

One of best definitions of ungodliness is identical to mental disease—we are out of touch with what makes us human. Remember, the best of us as human is our theological DNA; when that theological DNA is shredded by our biological and social DNA, we become diseased by chaos. Divorce, adultery, persecution, betrayal, death, gossip—all of these shred the precious DNA given by the Lord God Jehovah. Remember, we are indeed created in Their image.

A QUESTION TO GET YOU THINKING:

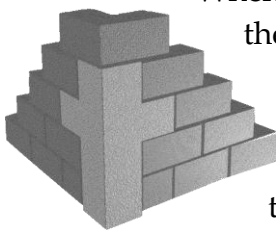
WHAT IS THE GREATEST THREAT TO OUR THEOLOGICAL DNA?

When our theological DNA is strengthened by God's grace—when we come to terms with the reality we are God's creatures, and our singular purpose on earth, we look at suffering very differently. Peter helps us prepare for that singularity, that warp in the consciousness, that time-bending, mind-warping, soul-searching time at the end of our time on earth.

KEY ISSUES

1 Peter 2:1-10 —Peter encourages us to eliminate evil intent, deceitful means, false righteousness, envy, and slander of any kind. In contrast, we are to be like newborns—craving spiritual food so we can grow up within our soteriologically enriched life. Once you have tasted the Lord, you know what is truly good.

When you come to understand the Christ, He becomes a living Stone—yes, rejected by people, but chosen as the precious One by Father God. So you too are living stones, being used by the Tekton into a living spiritual house; you are a sanctified priesthood—you offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus the Christ.⁹ The Stone laid is precious and will never shame the one who trusts in the Stone, even though is a stumbling block for some and rejected by others. People stumble because they disobey, just as God intended. But us?



1 PETER 2:1-10

Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. ²Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, ³now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

⁴As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—⁵you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." [Isaiah 28:16]

⁷Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone, [or *cornerstone*]" [Psalm 118:22]

⁸and, "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." [Isaiah 8:14]

They stumble because they disobey the message--which is also what they were destined for.

⁹But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

⁹Romans 12:1 describes this living sacrifice: "... in view of God's mercy, ... offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship."

We are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation who belong to God, and God alone. We were created to “declare the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His wonderful light.” Yes, once we were not a people, but now we are people of God. Once we did not have mercy, but now we have received mercy! Therefore ...

- Q 2 Why do many people not crave the spiritual food they need to grow up in their salvation? Have they not tasted the Lord?
- Q 8 Why do people stumble over the Stone?
- Q 9 What makes believers different? Who did this? Why?
- Q 10 What makes a people a people? What does mercy do that nothing else does to “make a people?”

1 Peter 2:11-25

—Now here's how you should respond to being "made a people." First, remember you are aliens and strangers, so abstain from your sinful desires. They not only war against your soul, they make you appear as if you were not an alien or stranger. In fact, you are to live among the goyim (εθνεσιν) so that they will observe over the long term your good deeds and glorify the Lord God when He returns. Therefore, ...

1. Submit yourselves (for the Lord's sake) to every authority instituted among men (even power-hungry cops and corrupt politicians), at all levels.
2. Live as free, for you are; free to live as servants of God.
3. Show proper respect to everyone.
4. Love the brotherhood of believers.
5. Just as you fear God, honor the king.

If a slave, submit to your master; if an employee, do what the boss says. Obey respectfully, not just with the considerate master/boss, but also with the harsh boss. It is commendable to bear up under such harshness because you remember "for Whom you really work." What's the big deal it you receive punishment for sloppy work? But, if you suffer for doing good work, now that's what you were called to do. Christ suffered for you; He left you an example. Follow it.

Christ did not retaliate against their insults; when He suffered, He made no threats—in fact, He prayed that Father God would forgive us because we were too spiritually stupid to know what we were doing. Instead, my Christ entrusted Him-

self to the One who judges justly. He bore our sins εν¹⁰ His body on the tree so we might die to sin and live for righteousness. By His wounds we have been healed. We were like sheep gone astray, each of us turned to our own way. And Yahweh laid on Christ the iniquity of us all. But now? We have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of our very essence, our souls!!! May God be praised!

- Q Why are we to honor the king, even the corrupt king?
- Q Why are we to submit to our bosses, even the harsh bosses?
- Q For Whom do you really work?
- Q Why didn't Christ retaliate against the insults, lies, and threats?
- Q What was the purpose of Christ bearing our sins εν His body?

¹⁰It does not say "on" nor "by" or "with." The Scripture says εν. I am weeping as I note this.

1 PETER 2:11-25

Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. ¹²Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

¹³Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. ¹⁵For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men.

¹⁶Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. ¹⁷Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.

¹⁸Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. ¹⁹For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. ²⁰But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. ²¹To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

²²"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." [Isaiah 53:9]

²³When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.