

**THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER**  
**Introduction & 1 Peter 1:1-2**  
**“Peter, An Apostle of Jesus Christ”**

**I) INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER**

**AUTHOR:** Is Peter, but who is he? Simon (or Simeon) was the original name of Peter, the son of Jonas (or John), and brother of Andrew, a disciple of John the Baptist, as Peter also may have been. A fisherman by occupation, he was an inhabitant of *Bethsaida* (“*the house of fish*”) on the Sea of Galilee, though subsequently he dwelt with his family at Capernaum (Matt 4:18; 8:14; 10:2; 16:16-17; 17:25; Mark 1:16,29-30,36; Luke 5:3-4,5,8,10; 22:31; 24:34; John 1:40-44). His first appearance in Gospel history is in John 1:35-42, when Andrew, having discovered Jesus to be the Messiah, “*first findeth his own brother Simon,*” and “*brought him unto Jesus*”; on which occasion Jesus beholding him, said, “*Thou shalt be called Cephas,*” an Aramaic surname whose Greek synonym is *Petros*, or Peter, meaning “*a rock*” or “*stone*.”

**DATE OF WRITING:** A.D. 65

**THEME:** *The First Epistle of Peter* is a letter of great “HOPE!”

**INSIGHTS ON:** Christian SALVATION; Christian SUBMISSION; Christian SANCTIFICATION; Christian SUFFERING; Christian SHEPHERDING.

**VARIOUS TOPICS:** *Victory in Trials – The New Birth – The Will of God – Governments – Business – Marriage & Family – Gifts & Ministry – Last Days – Church Leadership – Spiritual Warfare.*

**CHAPTER BY CHAPTER:**

Chapter 1 – A LIVING HOPE

Chapter 2 – YOU ARE A CHOSEN GENERATION

Chapter 3 – ALWAYS BE READY

Chapter 4 – KNOWING THE WILL OF GOD

Chapter 5 – SPIRITUAL WARFARE

**KEY VERSES:** 1 Peter 1:3-5; 2:9-10; 3:15; 4:10-11; 5:8-9.

**II) PETER’S INTRODUCTION TO 1<sup>ST</sup> PETER (1:1-2)**

**(v1a) What is an apostle?** In summary an *apostle* (“*one sent forth*”) - The official name of the twelve whom Jesus sent forth to preach, and who also were with Him throughout His earthly ministry. Peter states the qualifications before the election of Judas' successor (Acts 1:21), namely, that he should have companied with the followers of Jesus “*all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them, beginning from the baptism of John unto the day that He was taken up, to be a witness with the others of His resurrection.*”

**(v1b) Why the Dispersion?** One commentary reads, “Peter called them “pilgrims;” these people were citizens of heaven through faith in Christ (Phil 3:20), and therefore were not permanent residents on earth. Because Christians are “strangers” in the world, they are considered to be “strange” in the eyes of the world (1 Peter 4:4). Christians have standards and values different from those of the world, and this gives opportunity both for witness and for warfare. We will discover in this epistle that some of the readers were experiencing suffering because of their different lifestyle. These believers were a “scattered” people as well as a “strange” people. The word translated “Dispersion” or “scattered” (*diaspora*) was a technical term for the Jews who lived outside of Palestine. However, Peter's use of this word does not imply that he was writing only to Jewish Christians, because some statements in his letter suggest that some of his readers were converted out of Gentile paganism (1 Peter 1:14,18; 2:9-10; 4:1-4). These Christians were scattered in five different parts of the Roman Empire, all of them in northern Asia Minor (modern Turkey). People were “on the move” in those days, and dedicated

believers shared the Word wherever they went (Acts 8:4). The important thing for us to know about these "scattered strangers" is that they were going through a time of suffering and persecution. At least fifteen times in this letter, Peter referred to suffering; and he used eight different Greek words to do so. Some of these Christians were suffering because they were living godly lives and doing what was good and right (1 Peter 2:19-23; 3:14-18; 4:1-4,15-19). Others were suffering reproach for the name of Christ (1 Peter 4:14) and being railed at by unsaved people (1 Peter 3:9-10). Peter wrote to encourage them to be good witnesses to their persecutors, and to remember that their suffering would lead to glory (1 Peter 1:6-7; 4:13-14; 5:10)."

