

First Peter

I. Author

A. Apostle Peter (1:1)

1. Peter was the son of John. (Matt. 16:17).	4. His brother was Andrew. (Jn. 1:44; Matt. 10:2).
2. He was “Bar jonas.” Gr. “bariona”	5. He was from Bethsaida. (Jn. 1:44).
3. The word “bar” meant “son” and “Jonas” was a form of the word “John.”	6. He was married. (Mk. 1:30). See 1 Cor. 9:5.

1. Peter and his brother Andrew were fishermen on the Sea of Galilee (Matt.4:18; Mk. 1:16).	3. He was a witness of the resurrection. (1 Cor. 15:5; Lk. 23:34).
2. They were partners of James and John. (Lk. 5:10).	4. He preached the gospel first to the Jews and first to the Gentiles. (Acts 2, 10). See Matt. 16:16-19. & Matt. 18:18. All the apostles have the same authority from God.

B. The **early church writers** support his authorship.

1. Irenaeus (about A.D. 185). <i>Against Heresies IV. ix. 2.</i>	3. Clement of Alexandria (about A.D. 200).
2. Tertullian (about A.D. 200). <i>Scorpiace xii; On Prayer xv.</i>	4. There are many allusions to the writings of Peter dating from the first century itself.

C. **Internal evidence** of epistle supports Petrine authorship.

1. The style and content of First Peter is very similar to Peter’s discourses in Acts.

a. Resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:31, 32; 3:15; 4:10; 10:40; 1 Pet. 1:3, 21; 3:18).	c. Baptism (Acts 2:38; 10:48; 1 Pet. 3:21).
b. Ascension and glorification (Acts 2:33-36; 1 Pet.1:21).	d. Second coming (Acts 3:20; 1 Pet. 1:7, 13; 4:13).

2. The contents of First Peter agrees with the facts of Peter’s life.

D. Peter used Silvanus as a scribe for this letter. (1 Pet. 5:12).

1PE 5:12 Through Silvanus [Silas], our faithful brother (for so I regard {him}), I have written to you briefly,

exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!

1. He was a faithful brother (1 Cor. 4:17; Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:7; Acts 15:22ff).
2. Probably this postscript (12-14) is in Peter's own handwriting, as Paul did (2 Thess. 3:17,18.; Gal. 6:11-18).. If so, Silvanus (Silas) was the amanuensis and perhaps the bearer of the epistle.

II. Place - It is assumed Peter is in the place from which he sent greetings.

A. Babylon (1 Pet. 5:13).

1. The “she” may refer to the church.
 - a. The Greek literally has “the co-chosen in Babylon greets you ” or “the co-elect [woman] in Babylon.”
 - 1) The Greek has a feminine article “the” without a subject.
 - 2) The word “ekklesia” is a feminine word and the KJV has “the church.”

<p>1PE 5:13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and {so does} my son, Mark. NASB</p>	<p>1PE 5:13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark. NIV</p>
<p>1 PE 5:13 She who is in Babylon (chosen with you), and my son Mark greet you. McCord</p>	<p>1 PE 5:13 The [] in Babylon co-chosen and Mark the son of me greet you. Lit Greek rendering Marshall.</p>

- b. Most translations render the verse like the NASB, NIV, and McCord.
- c. **Many scholars believe Peter is using the “she” to refer to the church, but this is guess work.**
2. Some think it refers to Peter’s wife. .
 - a. Peter was a married man. (Matt. 8:14).
 - b. Paul refers to Peter’s wife. (1 Cor.9:14).
3. It could refer to some other lady but if so we will never know her identity.
4. The fact is we do now know who the feminine article refers to here, and the identity has little importance to the message of this great epistle.

Mark (Gk. Markos).

- The evangelist who was probably the same as "John who was also called Mark" (Acts 12:12, 25). He was the son of a Mary in Jerusalem (Acts 12:12). He was presumably a native of that city.
- He was of Jewish parentage, his mother being a relative of Barnabas (Col. 4:10).
- It was to her house that Peter went when released from prison by the angel (Acts 12:12).
- Peter calls him “his son” (1 Pet. 5:13). He was likely converted by Peter or Peter had had a very strong influence on him.
- He accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first journey (Acts 12:25; 13:5), but he left them at Perga and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13).

