

# 1 Peter 5:11-14 Commentary

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Adapted from Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa's [Talk Thru the Bible \(borrow\)](#)

1 Peter 5:11 To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.(NASB: Lockman)

- Greek: [auto to kratos eis tous aionas; amen.](#)
- Amplified: To Him be the dominion (power, authority, rule) forever and ever. Amen (so be it). ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))
- KJV: To him [be] **glory** and dominion for ever **and ever**. Amen. (based on Textus Receptus which has "glory" and a second "ever" in the original Greek text)
- Phillips: All power is his for ever and ever, amen! ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))
- Wuest: To Him let there be ascribed this power forever and forever. Amen.

**TO HIM BE DOMINION FOREVER AND EVER: auto to kratos eis tous aionas, amen:**

- 1 Pe 4:11; Revelation 1:6; 5:13
- [1 Peter 5 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**To Him** (auto) Peter addresses this to the God of all grace (1 Pe 5:10) Who acts so generously and tenderly on behalf of His children. To Him and to Him Alone is all praise due! "Be" is not in the Greek but is supplied by the translators. The literal is even a more striking exclamation of heartfelt adoration

To Him the dominion into the ages

**Dominion** (2904) (**kratos**) means strength or might, especially manifested power, the power to rule or control or **dominion** (power to rule, supreme authority, sovereignty, the right to govern or rule or determine). **Krátos** denotes the presence and significance of force or strength rather than its exercise. It is the ability to exhibit or express resident strength. Most of the NT uses (10/12) are in references to God Almighty, and make the point that ultimate dominion belongs to God Alone.

Regarding the derivation of **krátos**, **Vine** writes that this word means "force, strength, might, more especially manifested power, is derived from a root **kra**—, to perfect, to complete: "creator" is probably connected. It also signifies dominion, and is so rendered frequently in doxologies." (Vine's Expository dictionary of Old and New Testament words)

**Gilbrant** - In the New Testament **kratos** always refers to "authority" above that of humans. One time it is connected with the devil (Hebrews 2:14 where the devil has the "power of death"); elsewhere it is related to God. In Acts 19:20 the growing power of the "word of God" is recognized, using the term **kratos**. Many times in the New Testament **kratos** is used in doxologies and is then sometimes translated "dominion" (1 Timothy 6:16; 1 Peter 5:11; Jude 25; Revelation 1:6). (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

**TDNT** - **Kratos** more closely related to *ischus* than *dunamis*, and thus denoting the presence and significance of force or strength rather than its exercise, is found in various areas of Gk. literature from the time of Homer. Its first meaning is (a). "**might**" or "**strength**" as a natural attribute, e.g., the physical strength which a man has, Hom. Il., 7, 142, or the toughness which constitutes the strength of iron, ad., 9, 393. A common expression is *κατὰ κράτος*, "powerfully," "impressively," "forcefully," esp. with military verbs, e.g., *αἰρεῖν κατὰ κράτος*, "to take by storm," Ditt. Or., 90, 26 (2nd cent. B.C.), P. Tebt., 27, 83 (2nd cent. B.C.), Ditt. Or., 654, 3 (1st cent. B.C.). We then find the sense b. of "power" which one has or attains, or with which one is invested; the power of the gods: *τοῦ γὰρ κράτος ἐστὶ μέγιστον* (of Zeus), Hom. Il., 2, 118, *ἐλθέ μοι θεᾶ θεῶν, κράτος ἔχουσα μέγιστον* (invocation of Isis). P. Leid. U., col. 2a, 17 (2nd cent. B.C.); or the power which the gods have given to men, esp. rulers: *ἀνθρώπων δεδώκασιν αὐτῷ ἱοὶ θεοὶ υἱεῖαν, νίκην, κράτος καὶ πάντα*, Rosetta stone, Ditt. Dr., 90, 35 (2nd cent. B.C.), *υἱεῖαν, [ν]ίκην, κράτος, σθένος, κυριεῖαν τῶν [υ]ποταγμένων οὐρανῶν χωρὶς [ν]*, P. Leid. G., 14 (1st cent. B.C.), in the Egyptian royal style: *ὡς ἥλιος ἔδωκεν τὸ κράτος*, Mitteis-Wilcken, I, 109, 10 f. (3rd cent. B.C.). In this sense it is used esp. of political power: *ἀρχὴ καὶ κράτος τυραννικόν*, Soph. Oed. Col., 373, *εἰς κράτος Πύμης*, Ditt. Syll.3, 1125, 5 (1st cent. B.C.). It also occurs in the plur., which is otherwise rare: *κράτη καὶ θρόνους*, Soph. Ant., 173. When applied politically, **κράτος** almost always denotes the legal and valid superior power which confers supremacy and legally, politically and physically turns the scale. In this connection we may note the compounds which denotes the various constitutional forms and political groupings: *ἀριστοκρατία* (since Hdt.), *δημοκρατία* (Xenoph.), *πλουτοκρατία* (Xenoph.); on *θεοκρατία* → 908. **κράτος** is riot prominent as a tt. in the vocabulary of the imperial cult (though it occurs in Test. Sol. 4:10 and 6:2: *τὸ σὸν κράτος* as a title, "thy royal majesty"). With a gen. it takes on the sense c. of "power" or "control over something," Hdt.; III, 69, *τὸ κράτος εἰς χεὶρ στρατηγῆς*, IX, 42, *κράτος ἔχειν ἐαυτοῦ*, Plat. Polit., 273a. Finally, it has also the sense d. of "supremacy," "victory," e.g., Hom. Il., 1, 509; 6, 387. It is not common as a tt. term in law (like → *κρατέω* and *κράτησις*), nor in the context of ancient ideas of power or of stories of healing. Divine or demonic beings are not described in terms of it. The predominant singular use—it bears a primarily comparative sense of "superiority"—mitigates against personification in a plurality of forces. It should also be noted that there are not many instances of its use in acclamations, which would be a step towards the adoption of the word in Christian doxologies. 2. In the LXX **κράτος** occurs some 50 times, though only in 20 cases in works which are also in the Heb. Canon. In the first instance it denotes natural "strength" or "might" such as is proper to man's hand (Dt. 8:17) or to man more generally (Job 21:23), or to the bow (Ps 75:3) or horse (Jdth. 6:3) or even the raging sea (Ps 88:9). (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament – Volume III)

See note by Wayne Barber on **kratos**.

**Kratos** -12x times in the NT = dominion, 6; might, 1; mightily, 1; mighty deeds, 1; power, 1; strength, 2. Lk. 1:51; Acts 19:20; Eph. 1:19; 6:10; Col. 1:11; 1Ti 6:16; Heb. 2:14; 1Pe 4:11; 5:11; Jude 1:25; Rev. 1:6; 5:13.

**Kratos** - 17x in the **Septuagint (Lxx)**- Gen. 49:24; Deut. 8:17; Jdg. 4:3; Ezr. 8:22; Job 12:16; 21:23; Ps. 59:9; 62:11; 76:3; 86:16; 89:9; 90:11; Prov. 27:24; Is 22:21; 40:26; Dan. 4:30; 11:1;

In the first NT use we see Mary praising her Lord ("The Magnificat" = the first word in the Latin translation) declaring that

He has done **mighty deeds** (krátos) with His arm. He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart. (Luke 1:51)

Wuest translates this as "He brought about **strength** with His arm".

Mary reflects on God's power in reversing certain social conditions (read Luke 1:52, 53)

Paul uses **krátos** in two prayers, praying for the Ephesians

that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His **power** (dunamis - inherent power available only to believers) toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the **working** (energeia - depicts the energizing force of the Spirit that empowers believers to live for the Lord) of the **strength** (krátos) of His **might** (ischus = carries idea of endowed power or ability, power as an endowment) 20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places." (see **notes** Ephesians 1:18; 1:19; 1:20)

**Wuest** paraphrases it

And what is the superabounding greatness of His inherent power to us who are believing ones as measured by the operative energy of the **manifested strength** of His might, which (might) was operative in the Christ when He raised Him out from among the dead (emphasizes the magnitude of the power) and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.

**Paul** prays that the Colossians might be

strengthened (present tense - continually, passive voice - from outside source = God) with all power (**dunamis** - inherent power), **according to** His glorious **might** (**kratos** - strength in action, manifested power, power that is put forth in action), for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience." (Col 1:11-note)

God's power is manifested in us through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. To live the supernatural life we need not mere human energy but supernatural strength, the power of the risen Son of God. Note that it is not "out of" but "**according to**" **His glorious might**. What's the difference? **Out of** speaks of a portion of His power. But **according to** speaks of proportion and God's power is infinite. The former speaks of a miserly giving, the latter of abundant, generous giving. The first is like a billionaire giving you a dollar, the latter of his giving proportionate to his great wealth.

In Col 1:11-note Paul is saying in effect "*With all power being empowered according to the might of His glory:*" Spiritual growth and maturity comes as we yield to God's power and permit Him to work in us. We usually think of God's glorious power being revealed in great feats of daring but the emphasis here is on God's power to effect one's Christian character. As most believers who have walked with the Lord for some time would agree, it is those inner victories in one's soul that are as great as God's more famous miracles (Red Sea, etc). Think about the victory David experienced over his temper when he was being cursed by Shimei. Surely this victory over a spiritual "giant" was no less of a personal victory for David than his triumph over the physical giant Goliath (see 2 Sa 16:5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13)

Paul exhorts the Ephesian saints

Finally, (present tense - continually, passive voice - His power not ours) be strong in the Lord (be empowered through your union with Him), and in the **strength** (krátos) of His might (ischus - indwelling strength, capability to function effectively) (that strength which His boundless might provides)." (Ephesians 6:10-note) (Comment: We can be strong in the Lord because as explained especially in chapter 1 regarding our position in Christ, believers are now one with Christ our Living Head, Who Himself is our life {Colossians 3:4 note}, our Way, and our Truth. If He is our life, His strength is our strength but does require that we humble ourselves and submit to His Lordship - see 2Cor 12:9-note, 2Cor 12:10-note, Philippians 4:13-note, 2 Timothy 2:1-note)

God's best soldiers are those who are conscious of their own weakness and ineffectiveness, and who rely solely on Him.

