

The Letter of 1 Peter

*. **Who wrote the letter?**

The writer of the letter is identified in the opening words as “Peter, an apostle.” Of course, we understand this to be Peter who is one of the original twelve – the apostle who spent much time in close contact with Jesus. In the letter, he refers to himself as an eyewitness – and also refers to Mark (who wrote the gospel) as his son, which is obviously a reference to his spiritual influence in Mark’s life.

Silas is mentioned in the letter as having helped Peter write the letter. He was an amanuensis to Peter – a scribe who aided in the writing process.

*. **When was it written?**

The letter appears to be written about 63/64 a.d. This was the time immediately preceding the great Neronian persecution which was about to happen against the Christians specifically.

*. **To whom was it written?**

In the opening verses, the letter is addressed to a list of churches that are found in the Roman Empire. Apparently, Peter had made an impact upon these churches and served as an encouragement to their ministries.

*. **Why was it written?**

Peter recognizes, probably through the work of the Holy Spirit in his life, that a major persecution against the Christian church is about to occur. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he writes this letter to help provide some guidance for these times.

*. **What is the main topic?**

Christians should expect suffering in the world in which we live; having expected suffering, they should be able to endure and remain faithful.

1 Peter 1:3-7: ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, ⁷ so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

1 Peter 1:13-16: ¹³ Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance, ¹⁵ but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; ¹⁶ because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

1 Peter 2:20-25: ²⁰ For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer *for it* you patiently endure it, this *finds* favor with God. ²¹ For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, ²² WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; ²³ and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting *Himself* to Him who judges righteously; ²⁴ and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. ²⁵ For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

1 Peter 4:12-17: ¹² Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; ¹³ but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. ¹⁴ If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; ¹⁶ but if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name. ¹⁷ For *it is* time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what *will be* the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

1 Peter 5:6-11: ⁶ Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, ⁷ casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. ⁸ Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹ But resist him, firm in *your* faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. ¹⁰ After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen *and* establish you. ¹¹ To Him *be* dominion forever and ever. Amen.