

NOTES: 1 Peter

05/07/2017

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Interesting Facts About 1 Peter

AUTHOR: Peter

TIME WRITTEN: Shortly before A.D. 64

POSITION IN THE BIBLE: 60th Book in the Bible
21st Book in the New Testament
16th of 21 Epistle Books
(Romans - Jude)
6 Books to follow it.



CHAPTERS: 5

VERSES: 105

WORDS: 2,482

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT 1 PETER:

■ Peter:

Was one of the original 12 apostles.

Was one of the inner circle of the apostles (Peter, James, & John.)

Denied Christ three times on the night of the betrayal.

He was given the keys to the kingdom of heaven.

- He opened the doors to the Jews. Acts 2

- He opened the doors to the Gentiles. Acts 11

Was married and his wife sometimes traveled with him.

1 Corinthians 9:5

Was an elder in the church. 1 Peter 5:1-4

According to tradition, Peter was crucified upside down in Rome prior to Nero's death in A.D. 68.

■ Peter authored two books of the New Testament:

1 Peter

2 Peter

■ The basic theme of 1 Peter is the proper response to Christian suffering.

■ Peter is writing to Christians in a world that is becoming increasingly hostile to them now that the Romans, as well as the Jews, are persecuting the church.

1 PETER

■ In the Book of 1 Peter:

The word suffering, and its equivalents, occur some 2 times.

The sufferings of Christ are mentioned in every chapter of 1 Peter.

■ Christ in 1 Peter:

Chapter 1 - Christ is man's source of hope and man's redeemer. 1:3, 18-19

Christ is:

- The chief cornerstone. 2:6

- Man's example. 2:21

- Man's sin-bearer. 2:24

Chapter 3 - Christ is Lord. 3:15, 22

Chapter 4 - Christ is man's sufferer. 4:1, 13

Chapter 5 - Christ is the Chief Shepherd and overseer. 5:4

■ Peter also death with:

Spiritual growth

Christian wives and their husbands

Elders

Salvation

Grace of God

Hope

The devil



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

1 Peter 2:21

Barnes Bible Charts

Interesting Facts About 2 Peter

AUTHOR: Peter

TIME WRITTEN: Shortly before A.D. 64

POSITION IN THE BIBLE: 61st Book in the Bible
22nd Book in the New Testament
17th of 21 Epistle Books
(Romans - Jude)
5 Books to follow it.



CHAPTERS: 3

VERSES: 61

WORDS: 1,559

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT 2 PETER:

■ Peter:

Was one of the original 12 apostles.

Was one of the inner circle of the apostles (Peter, James, & John.)

Denied Christ three times on the night of the betrayal.

He was given the keys to the kingdom of heaven.

- He opened the doors to the Jews. Acts 2

- He opened the doors to the Gentiles. Acts 11

Was married and his wife sometimes traveled with him.

1 Corinthians 9:5

Was an elder in the church. 1 Peter 5:1-4

According to tradition, Peter was crucified upside down in Rome prior to Nero's death in A.D. 68.

■ Peter authored two books of the New Testament:

1 Peter

2 Peter

■ 2 Peter was written not long before Peter's death.

■ Peter focuses on the internal opposition caused by false teachers whose destructive heresies (2:10) can lead Christians into error and immorality.

2 PETER

■ Peter identifies eight virtues every Christian should have in his life.

Faith

Virtue

Knowledge

Self control

Perservance

Godliness

Brotherly kindness

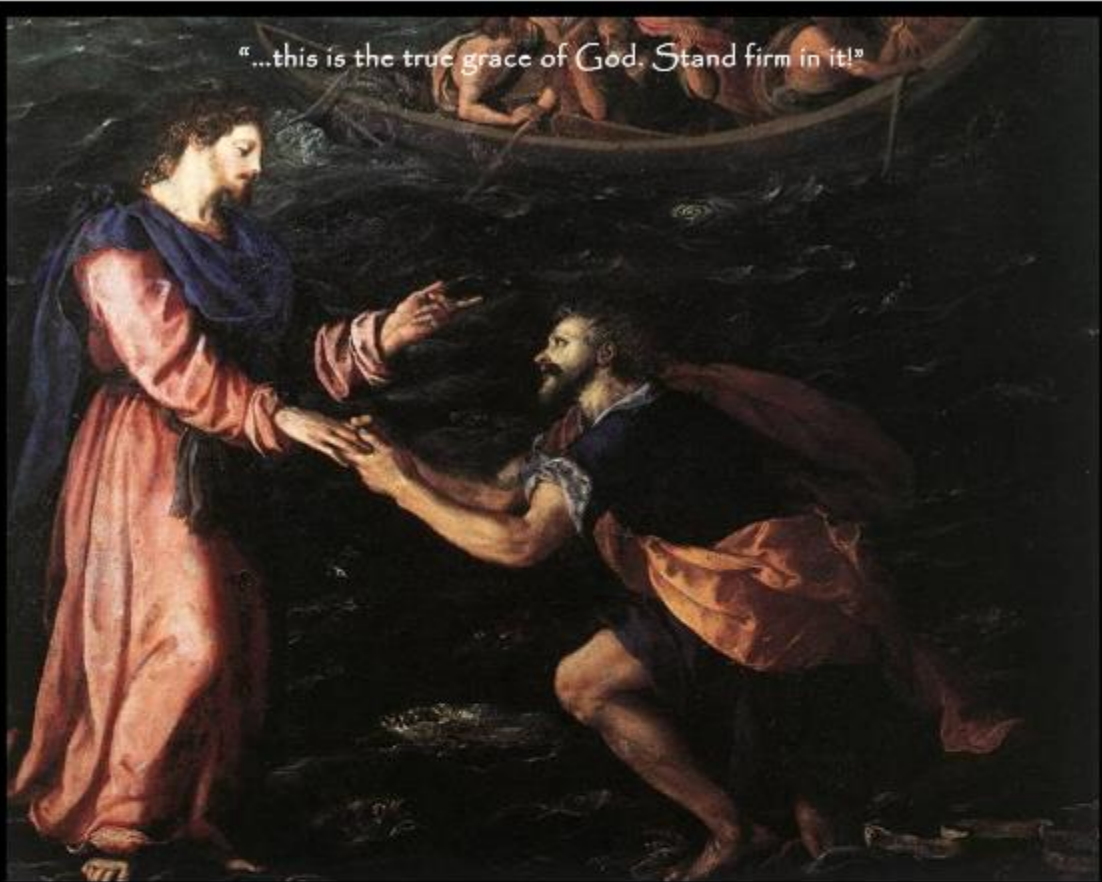
Love



The Lord is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

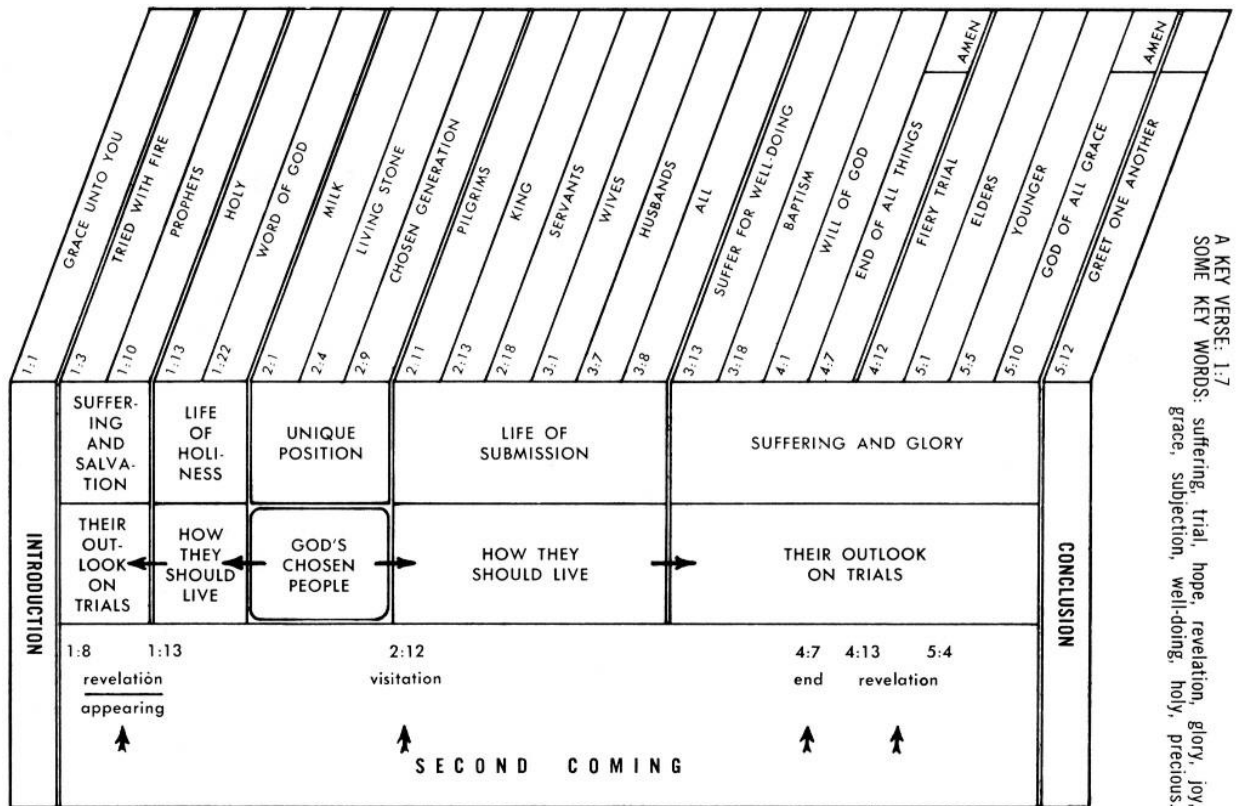
Barnes Bible Charts



“...this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!”

1 Peter

Week	Passage and Skill	Memorize	Page
Week 1	1 Peter Survey	---	pg. 5
Week 2	1 Peter 1:1-12 and “Observe Like a Pro”	1:3	pg. 7
Week 3	1 Peter 1:13-25 and “Ask Great Questions”	1:14-15	pg. 11
Week 4	1 Peter 2:1-10 and “Apply Truth to Your Life”	2:9	pg. 15
Week 5	1 Peter 2:11-25 and “See the Big Picture”	2:24	pg. 19
Week 6	1 Peter 3:1-12 and “ID the Structure”	3:12	pg. 23
Week 7	1 Peter 3:13-22 and “Discover the Answer”	3:15	pg. 27
Week 8	1 Peter 4:1-11 and “Study Key Words”	4:7-8	pg. 31
Week 9	1 Peter 4:12-19 and “Map the Passage”	4:14	pg. 36
Week 10	1 Peter 5:1-14 and “Dig Deeper”	5:6-7	pg. 41
Week 11	Synthesis	---	pg. 45
Appendix (Helpful Additional Questions, Advanced Skills, and Review of English grammar) starting on pg. 48			



FIRST PETER

	Salutation (1:1-2)	Our Living Hope and Holy Life	Our Submission and God's Honor	Our Suffering and Christ's Suffering	Conclusion (5:12-14)
		<p>"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:3)</p> <p>... for the hope we claim (1:3-12)</p> <p>... by our walk of holiness (1:13-25)</p> <p>... for our new identity in Christ (2:1-12)</p>	<p>"Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake" (2:13)</p> <p>... to the government (2:13-17)</p> <p>... at work (2:18-20)</p> <p>... like Christ (2:21-25)</p> <p>... in the home (3:1-7)</p>	<p>"Since Christ has suffered" (4:1)</p> <p>Keep a good conscience (3:16)</p> <p>Share the sufferings and rejoice (4:13)</p> <p>Commit yourselves to God (4:19)</p> <p>Be humble (5:6)</p> <p>Cast your anxiety on God (5:7)</p>	
		CHAPTERS 1:3-2:12	CHAPTERS 2:13-3:7	CHAPTERS 3:8-5:11	
Emphasis		Informing	Exhorting	Encouraging	
Grace		... to go on	... to live faithfully	... to stand firm	
Hope		A <i>living</i> hope through Christ's resurrection (1:3)	A <i>righteous</i> hope through personal submission (2:15)	A <i>trusting</i> hope through faith (4:19)	
Theme		Holy living in a hostile world; hope in the midst of suffering			
Key Verses		1:3-5, 13-16; 2:21; 4:12-13, 19; 5:10-11			
Christ in 1 Peter		Jesus is the living stone rejected by men, who has become the Cornerstone of the church and the Shepherd of our souls (2:4-10, 25).			

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<https://www.insight.org/resources/bible/the-general-epistles/first-peter>

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IHOP Bible Study: Charting of the Letter of 1 Peter

The IHOP Bible Study						CHARTING OF THE LETTER OF 1 PETER														January 2009			
Chart workshop and group consensus on chart																							
THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT Instructions for Faithful Sojourners God's Growing Season, Exhortation to follow Christ																							
NEW BIRTH NEW BIRTH You shouldn't have! Unmerited Grace Spiritual Immaturity							YOUTH SPIRITUAL PUBERTY To get to maturity you need to grow up!							ADULT ALIVE IN THE SPIRIT Doing what you are called to do									
GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION The goal of faith			LIFE STYLE OF SALVATION The work of holiness				SPIRIT GROWTH IN SALVATION		CHRISTIAN SUBMISSION					LIVE FOR A GOOD CONSCIENCE				EXHORTATION TO ELDERS AND YOUNG MEN					
To the chosen 1-for knowledge of God; 2--sanctification 3-Obedience to Son of God	Receiving the goal of your faith	The work of the Prophets	The work of Holiness	Revelation during the Last Times	Living the Word of God	Live like new born babes craving spiritual milk	Living stones in a spiritual house and a chosen people	To unbelievers a stone of stumbling	A Chosen People, a Royal Priest-hood	Instructions for the faithful	Submit to authority as God's will	Instructions for the faithful	Instructions for slaves	Instructions for wives and husbands	Fulfill intended creation to live humane and gracious	Pull your experience thru the Cross and baptism	Instructions for living for God's will	Instructions for living when the end is near	Instructions for living while suffering	Instructions for fellow Elders	Instructions for young men	Final Greeting	
1:1-2	1:3-9	1:10-12	1:13-16	1:17-21	1:22-25	2:1-3	2:4-6	2:7-8	2:9-10	2:11-12	2:13-15	2:16-17	2:18-25	3:1-7	3:8-13	3:14--22	4:1-6	4:7-11	4:12-19	5:1-4	5:5-11	5:12-14	
Session 1 -- 1: 1 – 2:3							Session 2 -- 2:4 – 3:7							Session 3 -- 3:8 – 5:14									

http://triumc.org/web1/biblestudy/1_Peter/Chart%20of%201%20Peter.pdf [PDF]

See Expanded View on Next Page...

The IHOP Bible Study													CHARTING OF THE LETTER OF 1 PETER													January 2009												
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<div>NEW BIRTH</div> <div>NEW BIRTH</div> <div>You shouldn't have!</div> <div>Unmerited Grace</div> <div>Spiritual Immaturity</div>													<div>YOUTH</div> <div>SPIRITUAL PUBERTY</div> <div>To get to maturity you need to grow up!</div>													<div>ADULT</div> <div>ALIVE IN THE SPIRIT</div> <div>Doing what you are called to do</div>												
GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION			LIFE STYLE OF SALVATION			SPIRIT GROWTH IN SALVATION			CHRISTIAN SUBMISSION			LIVE FOR A GOOD CONSCIENCE			EXHORTATION TO ELDERS AND YOUNG MEN																							
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Session 1 -- 1: 1 – 2:3						Session 2 -- 2:4 – 3:7						Session 3 -- 3:8 – 5:14																										



Source: <https://thebibleproject.com>

See Expanded View on Next Page...

Created by the Bible Project

Comparison of 1 & 2 Peter

The Books of 1 & 2 Peter

Focus	1 Peter					2 Peter					
Divisions	Salvation & Sanctification		Submission & Suffering		Steadfastness & Service	Growth in Grace		Growth in Knowledge		Growth in Expectation	
	1	2	2	3		4	5	1	2		2
Topics	Reassurance					Remembrance					
	Suffering from Without (Persecution)					Suffering from Within (False Teachers)					
Place	Written in Rome										
Time	About A.D. 63-64					About A.D. 64-66					
Author	The Apostle Peter										

COMPARISON OF POINTS OF EMPHASIS FIRST AND SECOND PETER

FIRST PETER	SECOND PETER
Letter of consolation	Letter of Warning
Encouragement for the Church	Error in the Church
Main teaching: Comfort for Suffering Saints	Main teaching: Exposure of False Teachers
Suffering of Christ	Glory of Christ
Christ - His Redemptive Title	Lord - His Title of Dominion
Hope - Enables us to Face Trials	Full Knowledge - Enables us to Recognize Error
External Opposition	Internal Opposition
Hostility	Heresy
Danger from Without	Danger from Within
Hope in the Lord's Return	Certainty of the Lord's Return
Walk in Holiness as God is Holy	Growth in Grace and Knowledge of Christ
"Pain with a Purpose"	"Poison in the Pew"

Adapted from [Jensen's Survey of the New Testament](#) and [Wilkinson and Boa's Talk Thru the Bible](#)

http://www.preceptaustin.org/1_peter_commentaries

NOTES ON 1 PETER – DR. THOMAS CONSTABLE

Introduction

Historical background

This epistle claims that the Apostle Peter wrote it (1:1). Since there is only one Peter who was an apostle, we may be confident of the identity of the writer. There is only one Peter that the entire New Testament mentioned. For parallels between 1 Peter and Peter's sermons in Acts, compare 1 Peter 1:20 [Open in Logos Bible Software (if available)] with Acts 2:23 [Open in Logos Bible Software (if available)] ; 1 Peter 2:7-8 [Open in Logos Bible Software (if available)] with Acts 4:10-11 [Open in Logos Bible Software (if available)] (cf. Matt. 21: 42 [Open in Logos Bible Software (if available)]); and 1 Peter 4:5 [Open in Logos Bible Software (if available)] with Acts 10:42 [Open in Logos Bible Software (if available)] .[1] Scholars did not question Peter's authorship until the nineteenth century when destructive biblical criticism became popular.[2] Since then, the views that Silvanus wrote the epistle, or co-wrote it with Peter, or that an anonymous writer composed it in Peter's name after Peter's death, have been the more popular ones.[3]

"The epistle has been well known and consistently acknowledged as Petrine from the second century well into modern times. . . .

"Aside from the four Gospels and the letters of Paul, the external attestation for 1 Peter is as strong, or stronger, than that for any NT book. There is no evidence anywhere of controversy over its authorship or authority"[4]

In contrast, there has been much controversy over the authorship of 2 Peter.