Five uses of **krátos** are found as part of a **doxology** (**doxa** - glory, praise + **logos** - word, utterance), a brief worshipful expression of praise to God, literally a "word of glory" or "utterance of praise". The fact that most NT doxologies are often found intimately associated with practical doctrine for living, suggests that believers should seek to live our everyday lives as a "doxology" to our God

and Father. The NT writers had also learned that praise is an important factor in achieving victory over discouragement and depression. Note how in the NT

theology leads to doxology. Biblical truth ignites hearts and enflames lives with a fervent, passionate love for God. The more truth about God one learns and personally applies, the more clearly he or she will see, submit to, and worship Him... A Word-filled church will be a worshipping church." (Lawson, Steven. Bibliotheca Sacra. Vol. 158, page 214. April-June, 2001)

Earlier discussing spiritual gifts, Peter wrote that

Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ (this is the goal of everything), to Whom belongs the glory and **dominion** (krátos - the definite article in the Greek marks krátos as a separate and distinct possession, rightfully belonging to Him) **forever and ever** (literally "unto the ages of the ages" = strengthened form of "forever" emphasizing the thought of eternity in the strongest way). **Amen** ("so let it be" = not a wish but a strong affirmation, placing a seal of approval on what has just been said)" (1 Peter 4:11-note)

God exercises krátos, the might and power in action, marking Him as the sovereign Ruler over all. Reason, gratitude, love, all utter their deep "Amen" to the declaration that God through Christ has endless glory and dominion.

## IOGD

**Barclay** comments that...The aim of everything is that God should be glorified. Preaching is not done to display the preacher but to bring men face to face with God. Service is rendered not to bring prestige to the giver but to turn men's thoughts to God. Selwyn reminds us that the motto of the great Benedictine Order of monks is four letters—IOGD—which stand for the Latin words **In Omnibus Glorificetur Deus** (in order that in all things God may be glorified). A new grace and glory would enter the Church, if all church people ceased doing things for themselves and did them for God." (W. Barclay. The Daily study Bible series, Rev. ed. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press)

**Paul** ends his first letter to **Timothy** with a beautiful doxology declaring that

He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, Who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal **dominion** (krátos)! Amen." (1 Ti 6:15-16)

In the Revelation, John concludes his doxology with the only proper response in light of the magnitude of the blessings Christ has given believers, declaring that

He has made us to be a kingdom (in which we enjoy His loving, gracious rule and almighty, sovereign protection), priests (believers have the privilege of direct access to the Father) to His God and Father; to Him be the glory and the **dominion** (krátos) forever and ever. Amen. (Rev 1:6-note)

All believers now live in the sphere of God's rule, a kingdom which was entered through the door of faith in Christ Jesus our Lord. As God's royal priests, we now have the privilege to speak forth the excellencies of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. And as we meditate on such amazing love for those so unlovely, we can only cry out that He is worthy of all the glory, honor, worship, and praise that we can heap upon Him. And He is worthy of **dominion** over our lives, the church, the world, and the entire universe. Does He really have dominion over my life or do I have one foot in the kingdom of this present evil world? We cannot serve two masters.

In Revelation we read that all believers will be among those who proclaim speak praise (doxology) to God, John recording that

every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." (see note [Revelation 5:13](#))

Jude records

to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, **dominion** (krátos here referring to the unchallenged sway which is His by sovereign right) and authority, before all time and now and forever (He was worthy of such praise in the past, He is worthy at the present time, and He will be worthy of it throughout eternity). Amen." (Jude 1:25)

One reference speaks of the power of the Word of God, Luke recording that as a result of the public renunciation of pagan practices "**powerfully** [krátos] was the word of God increasing and prevailing" in Ephesus (Young's Literal, Acts 19:20)

All the devil's forces of the occult and magic arrayed against the Word could not overpower it. The bold preaching of the gospel, the confirming miracles, the defeat of the exorcists, the resultant awe and respect for the name of Jesus, and the public repudiation of the magical arts demonstrated the invincible might of God's Word and provided a fertile environment in which it would grow. As someone has well said if Christians in America were to burn their trashy books and magazines, then perhaps we might see God's Holy Word would prevail in a much more powerful way in our secular culture.

There is one use of **krátos** referring to the devil, Hebrews recording that "Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the **power** of death, that is, the devil (Heb 2:14-note)

By conquering death, Jesus rendered Satan powerless against all who are saved. Satan's dominion over the human race was in the form of death. That dominion is now broken by the Cross of Jesus.

**Krátos** is used 16 times in the Septuagint (LXX - Greek of Hebrew OT). For example, Job although sorely afflicted was still able to praise God and declare that "with (God) are **strength** (LXX = krátos) and sound wisdom, the misled and the misleader belong to Him." (Job 12:16)

In one of the many majestic descriptions of Jehovah in Isaiah records "Lift up your eyes on high and see Who has created these stars. The One who leads forth their host by number. He calls them all by name. Because of the greatness of His might (LXX has "by the **power** [krátos] of His might) and the strength of His power not one of them is missing." (Is 40:26)

Nebuchadnezzar made a grave mistake in boasting "Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my **power** (LXX = krátos) and for the glory of my majesty?" (Da 4:30) God immediately removed "the might of his power" and drove him out into the beasts of the field to eat grass like the cattle.

**Forever** [and ever] (**aion**) is literally "into (eis) the ages". Note that the modern Greek manuscripts lack the second "aion" which is found in the Greek Textus Receptus ("aionas ton aionon") used for the KJV. In other words even though the NAS (NIV, RSV, NRSV, etc) uses a Greek manuscript that lacks the second "aion", the translators of most of these modern versions have chosen to translate this verse similar to the KJV ("for ever and ever")!

## Weymouth

To Him be all power unto the Ages of the Ages! Amen.

Below are all 43 uses of the glorious phrase "**forever and ever**" in the NASB.

Exod. 15:18; 1 Chr. 29:10; Neh. 9:5; Ps. 9:5; Ps. 10:16; Ps. 21:4; Ps. 45:6; Ps. 45:17; Ps. 48:14; Ps. 52:8; Ps. 104:5; Ps. 111:8; Ps. 119:44; Ps. 145:1; Ps. 145:2; Ps. 145:21; Ps. 148:6; Isa. 34:10; Jer. 7:7; Jer. 25:5; Dan. 2:20; Dan. 12:3; Mic. 4:5; Eph. 3:21; Phil. 4:20; 1 Tim. 1:17; 2 Tim. 4:18; Heb. 1:8; Heb. 13:21; 1 Pet. 4:11; 1 Pet. 5:11; Rev. 1:6; Rev. 4:9; Rev. 4:10; Rev. 5:13; Rev. 7:12; Rev. 10:6; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 14:11; Rev. 15:7; Rev. 19:3; Rev. 20:10; Rev. 22:5

From the beginning to the end, Scripture declares our God reigns in power forever and ever...

In Exodus Moses records that

Jehovah shall reign **forever and ever**. (Ex 15:18)

In Daniel we find a similar emphasis on the permanence of God's dominion, Daniel recording that

to Him (in context the "Son of Man", Christ Jesus) was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed... 18 'But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.' (Da 7:14-note ,Da 7:18-note)

In the **Revelation** we read that when

the seventh angel sounded and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign **forever and ever**." (Rev 11:15-note)

## Psalm 145

(A Psalm of Praise, of David.)

1 I will extol Thee, my God, O King;  
And I will bless Thy name forever and ever  
2 Every day I will bless Thee,  
And I will praise Thy name forever and ever  
3 Great is the LORD, and highly to be

**Spurgeon** observes that "Four times (David) says **I will**: praise is not to be discharged by proxy; there must be your very self in it, or there is nothing in it."

**1 Peter 5:12** Through Silvanus, our faithful brother (for so I regard him), I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it! ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [Dia Silouanou humin tou pistou adelphou. os logizomai.](#) (1SPMI) [di' oligon egrapsa.](#) (1SAAI) [parakalon](#) ([PAPMSN](#)) [kai epimarturon](#) ([PAPMSN](#)) [tauten einai](#) ([PAN](#)) [alethe charin tou theou: eis en stete.](#) (2PAAM)

**Amplified:** By Silvanus, a true (loyal, consistent, incorruptible) brother, as I consider him, I have written briefly to you, to counsel and urge and stimulate [you] and to declare [to you] that this is the true [account of the] grace (the undeserved favor) of God. Be steadfast and persevere in it. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**Phillips:** I am sending this short letter by Silvanus, whom I know to be a faithful brother, to stimulate your faith and assure you that the above words represent the true grace of God. See that you stand fast in that grace! ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** Through Silvanus, the faithful brother, which is my estimate of him, briefly I am writing to you, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God, in which stand.

**Young's Literal:** Through Silvanus, to you the faithful brother, as I reckon, through few words I did write, exhorting and testifying this to be the true grace of God in which ye have stood.

**THROUGH SILVANUS OUR FAITHFUL BROTHER: Dia Silouanou humin tou pistou adelphou:**

- **Silvanus** - 2 Corinthians 1:19; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1
- **Our faithful brother** - Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 1:7; 4:7,9
- [1 Peter 5 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## A TRUSTWORTHY BROTHER

**Silvanus** means "of the forest" and most authorities agree is the same as **Silas** ("woody", "person of the woods").

The following Scriptural biographical sketch deals with **Silas** also known as **Silvanus**, but it must be admitted that one cannot prove beyond doubt that the **Silvanus** mentioned by Peter is the same as the one who accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey.

