

1 Peter

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Authorship

Peter, the fisherman, known as Simon but renamed Peter by our Lord, is the author of both 1 and 2 Peter. There are those who dispute the Petrine authorship because of its grammatical sophistication in some places and Pauline thought in the letter. Specific to the grammatical issue which looms in the minds of many is the use of hapax legomenon which refers to the single use of a word either in a language's history itself (very rare) or within the works of an author. There is 686 such hapax legomenoi in the New Testament with 62 in 1 Peter and 54 in 2 Peter. And Peter's background as a fisherman would lend itself to questioning whether or not he could have gained such command of language.

However, precisely because of regional properties or uniqueness which was common before modern history, unlike today where speech and language is mass communicated, it was not a rare exception to find those of lesser education to employ this hapax device so such arguments against the Petrine authorship are quickly laid to rest.

Date of Composition

Peter's epistles were written somewhere between AD 62-67. There are some who prefer a later day of AD 72. But it is almost universally accepted as having been written during the first century and within one or two decades of the mid-century mark.

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The Nature of Our Salvation
Chapter 1: 1-12

I. The Greeting or Salutation (v 1-2)

1 Peter 1:1-2 (NIV)

- 1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, exiles scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia,
- 2 who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood:
Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

1 Peter 1-2 (ESV)

- 1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,
- 2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood:
May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

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Verse 1

Πέτρος (petros) Peter ἀπόστολος (apostolos) Apostle Ἰησοῦ (iēsou) of Jesus

Χριστοῦ (christou) Christ ἐκλεκτοῖς (eklektōis) chosen or called out of

παρεπιδήμεις (parepidēmois) strangers διασπορᾶς (diasporas) of dispersion

Πόντου (pontou) of Pontus, Γαλατίας (galatias) Galatia

Καππαδοκίας (kappadokias) Cappadocia Ἀσίας (asias) Asia καὶ (kai) and

Βιθυνίας (bithunias) Bithynia

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Verse 2

κατὰ (kata) According to **πρόγνωση** (prognōsin) foreknowledge

θεοῦ (theou) of God **πατρός** (patros) Father **ἐν** (en) in/through

ἁγιασμῷ (agiasmō) sanctification **πνεύματος** (pneumatōs) of Spirit

εἰς (eis) unto **ὑπακοήν** (upakoēn) obey/obedience **καί** (kai) and

ῥαντισμῶν (rantismon) sprinkled **αἵματος** (aimatos) of blood

Ἰησοῦ (iēsou) of Jesus **Χριστοῦ** (christou) Christ **χάρις** (charis) grace

ὑμῖν (umin) to you **καί** (kai) and **εἰρήνῃ** (eirēnē) peace

πληθυνθεῖν (plēthuntheî) be multiplied.

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1. Peter Apostle of Jesus Christ (to) chosen or called out (of) strangers (the) of dispersion of Pontus, Galatia Cappadocia Asia and Bithynia
2. According to foreknowledge of God Father in (through) sanctification of Spirit unto obey/obedience and sprinkled of blood of Jesus Christ grace to you and peace be multiplied.

Ultimately Peter is wishing to communicate the seriousness or gravity of the matter of our salvation and that it is not a matter of God adjusting to issues of time and human history but that before time (in eternity past) he foreordained His plan of salvation for mankind and that those who believe on Christ (described as sanctified through the Spirit and sprinkled with the blood of Christ) are part of that predestined and irreversible plan.

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II. What We Now Possess (v 3-12)

- A. New Birth** (v 3) – the moment you believe on Christ you are what is called "born again". Your spiritual life is resurrected from death and you are no longer separated from God but made alive with Him.

It was accomplished by or through the resurrection of Christ. When Christ was resurrected He won victory over both our spiritual and physical death. We not only have eternal life with a future glorified body but we have spiritual life, now, where we may begin the very life we will continue in eternity future.

- B. An Eternal and Incorruptible Inheritance** (v 4) – "kept in heaven for you". Ask yourself, who does the keeping, you or God? Your inheritance, your eternal life (and all of its properties) is kept by the integrity of God, not you. This is why we must, on earth, value this over earthly treasures because God values it more than anything here on earth which will pass away.

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C. Divine Protection Through the Mechanism of Faith (v 5) – Notice what Peter says, that we are shielded or kept (the word here is phroureo^o which refers to a sentinel) by the power of God **through faith**.

Remember, the Christian life is not like Israel or Noah, or even Adam and Eve. In fact not even like the early church during the Apostolic era when Apostolic sign gifts operated. Today we live strictly by faith without sight of any kind. It is the most demanding yet the most rewarding. It is the invisible way of life which is called faith and faith alone.

