



## Metaphorical Analysis of ἐκλεκτός, παρεπίδημος, and πάροικος in 1 Peter: Theological Identity Construction

Agus Prasetyo

Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Lutheran

E-mail: aghussttl@gmail.com

Digital Object Identifier (DOI): <https://doi.org/10.33856/kerugma.v8i1.491>

### Article history

Received	Revised	Accepted	Published
14 March 2025	15 April 2025	11 June 2025	14 June 2025

### ABSTRACT

In 1 Peter, the author employs the terminology παρεπίδημος (parepidemos) and πάροικος (paroikos), which is conventionally understood as the social status of "strangers and sojourners." However, their usage within the context of ἐκλεκτός (eklektos) indicates theological semantic complexity. This study aims to analyze the construction of theological meaning in this terminology through a semantic-pragmatic approach to unveil the metaphorical dimension of Christian community identity. A textual analysis method with a semantic-pragmatic approach is employed to investigate the lexical structure of Koine Greek and conversational implicature within the communicative context of the epistle. Primary data consisting of the Greek text of 1 Peter is analyzed using biblical software and lexical concordance. The research findings demonstrate that the terminology παρεπίδημος and πάροικος does not merely refer to sociological reality but functions as theological metaphor that constructs the eschatological identity of the Christian community. The combination with ἐκλεκτός creates a semantic paradox that affirms a dual ontological status: temporal alienation and membership in God's chosen community. The employment of this terminology aims to build identity consciousness that motivates ethical behavior and missiological commitment. The terms παρεπίδημος, πάροικος, and ἐκλεκτός form a complex theological construction as a rhetorical strategy to strengthen Christian community identity within eschatological tension. These findings contribute to hermeneutical understanding of identity construction in New Testament epistolary literature.

**Keywords:** παρεπίδημος; πάροικος; ἐκλεκτός; semantic-pragmatic analysis; theological identity; 1 Peter; biblical hermeneutics

**Citation Style (APA):** Prasetyo, A. (2025). Metaphorical Analysis of eklektos, parepidemos, and paroikos in 1 Peter: Theological Identity Construction. *Theological Journal Kerugma*, 8(1), 56–70. <https://doi.org/10.33856/kerugma.v8i1.491>

### INTRODUCTION

The Letter of 1 Peter employs specific terminology in identifying its recipients, namely "sojourners" (paroikos), "strangers" (parepidemioi), and "the elect" (eklektos). The use of this terminology not only functions as demographic identification but also becomes an integral part of the author's argumentative strategy in conveying theological and ethical messages to the early Christian community (Elliott, 1981; Campbell, 1998; McKnight, 1996).

Historically, scholars have tended to interpret this terminology within the context of socio-juridical status. From this perspective, paroikos is understood as a class of residents legally defined as foreign inhabitants with limited rights and status, while parepidemioi refers to temporary visitors or immigrants who have no intention of settling permanently (Elliott, 1981). This socio-juridical interpretation is supported by the use of the term "diaspora,"

which indicates the geographical location of the letter's recipients across various Roman provinces that had governmental systems with specific regulations regarding the rights and obligations of both citizens and immigrants.

However, a purely socio-juridical approach raises significant hermeneutical problems. If this terminology only refers to marginal social status, how can the group of "strangers and sojourners" be called "the elect" (eklektos)? This paradox demonstrates that a more comprehensive interpretation is needed to understand the complexity of the argumentative strategy in 1 Peter.

Recent scholarly developments show that identity terminology in 1 Peter has more complex dimensions. Ok (2021) argues that the mention of this social status characterizes ethnic identity that has the potential to generate strong solidarity among readers experiencing social alienation due to their conversion. Meanwhile, McKnight (1996) identifies the recipients as proselytes non-Jewish individuals who had previously joined synagogues as "God-fearers" before becoming Christians. An alternative approach is proposed by Seland (2005), who characterizes the recipients as "Philonic readers" a group of proselytes experienced with the works of Philo of Alexandria and experiencing alienation due to their conversion.

Intertextual analysis shows that the terminology *paroikos* and *parepidemoi* is not an innovation within the biblical corpus. Both terms first appear in the Septuagint to describe Abraham's social status as an individual without land ownership rights (LXX Genesis 23:4). In the Abrahamic context, the status of being *paroikos* and *parepidemoi* is a consequence of the divine calling to live as a migrant in order to carry out God's mission (Naseri, 2018). Thus, Abraham's social status is not only sociological but also theological as an individual specifically chosen to execute God's soteriological plan.

If the terminology in 1 Peter is understood as a metaphor referring to the Abrahamic narrative, then the author is reminding readers of God's calling to live as God's people who temporarily leave their "birthland." Achtemeier (1996) reinforces this perspective by explaining that *paroikos* and *parepidemoi* in 1 Peter refer to individuals who possess heavenly citizenship and must temporarily lose social rights, experience discrimination, and be treated poorly on earth.

Nevertheless, the complexity of 1 Peter's argumentative strategy is not limited to the metaphorical dimension alone. The author integrates identity terminology with other declarative elements, demonstrating a systematic effort to construct theological, ethical, and missiological identity for the letter's recipients. This identity construction, in turn, aims to awaken readers' moral consciousness so they may live as Christians who possess motives, guidelines, and ethical purposes consistent with their theological identity.

Based on this background, this research aims to analyze the function of identity terminology in 1 Peter as the author's strategy for constructing an ethical framework for the early Christian community. Specifically, this research will examine how the use of the terminology *paroikos*, *parepidemoi*, and *eklektos* functions as ethical motives, guidelines, and purposes in the context of forming distinctive Christian identity amid socio-cultural pressures of the Hellenistic-Roman environment.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs textual analysis methodology with a semantic-pragmatic approach to investigate Koine Greek lexical structures and conversational implicatures within the communicative context of 1 Peter. This approach is chosen because research on apostolic letters requires specialized methodology that can accommodate the linguistic and pragmatic complexity of ancient texts.

