

NEW TESTAMENT ESSAYS

STUDIES IN MEMORY OF
Thomas Walter Manson
1893-1958

sponsored by
PUPILS, COLLEAGUES
AND FRIENDS

edited by
A. J. B. HIGGINS
*Lecturer in New Testament Language
and Literature in the University
of Leeds*

MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY PRESS

© 1959

Published by the University of Manchester at
THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
316-324 Oxford Road, Manchester 13

Printed in Great Britain by Butler & Tanner Ltd., Frome and London

THE INDEBTEDNESS OF 2 PETER TO 1 PETER

by

G. H. BOOBYER

THE second epistle of Peter has a relationship with 1 Peter on the one hand and Jude on the other, and two views concerning its nature now have widespread acceptance. The first is that 2 Peter borrows from Jude. This seems the most likely explanation of the close correspondence between 2 Pet. 1:12 and Jude 5; 2 Pet. 2:1-18 and Jude 4-13, 16; 2 Pet. 3:1-3 and Jude 17 f., though it is uncertain whether the author of Peter 2 wrote with the text of Jude before him, or relied on his memory of it.¹ The second commonly held view is that 2 Pet. 3:1 f. alludes to our canonical 1 Peter, and claims it as the first epistle which the writer of 2 Peter addressed to his readers. This opinion also commends itself, inasmuch as 1 Peter had probably won extensive acceptance and authority as a genuine work of the apostle before 2 Peter was written. Further, in 2 Pet. 3:1 f., one seems to hear a strong echo of 1 Pet. 1:10-12.²

2 Peter was therefore written under the influence of Jude on the one side and with at least a reference to 1 Peter on the other. The debt to Jude is considerable. Most of it has been reproduced, though with some variations in wording. It supplies, in fact, the substance of about twenty-two verses, or, roughly, one third of 2 Peter. That 2 Peter was attacking antinomians similar to those assailed in Jude evidently occasioned the plagiarism. Indeed, in the church, or association of churches to which the author of 2 Peter belonged, Jude's tract may have been not infrequently used in speech and writing as a weapon against the antinomianism in question. If so, by incorporating most of Jude in his own epistle, the pseudo-Petrine writer was but following an established polemical line.

Jude, then, is laid under heavy contribution in 2 Peter. But what of 1 Peter? Was 1 Peter a second source from which 2 Peter

borrowed? If so, to what extent? Modern commentators, whilst usually agreeing that 2 Pet. 3:1 f. alludes to our 1 Peter,³ differ curiously in their assessments of the extent to which 2 Peter writes under the influence of the earlier letter. R. Knopf remarked: 'Dass der Verfasser I Pt kennt, folgt aus II Pt 3:1, aber nur daraus. Denn im übrigen haben die beiden Schreiben, die unter dem gleichen Namen gehen, nichts mit einander gemein'.⁴ Windisch commented in similar terms: 'Freilich ist I Petr in II Petr kaum benützt, auch trifft die Charakterisierung auf I Petr gar nicht zu.'⁵ But Mayor who, like Knopf and Windisch, did not attribute 2 Peter to the apostle Peter thought that 'the second Epistle shows signs of careful study of 1 P.'⁶ and C. Bigg endorsed B. Weiss's view that as far as its general Christian teaching is concerned, 'no document in the New Testament is so like 1 Peter as 2 Peter'.⁷

Scholars who have called attention to the resemblances between 1 and 2 Peter have, of course, been well aware of the striking differences. Bigg, for instance, who believed both epistles to be genuine, readily conceded that 2 Peter diverged significantly from 1 Peter in matters such as vocabulary, use of the O.T., christology, 2 Peter's stress on *ἐπιγνώσις* and its picture of the End with the expected world conflagration.⁸ Since Bigg wrote, these disparities, along with other considerations, have of course led Mayor and most scholars to deny the common authorship of the two epistles, and to adjudge 2 Peter a pseudonymous document of the sub-apostolic age.

But what resemblances have been noted between the two writings? Mayor compared them in detail.⁹ The main parallels to which he drew attention were some coincidences in language in spite of prevailing differences (2 Pet. 1:2 and 1 Pet 1:2; 2 Pet. 3:14 and 1 Pet. 1:19 are examples from a longer list); the prominence of the second-advent theme in both; the mention of Noah and seven others saved from the flood (2 Pet. 2:5, cf. 3:5 ff.—and 1 Pet. 3:19 ff.); the *μακροθυμία* of God related in 2 Pet. 3:15 to the coming conflagration and in 1 Pet. 3:20 to the flood; and the accounts in 2 Pet. 1:16-21 and 1 Pet. 1:10-12 (cf. 2 Pet. 3:1 f.) of prophecy as a divinely inspired foretelling of Gospel events now announced by apostles.

Whatever can be said about any of these points taken separately, the summary suggests that judgment on the 2 Peter-1 Peter relationship ought not perhaps to be left without

reconsideration where scholars like Knopf and Windisch left it. Moreover, the resemblances and differences between these writings seem to have been examined mainly, sometimes entirely, as an aspect of the problem of the authorship of 2 Peter. This may have led those concerned to establish a common authorship for the two to overstress the resemblances, whilst those convinced that the second epistle was not by the same hand as the first could have exaggerated the disconnectedness. Anyhow, the internal relationship between 1 and 2 Peter deserves study in itself, detached from authorship questions, especially in view of the direct reference to 1 Peter in 2 Pet. 3:1 f. and 2 Peter's borrowing propensities, so evident in his use of Jude.