Many in the church today wish to have manifestations or displays to validate or verify God's presence, work, blessing or power. They are mistaken. While God reserves the divine prerogative of intervention, the protocol or way for us today is to abide in His Word, to trust in His promises and to do so by faith. No matter what you see, what you feel or what someone else tells you, you must orient your thinking with God's Word and believe it above all things.

To be protected by God's power through faith does not mean things will always go your way or the way you think God should do them. But it does mean that trusting God, placing your faith in His Word and operating your life on those principles will place you in the center of God's plan, hence maximizing your availability to be used by Him and enriching His eternal rewards toward you in response. And this brings us to our next benefit, **suffering for blessing**.

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D. The Opportunity for Suffering for Divine Blessing (v 6-7) – it is a matter of certainty that as you progress in the Christian life, even in the youngest stages, you will experience suffering. Sometimes, of course, our suffering is due to our own fault, this is called self-induced suffering and very often is wrongly categorized by ignorant people as suffering for blessing (that is, suffering for positive divine purposes).

However, there is a form of suffering for the believer which is positive suffering (at least from the divine viewpoint) which has the purpose of refining the believer and producing greater maturity, integrity and so on, so that upon his or her face to face encounter with Christ and at the Bema seat (the reward seat for believers) he or she may receive a great eternal bounty not to mention its many purposes in this life, now.

Remember again, the moment you are born again you are at odds with the world around you so your suffering for blessing begins immediately. Like a baby who must suffer as he or she learns to sit up, turn over, look at something and process information, crawl and then walk, they all involve failures and learning from those failures is sometimes painful. This is your lot in this world with respect to advancing in your walk with the Lord.

This does not mean there will not be times of great blessing which is characterized by certain forms of earthly abundance such as friends, possessions, and so on. But even with these you suffer many forms of testing. For example the believer with abundant material wealth does not get to consider himself or herself only but must take that abundance and consider the principles of God's Word and use it that way. It might allow some pleasures, certainly, but it won't allow just those and maybe it will require a great deal of time and energy to make sure it is being used properly or divinely.

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E. Fellowship with Christ through the Mechanism of Faith (v 8-9) – remember in point C we covered the mechanism of faith, well here it is again. In point C faith was used to enjoy the protection of God, His sentinel over our lives. Here we are given the opportunity to fellowship with Christ through faith. Notice again what Peter says, "though you have not seen him, you love him".

How is it possible for us to love Christ whom we have not seen? Through His Word. It is by means of God's Word that we come to know and love Him. We do not get to take walks in the garden like Adam did nor do we go up to a mountain like Moses, yet both of them still had to accept what God was audibly saying and believe it. It is no different with you. The Bible is God's Word to you. The only way you are ever going to develop admiration, respect and then personal love for God is to know Him through His Word. There is no other way.

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III. What the Prophets and Angels Sought to Understand (v 10-12)

There is nothing, absolutely nothing in history greater than being a believer, now, during the age of the church. We have so much that those before us did not. In fact we have so much that even Angels sought to understand the dynamic of our position.

Never in history was it said that Angels were united with Christ but we are. Never in history did the Prophets understand that a believer would become the actual Holy Temple of God but we know and live it, daily. It is quantitatively and qualitatively the most supreme state of any being short of eternity future when all of the blessings will culminate in our eternal and glorified bodies.

While the prophets were great verse 12 shows they were serving us, believers today. You know what they could not know but sought to know.

Angels, over whom the Bible indicates we will have authority in eternity future, though they were created before us in eternity past, could not understand the salvation we now possess.

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With this in mind Peter writes to all of those who belong to God (just as Paul did) with the strongest preface possible in directing believers to live lives pleasing to God. It is not just a matter of doing right because doing right is the right thing, which is a circular argument. It is a matter of who and what God is and what we are in Him that must compel us. This is why God's Word and all of its doctrines do matter.

There is a very practical reason to learn the depths of God's Word and the intricate nature of our relationship to God; because this understanding serves as our motivation. Imagine waking up one day and someone tells you that your father is a billionaire and the most powerful man in the world. You would want to discover its certainty and all of its benefits and applications. Your motivation would be based on that relationship.

When you came to Christ you were *conjoined* with Christ. You are God's child and He is the riches and most powerful being, ever, and never will there be another. But He did not just make you "kind of" His. He placed His Spirit in you and now He resides in you and your body is His Holy Temple.

Ya' think just maybe its worth considering that the life you now live is not your own but God's and maybe all we do and say must reflect this? So next week, compelled by this reality, we will discover what we must do in response to all God has given us and will give us now and in eternity future.