As Smith explains, the epistolary genre is not a collection of proverbs or a collection of classical single sentences, but rather consists of a series of paragraphs, each containing arguments that sequentially contribute to the overall development of the author's argument (Smith, 2006). This demands an analytical approach capable of capturing semantic and pragmatic dimensions simultaneously.

The primary data consisting of the Greek text of 1 Peter will be analyzed using biblical software and lexical concordance to achieve accuracy in identifying lexical structures and semantic patterns. Semantic analysis will focus on the denotative and connotative meanings of Koine Greek lexicon, while pragmatic analysis will explore conversational implicatures that emerge within the communicative context of the letter.

Investigation of 1 Peter has undergone various approaches that have contributed positively to understanding the letter's argumentative strategy. Elliott employed a sociological approach (Elliott, 1982), while Snyder applied linguistic analysis to participles and imperatives (Snyder, 1995). The rhetorical function approach has been developed by various researchers such as Thuren (1995), Balch (1981), and Marshall, who examined rhetorical aspects in 1 Peter. Additionally, Green (1990) and Cailing (2013) have explored the use of the Old Testament in the context of Christian ethics and missiology. Comparative studies have also been conducted by Michaels (1987, 1988) and recently by Ok (2021), who constructed ethnic identity in 1 Peter.

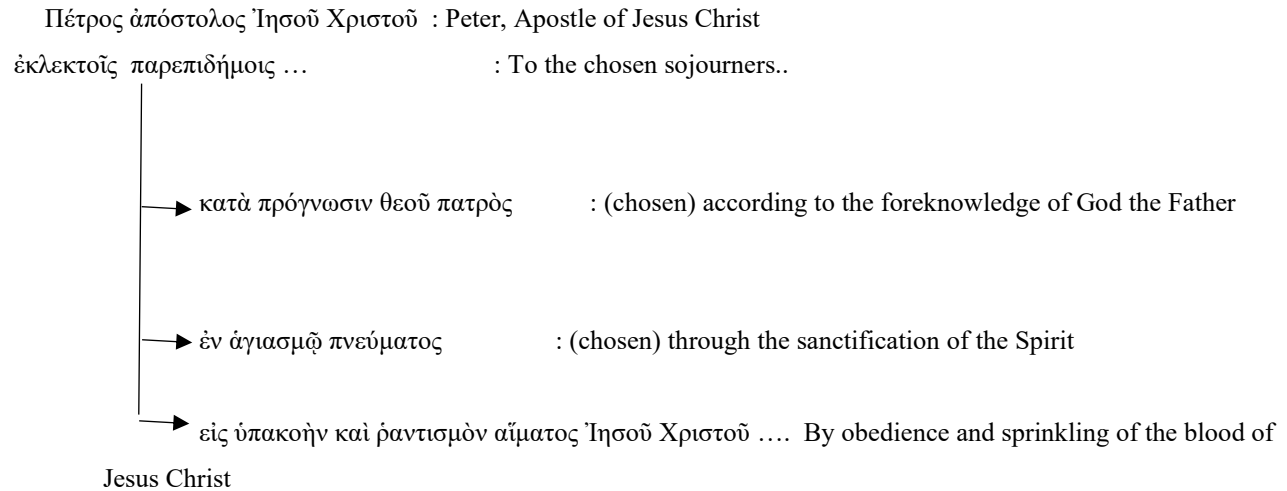
The semantic-pragmatic approach in this research will integrate the metaphorical dimension as developed by Martin (1992), considering that the author of 1 Peter identifies the letter's recipients as "elect sojourners and strangers." This metaphorical identification has significant semantic and pragmatic implications for understanding the author's communication strategy.

The analysis will be conducted in several stages: (1) identification and classification of Koine Greek lexical structures using biblical software, (2) semantic analysis of the contextual meaning of lexicon, (3) investigation of conversational implicatures through pragmatic approach, and (4) synthesis of findings to understand the overall communicative strategy of 1 Peter.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first term that 1 Peter presents to build awareness of the readers' self-identity is through the use of the word "chosen." This word appears in the opening of the letter, specifically after the name of Peter as an apostle of Jesus Christ is introduced. The author continues his writing with two metaphors, *ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις*, to denote the identity of the letter's recipients (1:1). The dative case in this word is understood as an indirect object for both metaphors of the chosen sojourners (Wallace, 2000). These two metaphors serve as initial clues for understanding the ethical and missiological motifs that the author constructs, as it appears the author intends to provide emphasis on the theological identity of both terms.

The sentence structure in 1 Peter 1:1-2 appears as follows:



The theological emphasis on the word ἐκλεκτοῖς (chosen/elect) is evident from the sentence structure which explains that the "recipients of the letter" are the chosen ones, and this election is in accordance with πρόγνωσιν θεοῦ πατρὸς (the foreknowledge of God the Father). The word πρόγνωσιν does not merely explain the ability to predict future events, but encompasses God's absolute sovereignty in determining and executing His decision to save sinful humanity. Coenen (1975) states that election cannot be separated from knowledge of the Lord's holiness, uniqueness, and unconditional sovereignty. On the other hand, the mention of God the Father implies that those whom God has chosen are called God's children who are privileged because they become the party within the covenant that God has made with His people (cf. 2 Cor 6:18).

This term also fits with the psalmist's concept who says, "You have searched me, LORD, and you know me" (Ps. 139). It makes sense that being "chosen and known" by the Lord impacts personal identity, making humans part of something far greater than themselves, and placing life differently in a different light (Rosner & Lunde, 2017). The words "chosen" and "foreknowledge" are connected with the preposition κατὰ which can function as a standard, so the translation becomes "chosen according to God's foreknowledge" (Dubis, 2010). However, the meaning of the preposition κατὰ translated as "according to" can also be understood as "result" or "reason" for "πρόγνωσιν" (Thuren, 1995). Therefore, with the phrase κατὰ πρόγνωσιν θεοῦ πατρὸς, the author intends to emphasize the theological aspect that explains the relationship between the readers and God, that the identity of election is in accordance with (and is the result of) God's knowledge.