This essay then asks once more, Do the contents of 2 Peter show indebtedness to 1 Peter?

It will be advisable to start with another look at 2 Pet. 3:1-2. 2 Peter was written to save the readers from libertines of a Gnostic type who were mockers of the parousia hope;¹⁰ and 2 Pet. 3:1 f. indicates the author's method, though he has in fact already indicated it in 1:12-15. He grapples with the situation by putting the readers in remembrance, particularly of the message of the OT prophets, and 'the commandment'—or 'the truth' (1:12)—as revealed in Jesus Christ and then proclaimed by the apostles. He took, he says, a similar line in 1 Peter. As an approach to the dangers in question, this owes something to Jude 5, 17 f., but it is also a consequence of the religious standpoint of the author. To him, sound doctrine is the truth as formerly given by God in the OT scriptures, in 'our Lord Jesus Christ' and in the message of the apostles as accredited witnesses of Christ.¹¹ 'False teachers' (2:1) and those they may seduce must therefore be confronted with these authorities—the sources of the traditional deposit of faith which the Church has received and teaches. Such being his viewpoint, this sub-apostolic author inevitably sees his pastoral and instructional duty as one of recalling to the mind, or 'putting you in remembrance'.

But whilst granting that 'putting in remembrance' is a description to which 2 Peter answers, is not 2 Pet. 3:1 f. strange or inappropriate as an account of 1 Peter, thereby implying that the later writer was indifferent to the actual contents of the former epistle? Some, like Windisch, think so. The question necessitates

careful attention to the nature of the reminding. What, then, is its content in 2 Peter?

From 2 Pet. 3:1-4, it becomes clear that the readers are enjoined to remember 'words which were spoken before' relating above all to the hope of Christ's second coming and the obligation to avoid every error of belief and lust. The passage draws on Jude 17 f., but the way in which 2 Peter alters Jude should be noted. In Jude, the warning concerning mockers, walking in ungodly lusts, is given as though it were a quotation from the words of apostles. In 2 Pet. 3:1-4, however, no more is implied than that the words of the prophets, the Lord (i.e. Christ) and the apostles will be found to contain exhortations with a bearing on mockers of the second advent and their reprobate ways and helpful to the readers in resisting them. The reminding in 2 Pet. 1:12-21 is of the same kind. Here, too, the prophets (19-21), the Lord Jesus Christ (14-18) and the apostles (12-16, 18 f.) are the authorities who appear. Further, through the transfiguration of Jesus the apostles are said to have been given a revelation of the certainty of the parousia.¹² This revelation confirms 'the word of prophecy' relating thereto (19); and *ταῦτα*, of which the 'apostle' himself reminds his readers in 1:12 and 15 seems a comprehensive term referring to the foregoing plea for godliness in 1:1-11 as well as to the second-advent theme of 16-21. In sum, 2 Pet. 1:12-21 again stirs up the readers to remember the inevitability of the parousia and the need of avoiding the corruption and lust of the world. Finally, in chapter two, the reminding relates predominantly to the condemnation of the false teachers and their evil lives.

Throughout 2 Peter, then, reminding, or 'putting in remembrance' is concerned mostly with the parousia (and associated subjects) and the necessity of avoiding error and lust, in lives devoted to godliness. On both these topics, the OT prophets, Jesus Christ and the apostles are held to say the authoritative words. This is, to be sure, fully in conformity with the overriding purpose of the epistle which, as already remarked, set out to save the readers from antinomians who scoffed at the parousia hope. We are thus brought to the conclusion that when in 2 Pet. 3:1 f. the writer couples 1 Peter with his present letter, as giving similar reminders, his meaning is that the former epistle likewise contains 'words which were spoken before by the holy prophets

and the commandment of the Lord and Saviour through your apostles' relevant to the same two themes.

It is now possible to answer the question previously raised. Is it justifiable to say that 2 Pet. 3:1 f. is strange or inappropriate as a description of 1 Peter? Why strange, coming from the writer of 2 Peter, with *his* aim and *his* conception of the nature of orthodox teaching? Deeming the putting in remembrance of traditional authorities essential to his role as 'Peter' now, will he not have attributed the same function to Peter then? And why is the description inappropriate as an account of what 1 Peter contains? In 1 Peter, exhortation to turn from evil and live holy lives occupies most of the epistle; and in 1 Peter, as in 2 Peter, the second advent, the incorruptible inheritance in heaven thereafter, and God's coming judgment, unsparing of sinners, are all prominent subjects, not to mention lesser parallels. But are these reminders given in 1 Peter on the authority of 'words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and the commandments of the Lord and Saviour through your apostles' (2 Pet. 3:2)? They are. The holy living there enjoined is prominently depicted as a necessary 'imitatio Christi', Christ being our *ὑπογραμμός* (2:21),¹³ and the OT is quoted as an additional sanction for it (1:16; 3:12-12; 5:5). The OT is further cited in support of future salvation (2:6) and the judgment of the wicked (3:12; 4:18). Finally, there are the specially significant verses 1 Pet. 1:10-12. Here, in one and the self-same passage, all three authorities to whom 2 Peter appeals find mention—the prophets who wrote the OT scriptures, Christ (this time as the Spirit of Christ prompting the prophets) and the apostles (implied in 'them that preached the gospel unto you').¹⁴ And what precisely was the nature of the 'salvation' (10) to which these authorities testified? When the passage is read in its context the answer becomes plain: it was that Christian salvation which would be attained in its completeness at Christ's second advent and the subsequent entry into the inheritance 'reserved in heaven for you' (1:4). In 1:10 and 12 the thrice repeated *ὑμεῖς* is also worth noting. That is, 1 Peter emphasizes that it was especially for his readers and their generation of believers that the Spirit of Christ testified through the prophets to the future salvation, now announced by the apostles. The emphasis seems not to have been lost on 2 Peter, when he speaks as he does in 2 Pet. 3:1 f., at the same time identifying the recipients of 1 Peter with his own readers.