- Whatever the reason for this act, it seems to have been sufficient in Paul's estimation to justify his refusing to allow Mark to accompany him on his second journey. Paul needed someone whom he could absolutely trust.
- Barnabas was determined to take him, and thus Mark was the cause of a "sharp disagreement" between them and a separation (Acts 15:36-39).
- This did not completely estrange him from Paul, for we find Mark with the apostle in his first imprisonment at Rome (Col. 4:10; Phile. 24).
- Later he was at Babylon and united with Peter in sending salutations (1 Pet. 5:13).
- He seems to have been with Timothy at Ephesus when Paul wrote to him during his second imprisonment and urged him to bring Mark to Rome (2 Tim. 4:11), A.D. 66.

B. There is not any evidence that this Babylon represents Rome or Jerusalem or Babylon in Egypt.

1. This symbolic or cryptic name [Babylon] was much later used for Rome or Jerusalem.

- a. Babylon in the O.T. had been a worldly city and had also been the center of persecution of God's people.
- b. Some think it is the city of Rome designated in a cryptic fashion as seems to be its meaning in the Apocalypse..
- c. If Peter is in Rome about A.D. 65, there is every reason why he should not make that fact plain to the world at large and least of all to Nero
- d. We have no real evidence he was in Rome though it is possible.

2. Babylon in Egypt was a small place and few, if any, Christians dwelt there at this time.

C. It seems to refer to the Babylon a large city on the Euphrates. Many Christians lived there, but again this is not certain.

III. **Date of Letter** - Uncertain. It may have been written between 58-65 A.D.

A. It was probably written close to 65 A.D. near the beginning of the Neronian persecution.

B. See 1 Peter 4:12-17.

1PE 4:12 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 upon you. 15 By no means let any of you suffer as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; 16 but if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God. 17 For it is time for judgment [persecution] 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?

IV. **Purpose Of Letter**

A. It was written to remind Christians of the preciousness of Jesus and salvation. (1 Pet. 1:2, 18, 19).

B. It was written to encourage Christians to be steadfast under persecution. (1 Pet. 4:12, 13).

V. **Catholic** (General) **epistle** - There are seven General epistles. - James - Jude.

- A. It was not written to an individual or to a single congregation. 2 & 3 John are not General epistles, but are called that because of their natural grouping with 1 John.
- B. It was written to Christians at large throughout the central and northern provinces of Asia Minor. (1 Pet. 1:1).

Salutation (1:1-2)

1PE 1:1 Peter [rock] , **an apostle** [special messenger] **of Jesus Christ**, [writing] **to those** [Christians] **who reside as aliens** [sojourners, foreigners in Asia Minor], **scattered** [dispersed] **throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen** [selected].

- Lit. “sojourners of [the] dispersion”
 - “Sojourners” is from “parepidemos” [pa re pee’ day mos] meaning “sojourner, stranger, exile, alien.”
1. Peter’s Hebrew name was “Simon.” (Jn. 1:40-42).
 - “Simon” is the English spelling of his Hebrew name.
 - The English “Simon” is a transliteration of the Greek (See’ mon)
 - a. Jesus gave “Simon” the name “Peter” (Gr. pet’ros) meaning “rock.” (Jn. 1:42).

JOH 1:42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him, and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

- b. “Peter” was the Greek equivalent of the Aramaic “Cephas.” (Mk. 3:16; Jn.1:42).
2. "apostle of Jesus Christ" (Gr. apos’tolos) - Matt. 10:2.
 - a. Listed first, but he was not chief apostle.
 - b. He was strongly rebuked by Paul. (Gal. 2:11-14).
 - c. There is no evidence that he was regarded as the chief apostle though he was a very prominent and well-known apostle.
 - 1) The first 12 chapters of Acts focus on the activity of Peter.
 - 2) Acts 13-28 focus on the activity of Paul.
 - d. Neither Peter nor Paul were the first pope.
 - e. All the apostles had the same authority. (Matt. 16:18,19; 18:18).
 3. Peter’s readers had been "chosen," that is, called through gospel. (2 Thess. 2:13,14; 1 Pet. 1:21). See Rom. 1:16; Jas. 1:18, 21.

4. “who are chosen” - God does not predestine the individuals who will be saved or lost. (Jn.3:16; Acts 10:34, 35; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).
5. “aliens” [sojourners, strangers] - Peter affirms that residence on earth is temporary and their true citizenship was in heaven.
 - a. They were to view themselves “as aliens and strangers” on this earth. (1 Pet. 2:11). Heb. 11:13-16.