The second theological emphasis on the chosen identity is shown by the phrase ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος with the preposition ἐν. This preposition can explain descriptions of place, time, reference, and so forth (Dubis, 2010), but in this context, the focus is explaining how believers become part of God's chosen people. Therefore, this preposition is appropriately understood as the manner of election, so the translation is "through" the sanctification of the Spirit (ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος). Another possibility is as a means, so the translation would be "by means of the sanctification of the Spirit." Both ways give understanding that emphasizes the Spirit's role in election.

Third, the author explains the word "chosen" with the phrase εἰς ὑπακοὴν καὶ ῥαντισμὸν αἵματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (1 Pet. 1:2 NA28). The preposition εἰς is more appropriately understood as reference, although other meanings such as description of place (in) can be considered, because when using the preposition εἰς, Peter means to remind readers of the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross, He redeems and purchases the chosen ones (cf. 1:18-19). Furthermore, he reminds them of the covenant that God made with the people of Israel (Ex. 24:3-8). Thus the chosen

identity is actualized when Christ obeyed God's will and sacrificed himself on the cross, so "the appropriate translation is with reference to the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Rendy Leedy's diagram places Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in 1 Peter 1:2 as an objective genitive to explain ὑπακοήν and ῥαντισμόν, as in the ESV, NASB, and NIV translations (Leedy, 2017). This helps to understand the two words "obedience and sprinkling" as terms that are closely related when understood with reference to biblical language about the Old Testament covenant in Exodus 24:7-8, concerning obedience to the word and the sprinkling of blood. The use of these two terms is very much in harmony with Peter's concept regarding the example of Jesus' obedience to God's will through the path of suffering unto His death (1 Pet. 3:17-20). The theological emphasis is related to sacrifice to actualize election.

### **Chosen Identity (ἐκλεκτός)**

The designation ἐκλεκτός represents one of the most distinctive aspects of 1 Peter, as it appears five times throughout the letter (1 Pet. 1:2; 2:4, 6, 9; 5:13). It is not surprising that election was once considered the primary theological theme of this epistle (Fagbemi, 2009). This adjective is generally translated as "chosen," emphasizing things of good quality (Piper et al., 1985), or selection based on distinction or the result of selection, emphasizing choice based on quality (Bauer & Danker, 2021).

Interestingly, this term is not foreign to the Old Testament world. In the Old Testament, this word is reflected in the Hebrew word *בָּחַר* (Brown et al., 2000). Unlike its general meaning, in the Old Testament, part of its usage describes Yahweh's action in choosing the Jewish nation from all nations in the world. Deuteronomy 7:6-9 provides the proper context for understanding God's concept of election in the Old Testament. This election is situated within the narrative of God's covenant with the nation of Israel. In this context, election is based on God's compassion, not on factors external to God. As it is written: "It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you... but it is because the LORD loves you" (Deut. 7:7-8). The purpose of this election was to become His treasured people (Deut. 7:6).

On the other hand, "election" in the Old Testament is associated with the idea of the Lord's "knowledge" of His people. In Genesis 18, for example, God appointed Abraham to become a blessing to all nations (v. 18) and concluded with the words, "יָדַעְתִּי אֱלֹהִים" (for I have known him)" (v. 19). Likewise, Amos 3:2 connects divine election with divine knowledge. From these references, it is understood that there is a close relationship between being known by the Lord and being chosen by the Lord (Rosner & Lunde, 2017).

In the LXX, the general meaning refers to "choice products," such as plants, animals, or minerals. When the word indicates persons, it refers to "choice troops." This term was later used in the book of Ezekiel, which figuratively refers to Israel in chapter 19 (Piper et al., 1985).

In relation to religious context, this word is used in three forms. First, it refers to sacred and pure things (1 Sam. 10:3, Ps. 18:26). Second, culturally this term has the meaning of "consecration" and is used for people who are delivered in judgment (2 Sam. 21:6), and is used for material substances, namely choice stones used to build the temple (cf. Isa. 28:16; 54:12). Third, it refers to the election of Israel, particularly the election of the figures Jacob, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, the land (Zech. 7:14), the city of Jerusalem (Tob. 13:13), and the people (see Isa. 43:20; Ps. 106:5). In its development, the Greek biblical writings and Hebrew Hellenistic writings tend to emphasize the fact that Israel is the chosen or elect people (Piper et al., 1985).

In the apocalyptic context, the word ἐκλεκτός is used to refer to Israel or the righteous who will fight against Hellenism to preserve the law of the Torah. Additionally, the word ἐκλεκτός is also used to refer to the Messiah as the chosen one, and is even used to designate angels as God's holy and chosen children (Piper et al., 1985).

The synoptic Gospels use the word ἐκλεκτός, generally associated with eschatological matters that on one hand emphasize faith, and on the other hand obedience (cf. Matt. 21:31, 43; Mark 13:19; Matt. 24:21; Luke 18:7). Second, this word refers to people who respond positively to privileges as God's grace and place their trust in Him (cf. Matt. 22:14, Luke 18:7). Third, ἐκλεκτός first means referring to the generation chosen by God from among humanity and drawn to Himself (Matt. 20:16; 22:14, 24:24) (Bauer & Danker, 2021). Additionally, the Synoptic Gospels also use the term "to choose" (ἐκλέγω) to refer to Jesus himself, first chosen by God during the transfiguration (Luke 9:35) and second, chosen through the mockers during His crucifixion (Luke 23:35).

