the NT, for the verb θεμελιώσσει see Eph 3,17. God will not preserve his faithful from evil and suffering but deliver them from it (cf. the last petition of the Our Father). What he is expected to grant his people is attributed in the final doxology to himself. For such a formula in our letter cf. 4,11 where it ends a section as well, not a whole document as sometimes opined.

5. Conclusion

If we compare this section with chapter 4 of the Letter of James, we see the difference in spite of the common elements. In James, the exhortations of the author are part of general moral teaching inspired by wisdom. The devil is mentioned, but rather as the adversary of the humans in a very general sense, without special apocalyptic overtones. In 1 Peter, the whole section is focussed towards strengthening the community in its final conflict with the world of the evil one. This is why temporal aspects are paramount in this text: καιρός in v. 6, ὀλίγον in v. 10, the reference to “eternity” and the use of grammatical future (v. 10) or conjunctive aorist (v. 6). Christians are exposed to the temptations and trials of an eschatological conflict, but they are not be afraid: the victory will be theirs (cf. John 16,33, final verse of the Farewell Discourses of Jesus in John).

24th Lecture: The Closing of Body Middle (5,12) and of the Epistle (5,13f)

1. Context

According to the proposal made earlier, we see in 1 Pt 5,12 the closing of the Body Middle of 1 Peter. We arrived at this opinion against P. Achtemeier (who considers 1 Pt 4,1 – 5,12 as the Body Closing) following the proposal made by John Lee White (see above, p. 2, in our first lecture, and p. 4 for the bibliographical reference). I quote from p. 2: “According to him (White), the body closing expresses the wish of the writer to communicate with the addressees, it resumes the intention of the writer of the letter, refers to his act of writing and tries to stress the purpose of the writing (cf. White, 41).” This is what we are going to find in v. 12.

Vv. 13-14 in their turn, show many elements of an “epistolary closing”, as we shall see. A direct reference to the content of the letter is missing, and this is one reason why it is recommended to treat this section separate from the preceding one.

2. The text

There are a number of textual variants to which attention is needed. In v. 12, the expression of διὰ βραχέων instead of δι’ ὀλίγων which we find in *P*⁷² remains isolated and confirms the impression that this Papyrus is not always mainstream tradition (important for the lacuna in v. 14). The same holds true for the omission of the article τοῦ before θεοῦ in the same verse, although a few more manuscripts follow (only one certain majuscule one). The variants replacing the imperative στῆτε in the same verse by different indicatives are more widely attested but seem to go back to the tentative of avoiding the harsh transition from the witness to God’s grace to the exhortation to stand in it. In v. 13, the replacement of Βαβυλῶνι by Ῥώμη in some mss. clarifies the obscure local indication in the sense of Patristic tradition. The same holds true for the insertion of ἐκκλησία before the word συνεκλεκτή in the same verse. In v. 14, the replacement of ἀγάπης by ἀγίω adapts the expression to Pauline usage. The omission of the whole final benediction (Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν ...) in *P*⁷² becomes more understandable if one considers the relative freedom of this manuscript with textual tradition (see above). Probably liturgical use may have led to the enlargements at the end of the formula in various manuscripts. The text of Nestle-Aland is attested by A, B and Ψ (Athos 9th/10th cent.) and merits credit. For ἀμήν at the end of NT letters see Rom 16,27; Gal 6,18; 2 Pt 3,18; Jud 25. These parallels may also have influenced the variant reading in 1 Pt 5,14.

3. The Closing of the Letter Body (v. 12)

What distinguishes such a “body closing” from an “epistolary closing” was mainly the element of reference to the content of the letter and to the act of writing. Before coming to this point, the author refers to a person: Silvanus. He says that he wrote διὰ Σιλουανοῦ. The expression is strongly debated. The opinion prevailing nowadays almost unanimously is that Silvanus was the person who forwarded the letter to the addressees. For this usage, there is strong support from early Christian and from non-Christian literature. A long list of references is given by Elliott in his commentary, p. 872. I choose just one from the Papyri (CPJud 2,151 = BGU 4.1079), a “letter of a certain Serapion ... to Herakleides”: “I sent (*epempsa*) two other letters to you, one through Nedyμος (*dia Nēdymou mi-an*) and one through Kronios (*dia Kroniou*)”. There is ample evidence in the Papyri for this usage. In early Christian literature cf. IgnRom 10,1 *dia Ephesiōn*, IgnPhld 11,2 *dia Bourrou* etc. Close comes the formula in Acts 15,23 *grapsantes dia cheiros autōn*, referring to Silvanus, together with Judas Barsabbas the bringer of a letter.

The alternative would be seeing in the διὰ a reference to Silvanus being the amanuensis (secretary) of Peter or the author of a draft version. For both, there is no clear evidence, and as we said already in our third lecture, for saving Petrine authorship the emphasis on the contribution made by Silvanus would not be of great help: the more the role of Silvanus is stressed, the more the role of Peter diminishes.

Silvanus is one of the better known figures in Christianity of New Testament times. On the one hand, we find him as a companion of Paul. He is mentioned as co-author of 1 Thess and 2 Thess and also as a companion of Paul in 2 Cor 1,19. In all three cases, he appears along with Timotheus, but named before him. In the Acts of the Apostles, he occurs 13 times under the name of “Silas” (Greek form of the Latin “Silvanus”). The identity of both persons is generally assumed. It is interesting that “Silas” appears for the first time in Acts as a bringer of a letter: the final document of the “Council of the Apostles” concerning the conditions for the admission of non-Jews to Christianity (Acts 15,22.27). Together with Judas Barsabbas, Silas encourages the community of Antioch (Acts 15,32). Shortly later, Barnabas parts company with Paul, and Silas, together with Timothy, is taken by Paul as a companion to his second missionary journey. Barnabas will be accompanied by Mark, another figure interesting in our context. Thus we have Silas / Silvanus as a companion of Paul, man of confidence of the community of Jerusalem and Peter, bearer of a letter to communities outside the centre of Christianity. This would make him an ideal figure for a letter-bearer also for 1 Peter. The only question is whether his role is literary fiction or reality.

