

for His sake (2:21-24). His blood, the currency of our redemption, was intended for that end before the world was made. Jesus was our substitute, reconciliation, and sin-offering (3:18). His Holy Spirit sets us apart to God (1:2), inspires his Word (1:11) and empowers those who preach it (1:12)

The church is the new Israel (2:9-10), a new temple being built up from its members into a spiritual house and being built upon Jesus, its foundation (2:4-8). This body of believers is entered by means of the new birth (1:23; 2:2) and has a destiny not dependent upon or connected with this present world (2:11). In another image, also from the Old Testament, the church is the flock of God-- guarded and cared for by its elders, undershepherds to the chief shepherd, Jesus (5:1-4).

In the last days will come the salvation of God (1:5) when Jesus will be revealed in all his glory (1:7; 4:13). The certainty of this event is to be the Christian's motivation to live a life characteristic of hope and perseverance (1:13-15; 4:7-11; 5:1, 4), even in the face (or midst) of trials and persecutions (4:7-19).

Questions:

Was Silvanus the Silas of the book of Acts? (the two names are identical in Greek)? Was Mark (5:13), Peter's "son," the John Mark of Acts?

Who were the souls in prison (3:19)? Does this imply a type of purgatory? How large a role did Silvanus, if he was a scribe, play in shaping the final product? How would proof of a major role affect our view of Petrine authorship?

Archaeology

First Peter was written to Christians in Asia Minor. The arrangement of the list of provinces in 1:1 has led some scholars to conclude that this was a circular letter, intended to be taken to the provinces in the order listed. The main reason for this theory is that Pontus and Bithynia are listed separately. When the Romans conquered the old city of Pontus (BC 63 or 67) they divided its territory, assigning about half to a new province called Bithynia et Pontus. The other part of the old Pontus was divided and redivided over the next several centuries, now assigned to a province with Cappadocia, now independent. The question thus becomes one of which province or region did Peter address? Like the North/South Galatian controversy, the answer does not affect the interpretation of the contents of 1 Peter. It is, however, an attempt to arrive at an ever more complete understanding of the world and circumstances of the Bible.

Only a few sites in Roman Galatia have been identified with any degree of certainty. Pessinus, modern Balhissar, has been plundered for building materials. Little remains. Gordium, modern Ankara, has yielded Roman baths, a temple of Augustus and Roma, and a column of Julian.