



The First Epistle General of Peter

The Opening of the Epistle

1 Peter 1:1-2

I. THE AUTHOR (1 Peter 1:1)

A. His Name

1. His birth name was Simon (Matthew 16:17; Mark 1:16, 29-30, 36; Luke 5:3-5, 10; John 1:41).
2. He was given a surname by the Lord (Matthew 4:18; Matthew 10:2; Matthew 16:17-18; Mark 3:16; Luke 6:14; John 1:42; Acts 10:5, 18, 32; Acts 11:13).
 - a. Variations of the name
 - (1) *Peter* (a Greek name)
 - (2) *Cephas* (a Syriac name)
 - b. The interpretation of the name—"A stone" (John 1:42)
3. Much can be learned by studying the usage of these names.
 - a. Simon
 - (1) This name appears fifty times in scripture.
 - (2) In twenty of those appearances, it is paired with Peter.
 - b. Peter—This name appears 166 time in scripture.
 - c. Cephas—This name appears six times in scripture. He was only identified as *Cephas* in the Gospel of John and in Paul's epistles.
 - d. While it is not a hard and fast rule, it is an interesting study to consider what reasons the Lord might have had at times to revert to Peter's given name of Simon.

B. His Lineage

1. He was the son of Jona(s) (Matthew 16:17; John 1:42; John 21:15-17).
Note: By comparing scripture with scripture, we can see that Bar means son of (see Acts 4:36 and Matthew 16:17 with John 1:42).
2. He was the brother of Andrew (Matthew 4:18; Matthew 10:2; Mark 1:16; Luke 6:14; John 1:40-41; John 6:8).
3. He had an unnamed wife (Matthew 8:14; Mark 1:30; Luke 4:38).

C. His Authority

1. He was first a disciple—a student.
2. He was later identified as an apostle—one sent.
3. Note: The word disciple(s) is found 273 times in the New Testament, all of which are found in the gospels and in Acts. The word apostle(s) is found eighty-three times in the New Testament with only eight of those appearing in the gospels.



II. THE AUDIENCE (1 Peter 1:1-2)

A. Their Earthly Situation (1 Peter 1:1)

1. Their conditions

a. They were strangers.

- (1) To get a basic understanding of those who would be identified as strangers, consider Acts 7:29, Acts 13:17, and Ephesians 2:19.
- (2) His audience was also called “strangers and pilgrims” (1 Peter 2:11).
- (3) They were obviously strangers because they dwelt in a land that was not their own.

b. They were scattered.

- (1) Scattered Jews gathered in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Acts 2:5, 9-11).
- (2) The persecution of Stephen yielded additional scattering (Acts 8:1, 4; Acts 11:19).
- (3) Both James and Peter addressed scattered Jews, albeit James likely did so earlier than Peter (James 1:1).

2. Their locations

- a. Pontus
- b. Galatia
- c. Cappadocia
- d. Asia
- e. Bithynia

B. Their Spiritual Condition (1 Peter 1:2)

1. The component parts

a. They were elect according to God’s foreknowledge.

(1) Identifying the elect

- a) Jesus (Isaiah 42:1; Romans 8:33; Colossians 3:12)
- b) **Israel** (Isaiah 45:4; Isaiah 65:9, 22; Matthew 24:22, 24, 31; Luke 18:7; Romans 9:11; Romans 11:5, 7, 28; 1 Thessalonians 1:4; 2 Timothy 2:10; Titus 1:1); Note: This group would fit the present context.
- c) Angels (1 Timothy 5:21)

(2) Considering foreknowledge

- a) Simply put, foreknowledge is knowledge had aforetime.
- b) The word *foreknowledge* appears two times in the scripture, both times as part of the phrase *foreknowledge of God* (Acts 2:23; 1 Peter 1:2). One time, the Bible uses the word *foreknow* (Romans 8:29) and another time the word *foreknew* (Romans 11:2), both of which refer an act of God. Regarding God’s foreknowledge and man:
 - i) God foreknew Israel as His earthly chosen people in the Old Testament (Romans 11:2).
 - ii) God foreknew man’s predestination based upon a man getting in Christ (Romans 8:29).