We first encounter **Silas** in Acts, Luke recording that

it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas—Judas called Barsabbas, and **Silas**, leading men among the brethren" (Acts 15:22+)

In the **Antioch church** we read that

Judas and **Silas**, also being prophets themselves, encouraged (parakaleo - urged and warned and consoled and encouraged) and strengthened (episterizo - place upon, make to lean on, in context they spoke forth sound doctrine which caused the brethren to become firm and unchanging in their beliefs) the brethren with a lengthy message." (Acts 15:32+)

Shortly thereafter **Luke** records that



there arose such a sharp disagreement (paroxusmós = paroxysm = sudden violent emotion or action, the stirring up of anger, sharp contention, angry dispute) that (Paul and Barnabas) separated from one another and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. But Paul chose **Silas** and departed, being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord. And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, **strengthening** (episterizo - continually placing them firmly upon and so establishing) the churches." (Acts 15:39-41+)

Luke also informs us that Silas was a Roman citizen like Paul. (see Acts 16:36)

**Silas** was imprisoned and fastened in stocks with Paul at Philippi and

about midnight Paul and **Silas** were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's chains were unfastened." (Acts 16:25-26+)

**Silas** was with Paul in Thessalonica when

for three Sabbaths (Paul) reasoned with (the Jews in their synagogue) from the Scriptures, explaining and giving evidence that the Christ (Messiah) had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ." And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and **Silas**, along with a great multitude of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women." (Acts 17:2-4+)

Later after the Jews had formed a mob and set the city of Thessalonica in an uproar

the brethren (in Thessalonica) immediately sent Paul and **Silas** away by night to Berea; and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews" (Acts 17:10+)

Luke records that

when the Jews of Thessalonica found out that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul in Berea also, they came there likewise, agitating and stirring up the crowds. And then immediately the brethren sent Paul out to go as far as the sea; and **Silas** and Timothy remained there. Now those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens and receiving a command for **Silas** and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they departed." (Acts 17:13-15+)

It appears that they may not have caught up with him until reaching Corinth, Luke recording that

when **Silas** and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul began devoting himself completely to the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ". (Acts 18:5+).

It seems reasonable to deduce that the report from **Silas** and Timothy concerning the Thessalonian church prompted Paul to write two epistles, both of which also contain **Silvanus'** name (1 Th 1:1<sup>+</sup>, 2Th 1:1)

The last mention of **Silvanus** is in a letter from Paul written to Corinth from Ephesus in which he reminded the Corinthians that

the Son of God, Christ Jesus, Who was preached among you by us—by me and **Silvanus** and Timothy—was not yes and no, but is yes in Him." (2Cor 1:19)

**Vincent** notes that "**brother** has the definite article, **the faithful brother**, designating him as one well known for his fidelity." The expression, "**faithful brother**," makes it clear that Silvanus was not only a Christian believer, but a valued co-worker as well.

**Faithful** (4103) (**pistos**) (Click for detailed word study) describes **Silvanus** as trustworthy, dependable, reliable, loyal, manifesting steadfast allegiance, firmly adhering to the Word of truth -- certainly a worthy attribute for any servant of God.

As illustrated in the examples that follow, in the NT passages where **faithful** (pistos) describes a specific individual, **faithful** conveys the idea that the one so described could be relied upon for a particular mission or purpose. So by analogy, Peter's designation of **Silvanus** as **faithful** suggests that he too had been relied upon for some purpose. What purpose? While we cannot be certain, the consensus is that Silvanus was the bearer of Peter's epistle.

Paul underscores the importance of faithfulness, writing to the Corinthians to

Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the **mysteries** (that which was hidden and can be known only by divine revelation) of God. In this case, moreover, it is required of **stewards** ("trustees") that one be found **trustworthy** (pistos)." (1Cor 4:1)

A steward is entrusted with his master's household and possessions and without **faithfulness** he can ruin both. Paul declares not that a steward be eloquent or to have many gifts, but only that he be found **faithful**! Paul in the same chapter wrote the Corinthians that

I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and **faithful** (pistos) child in the Lord and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church." (1Cor 4:17)

A faithful steward is one who is continually

holding fast the **faithful** (pistos) word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict." (see note Titus 1:9)

Writing from prison Paul informs the Ephesian saints that in order that they

may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and **faithful** (pistos) minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you." (see note Ephesians 6:21)

Paul reiterates his appraisal of Tychicus writing to the Colossians that

as to all my affairs, Tychicus, our beloved brother and **faithful** (pistos) servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information. For I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts and with him Onesimus, our **faithful** (pistos) and beloved brother, who is one of your number. They will inform you about the whole situation here." (see note Colossians 4:7; 4:8; 4:9)

In Colossians we read about

Epaphras, (Paul's) beloved fellow bond-servant, who (was) a **faithful** (pistos) servant of Christ on our behalf" (see note Colossians 1:7)

The writer of Hebrews describes Jesus as

**faithful** (pistos) to Him Who appointed Him, as Moses also was (faithful) in all His house." (see note Hebrews 3:2)

Writing to Timothy Paul declared

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me **faithful** (pistos), putting me into service." ([1Ti 1:12](#))

Paul went on to instruct Timothy to pour himself into **faithful** (pistos) men writing

the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to **faithful** (pistos) men, who will be able to teach others also." (see note 2 Timothy 2:2)

## FOR SO I REGARD: **os logizomai** (1SPMI) :

- [1 Peter 5 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Regard** ([3049](#)) (**logizomai**) means to think about something in a detailed and logical manner. It means to put together with one's mind. The idea is to draw a logical conclusion after considering a given set of facts. **Logizomai** was a secular bookkeeping term which describes making an entry in the account book or calculating as when figuring an entry in a ledger. The purpose of the entry was to make a permanent record that could be consulted whenever needed. In a secular document we read the writer's instructions to "put down to one's account, let my revenues be placed on deposit at the storehouse; I now give orders generally with regard to all payments actually made or credited to the government."

This use of the verb **logizomai** does not imply that others have doubted the ability of Silvanus, but it emphasizes Peter's confidence in his fidelity.

Note that the KJV translation as **suppose** (logizomai) suggests that Peter was not sure of the character of Silvanus. But as emphasized above, the Greek word **logizomai** denotes a settled persuasion or assurance determined after rational consideration of the evidence. Peter's assessment of Silvanus is therefore essentially a recommendation. In short, Peter was fully assured concerning the trustworthy character and work of Silvanus.



**Robertson** translates **logizomai** "as I account him." - **Whom I regard** may be appropriately rendered as "whom I know to be" or "whom I am sure is."

**J R Michaels** writes that "The effect of **logizomai**, "whom I consider" (lit, "as I consider") is not to weaken Silvanus' credentials (as if to imply, "that's just my opinion") but to strengthen them. It is one of only four first person singular verbs in the entire epistle and as such it carries the personal authority of the apostle." (Michaels, J. R. Vol. 49: Word Biblical Commentary: 1Peter. Word Biblical Commentary. page 307. Dallas: Word, Inc)

#### I HAVE WRITTEN TO YOU BRIEFLY: di oligon egrapsa (1SAAI):

- Ephesians 3:3; Hebrews 13:22
- [1 Peter 5 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**I have written** (gráphō) means to inscribe characters on a surface.

**Written** (1125)(**grapho** from root **graph-** = primarily means to scratch on or engrave as on an ornament, reports, letters, etc; **English** = graph, graphic, etc) means to engrave or inscribe with a pen or stylus characters or letters on a surface which can be wood, wax, metal, leather, stone, parchment, dirt (John ), paper, etc.

**Vincent** notes that Peter here gives us "An example of what is known as the epistolary **aurist**. The writer regards the time of writing as his correspondent will do when he shall have received the letter. We say in a letter, I write. Paul, writing to Philemon, says anepempsa, I sent; since to Philemon the act of sending would be already past. Therefore in using this form of expression Peter does not refer to the second epistle, nor to another now lost, but to the present epistle." (Vincent, M. R. Word studies in the New Testament. Vol. 1, Page 3-673)

**Briefly** (di' oligon) means literally "through few" ("words" is implied) and the idea is that given the importance of the theme and all that he might have said to strengthen and encourage his readers in their sufferings, these are but a few words.

Peter's words are similar the phrase in Hebrews where the writer states

I urge you, brethren, bear with this **word of exhortation** (the writer's own description of his epistle), for I have written to you **briefly** (dia brachus - literally "through few"). (see note Hebrews 13:22)

**A T Robertson** (and many other conservative sources) comment that this section (1Pe 5:12-14) most probably represents a "postscript in Peter's own handwriting, (cf Paul in 2Th 3:17). If so, Silvanus (Silas) was the amanuensis (person whose employment is to write what another dictates) and the bearer of the Epistle.

#### EXHORTING AND TESTIFYING THAT THIS IS THE TRUE GRACE OF GOD: parakalon (PAPMSN) kai epimarturon (PAPMSN) tauten einai alehte charin tou theou:

- **Exhorting** - Heb 13:22; Jude 3
- **Testifying** - Jn 21:21; Acts 20:24; 1Jn 5:9,10; 3Jn 1:12
- **True grace of God** - Acts 20:24; 1Co 15:1; Gal 1:8,9; 2Pe 2:15

to make an appeal, and to bring testimony that this is true grace from God. For it you must stand!

Here we encounter two participles (end in "-ing") which are used to indicate the purpose of Peter's letter. Hiebert remarks that in this section we find

a pithy summary of the double thrust of the epistle" (Hiebert, D. E. 1 Peter. page 328. Moody)

**Exhorting** (3870) (**parakaleo** from **para** = side of + **kaléo** = call > the prefixed preposition **para** in this compound can convey the idea of to call urgently ) conveys the basic idea of calling one alongside to give help, strength or aid. Because a person can be called alongside for many purposes, the word has a wide range of meanings including to entreat, appeal to, summon, comfort, exhort, encourage, even admonish.

**Exhorting** or encouraging implies an earnest and persuasive address aimed at encouraging the readers to face their trials and may also include the thought of comforting and consoling, although the former meaning seems to be Peter's prime intent.

The **present tense** speaks of continuous activity. Sometimes **parakaleo** means convey the idea of comfort, sometimes of exhortation but always at the root there is the idea of enabling a person to meet some difficult situation with confidence and with gallantry.

One of the Greek historians uses **parakaleo** in a most interesting and suggestive way. There was a Greek regiment which had lost heart and was utterly dejected. The general sent a leader to talk to it to such purpose that courage was reborn and a body of dispirited men became fit again for heroic action. That is what **parakaleo** means.

