

1 Peter

Introduction

Author:

Peter; his name means “rock” or “stone.” He identifies himself as “*Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ*” (1:1). Internal evidence supports Peter as the author, for it was written by one who was “*a witness of the sufferings of Christ*” (5:1). Peter was assisted by Silvanus, also known as Silas (5:12), a well-known prophet and missionary in the early church (Acts 15:32-34, 40; 16:19-25; 17:14). Silas joined with Paul in writing some of his epistles (1 Thes 1:1; 2 Thes 1:1). Peter is prominent both in the Gospels and in the book of Acts. Here are some prominent facts about the author, Peter:

- He was one of three apostles closely associated with Jesus (Matt 17:1; 26:37; Mark 5:37; 13:3).
- His original name was “Simon”, but Jesus said he would be called “Cephas” which is interpreted “Peter.” (John 1:42).
- He and his brother Andrew were both fishermen (Matt 4:18, 21).
- He was a native of Bethsaida (John 1:44), later known as Capernaum.
- He had little or no education (Acts 4:13).
- He was married (Matt 8:14-15; 1 Cor 9:5)
- He performed miracles (Acts 9:32-41).
- He was a devoted and courageous man as he stood up with the eleven and preached the first gospel sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40).
- He dealt with Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11).
- He and other apostles were arrested and imprisoned (Acts 5:17-41).
- He was a central figure in the Jerusalem conference regarding the discussion on circumcision (Acts 15:6-11).
- According to tradition, he was crucified upside down in 67 A.D.

The Recipients of the Letter:

In the letter, Peter refers to the recipients of his letter as “*the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion*” (1:1). The term “**dispersion**” is used to describe the Israelites who had been scattered following the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities (700-500 B.C.). Peter’s audience was Christian “pilgrims” (2:11), who were living in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. All of these are provinces in what is now modern day Turkey. Paul had traveled to some of these areas (Bithynia being the exception - Acts 16:7), so the gospel had been given much opportunity to spread throughout the region.

The Purpose of the Epistle:

To encourage Christians in their suffering in time of persecution, and to exhort them to remain faithful. It is clearly evident by reading this epistle that Christians in Asia Minor had experienced much persecution (1:6), and obviously more suffering was coming their way (4:12-19). Twelve times the Greek word “pascho” translated “suffer”, “suffering”, and “suffered” appears in this epistle. Peter admonishes his readers to not suffer for wrong doing (4:15), but rather suffer according to the will of God (4:19). Christians can expect to be persecuted for doing God’s will (2 Tim 3:12). Throughout this epistle, Peter encourages them to remain faithful and steadfast (1:13; 4:16; 5:8-9). Even Jesus suffered and He has left us an example to follow (2:21-23; 4:1). Since Jesus had no sin, His suffering was for doing right. Peter reminds these Christians of their blessings and duties that are incumbent upon them as God’s “*elect*” (1:2), “*His own special people*” (2:9).

Time and Place of Writing:

It is generally believed that the epistle was written somewhere between 64-68 A.D., probably about 65 A.D. Most believe that Peter died during the reign of Nero. Since Nero committed suicide in 68 A.D., the epistle must be dated before that time. Peter indicates that he wrote the epistle from “Babylon” (5:13). The majority of writers hold to the view that the epistle was from Rome, supposing that “Babylon” was a figure of speech. However, such authors as Alford, Barnes, and Thiessen, believe it was written in Babylon on the Euphrates River. There seems to be more evidence in favor of this view and since the context of the scripture so states it was written from Babylon, we will let others debate whether the Babylon mentioned by Peter was literal or not.

Theme of the Epistle:

The epistle of 1 Peter is filled with practical admonitions to Christians concerning their conduct, especially as sojourners in a hostile land. They are told by Peter how to conduct their lives in the midst of those who speak evil of them; those who abuse them and so do not believe their message, simply because they are Christians. An appropriate theme for this epistle could be: “**Conduct becoming the people of God.**” This epistle logically proceeds through three themes: The grace of God in the saints’ salvation should give them an attitude of submission in the context of suffering.