Peter first sent this letter to believers living in the northern regions of Asia Minor (1:1). This was not a region that Paul ever evangelized, as far as we know. The locations of these Christians, as well as allusions in the epistle, indicate that they were mainly Gentiles, but also Jews (cf. 1:14, 18; 2:9-10, 25; 3:6; 4:3-4).

Peter died in the 60s, and spent the last decade of his life in Rome, according to reliable tradition. The exact date of Peter's martyrdom is a matter of debate among scholars. Some believe that the traditional date of Peter's death was A.D. 64.[5] Another claimed that it was A.D. 67.[6] Many interpreters have regarded Peter's reference to "Babylon" (5:13) as a coded reference to "Rome," that Peter described as "Babylon" in order to highlight its paganism.

"Since the historical city of Babylon in Mesopotamia, often mentioned in the pages of the Old Testament, had no Jewish population in Peter's day (see Josephus, Ant. 18.371-79) and was almost deserted in A.D. 115 when the Emperor Trajan visited, almost no one thinks Peter wrote his letter from there. Another, very small Roman military colony in Egypt called 'Babylon' existed in Peter's day, but this too is a very unlikely provenance for 1 Peter."[7]

In view of all this information, it seems likely that Peter wrote this epistle from Rome about A.D. 64.[8]

Special Features

Theologically, this epistle is eschatological (dealing with the end times). Along with its eschatological focus, there is much emphasis on holiness (personal, social, and communal), hope, salvation, community, relationship to the world, the Trinity, and especially suffering.[9]

"Nowhere in the New Testament . . . are the priestly and the prophetic elements in Christianity so closely fused as in 1 Peter."[10]

". . . much of the material in 1 Peter is the stuff of basic Christian teaching rather than advanced instruction that assumes the mastery (and perhaps the perversion) of the basics, as in the Pauline letters." [11]

". . . despite its brevity—only 105 verses in all—it is a microcosm of Christian faith and duty, the model of a pastoral charge, composed of divers materials and of many themes." [12]

"Probably no other letter in the New Testament is said to rely so much on traditional material as is 1 Peter. . . . Scholars estimate that no other book in the New Testament, with the exception of Hebrews and Revelation, depends so heavily on the Old Testament." [13]

"The Greek of the letter is smooth and competent, with rhetorical flourishes. Indeed, along with Hebrews and Luke-Acts, it is some of the best Greek in the New Testament." [14]

"In many . . . respects, 1 Peter and James form a matched pair within the NT canon. They are Christian diaspora letters roughly similar in length, one directed (probably from Jerusalem) to scattered messianic Jews (i.e., Christians) who are real Jews, and the other directed from 'Babylon' to scattered 'Jews' who are in fact Gentile Christians." [15]

As James is an exposition of Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount" in Matthew 5—7, 1 Peter expounds some of the same themes that Jesus taught in His discipleship discourse in Matthew 10.

Purpose

Peter stated his reason for writing, namely, to encourage his readers, who were facing persecution for their faith, to "stand firm" (5:12). Evidently this persecution was widespread among his readers. Local enemies of the gospel were not the only people responsible for it. When Paul traveled around the Roman Empire preaching the gospel, some churches that he planted experienced persecution from the unsaved in their communities, but others did not. However, 1 Peter reflects persecution of the Christians throughout northern Asia Minor. This condition prevailed after Nero blamed the Christians for burning Rome in July of A.D. 64. While persecution seems to have been widespread, it may not have been official yet. [16]

Outline

- I. Introduction 1:1-2
- II. The identity of Christians 1:3—2:10
 - A. Our great salvation 1:3-12
 - 1. The hope of our salvation 1:3-5
 - 2. The joy of our salvation 1:6-9
 - 3. The witnesses of our salvation 1:10-12
 - B. Our new way of life 1:13-25
 - 1. A life of holiness 1:13-16
 - 2. A life of reverence 1:17-21
 - 3. A life of love 1:22-25

- C. Our priestly calling 2:1-10
 - 1. Listening to God 2:1-3
 - 2. Growing in God 2:4-5
 - 3. Building on Christ 2:6-8
 - 4. Summary affirmation of our identity 2:9-10
- III. The responsibilities of Christians individually 2:11—4:11
 - A. Our mission in the world 2:11-12
 - B. Respect for others 2:13—3:12
 - 1. Respect for everyone 2:13-17
 - 2. Slaves' respect for their masters 2:18-25
 - 3. Wives' respect for their husbands 3:1-6
 - 4. Husbands' respect for their wives 3:7
 - 5. The importance of loving enemies 3:8-12
 - C. Eventual vindication 3:13—4:6
 - 1. Suffering for doing good 3:13-17
 - 2. The vindication of Christ 3:18-22
 - 3. Living with the promise in view 4:1-6
 - D. The importance of mutual love in end-times living 4:7-11
- IV. The responsibilities of Christians collectively 4:12—5:11
 - A. The fiery trial 4:12-19
 - 1. Suffering and glory 4:12-14
 - 2. Suffering as Christians 4:15-19
 - B. The church under trial 5:1-11
 - 1. The responsibilities of the elders 5:1-4
 - 2. The responsibilities of the others 5:5
 - 3. The importance of humility and trust in God 5:6-7
 - 4. The importance of resisting the devil 5:8-11
- V. Conclusion 5:12-14

Message

One writer has identified five major motifs in 1 Peter. These are: (1) the believer's behavior, (2) the believer's unfair circumstances, (3) the believer's deference, (4) the believer's motivation by Christ's

example, and (5) the believer's anticipation of future glory. Putting these together, he has stated the message of 1 Peter as follows:

"The behavior of believers when they encounter unfair circumstances reflects a spirit of deference in all relationships as they follow Christ's example and anticipate future glory." [17]

This is a very fine statement of what the Holy Spirit has said to us through Peter in this epistle. However, I would add one more important motif. It is the believer's resource of God's grace. This is not an incidental motif but one that underlies all of what Peter called on his readers to do. We must understand and apply what he wrote about God's grace as our resource in order to obey his exhortations.

It seems to me that Peter stated the message of this epistle clearly: "Stand firm in the true grace of God" (5:12).

The subject of the letter, therefore, is "the true grace of God." "Grace" is the key word in the argument of this epistle. In each case, the word "grace" occurs in the practical, rather than in the doctrinal, part of each section of the letter. Throughout 1 Peter, the fact of God's grace was in Peter's mind as crucial to the believer's practice. How does one explain God's grace? "Grace" means both "undeserved favor" and "divine enablement." A good synonym is God's "help."

The main purpose of this epistle was to strengthen the readers so they would persevere through their persecution with the right attitude. Peter did this by showing that God's grace provided all that they needed for strength. In a larger sense, the purpose is to help Christians know how to live as "aliens" in the world.

This epistle reveals, above all else, that God's grace is sufficient for all our needs. We could write over this whole book: 2 Corinthians 12:9 [Open in Logos Bible Software (if available)] , "My grace is sufficient for you." Notice five things that Peter reminds us about God's grace, as we trace his references to grace through 1 Peter.

First, grace proceeds from God. God in His grace has chosen Christians (1:2a). Now we need to appropriate God's grace in its fullest measure in our experience (1:2b).

Second, grace produces confidence. The prophets foretold God's grace (1:10). The two advents of Jesus Christ supply God's grace (1:13). Grace came into the world at His first advent, through His sufferings and death. It will come into the world again at His second advent, through His glorification. This pattern gives us confidence. God has united us with Christ. As He suffered once, we suffer now. As certainly as He will receive glory in the future, we too will experience glorification in the future. We need to remember our hope. (cf. James 1).

Third, what proclaims God's grace is our conduct (2:19-20). The Christian's conduct in trying and difficult circumstances manifests God's grace in a human life. The submissive conduct of servants, whose masters are persecuting them, manifests God's grace. The submissive conduct of wives, whose antagonistic husbands are persecuting them, manifests grace. The submissive conduct of husbands, whom unbelievers are persecuting, manifests grace. The husband demonstrates his submission to God by treating his wife as a "fellow heir" of God's grace (3:7). Our patient endurance of trials displays our submission to God's will. Thus the Christian's conduct should manifest God's grace. Sometimes we marvel at the ability that God gives his persecuted saints to endure. We say, "How can he (or she) do it?" They can do it because God provides grace.

Fourth, grace perfects character. Grace is the source of service (4:10). Grace is also the source of humility (5:5). An attitude of humility manifests itself in service of others. God's grace is the secret of both the attitude and the activity. Jesus established "The Order of the Towel" by washing the disciples' feet (John 13).

Fifth, grace promotes courage (5:10). We need courage to resist the devil (5:8-9). God's grace gives us strength to defend ourselves against his attacks.

This epistle exhorts us to "stand firm" in this grace (5:12). This is Peter's appeal to his Christian readers.

When God tries our faith, we need to remember that we have an adequate source of "strength" in God's grace (2 Cor. 12:9).

When our faith is trembling, we need to remember that we have an adequate source of "confidence" in God's grace. This is not simply positive thinking, but real external help.

When our circumstances are difficult, we need to remember that we have an adequate source of "conduct" in God's grace, not just "pep talks."

When we suffer for conscience's sake, we need to remember that we have an adequate source of "character" in God's grace, not just self-effort.

When assaulted by the adversary, we need to remember that we have an adequate source of "courage" in God's grace. Some need courage to evangelize, others need it to do other forms of ministry.

We "stand firm in the true grace of God" when we respond to suffering for Christ's sake as Peter directed. God's grace is what we need to rely on, as we commit ourselves to continue to walk in the will of God. We need to trust and obey![18]



<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/htm/NT/1%20Peter/1Peter.htm>

Brief Summary. Peter wrote his epistle to comfort and strengthen the Christians that were under severe persecution. He speaks about the glory of their inheritance in heaven, which is reserved for those who are suffering for the sake of Christ. He also wrote his epistle to reinforce all of their instruction regarding living the Christian life. Peter exhorts every Christian to abstain from worldly pleasures and serve the living God. He encourages believers to be ready to give a defense of their Christianity, and to display love toward one another. He also encourages them to be strong in their faith and to remove any doubts. He assures them that they were not following "cunningly devised fables" but had received the truths concerning Lord Jesus Christ, to whose glory the apostle Peter himself have been an eyewitness. (Matthew 17)

<http://www.bible-history.com/new-testament/bookof1peter.html>

1. What threefold purpose did Peter have in writing this epistle?

- To encourage steadfastness in the face of persecution (5:10)
- To remind them of their special privilege as God's "holy nation" (2:9)
- To instruct them as to their proper conduct (2:11-12)

2. What is suggested as the theme of this epistle?

- Conduct becoming the people of God

3. What is suggested as the key verses in this epistle?

- [1 Pe 2:11-12](#)

4. According to the outline offered above, what are two main divisions of this epistle?

- Our salvation in Christ

<https://www.blueletterbible.org/study/eo/1Pe/1Pe000.cfm>

Why We Can Rejoice in Suffering (John Piper on 1 Peter: 4:12-19)

<http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/why-we-can-rejoice-in-suffering>

Peter's relationship to Paul

Peter makes a reference to having difficulty reading Paul's letters (2 Pet. 3:15-16), so we know that Peter had copies of Paul's material. Paul wrote his letter to the Romans in the winter of AD 56-57, and Peter is in Rome immediately after this time. In 1 Peter 2, Peter seems to be interacting with Romans 9-10. In fact, he quotes the same string of OT verses that Paul does. This is such a "coincidence" that it leads us to think that Peter was reading from Paul's work. It would be like seeing the "coincidence" of seeing two term papers with the same citations and typos in it: you would conclude that one was copying from the other.

- Romans 9:33 and 1 Peter 2:6 both quote Isaiah 28:16 ("Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense").
- Romans 10:11 and 1 Peter 2:6 both quote Isaiah 28:16 ("Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed").
- Romans 9:25 and 1 Peter 2:10 quotes Hosea 1:10 ("I will call those who were not My people, 'My people'").

<http://www.evidenceunseen.com/bible-difficulties-2/nt-difficulties/1-2-timothy-titus-philemon-hebrews-james-1-2-peter/introduction-to-1-2-peter/>

Top 1 Peter Verses (by ranking):

<http://topverses.com/Bible/1Peter>

Note: Every verse in the Bible sorted by how often it is referenced across the internet

TOP 5 Most Popular Verses

1 Peter 2:3

Bible Rank: 120

Now that you have tasted that the Lord is good. **NIV**

1 Peter 3:15

Bible Rank: 122

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect **NIV**

1 Peter 2:9

Bible Rank: 131

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. **NIV**

1 Peter 3:18

Bible Rank: 213

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. **NIV**

1 Peter 2:24

Bible Rank: 221

*"He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." **NIV***

Most Popular Verses in 1 Peter

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil...

1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an ...

1 Peter 4:8 And above all things have fervent charity among yoursel...

1 Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his e...

1 Peter 1:7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious ...

<http://www.godvine.com/bible/1-peter>

Additional Study References:

1 Peter Commentaries and Sermons

http://www.preceptaustin.org/1_peter_commentaries

1 Peter – A Study Guide (Copeland)

http://executableoutlines.com/pdf/1pe_sg.pdf

Notes on 1 Peter (Dr. Thomas Constable)

<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf> [PDF]

<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/htm/NT/1%20Peter/1Peter.htm>

also check out: Talking to God: What the Bible Teaches about Prayer

<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/prayer/prayer.pdf>

1 Peter - Inductive Bible Study

<http://inductive.indubiblia.org/1-peter-1>

Workbook on 1 Peter (Padfield)

<http://padfield.com/acrobat/nt/peter.pdf> [PDF]

The Life and Letters of the Apostle Peter (1 & 2 Peter)

<http://padfield.com/acrobat/asher/apostle-peter.pdf> [PDF]

Precepts for Life – How to Stand Firm When Tested (Study of 1 Peter)

http://store.precept.org/user_uploaded/documents/1%20Peter%20PUP%20L1%20NAS.pdf [PDF]

1 Peter – Notes and Outlines (McGee)

http://www.tb.org/docs/default-source/notes-outlines/no44_1-peter.pdf?sfvrsn=2 [PDF]

<http://www.tb.org/resources/study-guides/1-peter-study-guide> (online)

Summary of 1 Peter

<http://www.bible-history.com/new-testament/bookof1peter.html>

1 Peter: Suffering and Glory

<http://overviewbible.com/1-peter/>

First Peter: Introduction, Argument, and Outline (Wallace)

<https://bible.org/seriespage/21-first-peter-introduction-argument-and-outline>

Bible.org Links on 1 Peter

<https://bible.org/book/1%20Peter>

Bible.org 23-Part Series on 1 Peter

<https://bible.org/series/1-peter>

Bible.org Introduction to the Book of 1 Peter

<https://bible.org/article/introduction-book-1-peter>

Charles Swindoll: 1 Peter

<https://www.insight.org/resources/bible/the-general-epistles/first-peter> (includes audio)

Jeff Smith: 1st and 2nd Peter – A Living Hope...A Sure Salvation

<http://www.biblestudyguide.org/ebooks/jeffsmith/1-2-peter.pdf>

Charts

<http://www.biblestudyguide.org/ebooks/jeffsmith/1-2-peter-charts.pdf> [PDF]

J.S. Smith: 1 & 2 Peter

<http://www.biblestudyguide.org/ebooks/jssmith/NT/NT10.pdf> [PDF]

Simon Peter Timeline in Biblical History

<http://totallyhistory.com/biblical-history/simon-peter-the-apostle/>

Apostle Peter Biography: Timeline, Life, and Death

<http://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/apostle-peter-biography-timeline-life-and-death/>

1 Peter – IVP Bible Background Commentary, 2nd Ed. [BBC2]

[Intro \(JFB\)](#) [Intro \(NBC\)](#) [Intro \(HBH\)](#) [Map](#) [Timeline of Peter](#)

Chapters [1](#) – [2](#) – [3](#) – [4](#) – [5](#) – [Conclusion](#)

INTRODUCTION (from BBC2)

Introduction

Authorship. Although some commentators question Petrine authorship, others have argued forcefully for it; the situation presupposed in the letter fits Peter's lifetime. The tradition of Peter's martyrdom in Rome is virtually unanimous. By the late first century 1 Clement accepted this tradition, and excavations indicate a second-century memorial in Rome to Peter's martyrdom. Other early Christian traditions also support this tradition as well as the view that Peter was the author of the letter, which is cited by authors from the beginning of the second century.

Given this tradition of his martyrdom in Rome, the likelihood that letters he wrote would be preserved, and the fact that most letters were either authentic or written long after the purported author's death, the burden of proof is on those who deny that Peter wrote the letter. One commentator (Selwyn) thought he could detect parallels to Silas's (5:12) style in 1 and 2 Thessalonians. This argument alone is not conclusive, but arguments against Petrine authorship are even weaker (for those based on Greek style, see introduction to James).

Date. Three basic periods of persecution have been suggested as the background: the time of Trajan (early second century), the time of Domitian (see introduction to Revelation) and the time of Nero, which would be the time of Peter's martyrdom. First Peter implies an atmosphere of severe repression, but not the official court prosecutions of Trajan's time. Church leadership in the epistle (5:1-2) also fits the first-century model better than a later date. A pseudonymous letter attributed to Peter as early as the Flavian period (after Nero but still first century) is unlikely.

Unity. The first section of 1 Peter (1:1-4:6) does not explicitly indicate that fatal persecution has begun; the second part (4:7-5:14) is more explicit. Some writers have therefore divided the letter into two parts, usually arguing that the former was a baptismal homily (due to abundant parallels with other parts of the New Testament). But the difference of situation presupposed between the two sections is not significant enough to warrant such a division, and there appear no other compelling reasons to divide them.

Provenance and Audience. It is widely agreed that "Babylon" (5:13) is a cryptic name for Rome (linked early in Jewish views on the four kingdoms), as in some Jewish works and undoubtedly in the book of Revelation. The situation of persecution described here fits Rome, and it would be appropriate for Peter to send advance warning of that situation to believers in Asia Minor, the stronghold of emperor worship. An audience in Asia Minor would probably include Jewish Christians, but Peter's audience probably includes Gentile Christians (cf. 1:18; 4:3-4).

Situation. A fire devastated Rome in A.D. 64 but suspiciously left unscathed the estates of Nero and his older boyfriend Tigellinus. Like any good politician, Nero needed a scapegoat for his ills, and what appeared to be a new religion, understood as a fanatical form of Judaism begun by an executed teacher three and a half decades before, filled the need perfectly.

Romans viewed Christians, like Jews, as antisocial. Certain charges became so common that they were stereotypical by the second century: Romans viewed Christians as "atheists" (like some philosophers, for

rejecting the gods), "cannibals" (for claiming to eat Jesus' "body" and drink his "blood") and incestuous (for statements like "I love you, brother," or "I love you, sister"). Judaism was a poor target for outright persecution, because its adherents were numerous and it was popular in some circles; further, Nero's mistress, Poppaea Sabina, was a patron of Jewish causes. By contrast, Christianity was viewed as a form of Judaism whose support was tenuous even in Jewish circles, and therefore it offered an appropriate political scapegoat.