In classic Greek **parakaleo** is used of exhorting troops who are about to go into battle. Peter was certainly addressing "good soldiers of Christ Jesus" who were in a spiritual battle (their "adversary, the devil") and experiences "various trials" of suffering. They were indeed in need of **parakaleo**.

**Parakaleo** was used of the defense counsel in a court of law and was the advocate who pleaded the cause of the accused.

**Barnes** adds that "No small part of the Epistle is taken up with exhortations." (Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible)

**Testifying** (1957) (**epimartureo** from **epí** = upon, an intensifier + **martureo** = witness) means to **attest further** (**attest** = affirm to be true or genuine; authenticate by signing as a witness, authenticate officially), **affirm** (implies conviction based on evidence, experience, or faith), to bear witness, to **corroborate** (support with evidence or authority: make more certain - this word suggests the strengthening of what is already partly established), to supply evidence that, to confirm that fact by evidence, to testify emphatically or to appear as a witness decidedly for something. The idea of **testify** is that one provides information about a person or an event concerning which the speaker has direct knowledge.

This verb is used only by Peter in the NT and emphasizes the idea of confirmation, the force being that Peter is "*earnestly testifying*" (**present tense** indicates continuous action)

**Barnes** comments that **testifying** or "**Bearing witness** (was) the main design of the office of the apostles was to bear witness to the truth, and Peter in this Epistle discharged that part of the functions of his office toward the scattered Christians of Asia Minor." (Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible)

**True** (227) (**alethes** from **a** = without + **letho**, older form of **lantháno** = be hid) is literally "not be hid" and thus that which is true, conforming to reality, unconcealed, manifest, in accordance with fact. (Ponder the derivation of this word a moment! God's grace is "not hidden" (i.e., "true")! **Alethes** is literally, "what can't be hidden!" Praise God His grace is not hidden, but in fact is revealed to us supremely in Christ of whom John says "of His fullness we have all received, and **grace** (piled) upon **grace**." (Jn 1:16+)

**Truth** basically means 'reality'; 'in truth' means 'according to being' or 'in reality' (that which may be seen in the open, as it is). Truth is the correct knowledge of reality .

**Grace** (5485) (**charis** from **chaírō** = to rejoice, be glad) usually signifies God's favor and kindness bestowed on those who do not deserve it and cannot earn it. If God dealt with us only according to truth, none of us would survive but He deals with us on the basis of grace and truth. Jesus Christ, in His life, death, and resurrection, met all the demands of the Law; now God is free to share fullness of grace with those who trust Christ. Grace without truth would be deceitful, and truth without grace would be condemning. The Law said "Do this and live." Grace says "Believe and live."

Humility is the only soil in which the **graces** root. The lack of humility is the sufficient explanation of every defect and failure. (Andrew Murray)

It is important to remember that it is

the word of His **grace**" that performs the work of His grace (Acts 14:26+).

**Grace** is God's provision that can transform trial into triumph and sorrow into joy.

Wuest adds that although **grace** is free, **grace** is not license to do as we please for

grace in the form of salvation is so adjusted that the one who receives it, turns from sin to serve the living God and live a holy life, for grace includes not only the bestowal of a righteousness, but the inward transformation consisting of the power of indwelling sin broken and the divine nature implanted, which liberates the believer from the compelling power of sin and makes him hate sin, love holiness, and gives him the power to obey the Word of God." (Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament : For the English reader. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans)

Whatever begins with **grace**, leads to **glory** as both Peter and the Psalmist teach -- Peter writes "The God of all **grace**... called you

to His eternal **glory** in Christ." (1 Pe 5:10)

The **psalmist** writes

For the LORD God is a sun and shield. The LORD gives **grace** and **glory**. No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly." (Ps 84:11) ([Spurgeon's note](#))

If there is a **true grace of God**, then there is also a "false grace of God". Jude for example warns us that there are false teachers who have crept into the church unnoticed, "ungodly persons (on the surface they look like the real thing) who turn the **grace of our God** into licentiousness." (Jude 1:4<sup>+</sup>)

They twist Christian liberty into license (saying grace permits one to live any way they please), and pervert freedom to serve into freedom to sin. Christian liberty is not a license to sin but an opportunity to serve and the power to obey.

The word **grace** is used in every chapter of 1 Peter 1:2, 10, 13; 2:19, 20 ("favor" in both verses); 1 Pe 3:7; 4:10; 5:5, 10, 12. **Grace** is God's generous favor to undeserving sinners and needy saints. It is only when we depend on the **grace of God** that we can glorify God in times of suffering. When we stand firm on **God's grace**, we can endure suffering and turn trials into triumphs.

**Jerry Bridges** helps give us a proper understanding of grace...

**Grace** stands in direct opposition to any supposed worthiness on our part. To say it another way: Grace and works are mutually exclusive. As Paul said in Romans 11:6, "And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace." Our relationship with God is based on either works or grace. There is never a works-plus-grace relationship with Him. Furthermore, grace does not first rescue us from the penalty of our sins, furnish us with some new spiritual abilities, and then leave us on our own to grow in spiritual maturity. Rather, as Paul said, "He who began a good work in you [by His grace] will [also by His grace] carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:6). John Newton captured this idea of the continuing work of grace in our lives when he wrote in the hymn "Amazing Grace," "Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home." The apostle Paul asks us today, as he asked the Galatian believers, "After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to obtain your goal by human effort?" (Galatians 3:3). (Transforming Grace: Living Confidently in God's Unfailing Love)

#### **STAND FIRM IN IT: eis en stete. (2PAAM):**

- Ro 5:2; 2Cor 1:24; 2Pe 1:12
- [1 Peter 5 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Eis** (preposition meaning **into** - not effectively translated in most English versions) and "en" (second preposition).

**Vincent** comments that "the preposition with the verb having **the pregnant force of entering into** and standing fast **in**." (Bolding added. Vincent, M. R. Word studies in the New Testament . Vol. 1, Page 3-673)

**Stand firm** (**histemi**), hold your ground, is in the **ao**rist tense, **active** voice, **imperative** mood (see aorist imperative = "Just Do It!") and therefore is a command to do this now, do it effectively and do it even with a sense of urgency. All of you (plural) **take your stand** in grace. Truly embrace it and profess it and abide in it. And remember that God's commandment always includes His enablement, for believers have the indwelling Spirit Who is continually energizing them to give them both the desire and the power to obey what please their Father in Heaven (cf Php 2:13NLT<sup>+</sup>)

**Stand firm** in grace by being in His word, obeying His word, repenting quickly and returning to your first Love. And in so doing you will not quench or grieve His Spirit, Who is your ultimate Source of power to stand firm!

#### **Related Resources:**

- [See discussion of the Need for the Holy Spirit to obey NT commands](#) (or "How to Keep All 1642 Commandments in the New Testament!")
- [Filled with His Spirit/Richly Indwelt with His Word](#) - Chart Comparing

**Matthew Henry** wisely notes that "A firm persuasion that we are in the true way to heaven will be the best motive to stand fast, and persevere therein." (and this is Peter bore witness to this truth even when confronted with threat of imprisonment)

This verb **histemi** was occasionally used in a military sense with the idea to hold a watch post or to stand and hold a critical position on a battlefield while under attack! (cf spiritual warfare implied by the "adversary, the devil... like a roaring lion" in preceding verses)

The intent of the exhortation here is not unlike that of our Lord to the embattled church at Thyatira, whom He commanded, **hold fast until I come** (Revelation 2:25 [note](#)).

**Constable** - Peter explained his purpose for writing this epistle. He wanted to exhort the readers to **stand firm in the faith** since suffering for the Savior is part of being a recipient of God's grace (1Pe 5:9). One of Peter's gifts was exhortation. God's grace is sufficient (2Cor 12:9)! The "true grace of God" may refer to the help that the readers would obtain from this letter." (Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible).

**Dave Roper** - You are in the Ark, remember? And though all the fury of Hell itself may break upon the Ark, you are secure. Far from destroying you, God will use everything that comes into your life -- the most adverse circumstance -- to accomplish in you the good thing he is after. He will conform you to the image of Jesus Christ. That is the **true grace of God**. That is God, giving himself freely to us. That is what **grace** is -- God's resources poured out to us." ([Dave Roper](#))

**1 Peter 5:13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark.**

**Greek:** [Aspazetai](#) (3SPMI) [humas e en Babyloni suneklekte kai Markos o huios mou.](#)

**Amplified:** She [your sister church here - {**NOTE NON-LITERAL INTERPRETATION!**}] in Babylon, [who is] elect (chosen) with [yourselves], sends you greetings, and [so does] my son (disciple) Mark. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**Phillips:** Your sister-church {**NOTE NON-LITERAL INTERPRETATION!**} here in "Babylon" sends you greetings, and so does my son Mark. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** The [church] {**NOTE NON-LITERAL INTERPRETATION!**} in Babylon, chosen out with you, sends greetings; also Mark, my son.

BGT 1 Peter 5:13 σπ ζεται μ ς ν Βαβυλ νι συνεκλεκτ κα Μ ρκος υ ς μου.

KJV 1 Peter 5:13 The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.

NET 1 Peter 5:13 The church {**NOTE NON-LITERAL INTERPRETATION!**} in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you, and so does Mark, my son.

CSB 1 Peter 5:13 The church {**NOTE NON-LITERAL INTERPRETATION!**} in Babylon, also chosen, sends you greetings, as does Mark, my son.

ESV 1 Peter 5:13 She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, my son.

NIV 1 Peter 5:13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark.

NLT 1 Peter 5:13 Your sister church h {**NOTE NON-LITERAL INTERPRETATION!**} here in Babylon sends you greetings, and so does my son Mark.

NRS 1 Peter 5:13 Your sister church {**NOTE NON-LITERAL INTERPRETATION!**} in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings; and so does my son Mark.

RSV 1 Peter 5:13 She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings; and so does my son Mark.

YLT 1 Peter 5:13 Salute you doth the assembly in Babylon jointly elected, and Markus my son.

GWN 1 Peter 5:13 Your sister church h {**NOTE NON-LITERAL INTERPRETATION!**} in Babylon, chosen by God, and my son Mark send you greetings.

NKJ 1 Peter 5:13 She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son.