Is further evidence now needed to reach a conclusion about 2 Pet. 3:1 f. as a reference to 1 Peter? Is there not every reason for confidence that 2 Pet. 3:1 f. does refer to the former Petrine epistle, and, moreover, refers to it in what for the writer of the second are wholly intelligible and appropriate terms? Indeed, the argument seems to carry further, pointing to two more possibilities, namely: (i) 2 Pet. 3:1 f. (and probably 2 Pet. 1:19-21) was written with 1 Pet. 1:10-12 immediately in mind; and (ii) the 'Peter' of 2 Pet. 3:1 f., in his expressed desire to be the Peter of the former epistle, will be found to draw further on 1 Peter, just as in his desire to be the Peter of the Gospels, he uses and stresses his presence at the transfiguration of Jesus.

Can these last two suggestions be substantiated? An exhaustive study of the question cannot be attempted here, but let us examine two more passages with a bearing on it.

Shall we turn next to the structure of the first chapter of 2 Peter? If 2 Peter is further indebted to 1 Peter, the signs of it are likely to appear at the beginnings of both epistles, because in chapter two, 2 Peter draws mainly on Jude, and the third chapter of 2 Peter contains much that is peculiar to the second epistle. Let us then compare the structure of 2 Pet. 1:1-21 with the opening chapter of the first epistle.

This line of investigation yields a small, positive result at once. As expositors have noticed, 2 Pet. 1:2 exactly reproduces the greeting formula of 1 Pet. 1:2—*χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη πληθυνθείη*—though adding words characteristic of the thought of 2 Peter, namely, *ἐν ἐπιγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν*. Significance attaches to the duplication in that *πληθύνειν* as the verb of a NT formula of greeting occurs only in 1 and 2 Peter and Jude.¹⁵ Further, although Jude, from whom 2 Peter borrows so heavily, uses a greeting somewhat similarly worded to that in 1 Peter, 2 Peter at this point follows 1 Peter rather than Jude. Even Knopf, who is elsewhere sceptical about any indebtedness of the second writer to the first, is here constrained to comment, 'vermutlich liegt eine bewusste Anlehnung vor'.¹⁶ But is the dependence of 2 Peter on 1 Peter likely to have ceased abruptly, when 2 Peter had written his greeting? We have already found cause to think that at least 1 Pet. 1:10-12 had 2 Peter's attention, and prompted his thought. But perhaps his mind jumped from

1 Pet. 1:2 to 1:10, unaffected by the intervening verses? At least, a comparison of 1 Pet. 1:3-9 and 2 Pet. 1:3-11 should be made to see what impression emerges. Nor, as we make it, should we forget that it is characteristic of 2 Peter to express himself differently from 1 Peter, the later writer having his own distinctive vocabulary and more Hellenistic categories of thought. For such factors, reasonable allowance must be made. Set out in parallel columns, the two sequences of thought are as follows:

1 Pet. 1 : 3-9

Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have hope of an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance, reserved for us in heaven.

This inheritance is for those guarded by faith until salvation 'in the last time', and is a cause of rejoicing in the grief of present trials or temptations.

But faith, tested, and proved, will issue in glory, honour and the salvation of your souls 'at the revelation of Jesus Christ' (i.e. the second advent).

2 Pet. 1 : 3-11

Christ's divine power and glory are sources of all things pertaining to life and godliness, as well as of precious promises, enabling us to become partakers of the divine nature and avoid terrestrial corruption.

To faith other virtues must be added. This will promote the necessary knowledge of Jesus Christ and be in keeping with cleansing from former sins.

In this manner, make your calling and election sure, as well as your entry into Christ's eternal kingdom (i.e. at the parousia).

The comparison reveals at once differences in expression and emphasis. The principal difference of emphasis is in 2 Pet. 1:5-9 where the later author stresses that to faith—mentioned twice in the passage from 1 Peter (in 1:5 and 7)—must be added other virtues, mostly moral ones. The teaching of this section is reminiscent of the treatment of faith and works in the Epistle of James,¹⁷ although of the virtues specifically named after faith only *ὑπομονή* occurs in James. But James shows faith without works to be 'dead' (2:17, 26) or 'barren' (2:20); whilst 2 Peter leads up to the conclusion that it is blind (1:9. Cf. Jas. 1:23-25). Further, James may, as some hold, have been correcting a misunderstanding of Paul's doctrine of faith. That 2 Peter was doing so seems