1PE 2:11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul.

- b. Paul affirmed the same truth. (Phil. 3:20).

Notes

1. Paul usually called “Peter” by his Aramaic name “Cephas.” (1 Cor. 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5; Gal. 1:18; 2:9, 11).
2. Paul in his Epistles always terms himself Paul, not Saul.
3. So Peter uses His Greek name, not Cephas or Simon, because he is writing to Christians scattered over Asia Minor.

“Chosen”

1PE 1:2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in fullest (ever increasing) measure.

- “plethuno” [play thu’ no] means “to increase, multiply.” Passive “be multiplied.”
1. "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" - “prog’nosis ‘ “knowing before, foreknowledge.”
 - a. God knows everything, but does not force man to do good or evil.
 - b. Men are free moral agents who can choose to accept God or reject Him.
 - c. They were chosen “according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.”
 - 1) God did not choose the individuals that would be saved or lost.
 - 2) He chose that men would be saved by the death of His Son. (Eph. 1:4; Rev. 13:8).
 2. “by the sanctifying work of the Spirit”
 - Lit. “in sanctification [holiness] of spirit”
 - McCord “in holiness of the Spirit”
 - a. The Spirit does not convert or sanctify apart from the word.
 - b. This is done by the instrumentality of the word. (2 Thess. 2:13, 14).

2TH 2:13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. 14 And it was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- c. See John 8:32; Rom.1:16; Jas. 1:18,21.
3. "that you may obey Jesus" - lit "for obedience"
 - a. It is God's will that men obey His Son. (Matt. 17:5; Heb. 5:9).
 - b. God chose them with the purpose in mind of their being obedient.
 - c. Obedience is the goal or purpose of those called.. (1 Pet. 1:14; 1 Thess. 4:7; Rom. 1:5).
4. "and be sprinkled with His blood" - Gr. "rhantismos" [rhan tee smos']
 - a. There is an allusion here to the sprinkling of the Israelites at the time of the giving of the law of Moses. (Exod. 24:7).
 - b. The sprinkling of those accepting Christ is not with animal blood. (Heb. 10:4, 5).
 - c. Christians are under shower of Christ's precious blood. (1 Jn. 1:7,9; Col. 1:14; Eph. 1:7; Rev. 1:5).

Eulogy and Thanksgiving (1:3-5)

1PE 1:3 Blessed [praise] be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great [abundant] mercy has caused us to be born again to a living [undying] hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

1. Christians have been "born again" "according to His great mercy."
 - a. "anagennao" [a na gen na' o] means "to be born again."
 - b. We can be "born again" because God first loved us. (1 Jn. 4:19).
2. "living hope" - Rev. 1:18.

REV 1:18 and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

- a. Paul had reminded the Ephesians that prior to conversion they had no hope. (Eph. 2:12). See 1 Thess. 4:13; Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12.
- b. It is a "living hope" because it is grounded upon the promises of God and because it is guaranteed by a living (not a dead) Christ.
3. We have "a living hope" because Jesus was raised from the dead and He is the first-fruits of our resurrection. (1 Cor. 15:20-23).
4. We have "a living hope" because we serve "a living God." (1 Thess. 1:9).

“An Inheritance”

1PE 1:4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable [in corruptible, can never perish] **and undefiled** (stainless, never spoil) **and will not fade away, reserved** [kept safe, safeguarded] **in heaven for you,**

- “reserved” is perfect tense from “tere’o” [te reh o] meaning “having been and still kept.”
1. “imperishable” - The inheritance will never be destroyed or defiled or fade away.
 - a. Nothing unclean will enter heaven. (Rev. 21:8, 27).
 - b. All good things end, but not heaven. (Rev. 22:5).
 2. “reserved in heaven for you” - John 14:6; Phil. 3:20; Matt. 5:12.
 - a. Nothing can destroy heaven and nothing can destroy the treasures laid up in heaven.
 - b. It is guaranteed [kept] by the infinite power of the Almighty God of heaven.