According to the early-second-century historian Tacitus (*Annals* 15.44), who disliked Christians himself, Nero burned Christians alive as torches to light his gardens at night. He killed other Christians in equally severe ways (e.g., feeding them to wild animals for public entertainment). In all, he may have murdered thousands of Rome's Christians, although most Christians there escaped his grasp. Thus, even though the Greek part of the empire loved Nero, Christians saw him as a prototype of the antichrist. Nero died in disgrace several years later, pursued by fellow Romans who hated him.

Genre. First Peter appears to be a general letter, influenced more by the situation in Rome than by the current situation in Asia Minor (what is now western Turkey); thus Peter can address it as a circular letter to many regions of Asia Minor (1:1). Peter does, however, seem to expect that the sufferings of Rome will eventually materialize in other parts of the empire. On events in Asia Minor three decades later, see the discussion of background in the introduction to Revelation. Leaders of the Jerusalem priesthood sent out encyclicals, letters to Diaspora Jewish communities, by means of messengers; Peter's letter is similar to these but on a smaller scale of readership.

Commentaries. One of the most helpful for those who do not work with the Greek text is J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude* (reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981). More technical works that are helpful for background include Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990); John H. Elliott, *1 Peter*, AB 37B (New York: Doubleday, 2000); Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005); J. R. Michaels, *1 Peter*, WBC 49 (Waco, TX: Word, 1988); and E. G. Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1947). Two of the best specialized works are David L. Balch, *Let Wives Be Submissive: The Domestic Code in 1 Peter*, SBLMS 26 (Chico, CA: Scholars, 1981), and William J. Dalton, *Christ's Proclamation to the Spirits: A Study of 1 Peter 3:18-4:6*, *Analecta Biblica* 23 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1965).

INTRODUCTION (from JFB Commentary)

Its genuineness is attested by 2Pe 3:1. On the authority of Second Peter, see the *Introduction*. Also by Polycarp (in Eusebius [*Ecclesiastical History*, 4.14]), who, in writing to the Philippians, quotes many passages: in the second chapter he quotes 1Pe 1:13,21; 3:9; in the fifth chapter, 1Pe 2:11. Eusebius says of Papias [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.39] that he, too, quotes Peter's First Epistle. Irenæus [*Against Heresies*, 4.9.2] expressly mentions it; and in [4.16.5], 1Pe 2:16. Clement of Alexandria [*Miscellanies*, 1 . 3 , p. 544], quotes 1Pe 2:11,12,15,16; and [p. 562], 1Pe 1:21,22; and [4 , p. 584], 1Pe 3:14-17; and [p. 585], 1Pe 4:12-14. Origen (in Eusebius [*Ecclesiastical History*, 6.25]) mentions this Epistle; in [*Homily 7* , on Joshua, vol. 2, p. 63], he mentions *both* Epistles; and [*Commentary on Ps 3 and on John*], he mentions 1Pe 3:18-21. Tertullian [*Antidote to the Scorpion's Sting*, 12], quotes expressly 1Pe 2:20,21; and [*Antidote to the Scorpion's Sting*, 14], 1Pe 2:13,17. Eusebius states it as the opinion of those before him that this was among *the universally acknowledged* Epistles. The *Peschito Syriac Version* contains it. The fragment of the canon called Muratori's omits it. Excepting this, and the Paulician heretics, who rejected it, all ancient testimony is on its side. The *internal evidence* is equally strong. The author calls himself the apostle Peter, 1Pe 1:1, and "a witness of Christ's sufferings," and an "elder," 1Pe 5:1. The energy of the style harmonizes with the warmth of Peter's character; and, as

Erasmus says, this Epistle is full of apostolic dignity and authority and is worthy of the leader among the apostles.

Peter's personal history.—Simon, Or Simeon, was a native of Bethsaida on the Sea of Galilee, son of Jonas or John. With his father and his brother Andrew he carried on trade as a fisherman at Capernaum, his subsequent place of abode. He was a married man, and tradition represents his wife's name as *Concordia* or *Perpetua*. Clement of Alexandria says that she suffered martyrdom, her husband encouraging her to be faithful unto death, "Remember, dear, our Lord." His wife's mother was restored from a fever by Christ. He was brought to Jesus by his brother Andrew, who had been a disciple of John the Baptist, but was pointed to the Saviour as "the Lamb of God" by his master (Jn 1:29). Jesus, on first beholding him, gave him the name by which chiefly he is known, indicative of his subsequent character and work in the Church, "Peter" (*Greek*) or "Cephas" (*Aramaic*), a *stone* (Mt 4:18). He did not join our Lord finally until a subsequent period. The leading incidents in his apostolic life are well known: his walking on the troubled waters to meet Jesus, but sinking through doubting (Mt 14:30); his bold and clear acknowledgment of the divine person and office of Jesus (Mt 16:16; Mk 8:29; Jn 11:27), notwithstanding the difficulties in the way of such belief, whence he was then also designated as *the stone*, or *rock* (Mt 16:18); but his rebuke of his Lord when announcing what was so unpalatable to carnal prejudices, Christ's coming passion and death (Mt 16:22); his passing from one extreme to the opposite, in reference to Christ's offer to wash his feet (Jn 13:8,9); his self-confident assertion that *he* would never forsake his Lord, whatever others might do (Mt 26:33), followed by his base denial of Christ thrice with curses (Mt 26:75); his deep penitence; Christ's full forgiveness and prophecy of his faithfulness unto death, after he had received from him a profession of "love" as often repeated as his previous denial (Jn 21:15-17). These incidents illustrate his character as zealous, pious, and ardently attached to the Lord, but at the same time impulsive in feeling, rather than calmly and continuously steadfast. Prompt in action and ready to avow his convictions boldly, he was hasty in judgment, precipitate, and too self-confident in the assertion of his own steadfastness; the result was that, though he abounded in animal courage, his moral courage was too easily overcome by fear of man's opinion. A wonderful change was wrought in him by his restoration after his fall, through the grace of his risen Lord. His zeal and ardor became sanctified, being chastened by a spirit of unaffected humility. His love to the Lord was, if possible, increased, while his mode of manifesting it now was in doing and suffering for His name, rather than in loud protestations. Thus, when imprisoned and tried before the Sanhedrim for preaching Christ, he boldly avowed his determination to continue to do so. He is well called "the mouth of the apostles." His faithfulness led to his apprehension by Herod Agrippa, with a view to his execution, from which, however, he was delivered by the angel of the Lord.

After the ascension he took the lead in the Church; and on the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, he exercised the designed power of "the keys" of Christ's kingdom, by opening the door of the Church, in preaching, for the admission of thousands of Israelites; and still more so in opening (in obedience to a special revelation) an entrance to the "devout" (that is, Jewish proselyte from heathendom) *Gentile*, Cornelius: the forerunner of the harvest gathered in from *idolrous* Gentiles at Antioch. This explains in what sense Christ used as to him the words, "Upon this rock I will build my Church" (Mt 16:18), namely, on the preaching of Christ, the true "Rock," by connection with whom only he was given the designation: a title shared in common on the same grounds by the rest of the apostles, as the first founders of the Church on Christ, "the chief corner-stone" (Ep 2:20). A name is often given in *Hebrew*, not that the person is actually the thing itself, but has some special relation to it; as Elijah means *Mighty Jehovah*, so Simon is called Peter "the rock," not that he is so, save by connection with Jesus, the only true Rock (Isa 28:16; 1Co 3:11). As subsequently he identified himself with "Satan," and is therefore *called* so (Mt 16:23), in the same way, by his clear confession of Christ, the Rock, he became identified with Him, and is accordingly so called (Mt 16:18). It is certain that there is no instance on record of Peter's having ever claimed or exercised supremacy; on the contrary, he is represented as *sent*

by the apostles at Jerusalem to confirm the Samaritans baptized by Philip the deacon; again at the council of Jerusalem, not he, but James the president, or leading bishop in the Church of that city, pronounced the authoritative decision: Ac 15:19, "My *sentence* is," &c. A kind of primacy, doubtless (though certainly not supremacy), was given him on the ground of his age, and prominent earnestness, and boldness in taking the lead on many important occasions. Hence he is called "first" in enumerating the apostles. Hence, too, arise the phrases, "Peter and the Eleven," "Peter and the rest of the apostles"; and Paul, in going up to Jerusalem after his conversion, went to see Peter in particular.

Once only he again betrayed the same spirit of vacillation through fear of man's reproach which had caused his denial of his Lord. Though at the Jerusalem council he advocated the exemption of Gentile converts from the ceremonial observances of the law, yet he, after having associated in closest intercourse with the Gentiles at Antioch, withdrew from them, through dread of the prejudices of his Jewish brethren who came from James, and timidly dissembled his conviction of the religious equality of Jew and Gentile; for this Paul openly withstood and rebuked him: a plain refutation of his alleged *supremacy* and *infallibility* (except where specially inspired, as in writing his Epistles). In all other cases he showed himself to be, indeed, as Paul calls him, "a pillar" (Ga 2:9). Subsequently we find him in "Babylon," whence he wrote this First Epistle to the Israelite believers of the dispersion, and the Gentile Christians united in Christ, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

Jerome [*On Illustrious Men*, 1] states that "Peter, after having been bishop of Antioch, and after having preached to the believers of the circumcision in Pontus, &c. [plainly inferred from 1Pe 1:1], in the second year of Claudius went to Rome to refute Simon Magus, and for twenty-five years there held the episcopal chair, down to the last year of Nero, that is, the fourteenth, by whom he was crucified with his head downwards, declaring himself unworthy to be crucified as his Lord, and was buried in the Vatican, near the triumphal way." Eusebius [*Chronicles*, Anno 3], also asserts his episcopate at Antioch; his assertion that Peter founded that Church contradicts Ac 11:19-22. His journey to Rome to oppose Simon Magus arose from Justin's story of the statue found at Rome (really the statue of the Sabine god, *Semo Sanctus*, or Hercules, mistaken as if Simon Magus were worshipped by that name, "Simoni Deo Sancto"; found in the Tiber in 1574, or on an island in the Tiber in 1662), combined with the account in Ac 8:9-24. The twenty-five years' bishopric is chronologically impossible, as it would make Peter, at the interview with Paul at Antioch, to have been then for some years bishop of Rome! His crucifixion is certain from Christ's prophecy, Jn 21:18,19. Dionysius of Corinth (in Eusebius [*Ecclesiastical History*, 2.25]) asserted in an epistle to the Romans, that Paul and Peter planted both the Roman and Corinthian churches, and endured martyrdom in Italy at the same time. So Tertullian [*Against Marcion*, 4 . 5 , and *The Prescription Against Heretics*, 36, 38]. Also Caius, the presbyter of Rome, in Eusebius [*Ecclesiastical History*, 2.25] asserts that some memorials of their martyrdom were to be seen at Rome on the road to Ostia. So Eusebius [*Ecclesiastical History*, 2 . 25 , and *Demonstration of the Gospel*, 3.116]. So Lactantius [*Of the Manner in Which the Persecutors Died*, 2]. Many of the details are palpably false; whether the *whole* be so or not is dubious, considering the tendency to concentrate at Rome events of interest [Alford]. What is certain is, that Peter was not there before the writing of the Epistle to the Romans (A.D. 58), otherwise he would have been mentioned in it; nor during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, otherwise he would have been mentioned in some one of Paul's many other Epistles written from Rome; nor during Paul's second imprisonment, at least when he was writing the Second Epistle to Timothy, just before his martyrdom. He *may* have gone to Rome after Paul's death, and, as common tradition represents, been imprisoned in the Mamertine dungeon, and crucified on the Janiculum, on the eminence of St. Pietro in Montorio, and his remains deposited under the great altar in the center of the famous basilica of St. Peter. Ambrose [*Epistles*, 33 (Edition Paris, 1586), p. 1022] relates that St. Peter, not long before his death, being overcome by the solicitations of his fellow Christians to save himself, was fleeing from Rome when he was met by our Lord, and on asking, "Lord, whither

goest Thou?" received the answer, "I go to be crucified afresh." On this he returned and joyfully went to martyrdom. The church called " *Domine quo vadis* " on the Appian Way, commemorates the legend. It is not unlikely that the whole tradition is built on the connection which existed between Paul and Peter. As Paul, "the apostle of the uncircumcision," wrote Epistles to Galatia, Ephesus, and Colosse, and to Philemon at Colosse, making the Gentile Christians the persons prominently addressed, and the Jewish Christians subordinately so; so, vice versa, Peter, "the apostle of the circumcision," addressed the same churches, the Jewish Christians in them primarily, and the Gentile Christians also, secondarily.

To whom he addresses this epistle.—The heading, 1Pe 1:1, "to the elect strangers (spiritually *pilgrims*) of the dispersion" (*Greek*), clearly marks the Christians of the *Jewish* dispersion as prominently addressed, but still including also *Gentile* Christians as grafted into the Christian Jewish stock by adoption and faith, and so being part of the true Israel. 1Pe 1:14; 2:9,10; 3:6; 4:3 clearly prove this. Thus he, the apostle of the circumcision, sought to unite in one Christ Jew and Gentile, promoting thereby the same work and doctrine as Paul the apostle of the uncircumcision. The provinces are named by Peter in the heading in the order proceeding from northeast to south and west. Pontus was the country of the Christian Jew Aquila. To Galatia Paul paid two visits, founding and confirming churches. Crescens, his companion, went there about the time of Paul's last imprisonment, just before his martyrdom. Ancyra was subsequently its ecclesiastical metropolis. Men of Cappadocia, as well as of "Pontus" and "Asia," were among the hearers of Peter's effective sermon on the Pentecost whereon the Spirit descended on the Church; these probably brought home to their native land the first tidings of the Gospel. Proconsular "Asia" included Mysia, Lydia, Caria, Phrygia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia. In Lycaonia were the churches of Iconium, founded by Paul and Barnabas; of Lystra, Timothy's birthplace, where Paul was stoned at the instigation of the Jews; and of Derbe, the birthplace of Gaius, or Caius. In Pisidia was Antioch, where Paul was the instrument of converting many, but was driven out by the Jews. In Caria was Miletus, containing doubtless a Christian Church. In Phrygia, Paul preached both times when visiting Galatia in its neighborhood, and in it were the churches of Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse, of which last Church Philemon and Onesimus were members, and Archippus and Epaphras leaders. In Lydia was the Philadelphian Church, favorably noticed in Rev 3:7, &c.; that of Sardis, the capital, and of Thyatira, and of Ephesus, founded by Paul, and a scene of the labors of Aquila and Priscilla and Apollos, and subsequently of more than two whole years' labor of Paul again, and subsequently censured for falling from its first love in Rev 2:4. Smyrna of Ionia was in the same quarter, and as one of the seven churches receives unqualified praise. In Mysia was Pergamos. Troas, too, is known as the scene of Paul's preaching and raising Eutychus to life (Ac 20:6-10), and of his subsequently staying for a time with Carpus (2Ti 4:13). Of "Bithynia," no Church is expressly named in Scripture elsewhere. When Paul at an earlier period "assayed to go into Bithynia" (Ac 16:7), the Spirit suffered him not. But afterwards, we infer from 1Pe 1:1, the Spirit did impart the Gospel to that country, possibly by Peter's ministry. In government, these several churches, it appears from this Epistle (1Pe 5:1,2, "Feed," &c.), were much in the same states as when Paul addressed the Ephesian "elders" at Miletus (Ac 20:17,28, "feed") in very similar language; elders or presbyter-bishops ruled, while the apostles exercised the general superintendence. They were exposed to persecutions, though apparently not systematic, but rather annoyances and reproach arising from their not joining their heathen neighbors in riotous living, into which, however, some of them were in danger of falling. The evils which existed among themselves, and which are therefore reprov'd, were ambition and lucre-seeking on the part of the presbyters (1Pe 5:2,3), evil thoughts and words among the members in general, and a want of sympathy and generosity towards one another.

His object seems to be, by the prospect of their heavenly portion and by Christ's example, to afford consolation to the persecuted, and prepare them for a greater approaching ordeal, and to exhort all, husbands, wives, servants, presbyters, and people, to a due discharge of relative duties, so as to give no handle to the enemy to reproach Christianity, but rather to win them to it,

and so to establish them in "the true grace of God wherein they stand" (1Pe 5:12). However, see note on 1Pe 5:12 , on the oldest reading. Alford rightly argues that "exhorting and testifying" there, refer to Peter's *exhortations* throughout the Epistle grounded on *testimony* which he bears *to the Gospel truth, already well known to his readers by the teaching of Paul in those churches*. They were already introduced "into" (so the *Greek*, 1Pe 5:12) this *grace of God* as their safe *standing-ground*. Compare 1Co 15:1, "I declare unto you the Gospel *wherein ye stand*." Therefore he does not, in this Epistle, set forth a complete statement of this Gospel doctrine of grace, but falls back on it as already known. Compare 1Pe 1:8,18, "ye know"; 1Pe 3:15; 2Pe 3:1. Not that Peter servilely copies the style and mode of teaching of Paul, but as an independent witness in his own style attests the same truths. We may divide the Epistle into: (I) The inscription (1Pe 1:1,2). (II) The stirring-up of a pure feeling in believers as born again of God. By the motive of *hope* to which God has regenerated us (1Pe 1:3-12); bringing forth the fruit of *faith*, considering the costly price paid for our redemption from sin (1Pe 1:14-21). Being purified by the Spirit unto *love* of the brethren as begotten of God's eternal word, as spiritual priest-kings, to whom alone Christ is precious (1Pe 1:22; 2:10); after Christ's example in suffering, maintaining a good *conversation* in every relation (1Pe 2:10; 3:14), and a good *profession* of faith as having in view Christ's once-offered sacrifice, and His future coming to judgment (1Pe 3:15; 4:11); and exhibiting *patience* in *adversity*, as looking for future glorification with Christ, (1) in general as Christians, 1Pe 4:12-19; (2) each in his own sphere, 1Pe 5:1-11. "The title "Beloved" marks the separation of the second part from the first, 1Pe 2:11; and of the third part from the second, 1Pe 4:12" [Bengel]. (III). The conclusion.