certain: 3:15 f. evidently means that the libertines were twisting Paul's teaching—in part, again, that on faith and works—to make it support their own perversities. If, then, the double reference to faith in 1 Pet. 1:5 and 7 did occasion 2 Peter's mention of it in 1:5, there is a fully intelligible reason for the supplementary teaching which immediately follows. 2 Peter was dealing with dangerous opponents whose misuse of Paul's doctrine of faith and works made it essential to leave the readers of 2 Peter in no doubt that faith unsupported by good works was of no avail. The digression from 1 Pet. 1:3–9—if such it is—occurring in 2 Pet. 1:5–9 is therefore fully intelligible: it arose from the pressing requirements of the emergency which 2 Peter handles. This digression apart, however, is there so great a disparity between the substance of the two trains of thought in 1 Pet. 1:3–9 and 2 Pet. 1:3–11? At least a measure of likeness is apparent in the opening lines and both writers arrive at the same point in 1 Pet. 1:9 and 2 Pet. 1:11. Perchance, however, broad correspondences occur because the sequence of ideas expressed in both epistles would come naturally enough to any early Christian writer at the outset of an epistle? And yet the run of thought in the opening section of 2 Peter seems less close to the introduction of any other NT letter than it is to that of 1 Peter. Note, too, what is said in 2 Pet. 1:12 f. Here, the writer mentions his permanent obligation 'to put you in remembrance'. From our study of 2 Pet. 3:1 f., we now know that these words must imply that at this point, anyhow, the mind of 2 Peter was still (cf. 1:2) reverting to 1 Peter. But what more does he say in 1:12 f.? He stirs up their memory concerning 'these things'. The reference of *περὶ τούτων* is, as we have already observed (p. 37), partly retrospective: it points back to the exhortation in 1:3–11. Does he then mean here that he was writing 1:3–11 as a review and amplification of 1 Pet. 1:3–9? Were it so, it would at least supply one reason why he added the words 'though ye know them and are established in the truth which is with you'. They knew 'them', partly because they had been reminded of them in First Peter.

Will it, then, be overpressing the case to say that a combination of points justifies the view that the thought parallelism between 1 Pet. 1:3–9 and 2 Pet. 1:3–11 is not fortuitous, but derives from the fact that from 1 Pet. 1:2 onwards the second 'Peter' continued to write under the influence of the former one? The probability

will be strengthened, if there is reason to believe that the indebtedness continued after 2 Pet. 1:3-11. It remains therefore to compare 2 Pet. 1:12-21, with the rest of chapter one of the previous epistle.

1 Peter, having spoken in 1:3-9 of the full salvation awaiting the readers at the return of Jesus Christ from heaven, proceeds in 1:10-12 to the supporting testimony of the OT prophets, inspired by 'the Spirit of Christ which was in them', and of 'them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Ghost'. These all witnessed to τὰ εἰς χριστὸν παθήματα καὶ τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας. Whilst the somewhat unusual phrase τὰ εἰς χριστὸν παθήματα may mean principally the sufferings of Christ himself, it could also connote the sufferings of Christians;¹⁸ and 2 Peter is likely to have attached the double meaning to it. Originally, τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας probably signified all the triumphs of Christ after his death, which Christians would in some measure share with him, including the glory of his second advent; and once more, 2 Peter will readily have seen such meanings in the words. In short, Second Peter's reading of 1 Pet. 1:10-12 saw there a reminder of the authoritative witness of the prophets, Christ (through the prophets) and Christian apostles to the fact that Christ and his followers would suffer and pass through suffering to glory, including the glory of Christ's second coming.

But what happens now in 2 Peter at the stage corresponding to that reached by 1 Pet. 1:10-12? In 2 Pet. 1:12-15, the writer introduces his stress on the reminding aspect of his epistle, and for him this means putting his readers in remembrance of the words of the OT prophets and of Jesus Christ through the apostles (cf. 3:1 f.) about 'these things' (1:12 and 15)—the phrase undoubtedly looking forward to the parousia theme in 1:16-21 (as well as backward to 1:3-11), especially in its use in 1:15. He also makes prominent mention of his own approaching decease which will be ταχινή; and in 1:16-21 there is the vindication of the parousia hope which makes direct appeal to the authority of Christ transfigured (16-18), OT prophecy (19-21) and the witness of apostles (16, 18, 19). The parallel between the emphasis on prophecy as given by men 'moved by the Holy Ghost' (21) and the prophets of 1 Pet. 1:11 as moved by 'the Spirit of Christ' is also worthy of note. Much in this section, in fact, could be an outflow from 1 Pet. 1:10-12.

But, it may be asked, if this overlap of thought between 1 Pet. 1:10-12 and 2 Pet. 1:12-21 is to be traced to the influence of the former passage on Second Peter, what leads 2 Peter to introduce the transfiguration of Christ in order to substantiate the parousia belief? At this point at least his mind seems to be elsewhere—on the Apocalypse of Peter perhaps?¹⁹ Admittedly, it has travelled further than 1 Pet. 1:10-12, but has it left 1 Peter? Not necessarily. Remembering that 2 Peter held the view that at the transfiguration Peter and his companions saw Jesus in his parousia glory, how must he have read 1 Pet. 5:1, especially the words *ὁ καὶ τῆς μελλούσης ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι δόξης κοινωνός*? Commentators have sometimes found the phrase awkward as a description of Peter in his lifetime; but E. G. Selwyn adopts a possible exegetical line. He suggests that even for 1 Peter the words carried an allusion to Peter's presence at the transfiguration. That is to say, 1 Peter considered that the transfiguration foreshadowed the second advent, and gave Peter a proleptic participation in the glory of Christ's second coming which assured him of a share in the final event.²⁰ But whether Dr. Selwyn carries us with him, or not, in this interpretation of the original sense of *ὁ καὶ τῆς μελλούσης ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι δόξης κοινωνός*, there is every reason to believe that Second Peter read it that way.²¹ That 1 Pet. 5:1 should then come to his mind inducing him to mention the transfiguration whilst developing the thought of 1 Pet. 1:10-12 in 2 Pet. 1:12-21 is natural enough, in view of the later writer's concern in 1:12-21 to justify belief in the parousia. The parallelism of wording between 1 Pet. 1:11 and 1 Pet. 5:1 may also have helped in the recall of the second passage.