NAB 1 Peter 5:13 The chosen one at Babylon sends you greeting, as does Mark, my son.

MIT 1 Peter 5:13 The co-select group in Babylon and Mark, my son, greet you.

NJB 1 Peter 5:13 Your sister in Babylon, who is with you among the chosen, sends you greetings; so does my son, Mark.

ASV 1 Peter 5:13 She that is in Babylon, elect together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Mark my son.

DBY 1 Peter 5:13 She that is elected with you in Babylon salutes you, and Marcus my son.

BBE 1 Peter 5:13 She who is in Babylon, who has a part with you in the purpose of God, sends you her love; and so does my son Mark.

NAS 1 Peter 5:13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark.

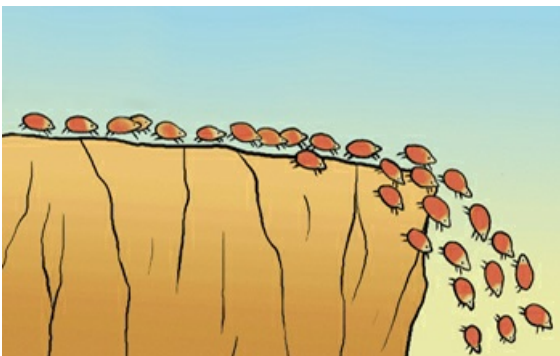
NIRV 1 Peter 5:13 The members of the church h **{NOTE NON-LITERAL INTERPRETATION!}** in Babylon send you their greetings. They were chosen together with you. Mark, my son in the faith, also sends you his greetings.

RWB 1 Peter 5:13 The church h **{NOTE NON-LITERAL INTERPRETATION!}** that is at Babylon, elected together with you, greeteth you; and so doth Mark my son.

WEB 1 Peter 5:13 The {church that is} h **{NOTE NON-LITERAL INTERPRETATION!}** at Babylon, elected together with {you}, saluteth you; and {so doth} Mark my son.

BYZ 1 Peter 5:13 σπ ζεται μ ς ν Βαβυλ νι συνεκλεκτ , κα Μ ρκος υ ς μου.

- Ps 87:4; Rev 17:5; 18:2
- **She** - 1Co 9:5 cf. Mk1:29, 30, 31, Mt 8:14
- [1 Peter 5 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



## THE ANCIENT CITY OF BABYLON

This verse illustrates the "[lemming effect](#)" depicted in the picture above. In other words many (? most) commentators seem to fall in line with the common understanding that God's word in this particular passage does not mean what it says but really means something else. Thus the moniker of "lemming effect." While I may be a rebel rodent (lemmings are rodents), I am a staunch literalist and can find nothing in the context that gives me license to shift to allegorize Babylon, so I have chosen to believe that Babylon means Babylon.

**She who is in Babylon** - NKJV, NIV, NASB, ASV, BBE (British), DARBY have "She who is in Babylon." I agree with the literalistic interpretation of **J Vernon McGee** says "I think "Babylon" here means Babylon, although some think it is a figurative name for Rome. Simon Peter is too practical to have used a figurative term. ([McGee, J V: Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

**She who** - Regarding **she A T Robertson's** comment is interesting "the co-elect woman," means Peter's wife [1Co 9:5] or the church in "Babylon." The natural way to take it is for Peter's wife." I like the last part of Robertson's comment and would add that if the plain sense makes good sense, then make no other sense out of it or it is non-sense!

**NET Note** says "the one in Babylon," which could refer to some individual woman ("**she who is in Babylon**") since the Greek article (here "the one") is feminine. But it is much more likely to be a veiled reference to a church (the Greek word "church" is also feminine in gender).(ED: I disagree! If the plain sense makes good sense, make no other sense or it is nonsense! If Peter had meant the church, there is a Greek word he could have used. There is no justification for not taking Peter literally as speaking to a literal

woman.)

#### Related Resource:

- [Rise of Allegorical Interpretation](#)

**In Babylon** - Peter says Babylon, a geographic location, so why not take him literally? The commentaries are "all over the ballpark" so to speak. Even **Charles Ryrie** who usually carefully avoids spiritualizing the prophetic passages in the NT makes a statement that amazes me, identifying Babylon as "The church in Rome, where Peter evidently was writing this letter." **Ryrie** usually a literalist for reasons unclear to me morphs into a spiritualistic interpreter on this passage. There is absolutely no contextual justification for calling **Babylon** anything but **Babylon**!

The respected expositor **Henry Alford** says "There is no reason whatever for regarding this any place but the Chaldean capital." (Amen!)

**Morris** who tends to interpret the Scripture literally comments in the Defender's Study Bible that "Babylon had a large Jewish population, and Peter had gone there to evangelize and make disciples among them since his special calling was to the Jews, as Paul's had been to the Gentiles (Gal 2:7). Some have speculated that Babylon was a mystical name for Rome, but no basis exists for this idea, with no indication that Peter had ever been there. Paul wrote a letter to Rome about this same time and had no hesitancy in calling the city by name (Ro 1:7)"

**William MacDonald** who is usually literal says "It is also impossible to know which **Babylon** is meant. It could be: (1) The famous city on the Euphrates, where there were many Jews; (2) The military station by the same name on the Nile (unlikely); (3) Rome. In Revelation, the city of Babylon is generally understood as referring to Rome (Rev 17:1-9; 18:10, 21). (Believer's Bible Commentary) (I disagree - It is not impossible to interpret unless you begin to spiritualize or allegorize the word! He is also incorrect on his comment on Revelation. If the apostle John had meant Rome, then why not use the literal name? Again, this shows the quagmire one can find themselves in when they begin to interpret one passage allegorically. Here MacDonald defends his allegorical interpretation with another allegorical interpretation, compounding his misinterpretation!).

I disagree with the **NET Note** - Most scholars understand Babylon here to be a figurative reference to Rome. Although in the OT the city of Babylon in Mesopotamia was the seat of tremendous power (2 Kgs 24-25 ; Isa 39; Jer 25), by the time of the NT what was left was an insignificant town, and there is no tradition in Christian history that Peter ever visited there. On the other hand, Christian tradition connects Peter with the church in Rome, and many interpreters think other references to Babylon in the NT refer to Rome as well (Rev 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). Thus it is likely Peter was referring to Rome here. (**COMMENT** - The diligent Acts 17:11+ Berean student needs to be very careful when using extra-biblical information to interpret the Bible. While such information may be helpful in some cases, in this case the interpretation rests primarily on tradition, and the fact remains that there is no evidence that definitively excludes the possibility that Peter was actually in Babylon and meant literal Babylon when he wrote Babylon! When we begin to interpret Scripture based on presuppositions, we are beginning to enter dangerous waters! We potentially open the door to interpreting any text allegorically that does not suit our fancy or our preconceived notion!)

Even one of my favorite expositors and surely one of the most literal interpreters of Scripture in my lifetime, John MacArthur, for some reason "goes off the reservation" (so to speak) favoring an allegorical interpretation of Rome rather than a literal interpretation - As noted in the Introduction, **Babylon** is possibly Peter's code word (ED: WHERE IN THE WORLD DID THIS IDEA COME FROM???) or alias for Rome (cf. Rev. 14:8 where John uses Babylon to represent the entire world system controlled by Antichrist; also see Rev 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). Some commentators suggest Babylon summarized Rome's link to false religions. But it may be better (ED: NOTE THE INDEFINITE VERBIAGE "MAY BE BETTER" WHICH INTRODUCES A DEGREE OF UNCERTAINTY IN THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT) to understand that with persecution intensifying, Peter was careful not to endanger the Roman Christians. Having written this letter from Rome, Peter did not want his manuscript discovered and the church to be persecuted even more (ED: THAT IS ADDING A LOT OF VERBIAGE TO THE "WHITE SPACE" OF THE TEXT!). Therefore he made no mention of Rome, leaving any curious and hostile authorities ignorant that this letter originated in their imperial capital. (ED: THIS IS IN THE REALM OF SPECULATION, AND IS AN APPROACH MACARTHUR GENERALLY ASSIDUOUSLY AVOIDS) (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – 1 Peter)

**Believer's Study Bible** ([Criswell, W A. Believer's Study Bible: New King James Version. 1991. Thomas Nelson](#)) interprets **Babylon** as the actual city rather than a spiritual or figurative allusion to the city of Rome and cites the following supporting evidence...

(1) There is no evidence that Rome was ever called Babylon until after the writing of the Book of Revelation in A.D. 90-96, many years after Peter's death.

(2) Peter's method and manner of writing are not apocalyptic. On the contrary, Peter is a man plain of speech,



almost blunt, who would not interject such a mystical allusion into his personal explanations and final salutation.

(3) Babylon is no more cryptic than Pontus, Asia, or the other places mentioned when Peter says the elect in Babylon send greetings to the Jews of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

(4) Babylon, no longer a great world capital in the time of Peter, was still inhabited by a colony of people, mostly Jews, many of whom Peter befriended and won to Christ.

(5) A study of the chronology of Peter's travels argues for Babylon to be the Babylon on the Euphrates. Such a study reveals these significant points:

(a) In A.D. 40, three years after Paul's conversion and subsequent travels into Arabia, Peter was still in Jerusalem. Around that time, he made his missionary journey through the western part of Judea to Lydda, Joppa, Caesarea, and back to Jerusalem (Acts 9-11).

(b) Imprisoned under Herod Agrippa I, he was miraculously delivered by the angel of the Lord (Acts 12). Peter was probably still in the vicinity of Palestine when Herod Agrippa I died (Acts 12:17, 20, 21, 22, 23). The date, according to Josephus, was the fourth year of the reign of Claudius, c. A.D. 45. In A.D. 54, soon after Paul visited Peter again in Jerusalem (Gal. 2), Peter returned the visit by going to Antioch where Paul was working and where the famous interview between the two occurred (Gal. 2:11, 12, 13, 14).

(c) From A.D. 54 to c. A.D. 60, Peter apparently made an extensive missionary journey (or journeys) throughout the Roman provinces of the East, taking his wife with him (1Co 9:5). During their travels in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, Peter and his wife remained in the Orient, never entering Rome. One can verify this by the last chapter of the epistle to the church at Rome, written c. A.D. 60, in which Paul salutes 27 persons, never mentioning Peter.