Time and place of writing .—It was plainly before the open and *systematic* persecution of the later years of Nero had begun. That this Epistle was written after Paul's Epistles, even those written during his imprisonment at Rome, ending in A.D. 63, appears from the acquaintance which Peter in this Epistle shows he has with them. Compare 1Pe 2:13 with 1Ti 2:2-4; 1Pe 2:18 with Ep 6:5; 1Pe 1:2 with Ep 1:4-7; 1Pe 1:3 with Ep 1:3; 1Pe 1:14 with Ro 12:2; 1Pe 2:6-10 with Ro 9:32,33; 1Pe 2:13 with Ro 13:1-4; 1Pe 2:16 with Ga 5:13; 1Pe 2:18 with Ep 6:5; 1Pe 3:1 with Ep 5:22; 1Pe 3:9 with Ro 12:17; 1Pe 4:9 with Phl 2:14; Ro 12:13 and Heb 13:2; 1Pe 4:10 with Ro 12:6-8; 1Pe 5:1 with Ro 8:18; 1Pe 5:5 with Ep 5:21; Phl 2:3,5-8; 1Pe 5:8 with 1Th 5:6; 1Pe 5:14 with 1Co 16:20. Moreover, in 1Pe 5:13, Mark is mentioned as with Peter in Babylon. This must have been after Col 4:10 (A.D. 61-63), when Mark was with Paul at Rome, but intending to go to Asia Minor. Again, in 2Ti 4:11 (A.D. 67 or 68), Mark was in or near Ephesus, in Asia Minor, and Timothy is told to bring him to Rome. So that it is likely it was after this, namely, after Paul's martyrdom, that Mark joined Peter, and consequently that this Epistle was written. It is not likely that Peter would have entrenched on Paul's field of labor, the churches of Asia Minor, *during Paul's lifetime*. The death of the apostle of the uncircumcision, and the consequent need of someone to follow up his teachings, probably gave occasion to the testimony given by Peter to the same churches, collectively addressed, in behalf of the same truth. The relation in which the Pauline Gentile churches stood towards the apostles at Jerusalem favors this view. Even the Gentile Christians would naturally look to the spiritual fathers of the Church at Jerusalem, the center whence the Gospel had emanated to them, for counsel wherewith to meet the pretensions of Judaizing Christians and heretics; and Peter, always prominent among the apostles in Jerusalem, would even when elsewhere feel a deep interest in them, especially when they were by death bereft of Paul's guidance. Birks [*Horæ Evangelicæ*] suggests that false teachers may have appealed from Paul's doctrine to that of James and Peter. Peter then would naturally write to confirm the doctrines of grace and tacitly show there was no difference between his teaching and Paul's. Birks prefers dating the Epistle A.D. 58, after Paul's second visit to Galatia, when Silvanus was with him, and so could not have been with Peter (A.D. 54), and before his imprisonment at Rome, when Mark was with him, and so could not have been with Peter (A.D. 62); perhaps when Paul was detained at Cæsarea, and so debarred from personal intercourse with those churches. I prefer the view previously stated. This sets aside the tradition that Paul and

Peter suffered martyrdom together at Rome. Origen's and Eusebius' statement that Peter visited the churches of Asia in person seems very probable.

The PLACE OF WRITING was doubtless Babylon on the Euphrates (1Pe 5:13). It is most improbable that in the midst of writing matter-of-fact communications and salutations in a remarkably plain Epistle, the symbolical language of prophecy (namely, "Babylon" for *Rome*) should be used. Josephus [*Antiquities*, 15.2.2; 3.1] states that there was a *great multitude of Jews* in the Chaldean Babylon; it is therefore likely that "the apostle of the circumcision" (Ga 2:7,8) would at some time or other visit them. Some have maintained that the Babylon meant was in Egypt because Mark preached in and around Alexandria after Peter's death, and therefore it is likely he did so along with that apostle in the same region previously. But no mention elsewhere in *Scripture* is made of this Egyptian Babylon, but only of the Chaldean one. And though towards the close of Caligula's reign a persecution drove the Jews thence to Seleucia, and a plague five years after still further thinned their numbers, yet this does not preclude their return and multiplication during the twenty years that elapsed between the plague and the writing of the Epistle. Moreover, the order in which the countries are enumerated, from northeast to south and west, is such as would be adopted by one writing from the Oriental Babylon on the Euphrates, not from Egypt or Rome. Indeed, Cosmas Indicopleustes, in the sixth century, understood the Babylon meant to be *outside* the Roman empire. Silvanus, Paul's companion, became subsequently Peter's, and was the carrier of this Epistle.

Style.—Fervor and practical truth, rather than logical reasoning, are the characteristics, of this Epistle, as they were of its energetic, warm-hearted writer. His familiarity with Paul's Epistles shown in the language accords with what we should expect from the fact of Paul's having "communicated the Gospel which he preached among the Gentiles" (as revealed specially to him) to Peter among others "of reputation" (Ga 2:2). Individualities occur, such as baptism, "the answer of a good conscience toward God" (1Pe 3:21); "consciousness of God" (*Greek*), 1Pe 2:19, as a motive for enduring sufferings; "living hope" (1Pe 1:3); "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away" (1Pe 1:4); "kiss of charity" (1Pe 5:14). Christ is viewed less in relation to His past sufferings than as at present exalted and hereafter to be manifested in all His majesty. *Glory* and *hope* are prominent features in this Epistle (1Pe 1:8), so much so that Weiss entitles him "the apostle of hope." The realization of future bliss as near causes him to regard believers as but "strangers" and "sojourners" here. Chastened fervor, deep humility, and ardent love appear, just as we should expect from one who had been so graciously restored after his grievous fall. "Being converted," he truly does "strengthen his brethren." His fervor shows itself in often repeating the same thought in similar words.

In some passages he shows familiarity with the Epistle of James, the apostle of special weight with the Jewish legalizing party, whose inspiration he thus confirms (compare 1Pe 1:6,7 with Jas 1:2,3; 1Pe 1:24 with Jas 1:10; 1Pe 2:1 with Jas 1:21; 1Pe 4:8 with Jas 5:20, both quoting Pr 10:12; 5:5 with Jas 4:6, both quoting Pr 3:34). In most of these cases Old Testament quotations are the common ground of both. "Strong susceptibility to outward impressions, liveliness of feeling, dexterity in handling subjects, dispose natures like that of Peter to repeat afresh the thoughts of others" [Steiger].

The diction of this Epistle and of his speeches in Acts is very similar: an undesigned coincidence, and so a mark of genuineness (compare 1Pe 2:7 with Ac 4:11; 1Pe 1:12 with Ac 5:32; 1Pe 2:24 with Ac 5:30; 10:39; 1Pe 5:1 with Ac 2:32; 3:15; 1Pe 1:10 with Ac 3:18; 10:43; 1Pe 1:21 with Ac 3:15; 10:40; 1Pe 4:5 with Ac 10:42; 1Pe 2:24 with Ac 3:19,26).

There is, too, a recurrence to the language of the Lord at the last interview after His resurrection, recorded in Jn 21:15-23. Compare "the Shepherd ... of ... souls," 1Pe 2:25; "Feed the flock of God," "the chief Shepherd," 1Pe 5:2,4, with Jn 21:15-17; "Feed My lambs ... sheep"; also "Whom ... ye love," 1Pe 1:8; 2:7, with Jn 21:15-17; "lovest thou Me?" and 2Pe 1:14, with Jn 21:18,19.

Wiesinger well says, "He who in loving impatience cast himself into the sea to meet the Lord, is also the man who most earnestly testifies to the hope of His return; he who dated his own faith from the sufferings of his Master, is never weary in holding up the suffering form of the Lord before his readers to comfort and stimulate them; he before whom the death of a martyr is in assured expectation, is the man who, in the greatest variety of aspects, sets forth the duty, as well as the consolation, of suffering for Christ; as a rock of the Church he grounds his readers against the storm of present tribulation on the true Rock of ages." **A.R. Faussett, JFB Commentary**

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INTRODUCTION (from the NBC (New Bible Commentary))

Who wrote 1 Peter?

The writer says he is 'Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ' (1:1), and was a 'witness of Christ's suffering' (5:1). He is writing with the help of Silas (Silvanus) from a place he calls 'Babylon', where his 'son' Mark is with him (5:12-13). As well as this direct evidence that Peter the apostle was the author, the letter frequently alludes to the life and teaching of Jesus (see below). The verdict of F. H. Chase is that 'No Epistle has caught so much of the spirit of Jesus' (*Dictionary of the Bible* , ed. J. Hastings, vol. III, p. 780).

Many early authors referred to the letter and quoted from it, but in recent years five main reasons have been put forward for suggesting that the apostle Peter was not in fact the author.

First, Peter is described in Ac 4:13 as 'unschooled', and the style of Greek in which the letter is written is said to be too good for a Galilean fisherman to have used. Also, quotations are taken from the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek rather than the Hebrew version of the OT.

The style is, however, not so 'educated' as some would like to make out and in places it is much more the language of ordinary people. There is evidence that in Peter's time Greek, as well as Aramaic, was spoken in Galilee, and as a fisherman living in Capernaum on one of the great trade routes he would have had to speak Greek regularly. The fact that his own brother's name, Andrew, is a Greek one suggests that from boyhood Peter would have grown up with this language. Some thirty years' work of evangelism and teaching in a church which contained an increasing proportion of Gentiles would have made him more fluent in Greek and prepared to quote the LXX as his 'Authorized Version'. It is not certain, but Silvanus (5:12 may have acted as Peter's amanuensis (i.e. composing the letter from thoughts Peter shared with him). If he did, then his background as a Roman citizen (Ac 16:37) of some breeding could well have affected the style and language.

Secondly, from the language of 4:14-16 some have built a case to suggest that the letter was written at a time when the very fact of being a Christian was a crime, and this is known not to have been the case until long after Peter's death.

Peter's argument in chs. 2-4 is, however, that Christians must take care to live an innocent life, so that, if they are falsely accused, such slanders will be without foundation. The book of Acts (e.g. 13:50; 14:5, 19; 16:19-24; 17:5, 13; 18:12-13; 19:23-29) shows that from the earliest days misunderstanding, personal prejudices and rejection of the gospel could lead to persecution 'because of the name of Christ'. 4:14-16 need have no further legal implications than similar phrases in Mt 10:22 and Ac 5:41. In fact, what Peter says about the role of the state in 2:13-14 suggests that he did not expect persecution from that quarter. The relationship between the church and the authorities indicated in the letter is basically the same as in Acts.

Thirdly, some object because the letter contains ideas found in Paul's writings especially in his letter to the Ephesians.

This argument is only valid if the theory is accepted that the two apostles disagreed and were never finally reconciled. The basic teaching in the early church was fairly standard, and it would have been strange had there been no similarities. If we accept that Peter and Paul may have been together in Rome (see below on Where and when was the letter written?) just before the letter was written they would doubtless have talked over many of the issues considered in it (see also Ga 1:18).

Fourthly, according to Ga 2:9 Peter and Paul agreed to work in different spheres, and yet the destination of 1 Peter is thought to be an area evangelized by Paul.

The arrangement referred to in Galatians was made at least ten years before the letter was written and in the interval the distinction between Jewish and Gentile churches would have become less clear. 1:12 suggests that Peter had not brought the gospel to his readers, but Ac 16:6-7 suggests that Paul had not visited all of them either.

Finally, some say that this letter does not contain the sort of personal references to Jesus one would expect from a writer who knew him as well as Peter did.

See, however, e.g. 1:8, 13; 2:21-25; 3:14; 4:14; 5:1-2 and other references in the commentary below. Let the readers make up their own minds as they read the letter for themselves.

Taken all in all, none of these objections is conclusive. The majority of the evidence, both external and internal, would appear to support the traditional view that Peter the apostle wrote this letter.

Where and when was the letter written?

In 5:13 the writer sends greetings from 'she who is in Babylon, chosen together with you'. This seems like a reference to the local church in Babylon, but it is unlikely that Peter would have gone to the former capital of Nebuchadnezzar's empire. By Peter's time it was a sparsely inhabited ruin (fulfilling Isa 14:23). In Rev 16:19 and 17:5 'Babylon' is used as a cryptic name for Rome, and Col 4:10 and Phlm 24 (most likely written in Rome) show that Mark was there with Paul.

In 2Ti 4:11 Mark is in Asia Minor, and Paul sends for him to come, most probably to Rome. The fact that neither Peter nor Paul mentions the other in the list of those sending greetings from Rome merely suggests that they were not together at the time of writing their letters. All this points to the theory that Peter was writing from Rome, which is supported by the evidence of Tertullian (*Against Heresies* , 36) and Eusebius (*Ecclesiastical History* , 2.25.8; 2.15.2 and 3.1.2-3).

In view of what was said above about Christians being persecuted, a date in the reign of Nero (AD 54-68) would seem best. Since Peter makes no reference to Paul's martyrdom, which is thought to have taken place during the outburst of persecution in Rome in 64, the letter was probably written before then (see also 2:13). Links with other writings are thought to suggest a date after 60. So far as we can draw any conclusions from the evidence, the letter was probably written c. 63-64.

To whom was the letter written?

Peter answers the question in 1:1. The region described was in the Roman provinces in Asia Minor (modern Turkey) north of the Taurus mountains. It is difficult to be precise as the place-names can refer to both ancient kingdoms and contemporary Roman provinces, and the two did not always have the same boundaries.

The social status of the recipients probably reflected that of most of the churches of the day, as a cross-section of the community. There were husbands and wives (3:1,7), slaves (2:18—but no reference to masters as in Ep 6:5-9; Col 3:22-4:1), younger men (5:5) and an eldership giving pastoral care (5:1-4). Some of the women appear to have been able to afford a comfortable lifestyle (3:3). The description of the readers' pre-Christian manner of life (4:3-4) suggests that some of them might have been involved in the local pagan trade-guilds. Peter calls them 'strangers in the world' (1:1 *cf.* 1:17; 2:11) and this technical term has led John H. Elliott in *A Home for the Homeless* (SCM, 1982), to develop the theory that they were 'resident aliens'. But the case is far from proven and the wording could be being used figuratively to reflect the way in which their Christian lifestyle had distanced them from their pagan neighbours. It also picks up the OT language of David and Solomon as they saw their life on this earth in the light of eternity (see Ps 39:12 and 1Ch 29:15).

The religious background of the original readers appears to have been both Jewish and Gentile. We know from Ac 2:9 that there were Jewish visitors from Asia Minor in Jerusalem for Pentecost, and those among them who were converted at that time would have taken the gospel message back with them. Converts at Pisidian Antioch and Iconium came from the synagogue (Ac 13:43; 14:1), and Luke specifically mentions in the latter case that the church was formed both of Jews and Gentiles. So Peter's writing reflects such a mixed gathering of believers. He uses the OT to prove his points (1:24-25; 2:6,7-8,22-24; 3:10-12; 4:18; 5:5) and makes other allusions that would be meaningful to Jewish readers (e.g. in 1:1 'scattered' [Gk. *diaspora*] is the technical term for the Jewish community outside Israel; see also 2:4-10 and 3:20). Other comments he makes would be more relevant to Gentile readers (e.g. 1:18, 'the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers'; 2:10, 'Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God'; 4:3, 'you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans[Gentiles] choose to do').

Whether his readers were Jewish or Gentile Christians, Peter is keen to encourage them to believe that they are the 'new Israel'. In the Christian church they inherit all that God promised his chosen people in the OT (see 1:1; 2:5, 9-10).

Is the letter a unity?

Those who say the letter is not a unity follow three main lines of argument:

- a. Some say that 1:1 and 5:12-14 were added after the letter had been written. There is no MS evidence for this, and there is still the reference in 5:1.
- b. Others say the letter originally ended at 4:11 and that the remainder was added at a later date. They argue that the possibility of suffering is remote in 3:17 but already being experienced in 4:12. 1:6 points, however, to the same situation as 4:12. It seems more likely that Peter's mind was moving between the experience of the church as a corporate body and that of its individual members. It is unlikely that 3:17 would apply to each reader. All churches may well suffer persecution in the near future, so that all members will suffer with one another (1Co 12:26), but few individuals are likely to be called on to suffer in each wave of persecution. The doxology of 4:11 is not necessarily a conclusion. Ro 11:33-36; 15:33 and Ep 3:20-21 are other examples where the writer was so thrilled by the truths he was expressing that he was carried away into an outpouring of praise.
- c. Others see the letter as a liturgy written for baptismal use, a collection of sermons, instructions for new converts or fragments of early hymns. Peter may well have quoted a variety of sources for his purpose (or they may have quoted him!), but there is no reason to dismiss his own statement in 5:12.

The letter reads as a unity written to encourage Christian people, especially those new to the faith, and to declare to them the truth and reality of the grace of God in which they can stand firm with every confidence.

Why was the letter written?

From what has been said in the last section it will be seen that theories abound concerning the purpose of the letter. Fuller details of these can be found in other commentaries on 1 Peter. For our purposes it is sufficient to take Peter's words in 5:12 at face value.

Peter sees Christians in danger of persecution (1:6) and not prepared for it (4:12). In the light of this he aimed to do two things: to encourage and to testify to the true grace of God (5:12) in which he urged his readers to stand. These two purposes are intertwined as Peter gives encouragement by declaring God's gracious acts in Christ, made known and mediated by his Spirit. We can list some of the encouragements as follows:

The scope and goal of God's purposes (1:3-9) The excitement of the prophets and eagerness of the angels to grasp this wonderful plan (1:10-12)

The costliness of our redemption (1:18-21)

The enduring nature of God's promises (1:22-25)

The privilege of belonging to God's people (2:4-10)

The example of Jesus (2:22-25)

What Jesus has done for us (3:18-22)

The confidence we can have in our Creator and his faithfulness (4:17-19)

The certainty that God will triumph in the end, and that his own will share the victory (5:10-11; cf. 1:7).

Such encouragements, and such a statement of the grace of God, offer an equally firm foothold for Christian believers facing whatever the twenty-first century after Christ may bring.

Is 1 Peter like other NT writings?

The author comes across as someone who knew his OT well, and ready to back up his teaching by quoting it, especially Isaiah and the Psalms (see on 1:18-20, 24-25; 2:6-8, 22 ff.; 3:10-12; 4:17-18). While he does not quote directly from the gospels, Peter frequently uses words and phrases which remind us of incidents and teachings they contain. We shall draw attention to these in the commentary.

There are also similarities with Peter's speeches in the Acts, e.g. Ac 2:23/ 1Pe 1:20; Ac 2:31/ 1Pe 1:11; Ac 2:34-35/ 1Pe 3:22; Ac 4:11/ 1Pe 2:7; Ac 4:12/ 1Pe 3:21; Ac 10:34/ 1Pe 1:17; Ac 10:39/ 1Pe 2:24. These are the main places where ideas overlap, and a detailed study of the passages will show many more words and phrases in common.

Peter also uses many key words which are also found in Romans and Hebrews. It could be said that the writers of all three 'breathed the same spiritual atmosphere'. By the time Peter was writing certain words and phrases would have become the accepted language of spiritual experience. There are also strong similarities of theme with Ephesians and James. These are interesting, and details will be found in a fuller commentary, but it is unwise to construct theories on them.

What theology does 1 Peter contain?