- b. This was accomplished through sanctification of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13).
 - c. This brought them unto obedience (Romans 10:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 Peter 4:17; compare with 1 Peter 1:22) and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:18-28; Hebrews 12:24).
2. The chronological order
- a. The foreknowledge of God the Father
 - b. The sanctification of the Spirit
 - c. Obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ
 - d. Elect

C. Special Notes on the Order of Events (Ephesians 1:1-14)

1. The promise of a sacrifice—outside of time (Ephesians 1:4)
- a. Christ “was foreordained before the foundation of the world” (1 Peter 1:20) and “slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8).
 - b. God’s purpose and grace “was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (2 Timothy 1:9).
 - c. God promised eternal life “before the world began” (Titus 1:2).
 - d. Before the foundation of the world, God chose that “in him...we should be holy and without blame before him” (Ephesians 1:4).
2. Chosen or predestinated (Ephesians 1:4-6)—promised outside of time, accomplished in time; Note: Election, chosen, and beloved are related terms, but it seems as though God chose to use each one differently.
- a. Chosen
 - (1) The place of choosing—“in him”
 - a) General truths concerning being in Christ
 - i) Christ was made sin for us; “that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).
 - ii) “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1).
 - iii) Paul wanted to “be found in him,” not having his own righteousness (Philippians 3:9).
 - iv) “In Christ,” we are blessed with spiritual blessings in heavenly places (Ephesians 1:3; see Ephesians 2:6).
 - v) We are “created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (Ephesians 2:10).
 - vi) God had an “eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ephesians 3:11).
 - vii) We are called to a holy calling, “according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (2 Timothy 1:9).
 - b) Evidence that this takes place in time
 - i) Paul told of some in Christ before him (Romans 16:7).
 - ii) Paul spoke of “babes in Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:1).
 - iii) Paul said, “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature” (2 Corinthians 5:17).



- (2) The time of choosing—"before the foundation of the world"; Simply put, before the world began, God had a purpose and set forth a plan for those who, within time, got in Christ at salvation. If a man failed or fails to get "in Christ" or "in him" these truths or benefits do not apply (see Ephesians 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2; 1 Peter 1:20-22).
- (3) The result of choosing—"that we should be holy and without blame before him in love"
 - a) In short, those who get in Christ benefit from God's eternal purpose in Christ.
 - b) Part of that eternal purpose or plan is that those who trust Christ as Saviour will be presented before God "holy and without blame."
- b. Predestinated
 - (1) The grounds of predestination—Predestination is based on the God's foreknowledge (Romans 8:29), is by Christ (Ephesians 1:5), and is set forth when we are in Him (Ephesians 1:10-11).
 - (2) The product of predestination
 - a) We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son (Romans 8:29).
 - b) We are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself (Ephesians 1:5).
 - c) We are predestinated to receive the inheritance of the believer (Ephesians 1:11).
3. The offer of a sacrifice—within time (Ephesians 1:7-10)
 - a. Christ came "when the fulness of the time was come" (Galatians 4:4).
 - b. He appeared "once in the end of the world..." to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:26).
 - c. While He was "verily foreordained before the foundation of the world," He "was manifest in these last times" (1 Peter 1:20).
4. Faith
 - a. Salvation is the result and product of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 16:31; Romans 1:16; Romans 10:9).
 - b. Imputed righteousness is the result of believing "on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Romans 4:23-25).
 - c. Justification is the result and product received when "we have believed in Jesus Christ" (Galatians 2:16).
 - d. We "heard the word of truth," believed and then "were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise" (Ephesians 1:13).
5. Salvation

D. Their Blessing (1 Peter 1:2)

1. The contents of the blessing
 - a. Grace unto you
 - b. Peace
2. The extent of the blessing—"be multiplied"



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The Foreshadowing of the Subject of the Epistle

1 Peter 1:3-12

I. THE FUTURE INHERITANCE (1 Peter 1:3-5)

A. The Source of Our Hope (1 Peter 1:3)

1. The praise for our hope

a. The nature of the praise—"Blessed be"

- (1) This phrase is found sixty-three times in sixty-two Bible verses.
- (2) In this usage, the word *blessed* is an adjective, a word used to describe the person being spoken of. Historically, as an adjective, the word *blessed* was used to signify one that was supremely happy or consecrated/holy.
- (3) Interestingly enough, in the New Testament epistles, it is always directed to the Father but points specifically to His relation to the Son and follows with a specific conduct demanding praise.
 - a) "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;" (2 Corinthians **1:3**)
 - b) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ;" (Ephesians **1:3**)
 - c) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," (1 Peter **1:3**)

b. The recipient of the praise (John 20:17; 2 Corinthians 11:31; Ephesians 1:3, 17)