The discussion of the relationship between 1 Pet. 1:10-12 and 2 Pet. 1:12-21 must end there; and is it too much to claim that it has again shown 2 Peter continuing to develop thought and argument which spring directly out of the former epistle, this time out of 1 Pet. 1:10-12 in particular, supplemented by 1 Pet. 5:1? If there is weight in the case which we have also presented for tracing much of the substance of 2 Pet. 1:2-11 to 1 Pet. 1:2-9, then it is now possible to conclude that the structure of the first chapter of 2 Peter in its framework and sequence of thought lies in very real debt to the way in which the writer of the second epistle read 1 Pet. 1:2-12, not forgetting his more detailed explication of 1 Pet. 5:1 in 2 Pet. 1:16-18.

Immediately after 1 Pet. 1:10-12, 1 Peter begins to exhort his readers to abandon former lusts and live holy lives in obedience to the truth. At the close of chapter one, 2 Peter does the same; but now 1 Peter's message ceases to have enough relevance for him. Unlike 1 Peter, the author of the second epistle has readers to save from a dangerous coterie of libertine, false teachers existing within the fellowship of the Church itself. He must therefore have material more apposite to the task on hand—sterner, even vehement material. He therefore turns to Jude.

It would be valuable at this point to embark on a study of the possible influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter's use of Jude. We shall, however, pass by this question to examine as our last line of inquiry a verse connected with passages already discussed. It will be:

2 Peter 1:14. The principal exegetical problem in this verse is the reference of the words *καθώς και ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός ἐδήλωσέ μοι*. To what revelation, or special instruction, given by Jesus Christ to Peter, does the writer of 2 Peter here allude?

Most expositors suggest that he was looking back to John 21:18 f. (cf. 13:36), or some other version of the same tradition. Some, like Spitta, prefer the theory of dependence upon the tradition lying behind the *Quo Vadis* legend in the Acts of Peter.²² Others think that all traces of the occasion of the disclosure in question have now been lost.²³ One should, however, resort to the second and third hypotheses only if John 21:18 proves an improbable source and no other likely solution is in sight.

Taking the wording of John 21:18 f. in itself, it is difficult to feel the strength of the objection that, because it seems to prophesy a violent martyr-death for Peter in old age, it is unfitting as the origin of what is said in 2 Pet. 1:14.²⁴ This contention appears to underrate two possibilities. First of all, the tradition that the apostle Peter suffered martyrdom was widely diffused in the early Church by A.D. 140/50—the date frequently assigned to 2 Peter.²⁵ This surely implies that Second Peter knew the tradition; and therefore, although 1:14 speaks less explicitly of violent death than John 21:18 f. does, it will none the less have been a reference to the apostle's martyrdom. Secondly, although in 2 Pet. 1:14 'Peter' does not describe himself as old (cf. John 21:18), he was probably writing as though he were a Peter of

old age.²⁶ From such a standpoint, it would be logical enough for him to say that his death was coming *ταχινή* and to mean thereby that, when it came, it would be a fulfilment of John 21:18. Given these legitimate presuppositions, John 21:18 f. seems to provide all that is required by 2 Pet. 1:14, as Chase thought.²⁷

But the case against John 21:18 f. as the passage recalled by 2 Pet. 1:14, could perhaps be more strongly presented on other grounds. First, 2 Peter differs from the Fourth Gospel so radically in outlook and teaching—in its eschatology, for instance—as to make it questionable whether Second Peter is likely to have drawn on the Fourth Gospel. Then again, in the immediate context of 1:14, the transfiguration of Jesus finds mention (17 f.). The author is here employing some form of Gospel tradition, but obviously it is not the Fourth Gospel to which he turned, since the Fourth Gospel does not report the transfiguration. These points scarcely rule out the possibility that 2 Pet. 1:14 is indebted to John 21:1-8f. Yet they do suggest the need of searching elsewhere to try to find a communication to Peter resembling that of which 2 Pet. 1:14 speaks, but less liable to objection as a source than John 21:18 f.

The first step must be a fuller clarification of the meaning and implications of 2 Pet. 1:14. What exactly does the verse say? And what does it show by implication to have been in the mind of 2 Peter, as he wrote it? Some additional points, though small ones, may have their significance. First of all, whilst *δηλοῦν* could denote a divine revelation of an unusual nature, granted on a special occasion, it does not necessarily do so. It was commonly used for 'inform', 'make clear to', or 'explain' in the ordinary senses. Thus 1:14 need not refer to some unique, revelatory event. Further, as suggested above, 2 Peter must have written in awareness of the tradition that Peter suffered martyrdom, so that the verse was intended as an allusion to the martyrdom. But it should then be recalled that the tradition also reported that Peter was put to death during a period of persecution, when many of the faithful perished.²⁸ So 2 Peter is likely to have been thinking of that, as well. It may further be worth mention that 2 Pet. 1:15 terms Peter's death an *ἔξοδος*—a word which appears in Luke's transfiguration narrative (9:31), as a designation of the approaching 'martyrdom' of Jesus.²⁹ Finally, in 1:14, 2 Peter writes *ταχινή ἐστιν ἡ ἀπόθεσις τοῦ σκηνώματός μου*. It is agreed that in