Outline of 1 Peter

Part One: The Salvation of the Believer (1:1--2:12)

- I. Salutation 1:1-2
- II. Salvation of the Believer 1:3-12
 - A. Hope for the Future 1:3-4
 - B. Trials for the Present 1:5-9
 - C. Anticipation in the Past 1:10-12
- III. Sanctification of the Believer 1:13--2:12
 - A. "Be Holy" 1:13-21
 - B. "Love One Another" 1:22-25
 - C. "Desire the Pure Milk of the Word" 2:1-3
 - D. "Offer Up Spiritual Sacrifices" 2:4-10
 - E. "Abstain from Fleshly Lusters" 2:11-12

Part Two: The Submission of the Believer (2:13--3:12)

- I. Submission to the Government 2:13-17
- II. Submission in Business 2:18-25
- III. Submission in Marriage 3:1-8
- IV. Submission in All of Life 3:9-12

Part Three: The Suffering of the Believer (3:13--5:14)

- I. Conduct in Suffering 3:3-17
- II. Christ's Example of Suffering 3:18--4:6
- III. Commands in Suffering 4:7-19
- IV. Minister in Suffering 5:1-9
 - A. Elders, Shepherd the Flock 5:1-4
 - B. Saints, Humble Yourselves 5:5-9
- V. Benediction 5:10-14

Review Questions for the Introduction

1. To whom was this first epistle of Peter written? (1:1) _____

2. What internal evidence suggests these “pilgrims” may have included Gentile Christians?
(1:21) _____
3. What country today makes up the region where these Christians lived? _____
4. Who assisted Peter in this epistle? What other name is this person called? (5:12) _____

5. When was this epistle possibly written? _____
6. Where was Peter when he wrote this epistle? (5:13) _____
7. What other places might this city symbolize? _____
8. What threefold purpose did Peter have in writing this epistle? _____

9. What is suggested as the theme of this epistle? _____
10. What is suggested as the key verses in this epistle? _____

Chapter 1

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

2 elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

9 receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.

10 Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you,

11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things which angels desire to look into.

13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance;

15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,

16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;

18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,

19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you

21 who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,

23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,

24 because "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away,

25 But the word of the LORD endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

Review Questions - Chapter 1

1. What are the main points of this chapter? _____

2. To whom does Peter address this epistle? Where were they located? (1) _____

3. What three things are said concerning their election? (2) _____

4. What has God done for us according to His abundant mercy? How was this done? (3)

5. What kind of inheritance does the Christian have? Where is it now? (4) _____

6. How are Christians kept (guarded) for their salvation? (5) _____

7. In what do Christians greatly rejoice? (5-6) _____

8. What benefits can come out of enduring grievous trials? (6-7) _____

9. Though they had not seen Jesus, what is said about Peter's readers? (8) _____

10. What would they receive as the end of their faith? (9) _____

11. What did the prophets of old testify about? (10-11) _____

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12. When these prophets wondered about they were prophesying, what were they told? (12)

13. Upon what are Christians to rest their hope? (13) _____

14. As obedient children, what three admonitions are given to Christians? (14-17) _____

15. What three reasons are given to obey these admonitions (14-19) _____

16. What four things are said about Christ? (20-21) _____

17. What did God do to Jesus so that our faith and hope are in God? (21) _____

18. What two reasons are given for us to love one another fervently with a pure heart?
(22-23) _____

19. What is said of the Word of God? (23-25) _____

20. What is said about flesh and the glory of man? (24) _____

Chapter 2

2 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all guile, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking,

2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,

5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame."

7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone,"

8 and "A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

11 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,

12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

13 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme,

14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.

15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men--

16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.

17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

18 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.

19 For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.

20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.

21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

22 "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth";

23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed.

25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Review Questions - Chapter 2

1. What are the main points of this chapter? _____

2. What must we lay aside to grow spiritually? (1) _____

3. How should we long for the Word if we want to grow spiritually? (2) _____

4. What should motivate us to desire the Word with such longing? (3) _____

5. What kind of stone is used to describe Jesus? (4) _____

6. What two metaphors are used to describe Christians? (5) _____

7. What prophecy foretells the laying of a chief cornerstone in Zion? (6) _____
8. What is Jesus to those who believe in Him? To those who do not believe? (6-8) _____

9. What is the appointed end of those who do not believe and are disobedient? (8) _____

10. How are Christians described by Peter? What is their duty? Why? (9-10) _____

11. What is our duty as sojourners and pilgrims in this world? Why? (11-12) _____

Adult Bible Class

12. What is our duty toward the governments of men? Why? (13-15) _____

13. How are we to use our freedom in Christ? (16) _____

14. What four admonitions summarize our duties to others? (17) _____

15. What is the duty of servants to their masters? (18) _____

16. What is commendable before God? (19-20) _____

17. To what have we been called? (21) _____

18. How did Jesus suffer wrongly and bear it patiently? (22-23) _____

19. What good did Jesus accomplish by suffering such abuse? (24-25) _____

Chapter 3

3 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,

2 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.