- (1) The **God of** our Lord Jesus Christ
- (2) The **Father of** our Lord Jesus Christ

2. The foundation of our hope

a. The person of God—"according to his abundant mercy"

- (1) The identification of His virtue—"mercy" (Ephesians 2:4-9; 1 Timothy 1:13, 16; Titus 3:5)
- (2) The extent of His virtue—"abundant"; Note: Consider the connection to the word *abound*.

b. The practice of God—"hath begotten us **again** unto a lively hope"

- (1) The phrase "begotten...again" or born again simply contrasts a spiritual rebirth to the physical birth (born of water or of the flesh—John 3:5-6).
- (2) Some Bible students limit this concept to Israel, both historically and in the future as it pertains to the tribulation.



- (3) While it is true that Paul did not incorporate the phrase “born again,” he certainly taught the concept.
 - a) All Christians are “born again” when they become babes (1 Peter 2:2; 1 Corinthians 3:1).
 - b) The new birth produced the “new man” (Colossians 3:10).
 - c) Paul certainly spoke of being born again when he spoke of “regeneration” (Titus 3:5).
 - d) To be born again means to be regenerated, and this happens when the believer becomes a “new creature” in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15).
- (4) Those who suggest that Paul and Peter were teaching conflicting truths lose credibility in such cases. After all, both Peter and Paul pointed to salvation as a new birth which will be further discovered later in our studies.
3. The facilitator of our hope—“by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,”; Note: Considering the context, we have been begotten again by the resurrection of Christ from the dead (Romans 4:25; Romans 5:10; 1 Peter 3:21).

B. The Substance of Our Hope (1 Peter 1:4)

1. The expression of our hope—“To an inheritance”
 - a. The obtaining and certainty of the inheritance
 - (1) In short, the thought is that we are “begotten...again...To an inheritance.”
 - (2) The certainty is established immediately and firmly built upon by the descriptive words that follow.
 - b. The nature of the inheritance
 - (1) The inheritance requires being in Christ (Ephesians 1:11).
 - a) We are accepted in the beloved (Ephesians 1:6).
 - b) We are made children and therefore “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:17).
 - c) In Christ, we have been made “meet to be partakers of the inheritance” (Colossians 1:12).
 - d) Our justification by grace makes us heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:7).
 - (2) The inheritance is made sure by the earnest of the Holy Ghost (Ephesians 1:13-14).
 - (3) Note: It would seem that a distinction should be made between the inheritance and individual rewards.
2. The description of our hope
 - a. Incorruptible—not able to be corrupted
 - b. undefiled—not made unclean or impure
 - c. That fadeth not away—not diminished
 - d. Reserved—not lost
3. The location of our hope—“in heaven”
4. The beneficiary of our hope—“for you”



C. The Sureness of Our Hope (1 Peter 1:5)

1. The realization of our hope—“unto salvation”
 - a. It should be remembered that our salvation comes in parts.
 - (1) The principle stated
 - a) The saved are presently “two-thirds redeemed.”
 - b) On the surface, that concept may seem awkward, but when all things are considered in the light of scripture, the confusion disappears.
 - c) Man is a three-part being (1 Thessalonians 5:23), made up of:
 - i) Spirit
 - ii) Soul
 - iii) And body
 - (2) The principle explained
 - a) Our souls have been redeemed (Hebrews 10:39).
 - b) Our spirits have been quickened by the Holy Ghost (Ephesians 2:1, 5).
 - c) Our bodies, on the other hand, are “vile” (Philippians 3:21), “corruptible” (1 Corinthians 15:53), “mortal” (1 Corinthians 15:54), and remain in need of redemption. The adoption is the redemption and glorification of the body.
 - b. The part of our salvation that is presently complete cannot be seen by the eyes of men.
2. The revelation of our hope—“to be revealed in the last time”
 - a. John likely testified of these truths when he said (1 John 3:2):
 - (1) NOW are we the sons of God
 - (2) It doth NOT YET appear
 - (3) What we SHALL BE
 - b. If that is the case, John also testified as to the timing, when he said (1 John 3:2):
 - (1) WHEN He shall appear
 - (2) We shall be like Him
3. The preserver of our hope—“Who are kept by the power of God”
 - a. This phrase offers the explanation of how one gets from point “A” (begotten again—1 Peter 1:3) to point “B” (To an inheritance—1 Peter 1:4).
 - b. The preservation that brings us to the promised end is “the power of God.”
 - (1) We do ourselves a disservice by using the phrase “eternal security” to describe what the Bible identifies as eternal or everlasting life (John 3:15, 16, 36; John 5:24; John 6:40, 47; John 10:28; John 17:3; Romans 6:23; 1 John 2:25; 1 John 5:11, 13, 20).
 - (2) While we desire for believers to persevere, the biblical doctrine is preservation (John 10:28-29; Romans 8:31-39; Philippians 1:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Jude 1:1, 24).
4. The access to this hope—“through faith” (Romans 3:25, 30; Galatians 3:14; Ephesians 2:8; 2 Timothy 3:15)