In Paul's letters, the word ἐκλεκτός is associated with the ultimate purpose of the chosen ones (Rom. 8:33, 2 Tim. 2:10). It is also used to emphasize the basis of salvation in God's calling, namely to those who are chosen to become His own (cf. Col. 3:12) (Bauer & Danker, 2021). Furthermore, in Romans 8:29-30, Paul uses προέγνω ("foreknowledge") as a synonym for "divine election." Therefore, being "known" by the Lord means being loved and chosen by Him (cf. Rom. 11:2). It is also mentioned that every believer is chosen (Rom. 16:13), so it is reasonable that this word refers to the community of believers.

In 1 Peter, the adjective "chosen" is placed together with the adjective παρεπιδήμιος and the noun διασποράς (1 Pet. 1:1, NA28 and WHT). The mention of this word is followed by their geographical existence, namely in the regions mentioned. This means that geographically, these "chosen people" are scattered (διασποράς). The word διασποράς has a special meaning for the Jewish people. Although all Jews wholeheartedly believed that Palestine was their homeland, for centuries the number of Jews who were expelled and exiled was greater compared to the Jews who still lived there. The books of 2 Kings 24:14, Jeremiah 52:28-30, and Jeremiah 43:1-7 provide historical records of the impact of Judah's fall, which geographically marked the beginning of the Diaspora, namely the scattering of Jews throughout the world. The book of Lamentations provides a picture of how the effect of this dispersion continued, one of which is expressed as "Judah has gone into exile because of affliction and hard servitude; she dwells now among the nations, but finds no resting place" (Lam. 1:3).

It is not surprising that Scott (2012) assesses that the dispersion had broad effects on Jewish life and psychology; therefore, they maintained their identity by tending to live close to one another, thus forming communities that were later called ghettos, which became targets of anti-Semitism even before Christ. Interestingly, studies of the intertestamental historical period prove that this alienation and dispersion did not destroy the sense of Jewish unity; on the contrary, Jewish identity was strengthened during the exile (Kirk, 2020).

The same term was subsequently used by Peter to indicate the similarity of reality for his readers who were also scattered as strangers in the regions mentioned, namely "Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia Minor, and Bithynia." The explanation of this geographical information contributes to providing a picture of the social, cultural, and political conditions of the letter's recipients (Wall, 2000). Schutter (1989) is very helpful in this regard by emphasizing the diversity of ethnic composition and religious diversity, such as traditional religions, ancient religions, syncretism, "Mystery" beliefs, Caesar worship, and Judaism in these five regions. From this description, the term diaspora reveals a historical reality, where the readers of 1 Peter are a new "ghetto," in the sense of a community that has the potential to become a target of anti-Christian sentiment, so that by calling the readers "diaspora," they are reminded of the "past diaspora ('ghetto)" that sought to maintain community unity through unity of purpose, motive, and ethical means.

Like Israel, the readers are called diaspora (1 Pet. 1:1; James 1:1), and therefore the readers not only have duties and obligations but also certain promises and rights, namely to carry out the role and function of priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5). On the other hand, the mention of these regions can possibly be linked to the event written in Acts 2:9, namely when representatives from these regions were present as listeners to Peter's sermon and experienced a spiritual experience. Therefore, it is very likely that the mention of these regions was intended to strengthen the identity built by the author, namely as "chosen," because most of these regions were represented as listeners to Peter's first sermon.

In other words, the author intended to emphasize the status of "chosen sojourners," considering that this theme is developed in other parts (1:17; 2:4, 9, 11; compare 1 Pet. 4:16). Selwyn (1987) believes that these representatives became the earliest bearers of news about the new religion to these regions. Therefore, it is natural for Peter to begin his letter by mentioning the "chosen" identity to people who were "scattered" to regions that had once been represented in the spiritual experience, namely the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as a sign of God's legitimacy over that choice. With this selection, they are now the Lord's possession, and the author calls them to live in a way that befits their calling (Fagbemi, 2021).

Thus, the word "ἐκλεκτός" is not a result of special treatment; on the contrary, it is linked to a mandate for ethical behavior that corresponds to that identity. Therefore, to understand the readers and their message, this designation of "chosen" is understood as Peter's way of reflecting a theological identity that has implications for the ethical behavior of his readers. So the term "chosen" in these opening verses is understood as an initial taste for understanding the main issues that permeate the message of the letter (Fagbemi, 2021). The mention of the "chosen" identity is used again in other parts of his letter (1 Pet. 2:4, 6, 9, 5:13). These repetitions become the reason for considering it as the controlling message of 1 Peter (Balch, 1981).

In 2:9-10, it appears that the development of ideas regarding chosen identity is increasingly strengthened by the statement: "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once 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." Fagbemi (2021) is very helpful in seeing two important things in this verse: first, the statement contained in the expression ὑμεῖς δὲ γένος ἐκλεκτόν, βασιλείον ἱεράτευμα, ἔθνος ἅγιον, λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν... ("you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God..."); second, in using the Greek word δέ (but), which distinguishes them from the disobedient and unbelieving people mentioned in 2:7-8. Fagbemi (2021) is very appropriate in highlighting the dimension that strengthens the aspect of his readers' election.

Even with his approach, the aspect of election is also increasingly clarified in verse 10, which compares their status in the past and present. In other words, this section is to show that the readers have truly been redeemed and have now become God's possession. In other words, the readers' identity as 'kingdom of priests' or 'royal priesthood,' 'holy nation,' and 'people belonging to God' stems from their special status as God's chosen people, and these titles are considered as materials or elements of election (Fagbemi, 2021).

On the other hand, the designation "chosen" for the readers of 1 Peter recalls a basic theological proposition rooted in the theology and history of Israel as God's chosen people. Novak (1995) observes that the belief of the people of Israel as the chosen people implies three basic theological propositions: (1) Israel is related to God because of God's choice of it, (2) Israel is related to God because of God's revelation of the Torah to it, and (3) Israel is separated from the nations of the world because of God's election of it. This theological proposition, on one hand, affirms that the title "chosen" cannot be reduced by any situation. In other words, God has chosen the people of Israel in the past, and

the choice is not because of merit from Israel's side but because of God's grace (*sola gratia*). On the other hand, the covenant demands that the people of Israel deserve it by obeying God's commandments in the Torah.