itself *ταχινή* means 'soon' or 'sudden', or both. Which connotation operates in 2 Pet. 1:14? Most commentators seem to prefer 'soon', whilst conceding that both senses may be present. Now *ταχινή* occurs in the NT only in 2 Pet. 1:14 and 2:1. Its use in 2:1 should therefore be considered. In 2:1 it describes the *ἀπωλεία* which is to befall the false teachers. But in the rest of the epistle it is the suddenness rather than the imminence of *ἀπωλεία* which receives emphasis. The destruction will not occur until the day of judgment (3:7), and although the appearance of mockers of the parousia is a sign of 'the last days' (3:3), the inbreaking of the day itself is to be sudden (3:10; cf. 3:4) rather than instant (cf. 3:4, 8 f.). Thus in 2:1 at least, *ταχινή* seems to describe catastrophic doom which, when it comes, will break upon the 'false teachers' quite unexpectedly, that is, suddenly, rather than swiftly or without delay. Though 'soon' was probably a secondary meaning, *ταχινή* could therefore have been used with the same two primary and secondary senses in 1:14. If so, it would be an apt enough adjective to describe death in a wave of persecution.

Summing up, there is good reason to conclude that 2 Pet. 1:14 was 2 Peter's way of saying that Peter's decease would shortly come in the manner described in the tradition with which the pseudo-Petrine author was familiar: it would be a sudden and violent martyr-death in an approaching time of persecution. This fate the Lord Jesus Christ had made clear at some time to the mind of Peter. It is thus the surviving source (if there is one) of 2 Pet. 1:14, written in this sense, which we have to track down. It still leaves John 21:18 f. in the picture; but is an alternative with a better claim now coming into view?

If the investigations in the foregoing sections of this essay have yielded acceptable results, it is now possible to approach the present question from at least the following established, or probable positions: 2 Pet. 3:1 does allude to 1 Peter; 2 Peter writes under a measure of debt to the contents of 1 Peter; and in 2 Pet. 1:12-21 his mind was running strongly on 1 Peter. Then did it jump elsewhere for what he writes in 1:14? It would be quite improbable, if there is anything in 1 Peter at all corresponding to the remarks in 2 Pet. 1:14. And in pursuing this question further, may we remind ourselves again that it is not only the original meaning of passages in 1 Peter which must be seen, but also the way in which 2 Peter is likely to have understood them? For

our immediate purpose, the latter is, to be sure, the more important question.

The pertinent passage in 1 Peter is 1 Pet. 5:1 and its context. 1 Pet. 5:1 reads *πρεσβυτέρους οὖν ἐν ὑμῖν παρακαλῶ ὁ συμπρεσβύτερος καὶ μάρτυς τῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθημάτων, ὁ καὶ τῆς μελλούσης ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι δόξης κοινωνός*. From *ὁ συμπρεσβύτερος* to the end of the verse, there is mention of three aspects of Peter's standing and destiny: he is *συμπρεσβύτερος*, *μάρτυς*, and *κοινωνός* of glory to be revealed. Beyond this, general agreement about the precise meaning of the three designations ceases. Shall we, then, re-examine them?

Whether 1 Peter was written by the apostle, or someone else, why was he styled *συμπρεσβύτερος*? At the beginning of 5:1, *πρεσβύτερος* describes those who exercised local, pastoral office in the Church. Would a leading apostle like Peter have adopted a similar designation for himself? Commentators have felt the difficulty, and modesty on the apostle's part is a commonly offered explanation. But without entering upon a discussion of the extent to which *πρεσβύτερος* is here used as a technical term for an established, ecclesiastical office, it will not raise dissent to say that the connotation 'elderly' or 'senior in years' is included in its sense. The *πρεσβύτεροι* in the early Christian churches will, more often than not, have been elderly men, and 5:5 shows that this aspect of the meaning of the word plays its part in 5:1. This being so, why does the designation of Peter as *συμπρεσβύτερος* cause surprise? It could well have been an elderly Peter who was writing—or alleged to be—and who, as Moffatt has remarked, 'plays on the double sense of the term'.³⁰ But that does not necessarily mean, as Moffatt seems to imply, that the writer carried over both senses of *πρεσβύτερος* with more or less equal weight into *συμπρεσβύτερος*. It may well have been in years rather than in office that, by the use of this word, he put himself—or was put—alongside those addressed as *πρεσβύτεροι*. Were it so, no further explanation of the language seems wanted, since there is nothing unusual about the self-alignment: *συμπρεσβύτερος* is another way of saying that an elderly Peter writes, and Second Peter could have read it so.³¹

The elderly apostle, however, is also *μάρτυς τῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθημάτων*. What is to be understood by that? It is generally translated 'witness of the sufferings of Christ' and has been held to refer to Peter's role as both an eye-witness of the passion of his

Lord and a preacher of Christ crucified. But some recent expositors, like Windisch, have observed that there is probably more to the meaning of *μάρτυς τῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθημάτων* than this: it may well include a reference to the share which Peter himself had in Christ's suffering and death, especially if 1 Peter was written at a time when *μάρτυς* had begun to mean 'martyr' as well as 'witness'.³² This strikes a line of interpretation which well befits the following clause: the apostle is to suffer and die, as Christ did, and will in consequence participate in Christ's heavenly glory. Much the same is said of other Christians in 4:13, and this theme of suffering (whether of Christ or Christians) issuing in heavenly glory is prominent throughout 1 Peter.³³ The lot, therefore, which this epistle elsewhere attributes to Christ and regards as possible for Christians in general is mentioned in 5:1 as the apostle's own appointed destiny. That this is the sense which Second Peter is likely to have attached to the passage can scarcely be denied, writing, as he did, fully acquainted with the tradition concerning Peter's martyrdom and also at a time when *μάρτυς* was being commonly used with the meaning 'martyr'—a connotation widely current by the middle of the second century.³⁴