3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel--

4 rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.

5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands,

6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

8 Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;

9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

10 For "He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit.

11 Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it.

12 For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil."

13 And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good?

14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison,

20 who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.

21 There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

Review Questions - Chapter 3

1. What are the main points of this chapter? _____

2. What are wives told to be in regards to their husbands? Why? (1) _____

3. What does Peter hope the unbelieving husbands will observe in their wives? (2) _____

4. What should not be the focus of their adornment? (3) _____

5. What should be the focus of their adornment? (4) _____

6. What other women so adorned themselves and were submissive to their husbands?
(5-6) _____

7. How are husbands to treat their wives? (7) _____

8. Why should husbands treat their wives so kindly? (7) _____

9. What duties do we as brethren have to one another? (8) _____

10. How are we to respond when mistreated by brethren? Why? (9) _____

11. What prescription is offered for those who would love life and see good days? (10-11)

Adult Bible Class

- 12. What is said of the righteous? Of Those who do evil? (12) _____

- 13. What is the general principle regarding persecution? (13) _____

- 14. What is said of those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake? (14) _____

- 15. How should one prepare themselves for possible persecution? (15-16) _____

- 16. If we maintain good conduct, what will happen to those who defame and revile us? (16)

- 17. If we suffer according to God's will, what is better? (17) _____

- 18. Who also suffered for righteousness' sake? For what reason? (18) _____

- 19. Though put to death in the flesh, what was He able to do by the Spirit? (18-19) _____

- 20. When were such "spirits" disobedient? (20) _____

- 21. Of what is the salvation of eight souls through water a "type"? (21) _____

- 22. How does baptism not save us? How does it save us? (21) _____

- 23. What was the final outcome of Jesus who suffered for righteousness' sake? (22) _____

Chapter 4

4 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

2 that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles--when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.

4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.

5 They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

6 For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

7 But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.

8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

9 Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.

10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

11 If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;

13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters.

16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.

17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

18 Now "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

19 Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

Review Questions - Chapter 4

1. What are the main points of this chapter? _____

2. What two reasons are given for us to have the “mind of Christ” regarding suffering? (1)

3. How should one live in whatever time they have left in the flesh? (2) _____

4. What sins are mentioned as being “the will of the Gentiles”? (3) _____

5. How do people in the world react when you no longer do such things? (4) _____

6. To whom shall they have to answer? (5) _____

7. Why was the gospel preached to those who are dead? (6) _____

8. In view of the end of all things being at hand, how should we live? (7-10) _____

9. How should one speak? How should one serve? Why? (11) _____

10. What should be our reactions to any fiery trial that may come our way? (12-13) _____

11. What do those who suffer for Christ have to look forward to? (13) _____

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12. Why is one who suffers for Christ blessed? (14) _____

13. For what reasons should a Christian not suffer? (15) _____

14. How should one react if they suffer as a Christian? (16) _____

15. Upon whom does the judgment of God begin? Who will face the greater judgment? (17)

16. Who will be “scarcely saved”? (18) _____
17. What should those who suffer according to the will of God do? (19) _____

Chapter 5

5 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed:

2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock;

4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

11 To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

12 By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.

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

14 Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Review Questions - Chapter 5

1. What are the main points of this chapter? _____

2. How does Peter identify himself as he exhorts the elders? (1) _____

3. What is the duty of the elders? (2) _____

4. How were they to serve as elders? (3-4) _____

5. What reward can elders look forward to when the Chief Shepherd appears? (5) _____

6. What twofold duty is enjoined upon those who are younger? (5) _____

7. What were they commanded to do in relation to God? (6-7) _____

8. Why were they to do this? (6-7) _____

9. Who is their adversary? What is he doing? (8) _____

10. What should they do in regards to their adversary? (8-9) _____

11. What should encourage them in their suffering? (9-10) _____

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12. By whom has Peter penned this epistle? (12) _____

13. What has been Peter's purpose in writing this epistle? (12) _____

14. Who sends them greetings? (13) _____

15. What final charge does Peter give? What final prayer? (14) _____

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