Peter wrote, as we have seen, with a practical purpose, and would no doubt have been surprised if asked about the letter's theological content. He did not write to set out a theology (as Paul did in Romans or Colossians) but, as a pastor, he based his ethical advice on his knowledge of the character of God. So the doctrines set out in the letter are those which provide a motive for Christian living.

Doctrine of God

In 1:1-2 Peter clearly sets out the practical relationship between the three persons of the Trinity. God is sovereign, and so can be trusted (4:19). He is holy, and so is to be copied (1:15-16). He is a Father, and so his children must live up to the family name (1:17), and the fact that he has redeemed his people is a ground for assurance (1:18-21).

Doctrine of Christ

Christ is sinless, obedient and prepared to suffer to the limit. This is an example for us (2:21-24). He died and rose again, so we must die to sin and live by his risen power (2:24; 4:1). His work is described in terms of redemption (1:18-19), reconciliation and being the sin offering and the substitute (3:18), and he was predestined for this very purpose by the Father's love (1:20-21). He is also the foundation of God's church, providing the ground of faith and hope, and inspiring to holiness and love (2:16; 1:21-22).

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is seen as the agent of sanctification (1:2), the author of Scripture (1:11), the enabler of Christian ministry (1:12) and the encourager of Christians undergoing persecution (4:14).

Doctrine of Scripture

The authority of Scripture is stressed by the way Peter appeals to the OT to support his teaching (e.g. 1:24-25; 2:6-8; 3:10-12; 4:18). Its source is seen to be in the guiding of the writers by the Holy Spirit (1:11; cf. 2Pe 1:21) and its enduring quality is underlined by a quotation from Isa 40:6-8 (1:23-25). Scripture is also pictured as a seed, by which the new birth is effected in human lives as people hear and respond to the preaching of the gospel (cf. 1:23 with 25), and as the means of Christian growth (if 2:2 is translated 'milk of the word').

Doctrine of the church

Peter has a high regard for the corporate nature of the people of God, entered into by the individual believer at his or her new birth (2:2-5; cf. 1:22-23). The church is God's building, on the foundation of Christ himself (2:4-8), and as such it is the inheritor of the blessings promised to Israel (2:9-10). Its twofold function is to offer worship to God and witness before people (2:5,9). Already in Peter's day the church had a corporate eldership, seen as a responsible and sacred office (5:1-4), but also encouraged the development and use of spiritual gifts by each member (4:10-11).

Doctrine of the last days

Peter writes as one who looks forward to the great unveiling in the last days, and he uses the Greek root *apocalyp* —('revelation') to describe the return of Christ. So he reminds his readers that the unseen Christ is never far away, and points them to the glories they will share when Christ is revealed. Their salvation will be fully realized and they will enter into their full inheritance (1:5). Their faith will be finally honoured (1:7; 4:13), and the full extent of God's grace discovered (1:13). Christ's glory will be shared (5:1) and faithful service rewarded (5:4). The expectation of

Christ's return is a most compelling argument for holy living and careful stewardship now (4:7-11,17-18).

What does Peter say to his readers?

Those who originally received this letter were Christians who were in danger of losing their way. Their newfound faith had severed the ties which had bound them to their non-Christian relatives and neighbours and was itself being tested because they were facing suffering. This situation was probably not what they had expected when they had first heard the gospel, and it is an experience faced by every generation since then.

Peter met their needs by reassuring them of the gospel. Father, Son and Holy Spirit work together to bring us a new life (1:3-5; 2:2; 4:1-6) in which the past is forgiven (2:24; 3:18), the present is protected (1:5) and motivated (4:2), and the future assured (1:4,7). This is a way of life to be lived out in practical terms (1:13-16) and in everyday relationships (2:16; 3:1,7). It equips the followers of Jesus for living in the real world of the here and now (4:1-4) and for that world of eternal glory for which Jesus is even now preparing us (5:10).

So Peter's response to the question of suffering is that it is a part of the journey of faith. It tests the seriousness of our discipleship (1:7), joins us to our fellow-Christians (5:9), and will be vindicated on the day of judgment (4:16-19). Though believers are 'strangers' and 'scattered' in this world (1:1), they are part of the pilgrim people of God (2:5,9), journeying to the Father's home (1:4). They look forward to the day when Jesus will return for his own (1:7; 2:12; 5:4). These are truths which can motivate today's Christians to live for God's glory, just as they encouraged Peter's original readers.

Peter writes as one whose heart has lost none of the fire of love stirred up by the Master at the Sea of Tiberias (cf. Jn 21:1,15-19 with 1Pe 1:8). In this letter there is all the vividness of the personal recollections of a follower of Jesus Christ.

Further reading

- E. P. Clowney, *The Message of 1 Peter*, BST (IVP, 1988).
- I. H. Marshall, *1 Peter* IVPNTC (IVP, 1991).
- W. Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC (IVP/UK/Eerdmans, 1988).
- P. H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, NICNT (Eerdmans, 1990).
- J. N. D. Kelly, *The Epistles of Peter and Jude*, BNTC (A. and C. Black, 1969).
- J. R. Michaels, *1 Peter*, WBC (Word, 1988).
- C. E. B. Cranfield, *1 and 2 Peter and Jude*, TBC (SCM, 1960).
- E. M. B. Green, *2 Peter and Jude*, TNTC (IVP/UK/Eerdmans, 1968).
- R. Bauckham, *Jude and 2 Peter*, WBC (Word, 1983).

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NBC (New Bible Commentary Introduction to 1 Peter)

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Timeline of Peter

TIMELINE OF 1 PETER	
30	Church established at Pentecost
33	Stephen martyred; Paul's conversion
44	James martyred
47-48	Paul's first missionary journey
49-50	Jerusalem Council
49-52	Paul's second missionary journey
54	Nero becomes Roman emperor
56-58	Paul's third missionary journey
58	Romans written
60-61	Paul under house arrest at Rome
63	1 Peter written
64	Fire at Rome
66	2 Peter written
67	Peter & Paul martyred
68	Roman emperor Nero dies
70	

Ryrie Study Bible

Introduction – Halley's Bible Handbook

A Letter of Hope in the Midst of Suffering

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. – 1Pe 1:6-9

Peter

For Peter's early life, see *Who Were the Twelve?* . Other than his two letters, there are no scriptural records of his later life. As the leader of the Twelve it seems likely that he visited the leading church centers of the Roman world. From Jesus' words in Jn 21:18 we judge that he must have died a martyr's death.

Some church historians think that there is not sufficient evidence that Peter was ever in Rome. Most of them, however, agree that it is probable that in or about the last year of his life, Peter did go to Rome, either by order of Nero or of his own accord, to help steady the Christians under the terrific blows of Nero's persecutions.

There is a tradition that says that Peter, giving in to the urging of friends to save himself, was fleeing from Rome when, in the night on the Appian Way, he met Jesus in a vision and said, "Where are you going, Lord?" (*Quo vadis, Domine?*). Jesus answered, "I am going to Rome to be crucified again." Peter, utterly ashamed and humiliated, returned to the city and was crucified upside down at his own request, feeling not worthy to be crucified as his Lord had been. This is only a tradition, and we do not know how much historical fact it may contain.

Pictures and Maps



Peter's Destination



This letter was initially written to followers of Jesus who were suffering persecution during the reign of Nero. Caesars like Nero were "entertained" by watching persecutions that occurred in the elongated oval depression which once held the Circus Maximus.

To Whom?

This letter was written to the churches in Asia Minor (1:1; modern-day Turkey, see Image 50). Many or most of these churches had been founded by Paul. We assume that Peter had at one time or another visited these churches, though this is not stated. Paul had written letters to these churches, of which we still have several: Galatians, Ephesians, and Colossians. (First Peter has some striking similarities to Ephesians.) Later, John addressed the book of Revelation to some of the same churches to which Peter wrote this letter.

From Where?

Peter wrote from "Babylon" (5:13). Some take this to be the literal Babylon on the Euphrates, in modern Iraq. (see Image 50 .) But generally it is thought to refer to the city of Rome, figuratively called Babylon. (The same is usually thought to be the case in Rev 17:5,18.) In those times of persecution, Christians had to be careful how they spoke of the ruling powers, and they had a code name for it that they among themselves would understand, though an outsider would not.

Mark was with Peter at the time (5:13), and 2Ti 4:11 seems to indicate that Mark may have been in Rome about the time this letter was written.

The Occasion

Nero's persecution of Christians in A.D. 64-67 was very severe in and around Rome, but not in the rest of the Roman Empire, although the example of the emperor encouraged the enemies of Christians everywhere to take advantage of the slightest pretext to persecute Christians. It was a trying time. The church as a whole was about 35 years old. It had suffered persecutions in various places at the hands of local authorities. But now imperial Rome, which had thus far been indifferent - and even in some cases friendly - had accused the church of a terrible crime and was taking steps to punish it (see External Problems: Persecutions).

The church worldwide was undergoing a time of trial (5:9). It seemed as if the end had come. It was in the most literal sense a "fiery trial" (4:12 KJV). Christians were being burned nightly in Nero's gardens. It did look as if the devil was about to devour the church as a "roaring lion" (5:8).

It is thought that Peter may have written this letter immediately after Paul's martyrdom, about A.D. 67/ 68 , and sent it with Silas (5:12), who had been one of Paul's helpers, to these churches, which Paul had founded, to encourage them to bear up under their suffering. Silas thus would have personally carried the news of Paul's martyrdom to Paul's churches.

Therefore the letter was born in the atmosphere of suffering, shortly before Peter's own martyrdom, and exhorted Christians not to think it strange that they had to suffer, reminding them that Christ did His work by suffering.

1 Peter 1:13-2:3 Live the New Life

1Pe 1:13. Men wore long robes and would tuck them into their belt, and thus "gird up their loins," so they could move more freely and quickly. Although the image also occurs elsewhere in the Old Testament, here Peter may specifically allude to the Passover (Ex 12:11): once God's people had been redeemed by the blood of the lamb (1Pe 1:19), they were to be ready to follow God forth until he had brought them safely into their inheritance (cf. 1:4), the Promised Land. Thus they were to be dressed and ready to flee. "Sobriety" in ancient usage meant not only literal abstinence from drink but also behaving as a nonintoxicated person should, hence with dignified self-control.

1Pe 1:14. "Obedient children" picks up the image of 1:3: born anew, they were no longer what they had been before, and they should obey God (cf. 1:2,22) as children obeyed their fathers. The obedience of minors to their parents was highly valued, and Roman and Jewish law expected it.

1Pe 1:15-16. Israel was called to be holy as God was holy and thus to live in a manner distinct from the ways of the nations (Lev 11:44; 19:2; 20:7,26). The daily synagogue prayers also stressed holiness to God, hence the idea would have been one of the most familiar to Jewish readers and to Gentiles who had learned Scripture from them. If Peter continues the image of father and children between 1:14 and 1:17, he may allude here to another feature of a child's relationship with a father that was stressed in antiquity: imitation.

1Pe 1:17. The image of God as an impartial judge was standard in Judaism, which also addressed him as "heavenly Father" in most of its prayers. "Resident aliens" ("foreigners"—NIV; "the time of your stay"—NASB) were distinguished from local citizens, but as legal residents of an area they were viewed more highly than newcomers. Jewish communities throughout the empire generally enjoyed a resident alien status, and although some Jews could achieve citizen status, in other places like Alexandria the Greeks met their attempts to do so with hostility.

1Pe 1:18. Jewish people often spoke of idolatry as "futile" or "empty." To them idolatry was the most basic characteristic of Gentiles' lifestyle, thus the former way of life of Peter's hearers ("passing down" of the ancestors' way of life by itself could refer either to paganism or to Judaism). Jewish sages contrasted the perishable wealth with the eternal, true wealth, (cf. 1:4,7,23) of righteousness or wisdom; here it refers to the price of the hearers' redemption, for which money was insufficient (1:19). (That gold was devalued in this period due to inflation under Nero may have occurred to some of Peter's original hearers but is probably not relevant to Peter's point about perishable gold; cf. 1:7.)

1Pe 1:19-21. Redemption by the blood of a lamb recalls the annual Passover celebration, by which Jewish people commemorated their redemption (freedom from slavery) in Egypt, through the blood of the Passover lamb (cf. 1:13).

1Pe 1:22. In Old Testament purity laws, people purified themselves from defilement by ceremonial bathing; although Judaism continued to practice literal ceremonial washings, it often used the image of washing figuratively for spiritual or moral purification (as occasionally in Old Testament prophets, e.g., Isa 1:16; Je 2:22; 4:14).

1Pe 1:23. The new life of obedient love (1:22) is natural for the person with a new nature; it was axiomatic in antiquity that children inherited the nature of their parents. (Many writers even remarked that adulterers gave themselves away because children bore their image.) The father's seed was especially important; followers of Jesus had been reborn through the living word, the gospel (1:3; 2:2), and it was imperishable (1:24-25). (A variety of parallels could be adduced, including Philo's perspective on the divine word as not only imperishable but as "seminal," or a seed; but most of these examples are individual and distinct cases rather than based on general tradition. The parallels may thus all draw from

the same sort of natural imagery as Peter's [except that Philo, unlike Peter, might draw on Stoicism's seminal Logos]. That the Word of God was imperishable, however, was agreed throughout all of Judaism; cf. Isa 40:6-8. The present image was more widespread in early Christianity; see 1Jn 3:9 and cf. Lk 8:11.) God's word could be depicted as seed elsewhere (e.g., 4 Ezra 9:31, 33).

1Pe 1:24-25. Here Peter quotes Isa 40:6-8 (following the LXX , which is more concise than the Hebrew text here), where the word is the future message of salvation in the time when God would redeem his people (e.g., 52:7-8).

1Pe 2:1. Ancient writers sometimes employed "vice lists," indicating what people should avoid; Peter employs a miniature vice list. "Putting aside" (NASB) the old ways also follows rebirth in James, Ephesians and Colossians; together with other parallels to those letters, this similarity has suggested to some scholars a common baptismal tradition in the early church . It might also follow some teaching by Jesus no longer available to us; on possible background to "putting aside," see comment on Ro 13:12 and Ep 4:20-24.

1Pe 2:2. This verse continues the image of rebirth (1:23). Babies were dependent on their mothers or nurses for nourishment by their milk; use of cows' milk was rare. It was believed that children were very impressionable at this nursing stage, and those who allowed them to be tended by nursemaids were advised to select the nurses with care. "Pure" milk meant that it had not been mixed with anything else; the term is used in business documents for sales of unadulterated foods. Pure "spiritual" (NIV, NRSV, GNT) milk is a possible translation (especially if we think in the sense of "nonliteral"), but the adjective here more often means "rational" and could well be rendered "milk of the word" (*logikon*; cf. NASB, KJV), i.e., the "word" of 1:25.

1Pe 2:3. Here Peter alludes to Ps 34:8. The term translated "kindness" (NASB) or "good" (NIV, NRSV) was sometimes used to mean "delicious" when applied to foods (as here, milk—v. 2).

1 Peter 2:4-12

Being Built Up as God's People

The Qumran community (the Jewish monastic sect who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls) also portrayed themselves as a new temple. Whereas many of Peter's exhortations to this point are the sort of moral instructions philosophers could give for individual behavior, this section concerns the church's corporate identity and hence corporate witness.

1Pe 2:4. Peter derives this image from Isa 28:16 ("choice," "precious"), which he cites in 2:6.

1Pe 2:5. The Dead Sea Scrolls portray the Qumran community as a living temple, and one text speaks of the temple's components (pillar, foundations, etc.) as animate beings. "House" could refer to a building, like the temple, or to a household (4:17), even to a large family like the "house of Israel"; both senses may be played on here, as sometimes in the Old Testament (2Sa 7:5-7,12-16). The image of God's people as a "holy priesthood" is from Ex 19:5-6 (cf. Isa 61:6) and appears more explicitly in 1Pe 2:9 (Israel as a priesthood also appears in some contemporary Jewish texts based on Ex 19:6, including an insertion into the LXX of Ex 23:22). As priests (as well as stones) in this new temple, they would offer sacrifices; others in Judaism also used the image of a spiritual sacrifice (see comment on Ro 12:1; Heb 13:15).

1Pe 2:6. The Qumran community applied Isa 28:16 to their own leadership; early Christians applied it to Jesus (Ro 9:33).

1Pe 2:7-8. The Jewish interpretive principle *gezerah shavah*, which linked texts that had a common key word, makes it natural for Peter to cite Ps 118:22 and Isa 8:14. Although this interpretive technique suggests that he need not be dependent on Paul, both Peter and Paul may have depended on Jesus for the cornerstone image (Mk 12:10-11). Ps 118 was sung during the Passover season (cf. 1Pe 1:19), normally, at least among some Jews in this period, after thanking God for delivering Israel from slavery in Egypt into freedom, "from darkness to great light" (cf. 2:9).

1Pe 2:9. Roughly half this verse is a direct quotation of Ex 19:6, implying that all Christians, including Gentile Christians, share in God's covenant with Israel. Jewish people on the Passover described their deliverance from Egypt as a call "from darkness into great light" (Mishnah *Pesahim* 10:5). Old Testament prophets taught that God had redeemed his people for his praise (e.g., Isa 60:21; 61:3; Je 13:11).

1Pe 2:10. Peter cites Ho 1:10 and 2:23, which reverse God's earlier verdict against Israel (Ho 1:6,8-9), promising the restoration of God's people in the end time. Like Paul, Peter believes that Gentiles converted to Israel's true faith, the message of Jesus, are part of this endtime people of God (Ro 9:24-26). Had he wished, he could have cited more direct Old Testament passages to support his conclusion (e.g., Isa 19:24-25; 56:3-8).

1Pe 2:11. On "resident aliens" (the normal sense of the terms usually translated "aliens and strangers"), see comment on 1:17. Philo spoke of souls as being "strangers" (using a term technically more foreign than "resident aliens"; *Confusion of Tongues* 81 ; *Who Is the Heir?* 267) in their bodies, belonging instead to heaven. The image here is of God's people (2:4-10) dispersed among the nations; God's people in the Old Testament were sometimes portrayed in such terms (Lev 25:23), because of their mortality (1Ch 29:15; Ps 39:12), because of zeal for God (Ps 69:8; cf. 119:19) or because of their wanderings (Ge 23:4; 47:9). Greek philosophers often viewed fleshly passions as "waging war" against the soul and emphasized the need to war against them (cf. also Philo, *Creation* 81). Peter uses the same image, although not for the same reason that philosophers often did (freeing the soul from earthly distractions); he demands proper living (2:12).