There remains the last clause of 5:1. It again, apparently, refers in part to Peter's standing whilst yet alive: *ὁ καὶ τῆς μελλούσης ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι δόξης κοινωνός*. The words have been discussed above on p. 43. 'The glory that shall be revealed' is the celestial glory of Christ to be manifested at the parousia and enjoyed by Christians in heaven thereafter; but just as the ostensibly still living apostle is already *μάρτυς* (presumably because the suffering to which he has been appointed had already begun), so is he also *κοινωνός* of Christ's parousia glory. This time, however, the collocation of present state and future lot is less straightforward. The difficulty seems to have escaped the eye of some expositors, or to have been regarded as insignificant. Others have treated the clause as a pseudo-Petrine author's allusion to an already accomplished entry of the martyred Peter into the initial stages of his heavenly reward, after the manner indicated in 1 Clem. 5:4—the consummation of his bliss being held in reserve until the parousia.³⁵ But is there not a more attractive explanation in the direction taken by Dr. E. G. Selwyn, and already mentioned (p. 43)? In the early Church the transfiguration was sometimes interpreted as a foreshadowing of the parousia. Peter and the other two disciples who

were there, were thus granted an anticipatory experience of Christ's parousia glory. This privilege, then, could well be said to have constituted Peter forthwith *κοινωνός* of Christ's future heavenly glory, whilst also confirming his future participation in its fuller manifestation at the parousia. To 2 Peter, who regarded the transfiguration as an anticipatory portrayal of the parousia, this is certainly likely to have been the meaning of *ὁ καὶ τῆς μελλούσης ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι δόξης κοινωνός*; and 2 Pet. 1:16-18 could well have been written as a fuller explication of the clause.

So much for the exposition of 1 Pet. 5:1, but before gathering up results, let not the context of the verse be overlooked. It expounds the apostle's view of the contemporary situation, which from 4:7 onwards is described as one of crisis and impending eschatological fulfilment. The woes of the last days have begun (4:7), manifesting themselves in the *πύρωσις* which has already engulfed the readers (4:12). This is the first phase of the inbreaking of God's final judgment—a judgment appointed to descend first and immediately upon the members of the household of God (4:17), who must therefore live in expectation of treading at any moment the path through suffering to eternal glory (4:19; 5:10, etc.).

Shall we now draw together the principal conclusions to which the examination of 1 Pet. 5:1 and its context points, when one tries to read the passage through the eyes of 2 Peter? He knew the tradition that Peter died a martyr's death in a period of persecution. He also had a version of the transfiguration which related it to the parousia. Our argument, then, seems to show that when this pseudo-Petrine writer studied the former epistle in Peter's name, he saw in 1 Pet. 5:1 a Peter, already advanced in years, who knew that he was to perish as a martyr. This he understood as the apostle's God-appointed road to that fuller share in Christ's celestial glory of which he had already been granted a token participation at the transfiguration. From the immediate context of 1 Pet. 5:1, which warned of the near approach of the End, 2 Peter could also have deduced that the apostle anticipated the early realization of his martyr destiny, and as a part of a general persecution. That is, the *πύρωσις* enveloping Christians would be one which Peter himself would not survive, being old and already appointed a *μάρτυς* ('martyr'), and *κοινωνός* of future glory. All this, as

mountain', Peter—accompanied by James and John—has the experience which in 2 Peter's thought constituted him forthwith a *κοινωνός* of Christ's heavenly glory.

Put all this alongside what Second Peter found in First Peter, and suppose that Second Peter read the Synoptic passages in the light of First Peter, what more is necessary, or what more appropriate material must the investigator be asked to produce in order to reveal in its entirety the source of 2 Pet. 1:14? The theory propounded here has the further advantage of harmonizing with the fact that in the verses immediately adjoining 2 Pet. 1:14, the mind of 2 Peter was running on the Synoptics and on 1 Peter: in 2 Pet. 1:16–18, and perhaps in 1:15, on the Synoptics; and in 2 Pet. 1:12 f., as shown earlier in this investigation, on 1 Peter.

Thus our final conclusion is that when the antecedent line of 2 Pet. 1:14 is fully traced, it is found to run through 1 Pet. 5:1 and its context (especially 1 Pet. 4:7–19) back to the Synoptics—probably to St. Matthew's or St. Mark's account (or a mixture of both) of the martyr-teaching of Jesus, given to Peter and other disciples between Peter's confession near Caesarea Philippi and the transfiguration of Christ.

NOTES

¹ In *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter* (1907), 1–15, J. B. Mayor sets out the Greek texts of Jude and 2 Pet. in parallel columns, clearly revealing the closeness of the connection between them.

² Similarly Mayor, *op. cit.*, xiii.

³ Spitta and Zahn were notable exceptions. Maintaining that 2 Pet. 3:1 f. gives an inappropriate description of 1 Peter, they suggested that the passage refers to some other Petrine epistle now lost.

⁴ *Die Briefe Petri und Judä* (1912), 254.

⁵ *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 3rd edn. (ungearb. H. Preisker, HNT, 1951), 99.

⁶ *Op. cit.*, cxiv. Cf. J. Moffatt, *Introduction to the Literature of the N.T.* (1912), 364.

⁷ *Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* (ICC, 2nd edn., 1902), 232 and 234.

⁸ *Op. cit.*, 224–36.

