**1 Peter: Aliens who are Chosen, Pt 2**

*1 Peter 1:1-2*

**Context**

Peter begins the epistle with the comforting words to these aliens scattered throughout Asia Minor that they are chosen of God. They needed to be reminded that although they were rejected by the world, they were indeed chosen of God, holy and beloved. That though can help us endure much in life. Peter’s pastoral epistle is to comfort persecuted believers with the positional truth of who they are in Christ.

This choosing of God was done according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit for the purpose of obeying Christ (**v2**). Although this doctrinal truth is seen throughout the scriptures—in both the OT as well as the NT—it nevertheless is a difficult one for people to embrace.

As with all biblical truths, we must examine closely the context of the scripture and believe what it says with a clear sense that His thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are His ways our ways (**Is 55:8**).

**The features of God’s election**

1. **The condition**

**1 Peter 1:1a***—Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia*

1. *Those who reside as aliens*
2. *Scattered throughout* various locations
3. **Point:** although they were rejected by society and treated harshly in these regions, they can face extreme persecution in triumphant hope

**4:13**—*but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.*

**4:16***—but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.*

**Hebrews 10:34-35***—For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.****35****Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.*

1. **The essence**

**1 Peter 1:1b***—…who are chosen*

1. Chosen (eklektos)—picked out, chosen

**Matthew 22:14**—*For many are called, but few are chosen.*

**2:9**—*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

* 1. That was true for Israel in the OT
  2. That is the pattern in the Scripture
  3. It is true of the NT saints

**Ephesians 1:11**—*also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,*

1. The chosen are expressions of the Father’s love for the Son
   1. All whom the Father gives, the Son receives
   2. The Son keeps them and raises them to eternal life

**John 5:21**—*For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.*

* 1. The Spirit regenerates and accomplishes the work of the new birth

1. Done by God’s sovereign purpose and grace

**2 Timothy 1:9**—*who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity*

1. **The source: the foreknowledge of God**

**1 Peter 1:2a***—according to the foreknowledge of God the Father*

1. Foreknowledge (*prognosis)*—forethought, pre-arrangement

**Romans 11:5**—*In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God’s gracious choice.*

**Ephesians 1:3-6**—*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,****4****just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love****5****He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,****6****to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.*

**Daniel 4:35**—“*All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’”*

**1 Timothy 5:21**—*I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality.*

1. His foreknowledge in choosing is independent of any person or circumstance
   1. It is not based on individual choice
   2. It is not based on individual (or collective) circumstances
   3. Chosen people are made up of the people chosen; but the source of the choosing is completely determined by God

**1 John 4:10**—*In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

**Isaiah 46:9-10***—“Remember the former things long past,  
For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me,* ***10****Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’*

1. Some believe “foreknowledge” here means knowing before in the sense that God, because of His omniscience, knows who will believe and then elects those that will otherwise make that choice on their own
   1. They likely come to such a conclusion because the notion that God would be “unfair” to suggest a choice without man’s consent
   2. It also is a desire to have man in some way have some contribution to their salvation
   3. That view is unscriptural for a number of reasons:
      1. It makes man sovereign in salvation and not God

**John 15:16**—*You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.*

(Cf. **Romans 9:6-13, 16**)

* + 1. It glorifies man by giving him credit for his own salvation vs all glory going to God

**Ephesians 2:8-9***—For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;****9****not as a result of works, so that no one may boast*

(Cf. **1 Cor 1:29, 31**)

* + 1. It assumes that man can seek after God

**Romans 3:11**—*There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God*

**Ephesians 2:1**—*And you were dead in your trespasses and sins*

(Cf. **Ps 14:1-3; 53:1-3**)

* 1. Additional reference to the word in **v20** for Christ’s crucifixion could not mean that God backed into the atonement because He saw that it was going to happen

**1:18-20**—knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, **19**but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood* of Christ. **20***For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you*

1. The foreknowledge of God involves a relational aspect of the elect

**Exodus 33:17**—*The Lord said to Moses, “I will also do this thing of which you have spoken; for you have found favor in My sight and I have known you by name.”*

**Isaiah 49:1-2**—[re: Christ the Servant] *Listen to Me, O islands, And pay attention, you peoples from afar. The Lord called Me from the womb; From the body of My mother He named Me.* ***2****He has made My mouth like a sharp sword, In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me; And He has also made Me a select arrow, He has hidden Me in His quiver.*