It would seem that Paul did not send him greetings simply because Peter neither was there nor ever had been. Those who hold that Peter governed a church at Rome must face the fact of Paul's omission of Peter's name. Had Peter been in Rome, the omission would have been a gross insult. Furthermore, it had been agreed at the Jerusalem Conference that Peter should go to the Jews and Paul to the Gentiles. The church at Rome was Gentile (Ro 1:13), and Paul was eager to go where no other apostle had been (Ro 15:20; 2 Cor 10:15, 16). Since he wrote his Roman epistle to the people at Rome, Paul's desire to witness to that city would be inexplicable had Peter been there at the time, or had he ever spent a number of years there. Neither while Paul was under Roman imprisonment from about A.D. 60 to 63, when he wrote four letters -- Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon -- nor shortly before his death, when he wrote his final letter to young Timothy, did he mention Peter. In his letters he mentioned many fellow Christians who were in Rome, but he stated clearly in 2 Ti 4:11 that only Luke was with him.

**Gilbrant** - What is the city called **Babylon** here? Some believe Peter was speaking symbolically of Rome. There are many testimonies from the early centuries of the Christian Era to the effect Peter visited Rome and was crucified there. St. Peter's basilica stands above the apostle's supposed burial spot. Our Roman Catholic friends especially hold to this view. Other scholars, however, believe Peter was writing from **Babylon** on the Euphrates. Though reduced from its former greatness, the city still had a large population in Peter's day, including many Jews. Since Peter was the apostle to the Jews, it is understandable that he should have journeyed to that city to preach Christ to them. He said this church at Babylon was "elected together with" them (suneklektē, chosen in company with, coelect in Christ) and "saluteth" them (aspazetai, greet). And so did "Mark my son," meaning John Mark, his son in the gospel. Early Christian writers state that after leaving his uncle Barnabas, Mark became helper to Peter under whose influence Mark wrote his Gospel. (Complete Biblical Library Commentary)

You will frequently read commentaries that say Peter was writing from Rome and was just using Babylon as a code word in 1Pe 5:13 "She who is in **Babylon**, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark." The first question is who is "**she**"? First, note that she is given a specific location, Babylon. The question is whether this refers to literal Babylon or is a "code word" for Rome. As an avowed literalist, I still take Babylon as the city of Babylon (for it was still in existence at this time). Secondly, she is chosen and thus is a genuine believer. In support of this "she" being Peter's wife read Mt 8:14 1 Cor 9:5 Mark 1:29-31, all of which support Peter as having a wife. Another literalist, **Dr Henry Morris**, writes "Babylon had a large Jewish population, and Peter had gone there to evangelize and make disciples among them since his special calling was to the Jews, as Paul's had been to the Gentiles (Galatians 2:7). **Some have speculated that Babylon was a mystical name for Rome, but no basis exists for this idea, with no indication that Peter had ever been there. Paul wrote a letter to Rome about this same time and had no hesitancy in calling the city by name** (Romans 1:7)." (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

**THOUGHT** - The differences in interpretation regarding the meaning of Babylon by good expositors is another

example of why **you must first do your own observations of every Biblical text**, so that you might hear from your ultimate Teacher, the Holy Spirit, for then you will be equipped to comment on the commentators, even those that are generally usually "spot on." Others who interpret the text literally as Babylon include Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, pp. 1463, 1484-85; A. C Gaebelein, 4:2:87; Kenneth Wuest, 2:4:132; McGee, 5:714; Charles H. Dyer, borrow [The Rise of Babylon \(read his comments\)](#), pp. 106-7.

**E. Schuyler English** in his conclusion to the question "[Was St. Peter Ever in Rome?](#)" writes - It is established firmly that Peter was in Jerusalem around A.D. 42 to 45 when he was imprisoned by Herod, and again in the year 49 at the council of the apostles; that he ministered among the Jews after that; and that he was in Babylon in about A.D. 65. He was executed under the Roman government in A.D. 67 (cf. 2 Pet. 1:13-14). John 21:18-19 points strongly to death by crucifixion. Probably it was under Nero. Perhaps it was in Rome. **Tradition concerning other facts of Peter's life and residence after A.D. 49 has not been substantiated conclusively and must, therefore, be judged with skepticism.** Simon Peter, who early in his discipleship had shown some cowardice, faced his coming death with equanimity. It is in keeping with his character that he should have requested that he be nailed to his cross head downwards. Recall the occasion when the Lord Jesus began to wash the feet of His disciples (John 13). When He came to Simon Peter the apostle said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet"; and when our Lord replied, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me," this impulsive and ever affectionate man exclaimed, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!" The apostle's hands were stretched and he was executed. In an instant he was with his Lord. And though here I am the one that indulges in speculation, I can imagine Peter saying, after a speechless moment: "Lord, it is good for us to be here."["Was St. Peter Ever in Rome?" Bibliotheca Sacra 124:496](#) (October-December 1967): (Bolding added for emphasis)

**Matthew Poole** writes that this refers to "Babylon in Chaldea, where it is most probable the apostle was at the writing of this Epistle; the Jews being very numerous in those parts, as having settled themselves there ever since the captivity, and Peter being an apostle of the circumcision, his work lay much thereabout." (Matthew Poole's Commentary on the New Testament)

Sources that do not favor "**Babylon**" as a place include the Ryrie Study Bible (alluded to above "The church in Rome"), the Disciple Study Bible ("Babylon stood for evil, so here it probably represents the church living in an evil location, possibly Rome"), the New Geneva study Bible ("Probably a reference to the church in Rome"), NET Bible notes (normally literal in their approach morph to a spiritualized interpretation - "it is likely Peter was referring to Rome here").

**A T Robertson** (Word Pictures) favors "**mystical**" Babylon, whatever that is. This is also the sense given by the **Early church fathers** so they make Babylon equate with Rome, as do a number of modern commentaries.

**Kenneth Wuest** says that "It would seem that he is referring to the **city of Babylon** itself: (ED: THIS IS VERY INTERESTING BECAUSE Wuest feels Babylon is used in a mystical sense in Revelation), **the other geographical illustrations undoubtedly are literal**, so **why would he change to a mystical meeting** Revelation was written after 1 Peter, wherever Rome is used in NT it is referred to by the literal name." Amen!

Here is the **Bible Knowledge Commentary** (Roger Raymer) - note words like "probably," "might be a disguised reference....," "suggest"... - Some scholars suggest that **she who is in Babylon** refers to Peter's wife (cf. [1 Cor. 9:5](#)). However, since Peter was writing to churches and said she is **chosen together with you**, probably "she" refers to the church (which is a feminine noun *ekklēsia*). If so, Peter was sending greetings from the church in "Babylon" to the churches in Asia Minor. According to historical evidence, Peter was in Rome during the final years of his life. "Babylon" here might be a disguised reference to Rome, used in order to protect both the Roman church and Peter from the Neronian persecution. (**Others suggest, however, that he wrote from the literal city of Babylon on the Euphrates River.**)

**What the Bible Teaches – 1 Peter through Jude** - She that is elected with [you] in Babylon" (JND) some have interpreted as Rome, but there is **only conjecture for that**. "There is not the slightest hint that Peter was ever at Rome before this, and from the late date of this epistle it is most unlikely that he was ever there afterwards" (F. W. Grant).

**Wayne Grudem** is very dogmatic - *Babylon* can hardly be the ancient city of Babylon in Mesopotamia which is prominent in the Old Testament, for by the first century it was a small and obscure place (see Introduction, p. 34) (**ED: SO AT LEAST GRUDEM ACKNOWLEDGES BABYLON WAS IN EXISTENCE!!!**), for which there is no evidence of a visit by Peter (or Mark: see the end of this verse), or even of a Christian church. (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries – 1 Peter) (ED: There is also no evidence in the Bible that Peter ever visited Rome! Grudem needs to read Charles H. Dyer, borrow [The Rise of Babylon \(read his comments\)](#), pp. 106-7)

**Warren Wiersbe** has a number of speculative comments - Peter indicated that he wrote this letter "at Babylon" (1 Peter 5:13) where

there was an assembly of believers. There is no evidence either from church history or tradition that Peter ministered in ancient **Babylon which, at that time, did have a large community of Jews.** (ED: THEN WHY PETER HAVE NOT MINISTERED THERE? JUST SPECULATING LIKE THE SPECULATORS!) There was another town called "Babylon" in Egypt, but we have no proof that Peter ever visited it. "Babylon" is probably another name for the city of Rome, and we do have reason to believe that Peter ministered in Rome and was probably martyred there. Rome is called "Babylon" in Revelation 17:5 and Rev 18:10. It was not unusual for persecuted believers during those days to write or speak in "code."

**Rod Mattoon** - The church (ED: NOTE MATTOON SPIRITUALIZES "SHE" LIKE MANY BUT ODDLY THEN SEEMS TO FAVOR A LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF BABYLON) at Babylon gave them greeting as well as Marcus or John Mark, who was a close friend of Peter. Some Bible scholars contend that Babylon is a reference to Rome. They claim that Peter used this coded name to protect the Christians that were in Rome from further persecution if this epistle was discovered by Roman authorities. Others contend that Babylon is a reference to Babylon on the Euphrates River. There are ample reasons why it is the actual Babylon. (Treasures from First Peter) (1Peter Commentary, page 330)

**Hiebert** - "In Babylon" has also been understood either literally or figuratively. Those who think of a literal city generally point to the noted city of Babylon on the Euphrates. Babylon in Egypt, a Roman military fortress located near the present city of Cairo, has also been mentioned. In support of the literal meaning, scholars argue that "other geographical references in First Peter are admittedly literal." (Guy N. Woods, A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles of Peter, John and Jude, p. 135.) and that "there is no reason to suppose that when this epistle was written the city of Rome was currently known among Christians as Babylon." (Kenneth S. Wuest, First Peter in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader,)

**Harold Marshall** in IVP commentary on 1Peter **"She who is in Babylon** must be the church in Rome (ED: WHY MUST IT BE? AGAIN THIS IS HIS BEST "GUESSIMATE" AND IS NOT BASED ON LITERAL INTERPRETATION) The affectation of personifying a congregation as a female figure was facilitated by the fact that "church" is a feminine noun in Greek and by the tradition that saw Israel as a female figure, the bride of God. Babylon is a pseudonym for Rome."