**(v2) Understanding God's "Foreknowledge" for salvation:** *Foreknowledge* does not suggest that God merely knew ahead of time that we would believe, and therefore He chose us. This would raise the question, "Who or what made us decide for Christ?" and would take our salvation completely out of God's hands. **In the Bible, to foreknow means "to set one's love on a person or persons in a personal way."** It is used this way in Amos 3:2: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." God set His electing love on the nation of Israel. But the plan of salvation includes more than the Father's electing love; it also includes the work of the Spirit in convicting the sinner and bringing him to faith in Christ. Also, the Son of God had to die on the cross for our sins, or there could be no salvation. We have been chosen by the Father, purchased by the Son, and set apart by the Spirit. It takes all three if there is to be a true experience of salvation. (From The Bible Exposition Commentary)

**(v3) Grace and peace be multiplied – GRACE** - Favor or kindness shown without regard to the worth or merit of the one who receives it and in spite of what that same person deserves. Grace is one of the key attributes of God. The Lord God is "*merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth*" (Ex 34:6). Therefore, grace is almost always associated with mercy, love, compassion, and patience as the source of help and with deliverance from distress. **PEACE** - In the New Testament, peace often refers to the inner tranquility and poise of the Christian whose trust is in God through Christ. The peace that Jesus Christ spoke of was a combination of hope, trust, and quiet in the mind and soul, brought about by a reconciliation with God. Such peace was proclaimed by the host of angels at Christ's birth (Luke 2:14), and by Christ Himself in His *Sermon on the Mount* (Matt 5:9) and during His ministry. He also taught about this kind of peace at the Lord's Supper, shortly before His death (John 14:27). (From Nelson's Bible Dictionary); **MULTIPLIED** (Gk. – *Plethuno*) – Always increasing!

> **Herbert Lockyer in his classic book *All the Men of the Bible* writes,** "Peter was a man with many facets of character. His life can be approached from many angles. He was naturally impulsive; tenderhearted and affectionate; gifted with spiritual insight, yet sometimes slow to apprehend deeper truths; courageous in his confession of faith in Christ, yet guilty of a most cowardly denial; self-sacrificing yet inclined towards self-seeking, and presumption; immovable in his convictions."

### **III) PETER'S GREAT ADVENTURE! (Peter points, plus 4 great confessions)**

- Peter meets the **SAVIOR!** – Luke 5:1-11
- Peter sees the **POWER** of Christ, mother in-law healed (Peter was married) – Mt. 8:14-15
- Peter called to be an **APOSTLE** (not Pope) - Matthew 10:2-4
- Peter experiences the meaning of **FAITH** – Matthew 14:28-33
- Peter's confesses Christ **DEITY** – Matthew 16:13-19
- Peter vs. the Devil, Christ **WINS!** – Matthew 16:21-23
- Peter witnesses the Christ **GLORY!** – Matthew 17:1-8
- Peter learns **FORGIVENESS** – Matthew 18:21
- Peter's lesson on being a **SERVANT** – John 13:1-17
- Strike-force Peter (**NOT**) – John 18:10-11
- Peter's **DENIES** of Christ – Matthew 26:69-75
- Peter lost the race – John 20:1-8
- Peter's call to be a fisher of **MEN** – John 21:1-14
- Peter's ministry in the **POWER** of the Holy Spirit – Acts chapters 2:14-40
- Peter, from coward to **COURAGEOUS!** – Acts 4:1-22

➤ Peter always points to JESUS and JESUS now points to us, let's GO FOR GOD!