

**"Introduction to 1 Peter"**

**1 Peter 1:1-2**

**Introduction:** The study which we shall begin tonight will be something that will certainly equip us for any for any unfair treatment and suffering which we will face in the future. This letter was written to believers who were facing very trying circumstances and who would in the future face great tests of their faith.

➤ **The Theme of 1 Peter**

The theme of Peter's letter is:

**"Suffering for the cause of Jesus Christ for a Future Glory"**

Peter will teach us in this letter that suffering is connected with salvation and suffering is connected with future glory. Jesus spoke of this very Truth in the Sermon on the Mount.

**Matthew 5:11-12**

*<sup>11</sup> Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*

*<sup>12</sup> Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

The Apostle Paul understood this same Truth.

**2 Corinthians 4:17**

*<sup>17</sup> For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;*

➤ **The Outline of 1 Peter**

We can divide the letter into three sections which will better help us to understand Peter's thoughts.

**I. Salvation - 1 Peter 1:1-2:10**

This deals with the **destiny** of the believer.

**II. Submission - 1 Peter 2:11-3:12**

This deals with the **duty** of the believer.

**III. Suffering - 1 Peter 3:13-5:14**

This deals with the **discipline** of the believer.

➤ **The Recipients of the Letter**

**Notice 1 Peter 1:1**

We see here that Peter is writing to believers who were dispersed. These were mostly Jews whom Peter would have known for he was the Apostle to the Jews. These believers were living in difficult times. They were under the authority of the Roman Empire and in this empire, they were not well favored. Peter wrote this letter around the year 64 AD. This was the very year that Rome burned.

It is believed that Nero set the fire in Rome because he had an insatiable appetite for building. Rome however was built up so in order to have his appetite satisfied it is believed he set fire to Rome so that he would be able to rebuild the city. The buildings of Rome consisted of much wood and the streets were very narrow. So, when the fire started it leaped over the streets and burned building after building. It burned several temples of the false gods which devastated the people of Rome. The fire proved that their gods were not able to prevent and stop the fire. It was not long before the people suspected Nero of setting the fire and therefore, he needed a scape goat. That is when he falsely accused the Christians. Christians were not a well-liked group in Rome at this time for several reasons.

1. They refused to practice Emperor worship and they rejected the gods of the Romans.
2. They were accused of cannibalism. The Lord's Table was closed to the unsaved Romans and so when the Romans heard of the Christians "eating the flesh and blood" they believed they were cannibals. They were actually accused of eating babies at their communion services.
3. They were hated because many Roman women came to Christ and this was seen as the women rebelling against their husbands. So, the Christians were considered the people who led the women to act independently of their husbands.
4. The Christians were suspected of setting the fire because they spoke of a day when the world would burn in flames.

So, when Nero blamed the Christians it was the perfect opportunity to bring down the persecution upon them and that is what happened. These Christians that lived under the blame of the fire at Rome were persecuted in ways we cannot even imagine.

Now, some Bible teachers believe that Peter wrote this letter right before all of this persecution broke out and that may be correct. But we can be sure that God knew it was coming and therefore the timing of this letter was perfect.

**Application:**

I am reminded here of how God knows our circumstances before they ever happen. Have you ever read a devotional and found that for the day the words were perfect? Now stop and think about how long ago it was written, and the writer did not even know you nor the circumstances that you would be facing. God allowed the writer to write the devotional and then it was directed into your hand's years later.

**Psalm 139:1-7**

*O lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.*

*<sup>2</sup> Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.*

*<sup>3</sup> Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.*

*<sup>4</sup> For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.*

*<sup>5</sup> Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.*

*<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.*

*<sup>7</sup> Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?*

➤ **The Writer**

**Notice 1 Peter 1:1**

When I stop and consider what these believers were facing, I understand that they had not been perfect in the way they had lived their lives. They had made many mistakes and there were times when they just simply "blew it". Then they receive this letter from Peter. He too was a man who "blew it" on the night that Jesus was arrested. He had denied the Lord three times and yet he had become one of the Apostles. He was still being used by God which would have been a great encouragement for those who had failed.

Let me just say that as a servant of the Lord the most discouraging thing I can ever imagine would be failure to the point of being "placed on the shelf" by God. Have you ever failed the Lord in some way and thought to yourself, "He may never use me again". I am sure there were some who had received this letter who thought those thoughts. What an encouragement Peter would be to these people!