II. THE PRESENT LIFE (1 Peter 1:6-9)

A. The Presence of Troubles (1 Peter 1:6)

1. The joy experienced
 - a. The source of joy—"Wherein"
 - (1) The word *wherein* demands that we look to the context that is past (1 Peter 1:3-5).
 - (2) It is true that the Bible speaks of rejoicing in tribulation (Philippians 2:17; Colossians 1:24; James 1:2; 1 Peter 4:13-16), but in this case the rejoicing is in a future inheritance, our keeping by the power of God, and the revelation of our salvation.
 - b. The extent of joy—"ye greatly rejoice"
 - c. The power of joy—"though"
 - (1) The presence of the word *though* demonstrates that there are two conflicting situations coexisting at the same time.
 - (2) There was a future hope and a present struggle; however, the present struggle was not in any way to diminish the focus and joy concerning the future hope.
 - (3) In other words, the rejoicing was not dependent upon the right circumstances, but in spite of unfavourable circumstances.
2. The heaviness experienced
 - a. The time of heaviness
 - (1) Though NOW
 - (2) For a SEASON
 - (3) Note: The seasonal nature of the heaviness is to be contrasted with the eternal nature of the inheritance (see Romans 8:18).
 - a) Heaviness
 - i) Now
 - ii) For a season
 - b) Inheritance
 - i) Incorruptible
 - ii) Undefined
 - iii) Fadeth not
 - iv) Reserved
 - b. The necessity of heaviness—"if need be"
 - (1) Apparently, heaviness would only be present if it was needful for the believer.
 - (2) This may be difficult to understand until one considers some of the biblical purposes for troubles (Hebrews 10:32-36; Hebrews 12:7-11).
 - c. The complexity of heaviness—"through manifold temptations"
 - (1) The word *through* insinuates that the heaviness involves going *through* or enduring something.
 - (2) The provocation of this heaviness involved temptations with many folds.



B. The Purpose of Troubles (1 Peter 1:7)

1. The process of testing
 - a. The object of testing—"That the trial of your faith"
 - (1) The likeness of the testing—"being much more precious than of gold that perisheth"
 - a) Real gold is simply refined in the fiery furnace.
 - b) Real faith is simply refined in the fiery trials.
 - (2) The subject of the testing
 - a) One of two options exists as to what is being addressed as precious.
 - i) That which was precious was the trial
 - ii) That which was precious was the faith
 - b) The word *precious* speaks of something of value due to its rarity (1 Samuel 3:1; 1 Peter 1:19; 1 Peter 2:4, 6, 7).
 - c) In Peter's second epistle he spoke of "precious faith" (2 Peter 1:1).
 - d) Two things would identify faith as being precious:
 - i) If it was a rare find (Luke 18:8)
 - ii) If it was of great value (Hebrews 11:6)
 - b. The means of testing—"though it be tried with fire" (1 Peter 4:12-13)
 2. The desired results
 - a. The expected results
 - (1) In the present (Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2-4)
 - (2) In the future
 - a) Praise
 - b) Honour
 - c) Glory
 - b. The day of judgment—"at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 1:10; 2 Timothy 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13)

C. The Proving of Troubles (1 Peter 1:8-9)

1. The opportunity for proving (1 Peter 1:8; John 20:29; 2 Corinthians 5:16)
 - a. Whom having not seen
 - b. Now ye see Him not
2. The actions for proving (1 Peter 1:8)
 - a. Ye love
 - b. In whom...believing
 - c. Ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory
3. The reward of proving (1 Peter 1:9)
 - a. The means of reward—"Receiving the end of your faith"
 - (1) The contrast is clear, "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23) and "the end of your faith" is salvation.
 - (2) We are presently saved and have eternal life as stated above in the notes, but our salvation will be complete at Christ's appearing.
 - b. The nature of reward—"even the salvation of your souls"