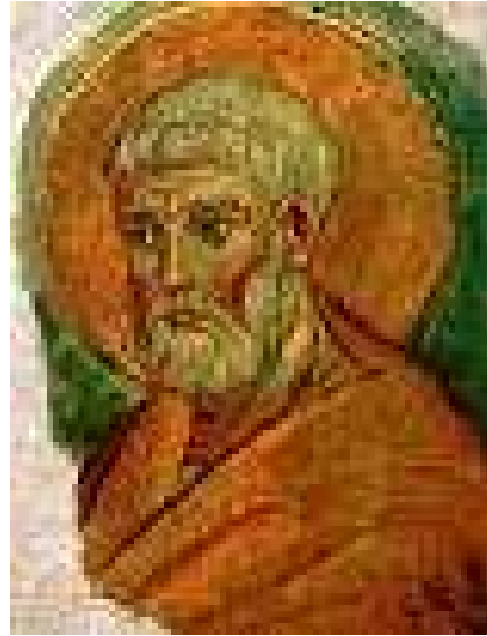
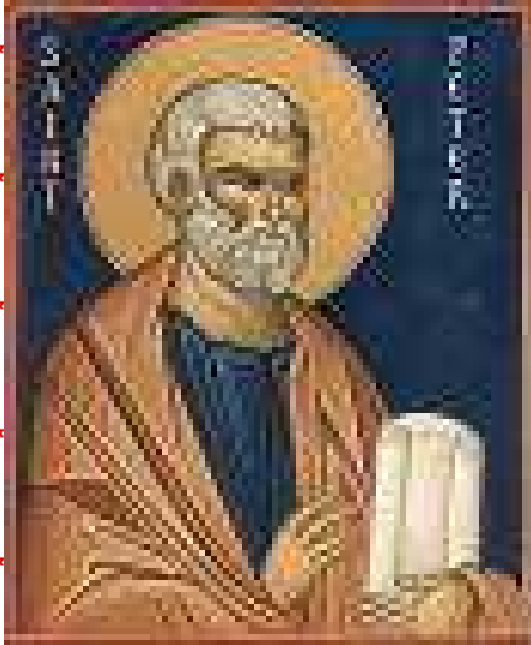


FOUR STUDIES



IN 1 PETER



Welcome to 1 Peter! This short letter, like many of the New Testament letters, divides itself into two sections. In the first two and a half chapters Peter explains the gospel. He clearly outlines the basis of what we as Christians believe. The second half of Peter's letter contains the practical application for Christians in everyday situations. As we understand the Gospel more and more clearly, we ought to be able to apply it in our lives more and more effectively. Peter stresses Gospel comprehension first and then following that, he stresses Gospel application.



NERO

Peter is one of the most interesting characters in the New Testament. He comes across as a person who seizes the moment, and in the Gospels we often see him making a mess of things. Originally Peter was an obscure fisherman from the land-locked Galilean lake. Throughout Jesus' ministry he was one of the three who made up the inner group of Jesus' disciples and he was the spokesman for the twelve. He became one of the leaders of the church in Jerusalem, and according to extra biblical sources he travelled to Rome where he was martyred along with Paul in 64/5 AD during the reign of the Emperor Nero.

Clement the Bishop of Rome wrote these words around 96 AD.

1 Clement 5: 4-5 Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labours, and when he had finally suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him. Owing to envy, Paul also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After preaching both in the east and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience.

Commentators disagree with each other as to whether Peter was writing to Christian Jews, or to Christian Gentiles, or to Christians in general. These studies are written from the perspective that Peter was writing to Christian Jews. And for personal interest the reasons for and against holding to this view are listed below.

FOR	AGAINST
1) Galatians 2:7 Paul says, "Peter had been given the task of preaching the gospel to the Jews"	1 Pet. 1:14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance.
2) 1Pet. 1. Literal reading is, " Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, etc." The word Diaspora was a specific term referring to the scattering of the Jews among the nations by the Assyrians in the 8 th century BC. 2 Kings 17	1 Pet. 1:18 You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers.
3) The letter is a thoroughly Jewish document written using many Old Testament expressions, citations and characters such as Abraham, Sarah and Noah.	1 Pet. 1:21 Through [Christ] you have confidence in God... so that your faith and hope are in God.
4) The verses cited in the AGAINST column only express the kind of disobedience of which Israel was guilty in the Old Testament. It was that kind of behaviour which landed them in exile in the first place.	1 Pet 4:3-4 Let the time that is past suffice for doing what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry.