The use of Israel's theological title is then directed to the readers of 1 Peter, so it is most appropriate if understood as a redefinition and reidentification to include the new people of God scattered throughout Asia. This redefinition is based on the redemptive work of Christ and faith in Christ as expressed throughout his letter (1 Pet. 1:1-5, 18, 23; 2:5-10) (Fagbemi, 2009). So the connection between Israel's chosenness and the readers of 1 Peter can be understood as follows: while Israel's election is tied to Abraham's calling in Genesis 12 and continues to the Sinai covenant (Exod. 19:5-6), the election of the readers of 1 Peter is tied to the election of Christ as the foundation of the Church (1 Pet. 1:20; 2:4). So the basic promises of the Old Testament and terms that were originally related to Israel are now actualized to the Christian community universally (1 Pet. 2:9-10), based on and influenced by Christ, especially in the relationship between Christ as the cornerstone and Christians as the 'chosen people' (2:4-6) (Fagbemi, 2009).

With this theological proposition, the designation "elect" for the readers of 1 Peter is viewed as the author's way of awakening theological reality while simultaneously encouraging the readers who are experiencing their social status in exile, and motivating the chosen people to form a brotherhood throughout the world (5:9). This motivation becomes increasingly evident through the elements that constitute the doctrine of election in 1:2, where election is rooted in the Trinitarian order of the Father's eternal plan and foreknowledge, carried out through sanctification by the Spirit and the obedience of Christ to realize salvation through His sacrificial act. Thus, through the term "elect," readers are made aware of the theological reality that implies the relationship between believers and Christ, between believers and baptism, between believers and the Trinity, and between believers and God's plan of salvation (Nasari, 2016). On the other hand, the close placement of ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς (1:1) is interpreted as the author's way of reclaiming social identity as theological and missiological identity. Socially, they are sojourners (representing marginal social identity), but theologically they receive a calling because they are chosen by God, and missiologically, they are people who are in various places for a specific purpose. With these realities, the term "elect" becomes an appropriate designation for readers to encourage them to achieve their ultimate goal (τέλος 1 Pet. 1:9).

### **Identity of Sojourners (παρεπιδήμους)**

The second term used by the author of 1 Peter to describe the readers' identity is *παρεπιδήμους* (1:1; 2:11). This word is formed from the root word *δῆμος* meaning "part of a territory, or community of a place or city" (Piper et al., 1964). The word *παρεπίδημος* describes someone who lives temporarily in another person's place (Bauer et al., 2000). Substantively, this explains temporary residents. On the other hand, this word can also be understood figuratively, referring to Christians whose citizenship is in heaven and who do not consider this earth as their dwelling place (cf. Heb. 11:13) (Friberg et al., 2000).

In the Septuagint, this word is used to refer to tribes, families, and communities (Gen. 23:4; Ps. 38:13; 39:13). In the context of Genesis 23, this word is spoken by Abraham in a context where he had no property to bury his wife. Peter apparently uses this word as an analogy or illustration to explain that the readers' spiritual status is also like Abraham's, who had no permanent dwelling in this world. In the context of Psalm 39 (NIV), the psalmist is emphasizing the shortness of time dwelling in the world, which is strengthened by the expression "before I go away and am no more!" (Ps. 39:13 NIV). When used in 1 Peter, the author apparently uses the term from this Psalm as a

form of analogy and application (Collins, 2009), where the analogy of life's brevity in the Psalm is applied in the letter to explain that the readers also have limited lifetime.

In the New Testament, this word is used to refer to "people or citizens" of a place who are under the authority of others or in another place. In Acts 12:22, it refers to the people of Jerusalem who were under Herod's authority; in Acts 17:5, it is used to explain the plan to bring Paul and Silas before the people's assembly in Thessalonica; while in chapter 19:30, 33, it refers to the people in Ephesus. On the other hand, Paul uses this word as an antithesis to "fellow citizens with the saints and members of God's household" (Eph. 2:19). Meanwhile, the author of Hebrews uses it to refer to the deceased Old Testament believers (Heb. 11:13).

From a socio-historical lens, the words *παροίκους* and *παρεπιδήμιους* are not understood as spiritual status obtained from conversion to Christ, but rather indicate their social status before conversion (Elliott, 1982). This thesis is rejected on the grounds that these words are never found in secular Greek, but are only found in the Septuagint, making it difficult to deny the absence of theological meaning (Achtemeier, 1996). Nevertheless, this idea has provided its own coloring in interpreting these words, and the perspective on *παροίκους* and *παρεπιδήμιους* can be expanded as something that explains the condition of alienation, whether spiritual (due to status change after conversion), political alienation (as a diaspora group living in other territories and cultures), or social alienation (due to behavioral differences from surrounding people as a reflection of identity).

When related to the regions mentioned in verse 1:1, this alienation is understood literally as people who are geographically alienated and have citizenship status issues. However, if we observe the development of ideas in the letter of 1 Peter, the term *παρεπιδήμιους* is used by the author as a way to convey the message that the readers are not outcasts; on the contrary, they are sojourners people who have been transformed through new birth (1:3-7) and the call to holiness (1:14-16), and must be in various places to demonstrate their transformation and identity through witness, proper behavior and lifestyle, and attitudes in facing adversity that causes suffering (Fagbemi, 2016, pp. 5-6).