⁹ *Op. cit.*, ch. IV, lxxviii–cv. Cf. Chase, 'Peter, the Second Epistle of', HDB, iii, 812–14; W. H. Bennett, *The General Epistles* (Cent. B.), 56–8; Bigg, *op. cit.*, 224–36.

¹⁰ The extent to which the polemic against both libertinism and the scoffing of the parousia is interwoven throughout the epistle and also a passage like 3:3 favour the theory that both dangers come from the same group of reprobates.

¹¹ In addition to 3:1 f., *vide* 3:15 f., 1:12–21.

¹² For a fuller explanation of this interpretation of 2 Pet. 1:16-18, may I refer to my treatment of the passage in *St. Mark and the Transfiguration Story* (1942), 43-46? I have also dealt with this passage and others used in this article in the new edition of *Peake's Commentary on the Bible* (sections 894-97 and 904-05) to be published by Nelson.

¹³ For ὑπογραμμός used of Jesus Christ, see also 1 Clem. 16:17, 33:8.

¹⁴ In 1 Pet. 1:10-12, a clear distinction is made between prophets of a bygone age and a new era which begins with those who first proclaimed the Christian gospel. This implies that the prophets of 1:10 are the OT prophets, as most commentators maintain, not Christian prophets. That the OT prophets should be guided by 'the Spirit of Christ' is not a difficulty in the light of the christology of the early Christian church.

¹⁵ R. Knopf, *op. cit.* (in footnote 4), 37 cites parallels from Dan. 3:98 (31 LXX and Theodotion; 4:34 LXX; 6:25 Theodotion. *Vide* also HRCS 1145.

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, 260.

¹⁷ On 2 Pet. 1:5 and James, cf. Bennett, *The General Epistles* (Cent. B.), 262, and Wand, *The General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* (1934), 154. See also the latter's comment on 2 Pet. 1:8 (p. 155).

¹⁸ Cf. E. G. Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter* (1949), 136 f., F. L. Cross, *1 Peter: A Paschal Liturgy* (1954), 21 f. See also the discussion of μάρτυς τῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθημάτων (5:1) on pp. 47 f. of this essay.

¹⁹ For the association of the transfiguration and the parousia in the Apocalypse of Peter, may I again refer to my *St. Mark and the Transfiguration Story* (30-40)? But the view that the Apocalypse of Peter was written before 2 Peter, seems to me improbable, although it was held by Harnack and looked upon as possible by Chase (HDB iii, 814-16).

²⁰ E. G. Selwyn, *op. cit.*, 228 f.

²¹ Cf. J. A. T. Robinson, *Jesus and His Coming* (1957), 133 and 136.

²² *Vide* Vercelli Acts of Peter XXXV, in M. R. James, *Apocryphal N.T.*, 333.

²³ E.g. Windisch, *op. cit.* (note 5), 88; J. Moffatt, *The General Epistles* (Moffatt NT Comm. 1928), 184.

²⁴ Cf. Mayor, *op. cit.* (note 1), 101 f.

²⁵ For the early development and spread of the tradition of Peter's martyrdom, attested in John 21:18 f., cf. also Rev. 11:3-13 (? *vide* J. Munck, *Petrus u. Paulus in der Offenbarung Johannes*, 1950); 1 Clem. 5:1-6:1; Ignat., *Rom.* 4:3; Acts of Peter XXXV-XL. *Vide* also O. Cullmann, *Petrus*, 73-169.

²⁶ Cf. the exegesis of συμπρεσβύτερος in 1 Pet. 5:1 as given below p. 47.

²⁷ HDB iii, 809.

²⁸ So, for instance, as early as 1 Clem. 5-6.

²⁹ Cf. the reference to Peter's death as an ἔξοδος by Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* III, i, 1, in Eus. HE, V, viii. 2 f.).

³⁰ *The General Epistles*, 161.

³¹ Assuming that the following μάρτυς τῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθημάτων in 5:1 includes a reference to Peter's sufferings as a Christian (as suggested on p. 42), the collocation of πρεσβύτερος and suffering recalls a like association of πρεσβύτερης and Christian suffering in Philem. 9.

³² Cf. Windisch, *op. cit.* (note 5), 79; Wand, *op. cit.* (note 17), 122; F. W. Beare, *The First Epistle of Peter* (1947), 172; TWNT iv, 498-99; O. Cullmann,

Petrus (1952), 92 etc. Knopf, *op. cit.* (note 4), suggested that *μάρτυς τῶν του Χριστοῦ παθημάτων* might be a prophecy *ex eventu* of Peter's death.

³³ In addition to 5:1 and 4:12 f., *vide* 1:6 f., 11, 3:18-22, 4:19, and 5:9-10. Cf., too, Selwyn, *op. cit.* (note 18), 228.

³⁴ Cf. R. P. Casey, *Beginnings of Christianity* v, 30-7; TWNT iv, 512.

³⁵ Cf. Knopf, *op. cit.* (note 4), 188 f.; Windisch, *op. cit.* (note 5), 79.

³⁶ Three points would favour the view that 2 Peter drew on Matthew's narrative of the transfiguration: (i) the words of the heavenly voice in 2 Pet. 1:17; (ii) the reference to the disciples hearing the voice, cf. Matt. 17:6; (iii) a church leader who, around the middle of the second century, writes in the name and under the authority of Peter might well have had a preference for the Gospel which assigned Peter a leading place in the Church.

At the same time, the importance of the tradition linking St. Mark's Gospel with Peter must not be set on one side.