1Pe 2:12. Jewish people living in the Diaspora (1:1) always had to be concerned about Gentiles' anti-Jewish slanders, for their safety and for their witness to the one true God. Just as Gentiles were more than happy to slander Jews living among them, they were happy to slander Gentile converts to what they viewed as a Jewish sect, Christianity (2:4-10). The behavior advocated in the following household codes (2:13-3:12) would undermine some of the most traditional slanders against such faiths, slanders that they subverted the public order and traditional family values. "Day of visitation" (KJV, NASB) was good Old Testament language for God's coming day of judgment (e.g., Isa 10:3); many texts reported that the Gentiles would recognize God's glory in the end time (e.g., Isa 60:3).

1 Peter 2:13-17

Responsibilities Toward the State

Many ancient household codes were set in the context of discussions of city management and included instructions on how to behave toward the state (as well as toward parents, elders, friends, members of one's household, etc.). According to contemporary aristocratic ideals, the household mirrored the government of a city-state, so public obligations and obligations within the household (2:18-3:7) were commonly treated together.

Stoic and other philosophers commonly used these ethical codes to delineate proper relationships with others. Jewish people and members of other slandered religious groups sometimes adopted these codes to demonstrate that their groups actually supported the values of Roman society; this demonstration was important in combating persecution. See comment on Ro 13:1-7.

1Pe 2:13. Vassal kings in the East ruled their people with Rome's permission but were required to act in Rome's interests. Because most of Peter's hearers (1:1) would instead be directly under governors (2:14), by "king" Peter may refer especially to the Roman emperor. Although the emperor's title was technically *princeps*, i.e., "the leading citizen" or the first among equals (to preserve the myth of the republic in the early years of the empire), everyone knew that he was the supreme earthly king in the Mediterranean world.

1Pe 2:14. The term translated "governors" covers both legates (who governed imperial provinces as representatives of the emperor— 2:13) and proconsuls (who governed senatorial provinces). Such representatives of Rome ruled most of the empire. Governors of imperial provinces were "sent by" the emperor and were expected to administer justice. "Praise" would include the many inscriptions of praise dedicated to benefactors who provided wealth or services for municipalities.

1Pe 2:15. "Ignorance" includes the false understanding of Christianity spread among outsiders (more than in 1:14); Roman aristocrats were much quicker to malign minority religions, whose worship did not assimilate to Roman values, than to seek to understand them. The Old Testament taught God's sovereignty over rulers (Pr 16:10; 21:1).

1Pe 2:16. Here Peter modifies a common exhortation of ancient philosophers: for them, freedom from the world's values meant not only authority to do as one pleased but also freedom to pursue virtue, freedom from desire and freedom to do without. Most philosophers (such as contemporary Stoics) regarded the wise man as the ideal ruler but still advocated obedience to the state. For Christians, freedom meant freedom to be God's slaves rather than slaves of sin; it meant freedom from the tyranny of the state but also freedom to uphold the laws of the state as God's servants (v. 15).

1Pe 2:17. Such brief lists of these kinds of duties appear in other ancient moralists (e.g., Isocrates, Marcus Aurelius, Syriac Menander). The Old Testament also associated honoring God with honoring those in authority (Ex 22:28; 1Ki 21:10; Pr 24:21).

1 Peter 2:18-25

Duties of Servants

This passage addresses household slaves, who often had more economic and social mobility than free peasants did, although most of them still did not have much. Field slaves on massive estates were more oppressed; given the regions addressed (1:1) and the nature of household codes (see comment on 2:13-17), they are probably not addressed here and at *most* are peripherally envisioned. The most oppressed slaves, who worked in the mines, were segregated from the rest of society and would not have access to Peter's letter; they are not addressed here at all.

It should also be kept in mind that Peter does not address the institution of slavery *per se*, although his sympathy is clearly with the slave (2:21). No ancient slave war was successful, and abolition was virtually impossible in his day except through a probably doomed bloody revolution. In this situation, it was far more practical for a pastor to encourage those in the situation to deal with it constructively until they could gain freedom. On slaves and household codes, questions of subsequent application and so forth, see comment on Ep 6:4-9 and the introduction to Philemon.

1Pe 2:18-20. Except those slaves who were able to save enough money on the side to buy their freedom (which many household slaves could do), slaves were not in a position to achieve freedom. (Often the holders freed their slaves as a reward or to keep from having to feed them in old age, but slaves could not refuse that arrangement.) Although slaves and masters cooperated in many households as members of a common family, laws viewed slaves as property as well as people, and some slaveholders abused them as property; nearly all slaveholders treated them as socially inferior. (An aristocrat eating together even with his freedmen was considered unusual.) Philosophers (especially the popular Stoics) generally

counseled that slaves do their best in the situation in which they found themselves; this was also the view of Epictetus, a Stoic philosopher who had been a slave earlier in life.

1Pe 2:21. Moralists commonly cited models for imitation. Philosophers also often prided themselves in their ability not to be bothered by insults or deprivation (e.g., one said that Socrates, when advised that he suffered unjustly, protested, "What—would you rather I suffer justly?" Diogenes Laertius 2.35). Although ancient society was very status-conscious and associated power with greatness, Peter identifies Christ with unjustly treated slaves.

1Pe 2:22. Here Peter quotes Isa 53:9, the first of several allusions to Isa 53 in this passage. The passage describes "the suffering servant," a role fulfilled by Jesus (cf. comment on Mt 12:17-18).

1Pe 2:23. This verse may reflect the idea of Isa 53:7: though oppressed, he did not open his mouth. In a society based on respect and honor, refusing to reply in kind was a painful experience; subordinates like slaves were accustomed to it, but it could not have failed to hurt many of them. Many philosophers also advocated enduring reviling without responding in kind.

1Pe 2:24. Here Peter reflects the language of Isa 53:4-5. In this context (1Pe 2:24,25), Peter takes the "healing" as healing from sin, as it often was intended in the prophets (e.g., Isa 6:10; Je 6:14; 8:11) and sometimes in later Jewish literature (as probably in the eighth benediction of the Amidah, a regularly recited Jewish prayer).

1Pe 2:25. This verse echoes Isa 53:6. The image of Israel as sheep was common in the Old Testament (e.g., Isa 40:11), and the image of Israel as scattered sheep wandering from the shepherd also appears elsewhere (Je 50:6; Eze 34:6; cf. Ps 119:176). An "overseer" (NIV; "guardian"—NASB, NRSV) was one who watched over, protected and had authority; Diaspora Judaism sometimes applied the term to God. In the Old Testament, God is the chief shepherd of his people (see comment on Jn 10:1-18).

1 Peter 3:1-7

Wives and Husbands

Although Peter upholds societal norms for the purpose of the church's witness in society (see the introduction to the household codes in 2:13-17), his sympathy here is clearly with the woman, as it was with the slaves in 2:18-25. He continues to advocate submission to authority for the sake of witness (3:1) and silencing charges that Christianity is subversive; husbands were always in the position of authority in that culture. Peter addresses wives at much greater length than husbands; if proportions of converts were comparable to Judaism, women may have largely outnumbered men in the churches. (The proportion may have been greater for Jewish converts, however, since Diaspora churches did not require circumcision, one factor that discouraged male conversion.)

1Pe 3:1. "In the same way" refers back to the passage on slaves (2:18-25). Like Judaism and other non-Roman religions, Christianity spread faster among wives than husbands; husbands had more to lose socially from conversion to an unpopular minority religion. But wives were expected to obey their husbands in Greco-Roman antiquity, and this obedience included allegiance to their husbands' religions. Cults that forbade their participation in Roman or other local religious rites, including prohibiting worship of a family's household gods, were viewed with disdain, and Jewish or Christian women who refused to worship these gods could be charged with atheism. Thus by his advice Peter seeks to reduce marital tensions and causes of hostility toward Christianity and Christians. Silence was considered a great virtue for women in antiquity.

1Pe 3:2. "Chaste and respectful" (NASB) is the behavior that was most approved for women throughout antiquity.

1Pe 3:3. Hair was braided in elaborate manners, and well-to-do women strove to keep up with the latest expensive fashions. The gaudy adornments of women of wealth, meant to draw attention to themselves, were repeatedly condemned in ancient literature and speeches, and Peter's hearers would assume that his point was meant in the same way (challenging excess, not clothing per se). See comment on 1Ti 2:9-10.

1Pe 3:4. Ancients considered a meek and quiet spirit a prime virtue for women, and many moralists advised this attitude instead of dressing in the latest fashions to attract men's attention, a vice commonly attributed to aristocratic women but imitated by others who could afford to do so.

1Pe 3:5. Moralists often added examples of such quietness to their exhortations; they especially liked to appeal to matrons of the distant past, who were universally respected for their chaste behavior in contrast to many of the current models in Roman high society. Jewish readers would think especially of the great matriarchs, extolled for their piety in Jewish tradition: Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel and Leah, Sarah being most prominent. The readers might think of head coverings that were prominent in much of the East, meant to render the married woman inconspicuous (see comment on 1Co 11:2-16), but inner adornment is Peter's emphasis here.

1Pe 3:6. Although Peter explicitly advocates only "submission" (v. 1), he cites Sarah as an example even of "obedience," which was what Greek and Roman male society ideally demanded of their wives. That Abraham also "obeyed" Sarah is clear in Genesis (the term usually translated "listen to" in 16:2 and 21:12 also means "obey," and in both passages Abraham submits to Sarah), but this point is not relevant to Peter's example for wives with husbands disobedient to the word (3:1; see the introduction to this section). (One should not read too much into Sarah's calling her husband "lord" here. The direct address "lord" may have been used in Hebrew to address husbands respectfully as "sir," e.g., Ho 2:16, but apart from Ge 18:12 it is primarily in later Jewish traditions such as the *Testament of Abraham* that Sarah addresses Abraham in this manner. Even in the *Testament of Abraham*, Isaac also addresses his mother with a similarly respectful title, and Abraham so addresses a visitor, unaware that he is an angel [cf. also Ge 18:3]. In another Jewish tale, Asenath calls her father "lord" yet answers him boastfully and angrily, although Peter certainly does not suggest such behavior here. In the patriarchal period, it was a polite way to address someone of higher authority or one to whose status one wished to defer, e.g., Jacob to Esau in Ge 33:13-14.) Jewish people were considered "children" of Abraham and Sarah; on Christians' fulfilling such a role, cf. 2:9-10.

Peter's advice is practical, not harsh as it might sound in many of our cultures today. Although philosophers' household codes often stressed that the wife should "fear" her husband as well as submit to him, Peter disagrees (v. 6; cf. 3:13-14). Husbands could legally "throw out" babies, resort to prostitutes and make life miserable for their wives, although sleeping with other women of the aristocratic class was prohibited, and reported examples of physical domestic abuse are rare in this region (when compared to the beatings of children and slaves) (known exceptions included the North African region in which Augustine grew up and an earlier abuser named Egnatius). (In a mid-second-century account, a Christian divorced her husband for his repeated infidelity, so he betrayed her to the authorities as a Christian.) Christian wives were limited in their options, but Peter wants them to pursue peace without being intimidated.

1Pe 3:7. Although his point is to address the many converted wives with unconverted husbands (3:1-6), he includes a brief word for converted husbands as well. Many philosophers, moralists and Jewish teachers complained about the moral and intellectual weakness of women; some referred to the weakness of their bodies. Women's delicacy was considered an object of desire, but also of distrust; even the traditional Roman legal system simply assumed their weakness and inability to make sound decisions

on their own. This approach fit the earlier conceptions of Aristotle , who argued that women were by nature inferior to men in every way except sexually.

Yet this weakness (Peter may apply it only to social position) was often cited as a reason to show them more consideration, and Peter attaches no explicit significance to this common term *except* that requirement; the rest of the verse declares women to be equal before God, which ruined any arguments of their inferiority "by nature." A husband who failed to honor his wife as spiritual peer jeopardized his own prayers, for the reason Peter gives in 3:12.

1 Peter 3:8-12

Be Kind to One Another

Peter concludes his argument of 2:13-3:7 in the verses following 3:8, although this conclusion flows directly into his next argument. It reinforces the sense of mutual consideration Peter wishes to engender in household relationships, within limitations imposed by the culture he addresses.

1Pe 3:8. Moralists often listed virtues. They also often lectured on the topic of "harmony" between husband and wife. Advocating peace in all relationships in the home would not have offended any Roman moralists (3:13). "Sympathy" recalls the exhortation to husbands in 3:7, which probably means to "understand" their wives.

1Pe 3:9. Parallels with Jesus indicate that his teaching may be the source of part of this verse; see comment on Ro 12:17.

1Pe 3:10-12. Having cited Ps 34:8 in 2:3, Peter now cites Ps 34:12-16, which instructs the righteous to pursue peace with others and to speak no evil, thus supporting what he has argued in 2:13-3:7. (Jewish teachers also emphasized that one should pursue peace actively, not just passively.) The citation also indicates that although God hears the righteous, he opposes the wicked and hence does not hear the prayers of those who mistreat others (3:7).

1 Peter 3:13-22

Be Prepared to Suffer for Doing Good

This section flows naturally from 3:8-12.

1Pe 3:13-14. Peter alludes to the language of Isa 8:12, where God assures the prophet that he need not fear what the rest of his people feared, but should trust in God alone (8:13).

1Pe 3:15. The Septuagint (standard Greek version) of Isa 8:13 begins "Sanctify the Lord [i.e., God] himself "; here Christ is the Lord. The "defense" (NASB, NRSV; the common translation "answer" is too weak) implies especially (though probably not only) the image of a legal defense before a court, given "judgment" and execution in the context (4:5-6).

1Pe 3:16. Judaism also tried this tactic to undermine false accusations.

1Pe 3:17. Ancient writers sometimes communicated points through special literary forms; one of these is called chiasmus , an inverted parallel structure, which seems to occur here:

A Your slanderers will be ashamed (3:16)

B Suffer though innocent, in God's will (3:17)

- C For Christ suffered for the unjust (3:18)
- D He triumphed over hostile spirits (3:19)
- E Noah was saved through water (3:20)
- E' You are saved through water (3:21)
- D' Christ triumphed over hostile spirits (3:22)
- C' For Christ suffered (4:1a)
- B' Suffer in God's will (4:1b-2)
- A' Your slanderers will be ashamed (4:3-5)

1Pe 3:18-19. On "flesh" and "Spirit," see comment on Ro 8:1-11; the idea here is probably that Jesus was resurrected by the Spirit of God, by whom also he went (presumably after the resurrection) to proclaim triumph over the fallen spirits. Of the many views on this text, the three main ones are (1) that between his death and resurrection, Jesus preached to the dead in Hades, the realm of the dead (the view of many church fathers); (2) that Christ preached through Noah to people in Noah's day (the view of many Reformers); (3) that before or (more likely) after his resurrection, Jesus proclaimed triumph over the fallen angels (the view of most scholars today). In early Christian literature, "spirits" nearly always refers to angelic spirits rather than human spirits, except when explicit statements are made to the contrary. The grammar here most naturally reads as if, in the Spirit who raised him, he preached to them after his resurrection; further, v. 22 mentions these fallen angels explicitly. The view that these were instead spirits of the dead often rests on 4:6, but the point of 4:6, which caps the section, is that martyrs put to death in the flesh will be raised by the Spirit as Christ was in 3:18.

Except for most later rabbis , nearly all ancient Jews read Ge 6:1-3 as a reference to the fall of angels in Noah's day (1Pe 3:20); after the flood, they were said to be imprisoned (so also 2Pe 2:4; Jude 6), either below the earth or in the atmosphere (cf. 1Pe 3:22). Then, according to a commonly known Jewish tradition, Enoch was sent to proclaim God's judgment to them; here Christ is the proclaimer of triumph over them.

1Pe 3:20. Ancient Judaism sometimes used the flood as a prototype of future judgment, as in 2Pe 3:6-7. The emphasis on the salvation of "few" would encourage Christian readers, who were a persecuted minority. God's "patience" reflects Ge 6:3 and is mentioned in connection with the final judgment in 2Pe 3:9.

1Pe 3:21. The act of faith indicated in baptism , rather than the physical cleansing, was what was significant; baptism was an act of conversion in ancient Judaism, but Judaism insisted on the sincerity of repentance for it to be efficacious.

1Pe 3:22. "Authorities and powers" were angelic rulers over the nations, of which Jewish texts often speak (see comment on Ep 1:21-23). Thus even the evil powers behind the rulers who persecuted Christians had been subdued, and the final outcome was not in question.

1 Peter 4:1-11**Persevere in the New Life**

1Pe 4:1-2. Although the expression was often used figuratively, "arm yourselves" may evoke the military imagery of soldiers arming, training or otherwise preparing themselves for battle and possible death. The sense might be that those who died with Christ through faith (cf. 2:24; or, those who have shared in some of his sufferings) are genuinely prepared to suffer with him in any other way, including martyrdom.

1Pe 4:3. Unlike certain maligned religions, social clubs demanded orderly behavior at parties. Nevertheless, dinners at the homes of patrons and probably those of social clubs lasted far into the night, with heavy drinking and men often pursuing slave women or boys; religious festivals were similar occasions for immorality. Social clubs, household cults and virtually all aspects of Greco-Roman life were permeated with the veneration of false gods and spirits; hosts poured libations to gods at the beginning of banquets. Although this behavior was not immoral from the general Greco-Roman perspective, Jews and Christians condemned it as immoral. Jewish people rightly regarded this behavior as typical of Gentile men in their day—most commonly, though by no means exclusively, on pagan festivals.

1Pe 4:4. Although Jewish people did not participate in the lifestyle characterized in 4:3, their pagan neighbors often portrayed them as lawless and subversive because of their alleged antisocial behavior. The earliest pagan reports of Christians testify that the same prejudices were applied to them, although the authorities never found evidence substantiating these rumors from those they interrogated under torture. Nero's accusation against the Christians he butchered was that they were "haters of humanity," i.e., antisocial. But rumors of Nero's own base immorality offended even the Roman aristocracy.

1Pe 4:5. These pagans, not the Christians (3:15), would have to give "account" at the final trial, before God. Since the Old Testament period, the final day of judgment had often been portrayed in courtroom terms.

1Pe 4:6. Although some commentators regard "those who are dead" as souls of the dead, they seem to be Christians "judged" by earthly courts and executed, who would nevertheless be raised by the Spirit , as in 3:18. Compare Wis 3:1-6.

1Pe 4:7. In many Jewish traditions (including Da 12:1-2), the end of the age would be preceded by a period of great suffering; the impending end, therefore, calls for exhortations to perseverance in seriousness and prayer.

1Pe 4:8. Pr 10:12 seems to prohibit gossiping about one another's sins or slandering one another (cf. Jas 5:20). The implication here may be that love overlooks one another's faults, although some scholars have suggested that it means that those who love will themselves find grace in the day of judgment (1Pe 4:5-6).

1Pe 4:9. Hospitality was receiving others, especially taking in travelers of the same faith who needed a place to stay. As generally in the ethical ideals of antiquity, lodging and provisions were to be provided generously, not grudgingly.