By being called "sojourners," the readers' self-worth increases because it contains aspects of transformation and mission. In other words, the term that originally indicated literal alienation due to diaspora to other regions apparently is reclaimed to become a term indicating alienation due to the call to holiness for the purpose of God's glory and conformity to Christ's image, so that in the effort to achieve this goal, there is rejection of changes in attitude and behavior as implications of the theological identity received. Thus, its meaning becomes figurative, meaning God's people who must live in the world temporarily to carry out divine tasks with ethical tools appropriate to their identity. Another consideration for this interpretation is the mention of other theological identities that develop throughout the letter along with its ethical advice, such as "babies" (2:2), "living stones" (2:5), "chosen people," "royal priesthood," "holy nation," "people belonging to God" (2:9), and "Christians" (4:16).

Therefore, the identity of "strangers and elect" constitutes the beginning of the ethical structure of Peter's letter, which underlies theological ethics for Christians, where a Christian is someone who realizes himself as one of the chosen (in the sense of being set apart for specific tasks), and placed in the world to perform divine tasks.

In conclusion, the mention of theological identity for the recipients at the beginning of the letter is intended to provide awareness of a Christian's true identity, as a motive/driving force for someone to understand the theological values contained within that identity. Thus, by mentioning identity at the beginning of his letter, Peter is indirectly providing the foundation for theological ethics. Recognition of one's identity and the shaper of identity is intended so that the letter's recipients truly possess awareness of their identity and thus understand their life's purpose, life's motive,

and the means to achieve that life's purpose itself. Therefore, theological ethics is based on the awareness that the Triune God has given special privilege because God the Father knew them beforehand, God the Spirit sanctified them, and Jesus Christ cleansed them from sin through the sprinkling of His blood.

### **Stranger/Foreigner (πάροικος) 1 Peter 1:17, 2:11**

The author Peter also refers to his readers with the term *πάροικος*, which fundamentally describes a stranger with the status of a permanent resident in a particular place, but who does not possess citizenship status (Naseri, 2016, p. 35). This term was used in the ancient Greco-Roman world to express social differences and positions between foreigners and citizens. *πάροικος* was also used for foreigners who enjoyed certain legal rights and privileges, but did not have full rights over land (Piper et al., 1985, p. 784).

In the Old Testament, this word is used to indicate the condition, position, or fate of foreign residents (Ps. 119:54), in the context of exile (Ezra 2:1), this word refers to Israel and its descendants. In verbal form, this word can refer to non-Israelites (2 Sam 4:3; Isa 16:4), but generally it is directed toward the patriarchs (Gen. 12:10; 17:8; 26:3; 35:27; 47:4), and the Israelites (Judg. 17:7 ff.; Ruth 1:1; 2 Kings 8:1-2).

Among the Israelites, *πάροικος* referred to foreign residents who were accepted by Israel but excluded from certain religious rights and obligations (cf. Exod. 12:45; Lev 22:10, although cf. also Deut. 14:21). Foreign residents did have the right of asylum (Num 35:15) and the right to receive assistance if poor (Lev. 25:35; cf. 25:6). If foreigners became proselytes, their religious rights and obligations were extended (cf. Exod 12:49). Thus *πάροικος* was a guest who had to seek a way to enter the community fully through circumcision. On the other hand, the Israelites were also known as *πάροικος* when they were in the land of Midian (Exod. 2:12), and Egypt.

### **Hellenistic Judaism Perspective**

In the understanding of Hellenistic Judaism, Philo uses the group *πάροικος* to express the fact that righteous people are strangers on earth. Meanwhile, Josephus refers to foreign residents employed by Solomon for his construction work. From this understanding emerges Philo's reader perspective that interprets the words *πάροικος* and *παρεπίδημος* as proselytes (Seland, 2005).

In the understanding of Rabbinic Judaism, the word *πάροικος* is understood as proselytes, God-fearers in missionary communities in the diaspora, and foreign residents who live and work in Israel. They have the duty to facilitate life in religious communities, obey Noah's commands, and especially to avoid idol worship, as well as rejection of paganism (Kittel et al., 1985). In the New Testament, this word usually appears in the form of quotations or allusions from the Old Testament (cf. Acts 7; 13:16 ff.; Heb. 11:9, 13). In its usage, it shows that *πάροικος* are holy people (Eph. 2:19). Like the ancient Israelites, holy people are foreign residents in relation to worldly matters and fleshly desires (1 Pet. 2:11). Proleptically, Christians have already become citizens even when they are still foreign residents, but one day they will become citizens in the full sense so that *πάροικος* gives them the responsibility of appropriate behavior (1 Pet. 2:5) (Kittel et al., 1985).

The church as *ἐκκλησία* is also called *παροιμία*. The church as *ἐκκλησία* relates to God, while *παροιμία* relates to the world (cf. Heb 13:14). Another usage in the New Testament is found in Luke 24:18, where the verbal form *παροιμειῶν* in that context gives the understanding that the subject acts like a party visitor or a Jew from abroad living in Jerusalem who does not understand the events that are occurring (Seland, 2005). Generally, literal usage is indicated by the appearance of the preposition *ἐν* (Acts 7:6, cf. Gen. 15:13, Acts 7:29 cf. Exod. 2:22), while figurative usage is

indicated by combination with ξένοι (Eph. 2:19) or παρεπίδημοι (1 Pet. 2:11), which can be understood as Christians whose true home is in heaven (Kittel et al., 1985). Metaphorically, Christian life is viewed as a pilgrimage life (παρουσία) on earth (1 Peter 1:17) (Friberg et al., n.d.). In secular Greek this word means neighbor, foreign citizen (Kittel et al., 1985). From a socio-historical lens, this word is understood as someone who has a lower socio-political status. According to this view, 1 Peter is directed to strangers, namely people who literally live in other people's places and seek to improve their social status through membership in the community offered by the Christian movement, and therefore are increasingly humiliated by local residents because of their social status as newcomers plus their participation as "agents" of Christ. So in other words παρεπίδημοι and πάροικος are "sojourners who became followers of Christ" (Elliott, 1981).