Let us now get to the letter.

➤ **The Believer's Salvation - 1 Peter 1:1-2:10**  
**Part 1**

We see great encouragement in this text for Peter's readers that were scattered as well as us today.

**Notice 1 Peter 1:2**

**1. They were God's Elect.**

Now we have talked about this before but it good to be reminded of this Truth. When the Bible speaks of "election" it is NOT speaking of being chosen for salvation as many teach today. We know this for several reasons:

**a. Israel was God's ELECT in the Old Testament, and they were not all saved.**

**Isaiah 45:4**

*<sup>4</sup> For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.*

**b. The righteous angels are called God's ELECT and they have not been saved.**

**1 Timothy 5:21**

*<sup>21</sup> I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.*

The "ELECT" are God's representatives. Israel represented God in the Old Testament; they were His earthly representatives. The righteous angels are His heavenly representatives and today the church is called the ELECT because we are His earthly representatives.

**Romans 8:32-33**

*<sup>32</sup> He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

*<sup>33</sup> Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

**Notice 1 Peter 1:2 again.**

The "foreknowledge of God" goes back to eternity past. Before the foundation of the world God chose to have a church/bride for His Son.

**Ephesians 1:4**

*<sup>4</sup> According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

The invitation now is for whosoever will may come to Jesus Christ and when they do they become a part of the ELECT/church/body of Jesus Christ.

Now, let us get back to these scattered believers. In the Roman Empire they were despised. In the eyes of many of the Romans these believers had little value. But not so with God. This verse reminds them that they were God's representatives.

**Application:**

The same is true for us also. It may very well come to the place where we are despised in our society but no matter how the world sees us, we must never forget we are God representatives to the world. It even goes further than this.

**Matthew 5:13a, 14a**

*<sup>13</sup> Ye are the salt of the earth:*

*<sup>14</sup> Ye are the light of the world.*

The church is a blessing to the world because we are salt and light. We are used by God to expose evil (light) and we are used by God as a preservative (salt).

**2 Thessalonians 2:7-9**

*<sup>7</sup> For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.*

*<sup>8</sup> And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:*

*<sup>9</sup> Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,*

The Holy Spirit lives within us and it is the Holy Spirit who restrains Satan from bringing the anti-Christ into power. When the church is Raptured away the forces of evil will be released. So, today we are, in a sense, standing in the way of Satan and his demons.

**2. They were sanctified by the Spirit and sprinkled with the blood.**

Notice 1 Peter 1:2 again.

God had predetermined that all who would come to Jesus Christ would be part of the body of Jesus Christ and they would be sanctified by the Spirit and washed in the blood. We are sanctified/set apart by the Holy Spirit to a life of obedience.

**Application:**

Obedience to the Word of God is one of the evidences of true salvation.

**1 John 2:3-6**

<sup>3</sup> *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.*

<sup>4</sup> *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

<sup>5</sup> *But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.*

<sup>6</sup> *He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

The problem is that we do not walk in perfect obedience. That is where the sprinkling of the blood comes in. This is our assurance. Daily we are sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ to wash us clean.

**1 John 1:7-9**

<sup>7</sup> *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

<sup>8</sup> *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

<sup>9</sup> *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

**3. They were born again and given a living hope.**

**Notice 1 Peter 1:3**

Here is the result of the work of the Trinity in our lives. Because Jesus Christ is alive, we who are believers have a LIVING HOPE. No matter what happens in the years to come let us always keep in mind our HOPE is alive and there is no one who can take away our HOPE. The world may turn on us and take away all we have, but the world can never take away the eternal life we have in Jesus Christ. Before salvation we had no hope.

**Ephesians 2:11-12**

<sup>11</sup> Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

<sup>12</sup> That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

This was before salvation, but now we have a living hope because our Savior has been resurrected. His resurrection is proof that the Father accepted His sacrifice as the full payment for our sins. Nothing can take our hope away.

**John 10:27-29**

<sup>27</sup> My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

<sup>28</sup> And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

<sup>29</sup> My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

**Conclusion:**

In our study of Romans several weeks back we looked at a verse that fits so well with our closing thought.

**Romans 15:13**

<sup>13</sup> Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.