1Pe 4:10-11. Like Paul (Ro 12:4-8), Peter emphasized the diversity of gifts in the church and the need for all of them until the end; this argument was highly unusual in ancient Judaism. Speaking as if one uttered divine "oracles" would no doubt refer to the gift of prophecy , or at least prophetic inspiration in some form of speaking for God. On prophecy and serving, see comment on Ro 12:6-8 and 16:1.

1 Peter 4:12-19 Christians Judged First

In the Old Testament (Da 12:1-2) and much Jewish tradition, God's people would suffer greatly just before the time of the end; then the wicked would be judged. Jewish tradition often emphasized that the righteous experienced their sufferings in this age but that the wicked would experience theirs throughout the age to come . Such persecutions as are mentioned here continued for two more centuries in the Roman Empire and have continued periodically in various times and places throughout history; perhaps for such reasons, believers in each generation have had the occasion to feel close to the end of the age.

1Pe 4:12. It is possible that Peter alludes to the fate that would befall many Christians captured in Rome in A.D. 64: they were burned alive as torches to light Nero's gardens at night. But he may simply allude again to the image of gold being tried by fire (1:7), and perhaps to the fire of judgment day being experienced in advance; the language of fiery trials was often used figuratively.

1Pe 4:13. Some Jewish people described the time of tribulation before the end as the "Messiah's travail"; Peter might therefore be saying that those who share the Messiah's sufferings also hasten the coming of the end. Nevertheless, the regular New Testament idea of sharing Christ's sufferings is probably adequate to explain the passage.

1Pe 4:14. The Old Testament and Jewish tradition often speak of the Spirit resting "on" God's servants, empowering them for their task. In the light of "glory" in verse 13, Peter presumably means, "the Spirit who will raise you [4:6] is already on you."

1Pe 4:15. Second-century apologists, or defenders of Christianity, argued that the only charge on which true Christians were ever convicted was the charge of being a Christian. The Greek term for "meddler" (NIV, NASB) could refer to sorcerers but some think that it refers to "busybodies" (KJV), those giving unwanted and ill-timed advice. Meddling tactlessly in others' affairs was a vice often attributed to unpopular Cynic philosophers (to whom some Christian preachers had already been compared). The meaning of term used here, though, remains debated.

1Pe 4:16. The nickname "Christian" was originally used only by those hostile to Christianity; see comment on Ac 11:26. Here it is parallel to legal charges like "murderer" and "thief." Early Roman descriptions of Nero's persecution use this title for Jesus' followers. Many wise men in Greek tradition pointed out that it was truly noble to suffer scorn for doing good; in Greco-Roman society, obsessed as it was with shame and honor, this was a countercultural insight.

1Pe 4:17. The image of judgment beginning at God's household is an Old Testament one (Eze 9:6; cf. Je 25:18-29; Am 3:2), as is the ominous expression, "the time has come" (Eze 7:7,12). Believers experience the judgment of earthly courts (1Pe 4:6), but Peter probably sees that suffering also as God's discipline, as Jewish teachers often did. Throughout history, persecution has often refined and thus strengthened the church.

1Pe 4:18. Peter proves his case in 4:17 by citing the Septuagint of Pr 11:31, which may reflect what had become a prevailing Jewish conception by Peter's day, that the righteous suffered in this life, but the wicked suffered in the world to come.

1Pe 4:19. Peter again echoes the familiar language of Jewish prayer: the final benediction of one regularly uttered Jewish prayer (the Eighteen Benedictions) included the lines "Our lives are committed to your hand, and our souls are in your care," and some others also uttered similar prayers in the face of possible death (cf. 2Ma 13:14); the prototype for all of them was probably Ps 31:5 (cited in Lk 23:46).

1 Peter 5:1-5**Faithful Caretakers of the Flock**

The behavior of church readers in the time of crisis could encourage or discourage the flock. The leaders, once known, would be the first targets of search, capture, torture and execution.

1Pe 5:1. Elders, older and wiser men skilled in judging cases, ruled in most Israelite towns in the Old Testament . In the New Testament period, "elders" held a respected place in the synagogues , from which the churches took over this form of leadership. Peter ranks himself among them as a fellow elder.

1Pe 5:2. The image of a "shepherd" most readily connotes a concerned guide rather than a severe ruler (although the image of shepherds had often been applied to rulers in parts of the ancient Near East, to Greek kings and so forth). Charges of illegitimate gain were often made against moral teachers in the ancient world, and it was necessary for Christians to avoid even the appearance of impropriety. (Like certain officials in the Jewish community, these Christian leaders distributed the funds for the poor.)

1Pe 5:3. Heads of Greek philosophical schools and Jewish schools of law presented their lives as models to their students, but some also exercised strict control. A closer parallel to this text would be elders in Diaspora synagogues, who were responsible for the services and led the Jewish community but normally had no official power outside settling internal legal disputes.

1Pe 5:4. In some ancient texts a "chief shepherd" appears to have been an overseer of a group of other shepherds, although they were usually not well-to-do themselves. "Crowns" were garlands given to victors of athletic contests, benefactors or other heroes, and they were perishable; those faithful to Christ would receive an imperishable crown. The image was also used in Judaism.

1Pe 5:5. Respect for parents, elders and, in Judaism, those more knowledgeable in the law was socially obligatory in antiquity; some Jewish traditions regarded it as an expression of one's respect for God. Such respect included deferring to the wisdom of older men and allowing them to speak first. Peter advocates submission to the ruling elders (5:1), but he also urges—against Greco-Roman society's ideals—mutual humility, based on the teaching of the Old Testament (Pr 3:34).

1 Peter 5:6-11**Persevere by Grace**

Although 1Pe 5:5-9 has sufficient similarities with Jas 4:6-10 to suggest a common source for the imagery, the application is different. In James, the test is poverty and oppression tempting people to retaliate. In 1 Peter, it is persecution tempting believers to fall away.

1Pe 5:6. Following on Pr 3:34, cited in 1Pe 5:5, Peter urges believers to "humble" themselves before God. In the Old Testament , this idea often meant repenting, sometimes when facing impending judgment (4:17), or learning one's complete dependence on God. Here the sense includes embracing and accepting the suffering until God provides the way out (cf. Je 27:11). On present humbling and future exalting, see comment on Lk 1:52-53 and 14:11; the cries of God's people during unjust sufferings had always moved him to act on their behalf (Ex 2:23-25; 3:7-9; Jdg 2:18; 10:16).

1Pe 5:7. Although the promise of complete relief from persecution is future (5:6), Peter encourages believers to pray and trust God's love for them in the present. Judaism learned to see God's love in Israel's sufferings (as disciplines of love), but most Gentiles , who bartered sacrifices and vows to get benefactions from the gods, had difficulty with this concept.

1Pe 5:8-11. In the Old Testament, "Satan " (in the Hebrew of Job, a title, "the satan") was the accuser, the prosecuting attorney before God—the "adversary," as Peter says. In Jewish tradition, Satan accused God's people before God's throne day and night (except, in later accounts, on the Day of Atonement).

The "devil" is literally the "slanderer," carrying the same connotation as the adversarial accuser. Jewish teachers recognized that, as in the book of Job (where he "went about" over the face of the earth— 1:7), Satan sought in this present age to turn people to apostasy from the truth, although his power was limited because he ultimately had to answer to God. The Dead Sea Scrolls called the present evil age the "dominion of Satan" (1QM 14.9).

Lions were viewed as the most ferocious and mighty beasts, and from Ps 22:13 (probably the background here) they came to be used as figures for enemies of God's people. In the time of Nero, Christians were fed to some literal lions as well. The small, isolated Christian communities could take heart that their other spiritual siblings—starting with the churches Peter knew in Rome—were experiencing the same trials (1Pe 5:9), until the end (v. 10).

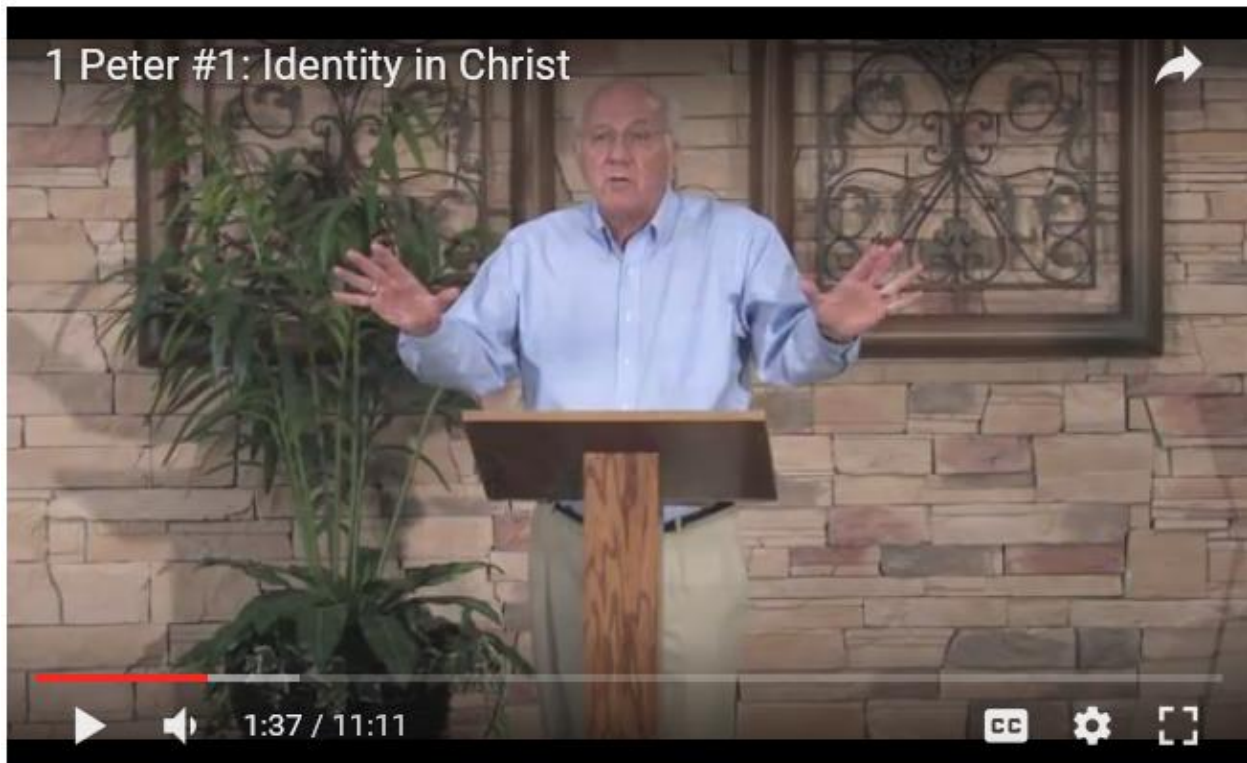
1 Peter 5:12-14 **Conclusion**

1Pe 5:12. Silvanus (the full Roman name for which the similar name Silas served as a short equivalent) appears to have been the amanuensis, or scribe . Most letters were written through the agency of scribes. As a Roman citizen (Ac 16:37), Silas presumably came from a fairly well-to-do Jewish family that provided him a good literary and rhetorical education; Peter may have given him some degree of freedom in wording the letter. On assertions of brevity, see comment on Heb 13:22; it was a polite closing formula in many ancient speeches and letters.

1Pe 5:13. Jewish people by this period viewed Rome as the fourth of the four kingdoms in Da 7 that would oppress Israel, a successor to Babylon. Some elements of contemporary Judaism had readily transferred prophecies of Babylon's demise in the Old Testament to the new empire of Rome (a transferral readily highlighted after A.D. 70). "Babylon" had thus become a fairly common cryptogram for Rome (although "Edom" was more popular with later rabbis .

1Pe 5:14. Kisses were a common affectionate greeting for close friends and relatives.

[\[Back to Beginning of Commentary\]](#)

1Peter Study Videos by Gene Getz from his Life Applications Study Bible

<http://www2.bhpublishinggroup.com/QR/GetzBible/1423/> (1 Peter#1 – Identify in Christ)

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<http://www2.bhpublishinggroup.com/QR/GetzBible/1433/> (1 Peter#1 – Demonstrating Humility)

<http://www2.bhpublishinggroup.com/QR/GetzBible/1434/> (1 Peter#1 – Resisting Satan)

Bio: <http://www2.bhpublishinggroup.com/qr/GetzBible/author.asp>



MAPS and Charts

Map of the New Testament World



http://www.bible-history.com/maps/maps/map_new_testament_world.html

Map of New Testament Asia





Source: Gene Getz: <http://www2.bhpgublishinggroup.com/QR/GetzBible/1423/>

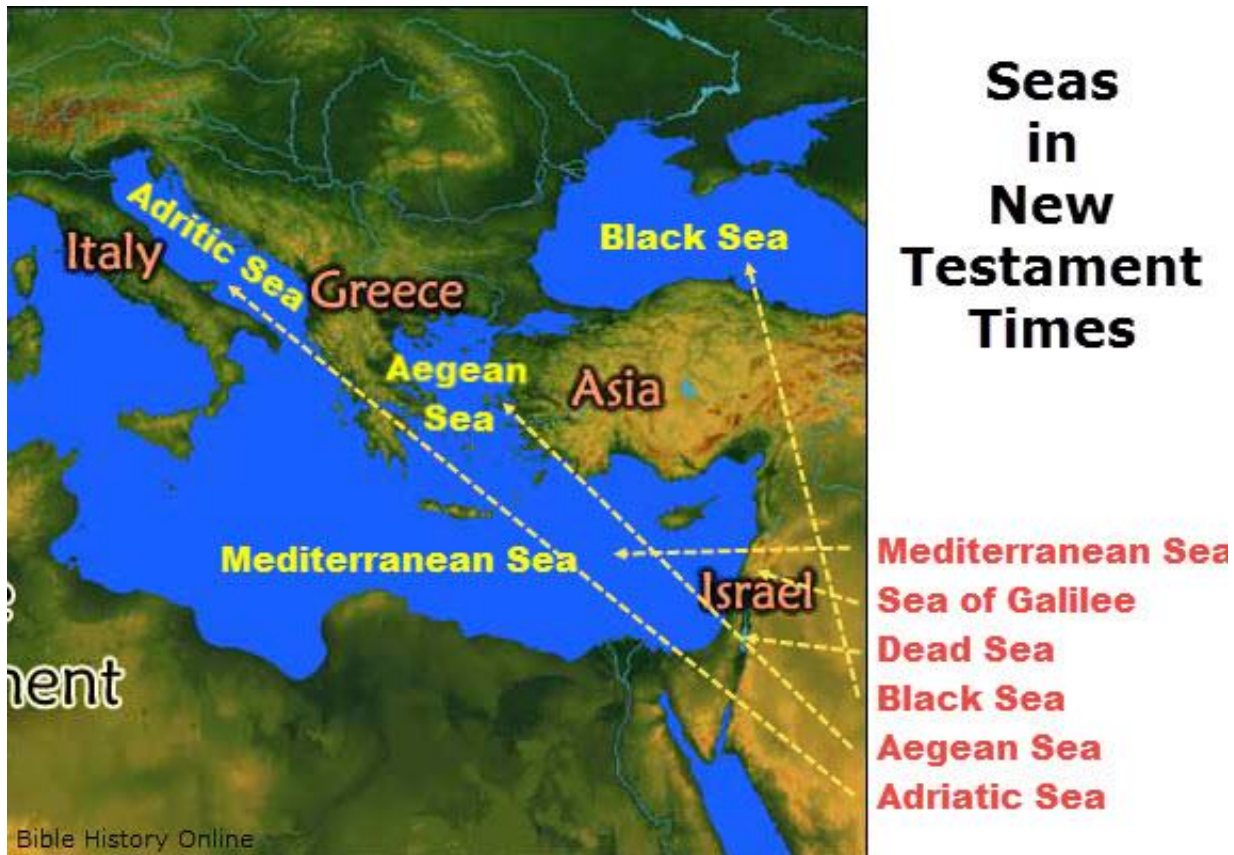


Source: Dr. Contables' Notes <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/htm/NT/1%20Peter/1Peter.htm>



Peter's Destination

Source: Halley's Bible Handbook



The Seas (6 Great Seas)

There were six important seas in the New Testament World, some are mentioned in the Gospels and the Book of Acts.

1. The Mediterranean Sea which bordered the land of Israel on the east as far as Italy on the east.
2. The Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias, mainly associated with the life of Jesus.
3. The Dead Sea, Although it was not mentioned in the New Testament it was in southern Israel.
4. The Black Sea, it was just north of Asia Minor.
5. The Aegean Sea, located between Asia Minor and Greece.
6. The Adriatic Sea, located between Greece and Italy.