Before we come to the question of a historical or fictional role of Silvanus in 1 Pt 5,12, we shortly analyse the rest of v. 12. The characterization of Silvanus as πιστός ἀδελφός comes close to the one for him and his companion in Acts 15,22 (ἡγουμένους ἐν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς). “As I think” is an expression of modesty, as is the following affirmation that the writer wanted to write “with few words”. Cf. Hebr 13,22. It is conventional, and therefore no conclusion can be drawn from this expression for an originally independent letter into which a baptismal homily or liturgy (1 Pt 1,3 – 4,11 or later) might have been inserted. The description of the content of the letter as “exhortation” and “witness” characterizes very well the intention of the author as it became manifest from the beginning of the letter. It affirms God’s saving action in Jesus Christ, whom he rescued from death and to whom he conferred eternal glory, and calls the Christians for confidence and endurance in their trials which they experience with and for the sake of their Lord. Both elements, exhortation and witness, are taken together as the content of God’s “grace”, since the “gospel” is the fundament of the “law” and makes its putting into practice possible. This way, the imperative is rooted in the indicative, and this is precisely the case, even from the grammatical point of view, in our verse (εἰς ἧν στήτε).

4. The epistolary closing (vv. 13-14)

V. 13: Greetings from communities and their members to communities and their members belong to normal epistolary closing of New Testament Letters, following epistolary format in antiquity. But three elements in our verse have to be commented:

What means “ἐν Βαβυλῶνι”? Authors normally agree that we have to do with a cryptogram for Rome. On the one side, Babylon in Mesopotamia was at the time the letter was written not much more than a heap of ruins, and a camp in the delta of the Nile with this name does not offer any link with Peter, on the other side, Babylon has become a name for Rome since Jewish apocalypticism (cf. the texts quoted by Elliott and Achtemeier); in the NT see Rev 14,8; 16,19; 17,5; 18,2.10.21. In Revelation, the city is seen as the great whore devouring people and nations. In our letter, which probably precedes the persecution of Christians in the time of Domitian, Rome/Babylon seems still to have a more positive connotation and only becomes a symbol of “being exiles and strangers”, an idea central for our letter from the beginning (cf. 1,1; 2,11).

Who is the “συνεκλεκτή”? The interpretation as a proper name or the designation of an individual person (for instance the wife of Peter, cf. Mk 1,30; 1 Cor 9,5) does not have many followers. It is recommended to see in the expression the designation of a community, here the Roman community. Cf. the understanding of this community as “ἐκλεκτοῖς” from 1,1 and similar usage in 2 John 1.13.

Who is “Mark”? A person of this name appears close to Paul according to Col 4,10 (here as a relative of Barnabas), 2 Tim 4,11 and Phlm 24. The Acts of the Apostles locate him in the Jerusalem community (Acts 12,12.25) and see him, as mentioned, as a companion of Barnabas when they start for missionary activity separated from Paul and Silvanus at the time of Paul’s second missionary journey. Early Christian tradition (Papias in Eusebius, anti-marcionite prologues to the gospels) knows him as the interpreter of Peter, and he is seen as the author of the second gospel in the tradition of Peter. According to Elliott, he would have belonged to the “Roman group” which continued Peter’s activity in Rome after Peter’s martyrdom between 64 and 67 AD.

This is why Elliott thinks that Silvanus and Mark are real figures in 1 Peter 5,12f. They stand behind the letter, and Silvanus might have been its bearer to the communities in Asia Minor. The problem is that between the sixties of the first cent. and the last decade of the same cent. a lot of time has elapsed. It may be more reasonable to presume with N. Brox (*Falsche Verfasserangaben*, see p. 10 of this manuscript) that the two names make part of pseudonymity. Both persons were linked in tradition with Peter as well as with Paul and might have been considered convincing tradition-bearers for a letter, which tried to achieve universal authority in a time of trial and distress. The proposal made by Achtemeier that the Silvanus of 1 Pt 5,12 (and perhaps the Mark of v. 13) might have been a further bearer of this name, otherwise unknown to us, does not appear too attractive.

The designation of Mark as Peter’s “beloved son” belongs to the vocabulary of family life applied to the Christian community, as underlined rightly by Elliott *ad loc.*

V. 14: An exhortation to kiss each other with a sacred kiss is almost standard in Pauline letters (cf. Rom 16,16; 1 Cor 16,20; 2 Cor 13,12; cf. 1 Thess 5,26). It is a consequence of the self-understanding of the early Christian communities as “brotherhoods” (cf. 2,17; 5,9) and was seen as characteristic for the relation between the members of the communities. The Christian dimension is safeguarded by Paul with the epitheton “holy”, by Peter with the characteristic Christian expression of “ἀγάπη” which goes beyond sympathy and physical attraction.

The final wish of peace rounds the letter up. Authors point to the fact that by this concept together with the related term of “grace” (χάρις), the last verses of 1 Peter point back to the letter opening (1,1-2!), forming an impressive inclusion of the whole document. Among all troubles and trials in this world, the addressees should enjoy the peace of Christ through his grace.

5. Summary

We renounce to a theological summary concerning the message of 1 Peter. See for this purpose particularly the 2nd lecture about “The addressees and the theological character of 1 Peter” (pp. 5-8).

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