So Marshall totally **spiritualizes** that which can and should be read **literally**. It shows how much the spiritualized teaching on **"Babylon"** in Rev 17,18 has influenced various individuals. Many think that **Babylon** ceased to exist and will never arise again as a literal city and thus they feel that they are forced to spiritualize the teaching in the Revelation and here in 1 Peter. But Scripture clearly contradicts this long-standing assumption, even amongst otherwise usually literal evangelical, conservative resources. **As always it is amazing how much light the Scriptures will shed on the commentaries!** Observe the Biblical text alone diligently first so that you are not confused when you read divergent interpretations in the erudite commentaries. My experience is that we are all influenced by men that we have grown to respect as conservative, to the point that we will accept virtually anything they say without questioning and/or without doing our own careful inductive study!

Undoubtedly some of the confusion here relates to the KJV which is usually relatively literal in its translating, but in this case chooses to be a **commentary** rather than a **translation** - **"The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you"** Thus the KJV translators took the "interpretative liberty" to insert **"the church"** for **"She who"**. In the Greek the word ekklesia is NOT present so this is an erroneous interpretation. It does serve as a good reminder that no Bible translation is immune to interpretative bias which is why is always a good idea to check the Greek or Hebrew text to be sure they are accurately rendering the original inspired words!) Thankfully the **NKJV** corrects this addition reading exactly like the **NASB** translation.

Another translation "interprets" the Greek rather than translating it: **Today's English Version (TEV)** - "Your sister church in Babylon, {BABYLON: [As in the book of Revelation, this probably refers to Rome.]}"

A popular paraphrase **The Living Bible** is a bit more intellectually honest even though it also translates as "church"

The church here in Rome {literally, "She who is at Babylon is likewise chosen"; but Babylon was the Christian nickname for Rome, and the "she" is thought by many to be Peter's wife to whom reference is made in Mt 8:14; 1Co 9:5, etc. Others believe this should read: "Your sister church here in Babylon salutes you, and so does my son Mark."}-she is your sister in the Lord--sends you her greetings; so does my son Mark.

Even La Reina Valera has an interpretative translation: La iglesia (Church) que está en Babilonia

Note the older RSV's more literal accuracy - "She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen" but compare the New RSV's interpretative translation - Your sister church {Gk [She who is] } in Babylon." So much for the mantra that the newer translations are always more accurate!

**Chosen together with you, sends you greetings** - This would support Peter as referring to a person not to a church. The church is

composed of the elect but it is not itself referred to as "elect" (as far as I know - see related note by Hiebert below).

**Hiebert** comments that "**Chosen together with you**" (suneklektē), "co-elect," echoes the description of the readers as "God's elect" in 1 Peter 1:1 (1Pe 2:10). The greeting is sent from her who is "co-elect," not with Peter, but with the readers, chosen with them to be members of the brotherhood of believers. It is a closing reference to the reality of the divine initiative in human salvation."

**Chosen together** (4899)(**sunekletos** from **sun** = together + **eklektos** = chosen) literally means chosen together with and is used only here in the NT. The idea is that one is of the same status of another of being chosen.

**Zodhiates** - suneklektós; fem. suneklektḗ, neut. suneklektón, adj. from sún (4862), together, together with, and eklektós (1588), elect, chosen. Chosen with others; as a subst. fellow elect (1 Pet. 5:13). **There are some who consider suneklektē to be a reference to the wife of Peter.**

**Sends you greetings** (782)(**aspazomai** from **a** + **spao** = draw out as a sword, pull, breathe) means to enfold in arms, to welcome, to embrace. To salute one (not in a military sense), greet, bid, wish well to. In classical literature aspazomai can also be used of physical expressions of welcome, such as "embrace" and "kiss."

**And so does my son, Mark** - This is most likely a reference to John Mark (Acts 12:12; 13:5; 15:36-39). Strong early church tradition in the testimony of Papias links Mark's Gospel to the central truths emphasized by Peter in his ministry. The writer of the second Gospel has been referred to as an "interpreter of Peter."

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**Hiebert** has an interesting note on "**chosen lady**" in 2 John 1:1 that some say refers to the "elect church." - The second epistle is addressed to "**the elect (chosen) lady and her children**." The exact meaning of this address is enigmatic and has given rise to varied interpretations. The problem that it presents puzzles the scholars. Westcott concludes that "the problem of the address is insoluble with our present knowledge." The diversity of interpretations is by no means of modern origin. These interpretations fall into two general groups. The question is whether the words "**elect lady**" (eklektḗ kuria) are to be taken figuratively or literally.

Those interpreters who accept the figurative meaning divide into two groups. One view, as old as Jerome, is that this is a catholic epistle addressed to the Church as a whole under the figure of a lady. This view is untenable. It was not addressed to all Christians, for the author knows to whom he is writing and has intimate knowledge of their circumstances. Furthermore, then the reference in verse 13 to her sister is meaningless.

The view of many commentators is that the "**elect lady**" means a local church. Guesses as to the identity of this local church have included Corinth, Philadelphia, Jerusalem, Ephesus, and Babylon. It was this figurative interpretation which encouraged many early writers to consider the epistle as worthy of a place in the canon. But there is nothing in the epistle which suggests this allegorical meaning for the address. In a highly figurative writing such an interpretation might be fully justified, but the epistle gives no hint of any figurative interpretation being intended. Rather, "the simplicity of the little letter precludes the possibility of so elaborate an allegory, while the tenderness of its tone stamps it as a personal communication." Further, to make the "elect lady" mean a local church and her children the members of that church is to eliminate the distinction made between the lady and her children; then the two are identical. Also, there is no other instance in the New Testament where a church is addressed in such a figurative manner.

**It seems much more natural to take the simple words of the epistle to refer to an actual lady and her children.** This view is favored by the simplicity of the letter, the reference to the children of the elect lady (2 John 1:1, 4), the mention of her sister (2 John 1:13), the reference to the elect lady's house (10), as well as the analogy of the third epistle, which certainly is addressed to an individual. It is interesting to notice that the formula of address in both epistles is exactly the same. We conclude the epistle may have been addressed to a church but we do not think it probable. We agree with Farrar when he says, "Certainly the prima facie impression created by the words would be that they refer to a lady."

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**Dr Andy Woods** discusses the interpretation of 1 Peter 5:13 that Babylon actually means "Rome." He writes that "the assumption of Rome advocates (**ED: THOSE WHO INTERPRET THE 6 USES OF "BABYLON" IN THE REVELATION AS A "CODE WORD" FOR ROME**) that the early Christians commonly used the name **Babylon** for Rome is built around two pieces of evidence. These two pieces of evidence include Peter's mention of Babylon as his place of writing in 1 Peter 5:13 and references in extra biblical literature equating Rome with Babylon.

Regarding 1 Peter 5:13, Rome advocates cite several reasons to support the conclusion that Peter was speaking of Rome rather than literal Babylon in 1 Peter 5:13.115 (FOR FOOTNOTES SEE [HERE](#))

First, tradition places Peter in Rome at the end of his life.116

Second, according to 1 Peter 5:13, one of Peter's companions was Mark. Mark was with Paul during his first Roman imprisonment

(Col 4:10; Phlm 22-23) and may have accompanied Timothy to Rome for the second incarceration (2 Tim 4:11). Therefore, it is more rational to assume that Peter and Mark got together in Rome rather than in Babylon.

Third, Peter and Mark are never associated with the literal city of Babylon. No where in Scripture or in extra biblical Christian material does one find a reference to Peter or Mark visiting Babylon.<sup>117</sup> Fourth, a consultation with a map demonstrates that the letter must have been sent from the West or Rome because of the order in which the names or provinces appear.

Fifth, Scripture depicts Peter's ministry moving northward from Canaan to Syrian Antioch (Gal 2:11) and then Westward to Corinth (1 Cor 1:12) in the direction of Rome.

Sixth, there was no reason for Peter to visit Babylon. Because of the Babylonian Captivity, a large number of Jews continued to reside in the East. However, in the last years of Caligula's life (Caligula died in A.D. 41), there was a persecution of the Jews in Babylon. Consequently, many of these Jews migrated to Selucia. Five years later a plague diminished their number further.<sup>118</sup> Thus, historians of the day referred to Babylon as uninhabited, declining, and deserted.<sup>119</sup>

Seventh, because Peter uses figurative language elsewhere (1 Peter 1:2, 13; 2:4), it is likely that he is also employing figurative language in 1 Peter 5:13. Perhaps Peter refers to Babylon figuratively in this verse in order to build upon the exile motif that he has been using throughout the epistle.

Eighth, because other cities are used in a figurative sense elsewhere in Scripture (Gal 4:25; Rev 11:8), Peter is probably referring to the city of Babylon figuratively here as well.

Ninth, the majority of New Testament scholars believe that Peter is referring to Rome in 1Pe. 5:13. Thus, Peter was obviously speaking figuratively of Rome through his use of the term Babylon in 1 Peter 5:13.....

#### (THEN WOODS REFUTES THE ARGUMENTS FOR INTERPRETING BABYLON ALLEGORICALLY AS ROME)

Furthermore, it is also debatable that the Christians of John's day commonly used Rome as a code for Babylon. The evidence favoring such a code is built upon certain assumptions that may or may not be true. For example, it is possible that Peter is referring to literal Babylon in 1 Peter 5:13 rather than Rome. A straightforward reading of the text would lead readers to this conclusion.<sup>154</sup> According to Alford, "...we are not to find an allegorical meaning in a proper name thus simply used in the midst of simple and matter-of-fact sayings."<sup>155</sup> According to Gromacki:

There is no reason to suspect that Peter asserted a symbolic name into a non-symbolic context. The normal reading of the passage would cause the reader to think of the literal reading on the Euphrates.<sup>156</sup>

Moule argues that that the epistle contains nothing that requires the use of such a code.<sup>157</sup>

In addition, if one interprets the geographic areas in the greeting section of the letter literally (1Pe 1:1), then consistency seems to dictate that the geographic area mentioned in the conclusion of the epistle (1Pe 5:13) deserves the same literal interpretation. A literal interpretation of Babylon becomes even more compelling to the extent that it is recognized that 1 Peter was written to a predominantly Jewish audience. His use of the word "diaspora" in 1Pe 1:1 always refers to Jews in all of its New Testament (John 7:35; James 1:1) and LXX (Deut 28:25; 30:4; Isa 49:6; Ps 174:2; 2 Macc 1:27) uses. If Babylon refers to Babylon in all of its Old Testament uses, why would 1 Peter 5:13 be the exception considering Peter's Jewish audience?