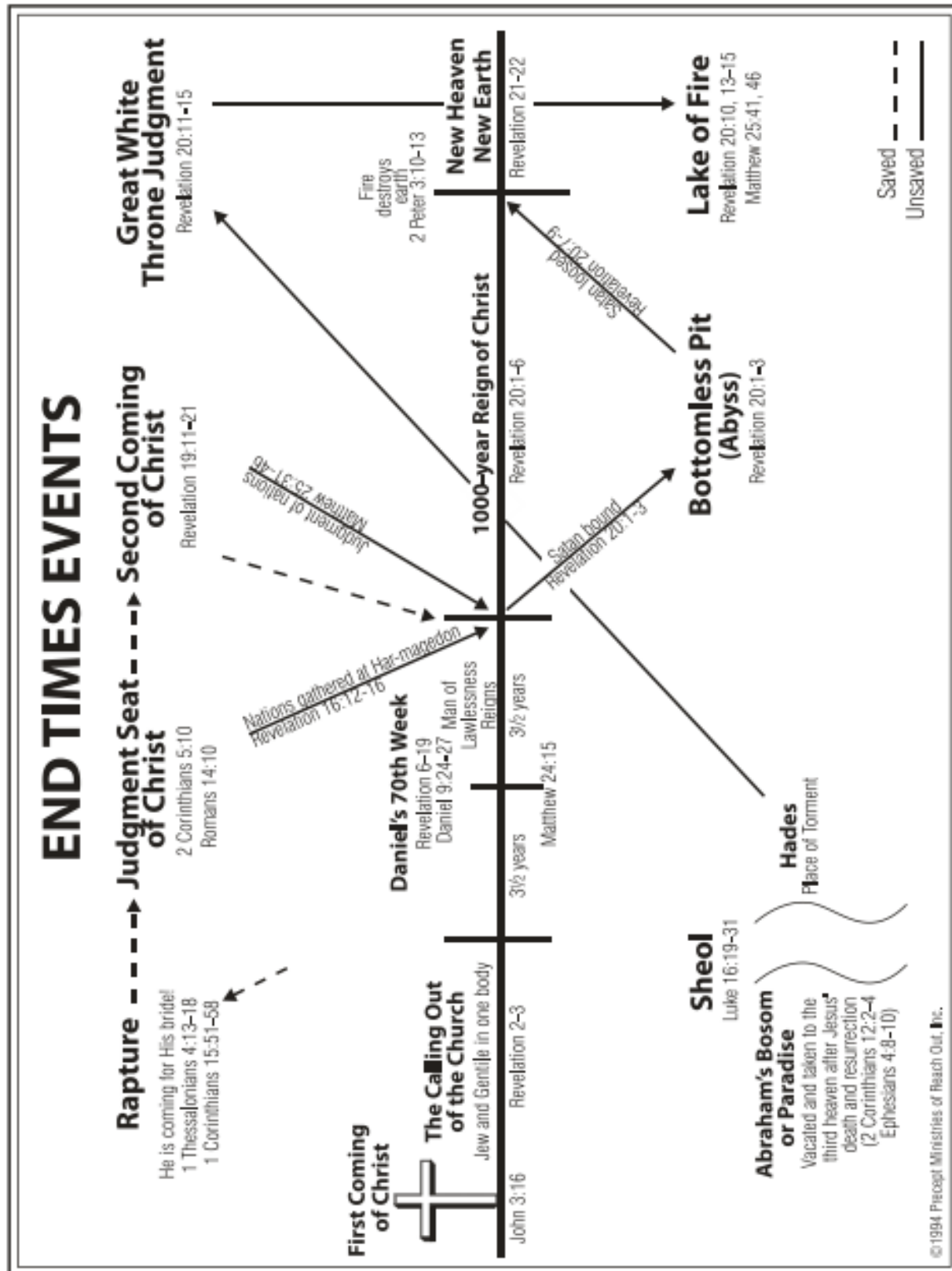


Roman Provinces in Europe (5 Provinces)

1. **Thrace** was the land bordering the southwest corner of the Black Sea.
2. **Macedonia** was the land at the northeast corner of the Aegean Sea, in-between Thrace, Illyricum, and Greece.
3. **Greece or Achaia** was the land southwest of Macedonia, bordering 3 seas.
4. **Illyricum** was the land north of Greece, northwest of Macedonia, and the eastern portion of the Adriatic Sea.
5. **Italy** was the country across the Adriatic Sea from Greece and Illyricum. Rome was the capital of Italy.



Precepts for Life Map



Precepts for Life – End Times Events Chart

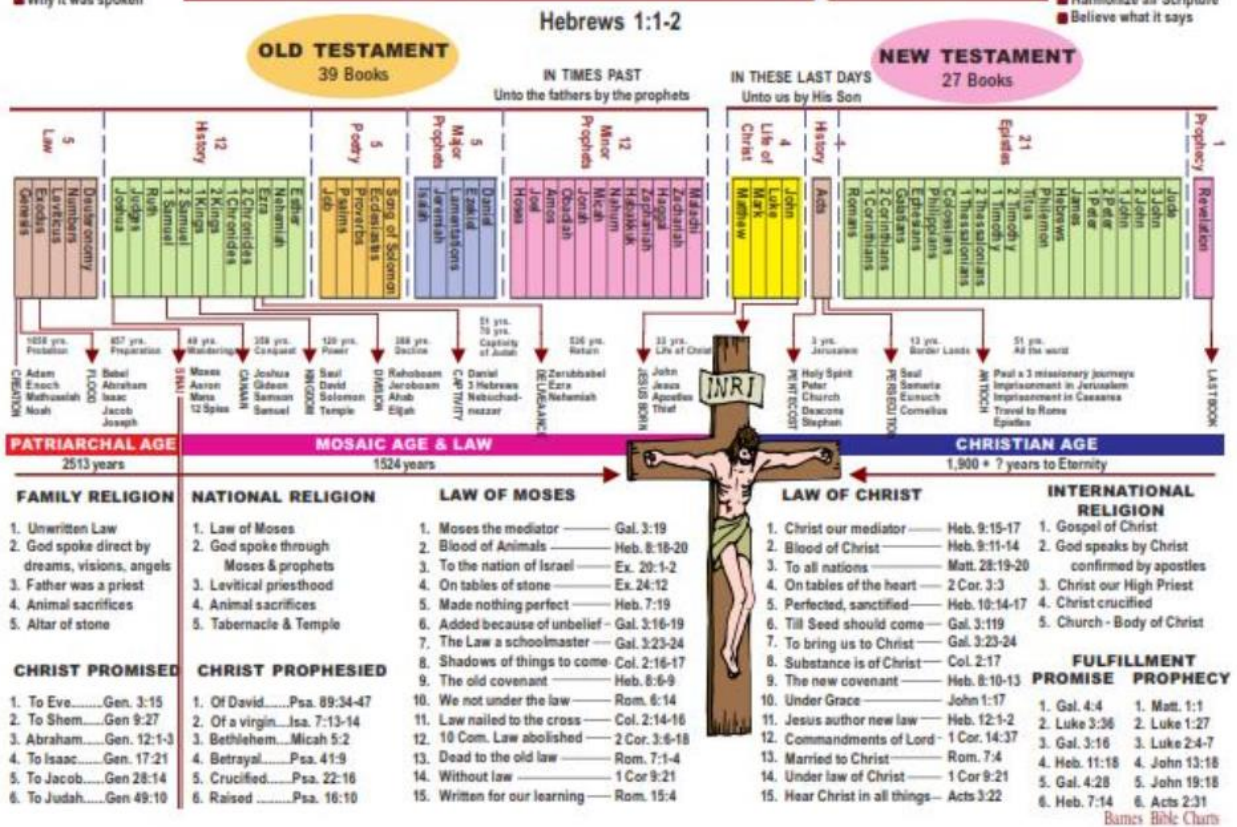
HOW TO STUDY

- Find out who spoke
- To whom they spoke
- In what age they spoke
- Why it was spoken

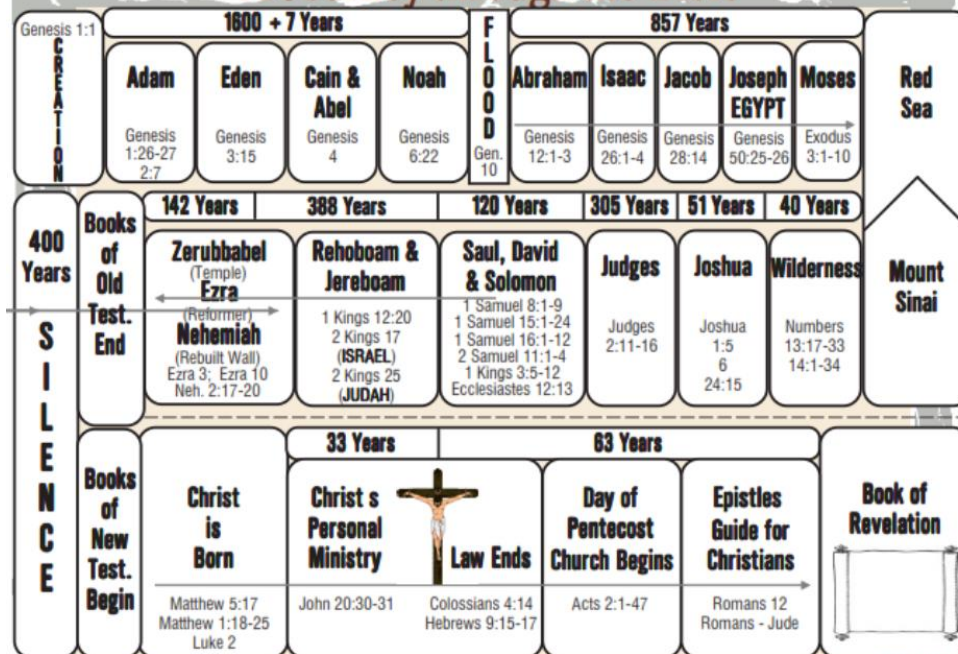
The Bible - God Has Spoken

HOW TO UNDERSTAND

- Study for yourself
- Read in context
- Harmonize all Scripture
- Believe what it says



A Journey through the Bible



History from Moses to Alexander the Great

BC 1445 Exodus/10 Plagues/Law Given

God raised up Moses to deliver the people from Egypt and through 10 plagues demonstrates his power and makes a name for himself. The last plague is the execution of the first born unless the house had the blood of a lamb (or goat) on their door posts. The Israelites were expelled after this last plague and made it through the Red Sea and then eventually to the Mountain of Sinai where God gave them the covenant.

BC 1405 Conquest of Canaan

Israel spent 40 years in the wilderness because when they reached the promised land, they refused to enter it. Now under Joshua, the successor of Moses, the people conquer the east side of the Jordan and then make their way into the land via Jericho. This is the first time Israel actually possesses the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

BC 1391-1050 Judges

The period of the Judges covers a few hundred years during which a cycle repeated itself over and again. (1) The people become oppressed by a foreign nation and call out to God in their despair. (2) God raises a Judge or Deliverer to obtain military victory. (3) The people become complacent and “everyone does what is right in his own eyes” which causes God’s protection to be forfeited.

BC 1050-930 United Kingdom

The first king of Israel was from the tribe of Benjamin, called Saul. The kingdom was taken from him and given to David of the tribe of Judah (though David did not rise to the throne until Saul died in battle). Then David’s son, Solomon was anointed above his brothers by David to be king over Israel. Each of these first three kings reigned for 40 years. This is called the “Golden Age” because during it Israel enjoyed peace, prosperity, and they worshiped God.

BC 966 First Temple Built

Shortly after the Law was given (BC 1445) Moses was given instruction on building the tabernacle (a tent meticulously designed by God to represent his presence among the people). The center piece of the tabernacle was the Ark of the Covenant containing the tablets of the Ten Commandments and some other items. David wanted to build a “house” for God but was refused because he was a man of war. Solomon used the materials David had laid up for the construction of the temple and dedicated it sacrificing thousands of animals. Then the glory of God visibly came into the temple.

BC 930 Kingdom Splits

Rehoboam, Solomon’s son, does not act wisely and instead of reaching out to the northern part of the kingdom alienates them. This causes a rift between the north and the south. Jeroboam is crowned king of the northern ten tribes (called hereafter Israel) and Rehoboam retains control (barely) of the southern two tribes (called hereafter Judah).

BC 930-721 Northern Kingdom of Israel

Jeroboam was the first king (the son of Nebat) and his first acts involved making two golden calves. One was to be installed in the south and one in the north. He appointed a new priesthood to offer sacrifices. The new capital was Samaria. The kings were not descended through one family line and there were often bloody assassinations to gain the throne. The last king was Hoshea the son of Elah. The Assyrians conquered Israel, deported its inhabitants and resettled other people in Samaria (later dubbed the Samaritans).

BC 930-586 Southern Kingdom of Judah

Under David's grandson, Rehoboam the kingdom split but God was merciful to the house of David and providentially saw to it that David's family line continued throughout all the kings of Judah. Jerusalem remained the capital. Hezekiah miraculously survived the vicious attack of Assyria when God sent two angels to defeat Sennacherib's army. The last kings of Judah were Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. At this point, the Babylonian empire conquered Jerusalem three times, the last of which resulted in the city's complete destruction.

BC 911-612 Assyrian Empire

Historians mark the beginning of the Assyrian empire with the accession of Adad-Nirari II to the throne. Before this Assyria existed but was not very powerful. When Tiglath-Pileser III (also known as Pulu) ascended to the throne, he defeated Babylonia, the Medes, Hittites, Syria, and Phoenicia. He occupied Philistia in BC 738 and subjected Israel to tribute. In BC 727 Tiglath-Pileser III's was succeeded by Shalmaneser V who died in BC 722 while laying siege to Samaria. Sargon II seized the throne and finished off Samaria and carried off 27,000 people into captivity in BC 721. Under Sennacherib (BC 705-681) an unsuccessful attack was made against Jerusalem and her king, Hezekiah. It really ended in BC 612 when the capital of Nineveh was defeated by the Babylonians.

BC 612-539 Babylonian Empire

Nabopolassar successfully rebelled and with the help of the Medes defeated Nineveh (the capital of Assyria) in BC 612. Under Nebuchadnezzar's 43 year reign Babylon was at the peak of its strength. He brought Judah under his control and imposed taxes on them. Judah rebelled, was conquered, then rebelled again, and this time it was destroyed and all the citizens were deported. Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by Nabonidus who eventually was defeated by Cyrus the king of the Medo-Persian Empire in BC 539 at Opis. Cyrus entered the city of Babylon without fighting.

BC 605 Jerusalem Defeated (First Exile)

During the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim (king of Judah), Jerusalem was defeated and some of the vessels from the house of God were brought by Nebuchadnezzar into Shinar (another name for Babylon) (Daniel 1:1-2). Daniel, Mishaël, Hananiah, Azariah and others who showed promise are brought to Babylon and trained to be able to serve in the royal court there (Daniel 1:3-6). Judah was made to pay taxes to Babylon but soon stopped in defiance to their foreign conquerors.

BC 597 Jerusalem Defeated Again (Second Exile)

In the eighth year of king Jehoiachin, Nebuchadnezzar again defeated Jerusalem and carried away the rest of the treasures of the temple, and the treasures of the king's house, and led away into captivity all the captains, the warriors, the craftsmen, and the smiths (2nd Kings 24:8-16). Only the poorest people were left in the land. During the siege, Jehoiachin surrendered and went out to Nebuchadnezzar and was taken back to Babylon. Jehoiachin's uncle, Mattaniah (also called Zedekiah), was put in charge by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:17). Ezekiel may have been taken during this time. He prophesied extensively about the coming destruction of Jerusalem while living in Babylonia near the river Chebar (Ezekiel 1:1-3).

BC 586 Jerusalem Destroyed/Temple Destroyed (Third Exile)

Jerusalem again rebelled and the army of Babylon once again defeated it in the eleventh year of King Zedekiah (2nd Kings 25:1-2). Zedekiah fled but was captured; both of his sons were slaughtered before his eyes and then his eyes were put out and he was brought in bronze fetters to Babylon where he died. The temple was burned to the ground to such a degree that when it was rebuilt even a new foundation had to be made. The city walls were completely destroyed along with the prominent houses and the gates to the city (2nd Kings 25:1-21). Jeremiah was in the city when this happened and survived.

BC 586-516 Seventy Year Captivity

The land was to lie dormant for seventy years to make up for the Sabbaths that it had not enjoyed (the Israelites were supposed to rest from farming every seventh year, but they did not). There are multiple ways to date this event. Some start in 605 (or 606) and end it in 535 (or 536). Here I have indicated the time from when the temple was destroyed (586) to when it was finally rebuilt (516). However one counts it, the people were able to survive in the foreign regions in which they were transplanted, just as God had prophesied through Jeremiah (Jeremiah 25.1-14). Daniel's prayer undoubtedly ties in with the end of the captivity (Daniel 9).

BC 539-333 Achaemenid Empire (also called Medo-Persia)

Cyrus the Great (also called Cyrus II of Persia) successfully defeated the Median Empire, the Lydian Empire, and the Babylonian Empire between BC 559 and 539. His son, Cambyses II conquered Egypt. Cyrus was politically shrewd, modeling himself as the "savior" of conquered nations. To reinforce this image, he instituted policies of religious freedom, and abolished slavery in the newly acquired cities. Other kings in this empire include Darius I, Xerxes I (Ahasuerus), Artaxerxes I, etc. In BC 334 during the reign of Darius III, Alexander the Great successfully established the Greeks as the new empire.

BC 538 Cyrus Issues Decree to Return to Judea

In the first year that Cyrus was established as the king of the empire he issued a decree that the Jews living throughout his empire could return to Judah and rebuild the temple (Ezra 1.1-4). Zerubbabel & Joshua lead 49,897 people back to Jerusalem (Ezra 2.2, 64-65) and begin work on the temple in BC 536. Zerubbabel was the Persian approved governor and Joshua was the highpriest. Prophets Haggai and Zechariah urged the building of temple through their prophecies.

BC 516 Second Temple Built

The building of the temple was begun in BC 536 but stopped some time before BC 529. The people of the surrounding areas (outside of Judah) discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building, and hired counselors against them to frustrate their work until Darius I became king (Ezra 4.4-5). Then God moved through the prophets Zechariah and Haggai to urge the work to begin again (without permission from the authorities) in BC 520. It was finally completed and dedicated in BC 516.

BC 484-475 Events of Queen Esther

In BC 484 King Ahasuerus (Xerxes I) gave a banquet and his queen (Vashti) publicly disobeyed him. The king sought after a new queen and chose Esther (Hadassah). During this time a man named Haman (who was the right hand man of the king) gained much power and wanted to annihilate the Jews because Mordecai (Esther's Uncle) would not bow to Haman as he passed. In a last minute effort to defend her people Esther succeeds in gaining Xerxes I's approval to reverse Haman's plot and the Jews throughout the Persian Empire were saved. The festival of Purim is celebrated annually (up to this day) as commemoration of this deliverance.

BC 457 Ezra Arrives in Jerusalem

In the seventh year of King Artaxerxes I (BC 464-425), Ezra the scribe was sent to establish Mosaic Law in Jerusalem. His mission was to teach the people how to live. He was given a good deal of silver and gold to get the sacrificial system going. BC 445 Nehemiah Arrives in Jerusalem and Builds Wall Governor Nehemiah was commissioned by Artaxerxes I to rebuild the wall in Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2.1). The work began and it was strongly opposed by Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab (Nehemiah 2.10, 19). Even so, the workers continued with incredible speed holding a weapon in one hand a tool in the other. The wall was finished in 52 days (Nehemiah 6.15).

BC 333 Alexander the Great's Empire

Alexander (son of Philip of Macedon) was king from BC 336 to 323 being only 20 years old. He was one of the most successful military commanders in history, and was undefeated in battle. He defeated Darius

III at the Battle of Issus in BC 333. By the time of his death (at only 33 years old), he had conquered most of the world known to the ancient Greeks pressing east into India. In the same year, Alexander took Jerusalem and now Judea was a Greek province instead of a Persian one. He founded Alexandria in Egypt (along with a number of other Alexandrias) which became a major city of trade, education, and culture. In BC 331, Alexander was welcomed as a liberator in Egypt and was pronounced the son of Zeus by Egyptian priests of the god Amun.

From then on, Alexander referred to the god Zeus-Ammon as his true father. Alexander was a brilliant and fearless military strategist (he was undefeated in battle) but was also well educated in general, having Aristotle as his personal tutor. Alexander wasn't just interested in conquering the world and submitting it to Greek rule; he wanted to make the world like Greece, civilizing it. He spread the Greek language, culture, religion, and philosophy to the lands he conquered and encouraged intermarriage. By the time of Jesus Greek was the common international language of the day. Alexander died in BC 323 of unknown causes (speculations include binge drinking, malaria, West Nile virus, typhoid, and viral encephalitis).

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