“Protected By The Power Of God”

1PE 1:5 who [you children of God] **are** [constantly] **protected** [guarded] **by the power of God through** [your] **faith for a salvation** [final inheritance] **ready to be revealed in** [at] **the last time.**

- “phroureo” [frou re’ o]- “to guard, watch.”
 - Lit. “in last time” - “Time” is from “kairos.” It has reference to Christ’s coming at the end of the world.
1. Christians “are protected by the power of God.” (1 Cor. 10:13; Matt. 10:28; Lk. 21:16-18).
 - a. The protection is not protection of our physical lives, but it protection for the soul.
 - b. We may be persecuted or even put to death, but this cannot affect the salvation of our souls.
 2. God’s power in keeping man is contingent upon man’s faith. (Rom.1:16; Gal. 3:11-14; Eph. 2:8; 1 Pet. 5:9).
 3. God does not force us to obey Him nor will He force us to accept His help. (Jas. 4:7, 8).

Joy In Affliction (1:6-9)

1PE 1:6 In this [salvation] **you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if** [since it is] **necessary, you have been distressed** [put to grief, suffered] **by various** [all kinds of] **trials** [temptations, persecutions, hardships],

- “In this” are neuter in gender and refer to the word “time” that is also neuter in gender. Christians are to rejoice “in the last time” because they will be raised to be with God when Christ comes again.
- “Salvation” [1:5] is feminine in gender and would not be the natural antecedent of “time.”
- The idea is about the same either way.

- We rejoice in salvation and we rejoice because of the blessings given us at the time of Christ's coming.
1. They "greatly rejoice" in salvation. (Phil. 3:1; 4:4).
 - a. Rejoicing comes by counting our **material blessings**.
 - b. Rejoicing comes by counting our **spiritual blessings**.
 - c. Rejoicing comes by reflecting on **our eternal blessings**.
 - d. Rejoicing comes by knowing our **names are recorded or written in heaven**. (Lk. 10:20).
 - e. Rejoicing comes by knowing we have **the greatest work in the world to do**. (Matt. 5:16; Mk. 16:15).
 2. "Trials" help us to become stronger. (Jas. 1:2,3).

JAM 1:2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

3. The trials are "for a little while" in view of eternity.
4. Even if this is for the span of one's life (as it was for some), it is short in comparison to eternity.

Value of Trials

1PE 1:7 that the proof [genuineness] of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested [and purified] by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation [second coming] of Jesus Christ;

- "dokimion" [do kee' mee on]- "proof, the proving, testing."
1. Trials make us stronger and manifest genuine faith.
 2. Peter shows their genuine faith is more precious than refined gold.
 3. Gold perishes even though refined by fire.
 4. The end result of genuine faith is "praise and glory and honor" at Christ's second coming.
 5. Gold will not get us into heaven, but genuine faith will. (1 Jn. 5:4,5).

1PE 1:8 and though you have not seen Him [Jesus], you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

- "with joy inexpressible and full of glory" has the idea that their joy will be too great for words.
 - The joy and excitement of seeing Jesus coming and knowing we will be with Him forever cannot be fully expressed, but will be experienced when He comes again. (1 Thess. 4:13-18).
1. They had "not seen him"

- a. Peter’s readers had not seen Jesus. He had been dead for more than 30 years, and had died in Jerusalem. See 1 Pet. 1:1.
 - b. They had not even seen a glimpse of Him, but they loved Him and were living for Him.
 - c. They were converts of the apostles and other Christians.
2. Today we are in the position of never seeing Jesus Christ, but we love Him because of what He did for us and what He does for us now in the future. See Jn. 15:13.
 - a. We live with the assurance that one day we will see Him.
 - b. One day we shall see God and His Son. (Matt. 5:8; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Jn. 3:2; Rev. 1:7; 22:4).
 3. “full of glory” is literally “having been glorified.”
 - a. This unspeakable joy will come in our glorified state.
 - b. This will come when we are raised from the dead (assuming we are dead at His coming), and when we ascend to meet Him in the air.
 - c. We rejoice now because of the hope of eternal life, but this joy will not compare to the joy we will have when our faith becomes a reality.

1PE 1:9 obtaining [receiving] as the outcome [end, goal] of your faith the salvation of your [immortal] souls.

Lit. “obtaining th end of the faith [the] salvation of [your] souls

1. The “outcome” [lit. end] of "faith" is “salvation.” (1 Jn. 5:3,4).
2. "of your souls"
 - a. Gr. “psuche” [psoo khay’]- “breathe, life, soul.”
 - b. Here it refers to our immortal souls.. (Matt.10:28; Jas. 1:21; 5:20; Heb. 6:19).
3. Faith in Jesus ends with victory. (1 Jn. 5:4, 5).

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