Although Peter does use figurative language in other sections of his letter, this fact does not automatically lead to the conclusion that Peter is employing figurative language in 5:13. Each use of figurative language must be proven from its immediate context rather than how the author employs figurative meaning in a remote context. In addition, it is difficult to argue that 1 Peter 5:13 is describing a figurative city just as cities are used in a non-literal fashion in Galatians 4:24-25 and Revelation 11:8. In Galatians 4:24-25, the text itself uses the word "allegorically" to explain that the city of Jerusalem is being figuratively used of Hagar, Mount Sinai, and the Old Covenant. Similarly, Revelation 11:8 uses the word "spiritually" to demonstrate that Jerusalem is being used figuratively of Sodom and Egypt. However, no similar designations are specified regarding the city of Babylon in 1 Peter 5:13. Although the majority of scholars believe that Peter was referring to Rome in 1 Peter 5:13 rather than literal Babylon, it is interesting to note that many prominent interpreters throughout church history have held to the literal Babylon interpretation. These prominent interpreters include Erasmus, Calvin, Hort, Gregory, Alford, Mayor, Moorehead, and Thiessen.<sup>158</sup>

While it is true that there is no evidence outside of the epistle of Peter's visit to Babylon, there is no evidence to contradict it either.<sup>159</sup> There may be evidence testifying to Peter's visit to Babylon that we are not yet aware of.<sup>160</sup> Moreover, Babylon would have been a logical place for Peter to visit. Because of the Babylonian Captivity, a large number of Jews continued to reside in that area. Not only did the Magi come from that region (Matt 2:2), but pilgrims from Mesopotamia also came to hear Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:9).<sup>161</sup> The persecution of the Jews in Babylon and subsequent plague does not preclude their increase in number and return to Babylon during the twenty years that intervened in between these events and the writing of Peter's

epistle.<sup>162</sup> In fact, Fruchtenbaum argues that at the time Peter's epistle was written, Babylonia had the largest concentration of Jews living outside the land. Moreover, Babylon was also the center of Judaism outside the land. The Babylonian Talmud would later be developed from this area. Because Peter was the apostle to the circumcised (Gal 2:8), it would have been a logical place for him to travel. Understanding Babylon as the place of writing of Peter's epistle might also explain the heavy Jewishness of the letter.<sup>163</sup>

As previously mentioned, the notion that Babylon was a code word that early Christians used to disguise their reference to Rome is not only built upon Peter's use of Babylon in 1 Peter 5:13 but also upon the Sibylline Oracles (V. 143, 159-60, 434) and the Apocalypse of Baruch (10:1-3; 11:1; 67:7), which both use Babylon as a code name for Rome. However, the hypothesis that such a practice was common in John's day is only workable to the extent that these writings were composed during the time period when John wrote. This assumption is not necessarily true.

Klijn dates the Apocalypse of Baruch in the second century.<sup>164</sup> Although Collins appears to lean towards a first century dating of Book 5 of the Sibylline Oracles, he remains open to the suggestion that the Sibylline Oracles as a whole can be dated in the early years of the second century.<sup>165</sup> Kreitzer accepts the reign of Hadrian (A.D. 117-138) as a date for the composition of Sibylline Oracles 5.<sup>166</sup> Thomas dates both the Apocalypse of Baruch and the Sibylline Oracles in the second century noting that they were composed quite a while after John wrote Revelation.<sup>167</sup> Interestingly, Thomas also indicates that Tertullian late in the second century is the first church father to use Babylon as a name for Rome.<sup>168</sup>

Because all of these writings may have been composed after John's era, their use of Babylon as a code for Rome only proves that such a practice came into existence after John wrote Revelation. Therefore, because this practice may have come into prominence after his era, it is difficult to dogmatically say that John was employing this practice when he mentioned Babylon in Revelation 17-18.

**In sum, given the notions that Peter could have been referring to literal Babylon in 1 Peter 5:13 and that the extra biblical Christian writings using Babylon as a code word for Rome may have been composed long after John wrote the Apocalypse, it is difficult to dogmatically assert that John was employing the well entrenched practice of his day that Babylon refers to Rome when he wrote Revelation 17-18.** (Excerpt from [What is the Identity of Babylon in Revelation 17-18](#))

**1 Peter 5:14 Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace be to you all who are in Christ.**

**Greek:** [aspasasthe](#) (3SPMI) [allelous en philemati agapes](#). [eirene humin pasin tois en Christo](#)

**Amplified:** Salute one another with a kiss of love [the symbol of mutual affection]. To all of you that are in Christ Jesus (the Messiah), may there be peace (every kind of peace and blessing, especially peace with God, and freedom from fears, agitating passions, and moral conflicts). Amen (so be it). ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**Phillips:** Give each other a handshake all round as a sign of love. Peace be to all true Christians. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace be with you all who are in Christ.

**Young's Literal:** Salute ye one another in a kiss of love; peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus! Amen.

**GREET ONE ANOTHER WITH A KISS OF LOVE: [aspasasthe](#) (3SPMI) [allelous en philemati agapes](#):**

- **With a kiss of love** - Romans 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2Cor 13:12; 1 Th 5:26
- [1 Peter 5 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## A HOLY KISS

**Kiss of love** - a holy kiss is mentioned in (Ro 16:16+; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; see 1 Th 5:26+) but here Peter qualifies it as **a kiss of love**. Here is where one needs to keep the cultural context in mind and be aware that men kissed the men and women kissed the women in Paul's day as form of greeting or farewell.

**McGee** quips that "Someone has said, "A kiss to a young girl is hope, to a married woman is faith, but to an old maid is charity." In our country and culture, I think we had better just use the handshake as the means of Christian greeting. ([McGee, J V: Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

**Marshall** adds that "The kiss was a greeting sign of brotherly affection used by the Jews and practiced also among the disciples of



Jesus. (The traitorous kiss of Judas was unusual not in that Judas kissed Jesus but rather in that he turned an accepted sign of affection into a means of betrayal.) The kiss was not associated with erotic desire." (1 Peter. The IVP New Testament commentary series Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.)

## PEACE [BE] TO YOU ALL WHO ARE IN CHRIST: Eirene humin pasin tois en Christo:

- **Peace** - 1 Pe 1:2; Jn 14:27; 16:33; 20:19,26; Ro 1:7; Ep 6:23
- **All who are in Christ** - Ro 8:1; 1Cor 1:30; 2Cor 5:17
- [1 Peter 5 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PEACE OF CHRIST PEACE WITH GOD

**Peace** ([1515](#))(**eirene** from verb **eiro** = to join or bind together that which has been separated) literally pictures the binding or joining together again of that which had been separated or divided and thus setting at one again, a meaning conveyed by the common expression of one "having it all together". It follows that **peace** is the opposite of division or dissension. **Peace** as a state of concord and harmony is the opposite of war. Peace was used as a greeting or farewell corresponding to the Hebrew word [shalom](#) - "peace to you".

**Peace** floods our soul when Christ rules our heart! **Eirene** is associated closely with the Messiah, the Source of all peace, the One Who is Himself Peace. In that sense, there will be no universal peace until the Prince of peace appears.

The source of true peace with God is found only **"in Christ"** (Ro 5:1<sup>+</sup>). Know Christ, know peace. No Christ, no peace!

**Alexander Maclaren** adds that "Peace comes not from the absence of trouble, but from the presence of God. (**Ed**: In other words **peace** is not just a truth [which it is] but is ultimately a **Person**, Christ Jesus - [cp Jn 14:27, note especially the phrase "in Me" in Jn 16:33!, cp Ro 1:7<sup>+</sup>].)

**A REAL LIFE ILLUSTRATION OF "PEACE"** - Jim Walton was translating the NT for the Muinane people of La Sabana in the jungles of Colombia. But he was having trouble with the word **peace**. During this time, Fernando, the village chief, was promised a 20-minute plane ride to a location that would have taken him 3 days to travel by walking. The plane was delayed in arriving at La Sabana, so Fernando departed on foot. When the plane finally came, a runner took off to bring Fernando back. But by the time he had returned, the plane had left. Fernando was livid because of the mix-up. He went to Jim and launched into an angry tirade. Fortunately, Walton had taped the chief's diatribe. When he later translated it, he discovered that the chief kept repeating the phrase, *"I don't have one heart."* Jim asked other villagers what having *"one heart"* meant, and he found that it was like saying, *"There is nothing between you and the other person."* That, Walton realized, was just what he needed to translate the word **peace**. To have **peace** with God means that there is nothing--no sin, no guilt, no condemnation--that separates us. And that **peace** with God is possible only through Christ (Ro 5:1<sup>+</sup>). Do you have "one heart" with God today?

### Related Resource:

- See discussion of **in Christ** and **in Christ Jesus**

**All who are in Christ** - A description of every believer, for all by grace through faith are eternally safe and secure in the "Ark" (Christ).

It is interesting to note that Paul always ended his letters with a benediction of grace but here Peter closed his letter with a blessing of peace, just as he had opened the letter (1 Peter 1:2<sup>+</sup>). It's as if he wants to emphasize from beginning to end that despite the fact that his readers will be sorely tested and experiencing even "fiery" trials, they could know that the peace of God was always available to them. And beloved, His peace is in the same way always accessible to you as you stand in the blazing furnace of an unexpected trial or walk through the valley of the shadow of death.