This opinion on one hand gives new color in understanding identity, but the neglect of theological meaning is quite difficult to accept. Therefore, what is most possible is the literal interpretation of believers who live in foreign places. However, just as the word παρεπίδημος was developed into an identity with theological meaning.

In 1 Peter the term is first used in chapter 1:17. This expression is placed after the call to holiness (1:13-16), and its explanation ends in verse 21, before finally returning to the old idea regarding the call to holiness and its implementation in the community (1:22). The designation πάροικος appears again in chapter 2:11 after the mention of priestly identity (2:9-10) and before the presentation of ethical guidelines outside the community (2:12 and following). Ethical advice for paroikos is seen in chapter 1:17-21, which in structure appears as follows;

<sup>1:17</sup>καὶ

ἀναστράφητε τὸν χρόνον τῆς παροικίας ὑμῶν

Make the most of your time in 'isolation

- εἰ πατέρα ἐπικαλεῖσθε .....(Conditional)  
If you call upon the Father .....
- ἐν φόβῳ → (means)  
with fear (honorable)
- εἰδότες ὅτι ἐλυτρώθητε (circumstantial)  
after knowing that you have been redeemed

This structure demonstrates that the ethical guidance for the paroikos is to use the time during exile with reverence toward God. The word ἀναστράφητε derives from ἀναστρέφω, which means to turn around, spend time in a place, live by following certain principles, associate, and return (Bauer & Danker, 2000). Considering its accusative form (τὸν χρόνον; time), the most likely translation is "spend" that time. The NIV translates it as "live out," while the KJV translates it as "pass." Figuratively, this word means moral behavior or life (Friberg et al., 2000). In secular Greek, this word means to change, bring back, be occupied with, act, walk (Kittel et al., 1964-1976). In the LXX, it is used to explain acts of repentance or change.

In the LXX, variants of the root word are used in the context of Saul's transformation (1 Sam. 10:6), the reversal of curse into blessing (Ps. 30:11), and the people's repentance (1 Kings 18:37). In the New Testament, the word means to return (Acts 5:22), to behave (2 Cor. 1:12; Eph. 2:3; 4:22; 1 Pet. 1:18; 2 Pet. 2:7, 18; 1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Tim. 4:12). From this understanding, it appears that the theological emphasis the author wishes to convey through the term πάροικος is a missiological mandate to apply principles and effect change. Schreiner (2003) sees the connection

between the noun ἀναστροφή in verse 15 (life) and the verb ἀναστράφητε in verse 17, so that the emphasis is on behavior.

Interestingly, this sentence is preceded by the conditional particle εἰ (if) in the sentence εἰ πατέρα ἐπικαλεῖσθε τὸν ἀπροσωπολήπτως κρίνοντα κατὰ τὸ ἐκάστου ἔργον ("if you call upon the Father who judges impartially according to each one's work"). Pragmatically, the use of this conditional sentence is employed in polite commands and to affirm the relationship between the recipients and the Father as a theological consequence of rebirth (1 Pet. 1:3). The pragmatic approach to conditional sentences does not merely question how the two parts relate to each other, but considers the possible use of conditional sentences to provide polite requests, commands, veiled threats, and the like (Wallace, 1996). Thus, the author gives ethical advice to the recipients as paroikos to use their time during life as children of God who have been born again. Therefore, the way of life of the paroikos is to carry out God's mission driven by the relationship between God as Father and believers as His children.

Furthermore, the main sentence is developed with the manner/attitude specification ἐν φόβῳ (with fear), the reason is given a manner specification namely ἐν φόβῳ (with fear) and the reason εἰδότες (because you know). The content of the knowledge is ἐλυτρώθητε you have been redeemed, προεγνωσμένου μὲν πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου ((He) was chosen before the foundation of the world), and τοὺς δι' αὐτοῦ πιστοὺς εἰς θεὸν (through him believers in God). The word προεγνωσμένου in the NIV is translated "foreknown" (cf. 1:2), synonymous with φανερωθέντος manifested, but contrasts with the specification "before the foundation of the world." The expected impact of knowledge about these things is ὥστε τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν καὶ ἐλπίδα εἶναι εἰς θεόν (so that your faith and hope are in God).

The designation "stranger" in this passage functions as an explanation for the word τὸν χρόνον which is the object of the verb ἀναστράφητε. The genitive form τῆς παροικίας functions as a descriptive genitive, translated "as strangers." This genitive characterizes the noun connected to it, namely τὸν χρόνον whose concept includes period, opportunity, time (Bauer et al., 2000). The combination of τῆς παροικίας and τὸν χρόνον expresses the reality that this "alienation" is not a permanent but temporal reality. Therefore, the expression ἐν φόβῳ τὸν τῆς παροικίας ὑμῶν χρόνον ἀναστράφητε (1 Pet. 1:17) is an ethical call that reminds readers as strangers who have limited time, so that temporary time must be filled with behavior that shows reverence to God.

Interestingly, Peter uses the word ἐν φόβῳ to explain the concept of the attitude that colors the reverent behavior of these "strangers." Peter precedes the word "φόβῳ" with the concept that explains "the just Father" (1:17), then ends with the concept of God who redeems (1:18). With such placement, it seems Peter wants to connect "fear" with knowledge about God who is just and God who redeems. Peter's construction like this is similar to the discourse of "fear of the Lord" in the Old Testament, especially the book of Proverbs which is called the source or prerequisite of wisdom (Prov. 1:7; 9:10; von Rad, 1981), or conversely, fear of the Lord is the first manifestation of wisdom (Weeks, 2007). With such construction, the author of 1 Peter seems to want to repeat the Old Testament concept in a clearer way, namely that knowledge about God who is just and who redeems is the basis for manifesting fear of God.