**Jeremiah 1:5**—“*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.”*

**Amos 3:2**—“*You only have I chosen among all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.”*

1. That knowledge isn’t simply knowing *about* someone, but His establishing an intimate relationship *with* someone
2. **The means: by the sanctifying work of the Spirit**

**1 Peter 1:2b***—… by the sanctifying work of the Spirit*

1. The sanctifying work of the Spirit in salvation provides:
   1. Faith (**Ephesians 2:8**)
   2. Repentance (**Acts 11:15-18**)
   3. Regeneration (**Titus 3:5**)
   4. Adoption (**Romans 8:16-17**)
2. The work of the Spirit then takes the elect and is realized at the moment of conversion
3. One could be elect and not yet saved
4. Thus election, the plan of God, becomes a reality in the life of the believer through salvation, the work of God, which the Holy Spirit carries out.[[1]](#footnote-1) – John MacArthur
5. Sanctifying work of the Spirit sets the believer apart from sin to God
   1. We are now separate from darkness to light
   2. We are now separate from unbelief to belief (faith)
   3. We are now separate from a love of sin to a love for righteousness, holiness, and the truth
   4. You are made new through the new birth

**John 3:3-8**—*Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”* ***4****Nicodemus \*said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?”****5****Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.****6****That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.****7****Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’****8****The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”*

**Colossians 2:13**—*When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,*

1. Peter identifies the same principle regarding the Gentiles at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15

**Acts 15:7-9***—After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe.****8****And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us;****9****and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.*

1. The nature of progressive sanctification
   1. After being set apart in the act of justification, God does an ongoing work of setting us apart more and more through sanctification

**Philippians 1:6**—*For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*

**Romans 12:1-2**—*Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.****2****And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

**2 Corinthians 7:1**—*Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

**2 Corinthians 3:18**—*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*

* 1. The culmination of God’s ultimate Goal is to shape us into the image of His Son completed in a glorified state

**Romans 8:29-30***—For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;****30****and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.*

1. **The purpose: to obey Jesus Christ**

**1 Peter 1:2c***—to obey Jesus Christ*

1. The work of the Spirit is done so as to obey Christ
2. He redeemed; we obey

**Ephesians 2:10***—For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

**Romans 1:5***—through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name’s sake,*

**Romans 6:17-18***—But thanks be to God that [*[l](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=rom%25206&version=NASB1995#fen-NASB1995-28086l)*]though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,****18****and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*

1. The evidence of salvation is demonstrated by our obedience

**1 John 2:3-5***—By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.****4****The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;****5****but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:*

**1 John 3:6-10, 24***—No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.****7****Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;****8****the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.****9****No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.****10****By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother….****24****The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.*

**1 John 5:2-3***—By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.****3****For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.*

1. **The eternal security: and be sprinkled with His blood**

**1 Peter 1:2d***—and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.*

1. The security for the believer (Cf. **John 6:37-40**)
2. The metaphor looks back at the OT sprinkling of blood on the people of Israel

(**Exodus 24:3-8;** Cf. **Hebrews 9:19-20; 12:24**)

1. The shed blood of Christ on our behalf acts like a seal to the new covenant

(**Exodus 24:8; Matthew 26:67-28**)

1. When believers are sprinkled with His blood, they enter into a covenant of obedience

(**Acts 5:31-32**)

1. **As a result: may grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure**

**1 Peter 1:2e***—May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.*

1. This is a salutation like many others in the NT

(**Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3; Galatians 1:3; Phil 1:2,** etc)

1. Peter is wishing these scattered aliens all the best that God can offer them and that it would continue to the fullest degree
2. These blessings of grace and peace come because they were God’s elect
3. Believers through all generations need to think of the blessed nature and advantages of being part of His chosen rather than denying or ignoring

**Conclusion**

The richness of God’s election will transform the daily life of the believer who genuinely understands its meaning and divine purpose. We are aliens chosen of God for His sovereign will. Our understanding of His gracious provision humbles us and motivates us to have grateful hearts and obedient lives knowing that His divine forgiveness is ours and the spiritual blessings and privileges He affords us give us hope for what is to come.

**Homework Assignment:** Read 1 Peter 1; Memorize 1 Peter 1:1-2

1. John MacArthur, the MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1 Peter, p21 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)