Although it is useful to maintain the distinction between Jew and Gentile as we study 1 Peter it is more important to stress the reality of the unity all Christians enjoy by faith in Jesus Christ. Both Jews and Gentiles now make up the people of God. All who believe in Jesus are the genuine children of Abraham.

Below is how these studies divide up the letter, and a brief synopsis of each.

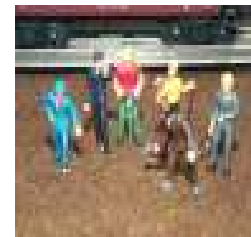
1. **Our miraculous salvation. 1:1-2:10**

Big Idea. Our salvation has past, present and future aspects. It's grounded in the OT, it's a current reality and it will have a future fulfillment.



2. **Christians in action. 2:11-3:12**

Big Idea. Since we are citizens of heaven our lives are to be noticeably different here on earth.



3. **Follow the leader. 3:13-4:19**

Big Idea. When it comes to suffering for your faith follow Jesus' example.



4. **Perseverance Pays 5:1-19**

Big Idea. Our motivation for Christian service in this life, is the future glory we will get in the next.



Study 1

Our miraculous salvation. 1:1-2:10

1) Introduction. Dear Strangers,

Read the first and last three verses of this letter. 1:1-3 and 5:12-14.

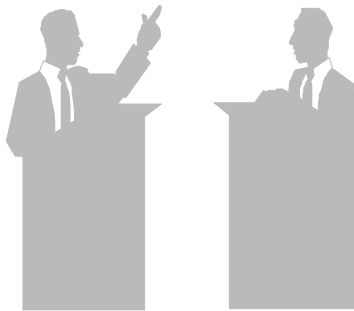
Who's the author and who's his helper?

Circle the regions Peter mentions in v1 on the map. *Note, Peter is writing to people within regional areas rather than to towns or cities.*



What's the purpose and desired result of the letter?

Commentators have different opinions regarding the meaning of '**she who is in Babylon**' in 5:13. Below are some of the options. Which do you prefer and why?



1. Peter's wife.
2. The church in Rome.
3. The church in Babylon Mesopotamia.
4. No idea

2) Understanding Our Privileged Position.

1 Pet. 1:2. is a loaded verse, it puts things in their eternal perspective. We are the elect, because God pre-selected us: 1) to be made holy by the Spirit and, 2) to be obedient by the work of Jesus Christ. What this amounts to is that we are set apart as holy at conversion and are declared obedient. We are God's elect and will receive what he has promised to us.

3) Applying Our Privileged Position.

Read 1:3-9. What makes the difference between ordinary hope and Christian '**living hope**' v3?

What's the purpose and end result of Christian suffering?

What are the sort of things that make us doubt the very idea of heaven?

How does v8-9 help counter some of those doubts?

4) Reassurance.

Read 1:10-12

Peter in this section is reassuring his converted Jewish audience of the validity of their Christian faith. He does this by presenting the work of Jesus as the completion of all their Old Testament scriptures. Christianity was not new. Rather, it was like the appearance of a long awaited plant whose seed had been germinating in the soil of the Old Testament prophecies and writings for centuries. You can imagine the comfort this continuity with the Old Testament would have given to the persecuted Christian Jews putting their life on the line for Christ. Christianity wasn't a break from a former system of belief, it was the radical fulfilment of it.

In the whole 'living stone' section, 2:4-10, Peter takes many familiar Old Testament motifs. What are some of them?

If Peter's writing to Jewish Christians, how do you explain v10?

5) Holiness Defined and Demanded.

Read 1:13- 2:3. What is v15 urging us to be? How should we go about being that?

What things would you list under Peter's words, "do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance" v14?

How do you feel you are going at putting such things aside?

V22 shows us that a big part of holy living is Christian love for each other. How can we move from superficial love to sincere and deep love for each other?

How important is God's word in our struggle for holiness? 2:1-3

Where are you spiritually?

- 1) anorexic
- 2) starving
- 3) hungry
- 4) content
- 5) well fed
- 6)

How can you get more to eat? What's stopping you?



Do you have good eating habits and regular meals?

For personal growth. Make a list of the things that you struggle with and commit yourself to addressing them throughout the rest of this week.