The fear referred to in 1 Peter is used to explain fear positively, namely feelings of reverence toward God (1 Pet. 1:17), toward humans, toward rulers, slaves toward masters (1 Pet. 2:18), wives toward husbands (1 Pet. 3:2), besides also being used to explain fear negatively as fear of a threat (1 Pet. 3:14). This word is also associated with the life pattern of believers, namely being filled with positive fear (1 Pet. 3:2) and eschatological hope.

This relationship has implications for quality time utilization because of awareness of past identity linked to the characteristics of God's judgment (v. 17), and the fact of redemption (vv. 18-19). On the other hand, fear can become an important part of faith even though faith sets aside anxiety, but the fear that colors the life of the chosen

identity is fear of human weakness and reverence for Christ's self-sacrifice (cf. Acts 2:21; 7:59; 9:21; 22:16; Rom. 10:12; 2 Tim. 2:22). This is what enables "the strangers" not to fear suffering or death (1 Pet. 3:14); conversely, this reverence is reflected in the context of calling upon God in prayer as Father as a characteristic that they are freed from their futile ways (1 Pet. 1:17). The relationship between "strangers" and God is also seen in the protasis *εἰ πατέρα ἐπικαλεῖσθε*. The structure of this sentence explains a conditional relationship so that its semantic meaning allows for a protasis-apodosis "if you call Him Father, then live your time as strangers," or cause and effect "because you call him Father, (therefore) live as strangers with fear."

However, if interpreted with a pragmatic approach, it seems the author is using it rhetorically to present the meaning "do you not call (him) Father." So, pragmatically, this structure is interpreted as encouragement for polite and firm commands. Another possibility is "you should rightfully call (him) Father." In reality, both semantic and pragmatic approaches are able to explain the close connection between God and the readers who are called "strangers."

The delivery of values contained in the term "stranger" is also reflected in the word *εἰδότες* (knowing), which functions as a causal participle, which is structurally seen as the reason for the main verb "live" (Leedy, 2006). But in a different way, the word *εἰδότες* can be understood as an implication of the theological identity "stranger." In other words, as a "stranger" he knows the fact of redemption (vv. 18-19), he knows the fact of Jesus Christ's revelation (20), and facts about faith, all of which form the believer's identity.

This section continues with the phrase *τοὺς δι' αὐτοῦ πιστοὺς εἰς θεὸν* (through him, believers in God). The phrase *δι' αὐτοῦ* (through him) explains Jesus' works in verses 18-19 as the essence of faith in God. The author desires that faith in God contains trust in Christ's redemptive work. This sentence also continues with the conjunction *ὥστε* which is interpreted as a result clause (so that) connecting the knowledge possessed by the "strangers" with hope (Friberg et al., 2000). Thus, knowledge about the fact of redemption, Christ's revelation and faith in God produces hope that ultimately reveals eschatological reality for the designation stranger, so that with this revelation, readers not only realize the fact of redemption, but also understand the hope contained within it.

"Hope" for the "strangers" becomes an important theme in the letter of 1 Peter. So important that the author places it at the beginning of the letter and explains it as the purpose of "rebirth" (v. 3), continued in verse 13 which is related to grace. Therefore, the mention of "hope" in relation to the result of faith is interpreted as inclusion, which affirms that the author is not a moralist who advocates virtue for their own good, but advocates holy life, namely life that trusts in the Lord's promises (Schreiner, 2003).

With the placement of the word "hope" in the letter of 1 Peter, verse 21 is interpreted as the result of the action "using time as strangers with fear/reverence to God" (1:17). So, to achieve the purpose of life, namely "glorifying God," readers are asked to remember their existence as "strangers," namely people who actually have a special relationship with God who is honored through redemption, have knowledge about God's work, have life principles, and have hope as motivation to use temporary time in exile.

Thus, *πάροικος* is interpreted as a way to express missiological reality, that readers as *πάροικος* are people who are temporarily placed in certain places, to witness their theological knowledge by reflecting their identity through an attitude of reverence to God. In another section, the use of the term *πάροικος* is expressed together with *παρεπιδήμιος* (1 Pet. 2:11). This joint usage further clarifies social, theological, and even ethical and missiological reality (Naseri, 2016). As *παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμιους* (1 Pet. 2:11), geographically readers living in foreign territories of Roman provinces make them strangers who settle socially, and face further alienation because of their newly acquired

Christian status (Elliott, 1981). Ethically, readers are reminded that their behavior/way of life is considered strange in the eyes of unbelievers (4:3-4) (ethical reality).

These two words do not merely show the social difficulties faced by readers, but emphasize relationship with God through redemption (theological reality), the call to live their different way of life (missiological reality), and reflect hope with behavior that shows reverence to God (eschatological reality). The expected implication of awareness of these identity values is self-introspection, which will then become the strongest driving force/motivation to carry out ethical demands for achieving the ultimate goal, namely God's glory, harmony with Christ and eternal life.

## CONCLUSION

The use of the terms "sojourners, strangers, and elect" in the letter of 1 Peter not only affirms the social aspect for its readers. By examining the structure and argumentative strategy of the letter's composition, these terms are ultimately understood as concepts that affirm theological, ethical, and missiological realities for the readers. Theologically, readers are made aware of themselves as individuals who have been born again (cf. Eph. 2:1), possess a living hope, receive God's grace through Jesus Christ, and have a heavenly inheritance (1:3-4). Ethically, they are made aware of themselves as individuals/groups who possess a way of life that is in harmony with Christ (1:15-16, 4:1, 4:13-14, 19, 5:2), and missiologically, the recipients are made aware of a life purpose that is oriented toward the glory of God (1:3, 21; 2:12, 16, 5:10-11) and eternal life (1:4-7, 9, 11, 5:1, 4). Through this designation, readers are not only made aware of their status, but also of their motivation, behavioral guidance, and life purpose. The significance of designating the identity of sojourners, strangers, and elect for contemporary readers requires further exploration in subsequent research.

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