

I & 2 PETER: INTRODUCTION

1. It has been said that I Peter is “the most complete summary of the doctrine and ethics of the Gospel of any New Testament epistle.”
2. I Peter is one the eight letters in the New Testament known as the “General Epistles”.
 - a. Primarily written to Christians over a widespread area instead of specific places like many of Paul’s epistles (cf. 1:1).
 - b. Christians from the Jews and Gentiles are addressed:
 - (1). Jews could identify with the Old Testament imagery – priesthood offering up sacrifices in the house of God; God’s view of His people (2:5-9, cf. Exodus 19:5-6)
 - (2). Gentiles also considered: “...who in times past were not people...” (2:10; Eph. 2:11-12, 19; I Peter 1:14, 4:1-4).

I. **AUTHOR OF THE BOOKS: PETER** “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ (I Pet. 1:1); Simon Peter, a servant and apostles of Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:1)

- A. Peter also called Simon or Simeon, and Cephas (Acts 15:14, Jn. 1:40-42)
 1. Born at Bethsaida (Jn 1:44); Father’s name was Jonas (Matt. 16:17) or John (Jn. 1:42); Andrew was his brother and brought him to Christ (Jn. 1:40-42); Peter and Andrew were fishermen in Capernaum where Peter resided along with his wife’s mother (Matt. 8:14; I Cor. 9:5)
 2. Peter was called by the Lord to be a disciple, and later an apostle (Matt. 4:18-19; Lk. 5:10-11; Matt. 10:2, Mk. 3:14-16)
- B. Peter’s earnestness and courage made him prominent among the disciples.
 1. Name appears first in the list of apostles (Matt. 10:2; Mk. 3:16; Lk. 6:14; Acts 1:13).
 2. Often a spokesman from among the twelve apostles (Mk. 8:29; Jn. 6:67-68; Matt. 19:27)
 3. Among the close disciples to the Lord (Mk. 5:37, 9:2, 14:33)
 4. Cut off the high priest’s servants’ right ear (Jn. 18:10-12)
- C. At the last supper, Peter objected to Jesus washing his feet – learned about humility (Jn. 13:1-10; I Pet. 5:5)
 1. Boasted of dedication to the Lord – denied Lord three times as predicted by the Lord (Lk. 22:31-33; Matt. 26:31-35; 56-75)
- D. After Jesus’ resurrection, the Lord sets forth Peter’s work – “tend my sheep” (Jn. 21:15-19; I Pet. 5:1-2)

- E. As an apostle, Peter preached the first sermon opening the way into Christ's established kingdom – the church (Acts 2:14-40, cf. Matt. 16:19).
 - 1. His prominence extends to Acts 12; he is mentioned again as later being in Jerusalem (Acts 15:7)

II. DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING:

- A. Probably between A.D. 65-67
- B. From "Babylon" (5:13)
 - 1. Literal Babylon on the Euphrates
 - 2. Some say Peter wrote from Rome which is figuratively named "Babylon" due to the persecutions by Nero, after the burning of Rome (July 18, A.D. 64)
 - a. Mark had been with Paul in Rome (Col. 4:10)
 - b. Mark was with Peter (cf. I Pet. 5:13)

III. THEME AND PURPOSE OF THE BOOKS

- A. Theme: "Sufficiency of God's Grace (I Pet. 5:12)
 - 1. The word "grace" appears 10 times in I Peter (cf. 1:10, 13, 3:7, 4:10, etc.)
- B. Theme of 2 Peter: "Responsibilities of Grace" – "Grow in the grace..." (3:18)
- C. Purpose: To give instruction (exhortation) and personal encouragement (testimony) to the persecuted Christian. And in 2 Peter, to fortify and alert the brethren of the false teaching arising from within.
 - 1. Abiding appeal: You can stand! You must stand!

IV. FEATURES OF THE BOOKS

- A. Persecution and trials are in the forefront – suffering mentioned some 12 times in I Peter
 - 1. No hint of bloodshed – but a fiery trial was upon them (1:5-6)
 - 2. Persecution in the form of vile slander (3:16; 4:14-15)
 - 3. Apparently charged also with being disloyal to the state (2:13-17).
 - 4. Persecution was consistent with being in Christ (5:9; cf. 3:18, 4:1)
 - 5. God will strengthen – He cares (5:10, 7)
- B. Warning against false doctrine – 2 Peter
 - 1. Those teaching a false freedom – license to sin (2 Peter 2)
 - 2. Those mocking the idea of the Lord's return (2 Peter 3)
 - 3. The remedy is to "grow" in knowledge and character within God's grace (2 Peter 1:3-12, 3:18)

V. OUTLINE OF THE BOOKS:

A. I Peter

1. The Greeting (1:1-2)
2. The Great Salvation (1:2-12)
 - a. Genuine thanksgiving for it (1:3-5)
 - b. Worthy of the test of persecution (1:6-9)
 - c. A subject of genuine interest to prophets and angels (1:10-12)
3. The Divine Call to Holiness (1:13-2:12)
 - a. Readiness to be pious toward God and be like Him in character (1:13-17)
 - b. Based upon the Divine ransom – Christ’s blood (1:18-21)
 - c. Demands of being set apart (1:22-2:12)
4. The Responsibilities Toward Others (2:13-3:12)
 - a. Government (2:13-17)
 - b. Masters (2:18-25)
 - c. Husbands and wives (3:1-7)
 - d. Brethren (3:8)
 - e. Revilers (3:9-12)
5. The Sufferings and Following Glory (3:13-4:19)
 - a. Proper conduct in suffering (3:13-17 4:7-19)
 - b. Example of Christ (3:18-4:6)
6. Exhortations and Salutations (5:1-14)
 - a. Exhortation to Elders (5:1-4)
 - b. Exhortation to be humble, trustful and watchful (5:5-11)
 - c. Salutation of peace (5:12-14)

B. 2 Peter

1. Salutation of Grace and Peace (1:1-2)
2. Grow in God’s Grace (1:3-21)
 - a. Proper growth ends into abundant entrance into the eternal kingdom (1:3-11)
 - b. Growth demands reminders of important objective truths (1:12-21)
3. Warning of the False Teacher (2:1-21)
 - a. The work of the false teacher recognized (2:1-3)
 - b. The power of God to destroy and deliver is proven in history (2:4-9).
 - c. The heart and character of the false teacher exposed (2:10-16)
 - d. The consequences of following the false teacher (2:17-21)
4. Stirring the Mind with Reminders (Chapter 3)
 - a. Warning of mockers who deny the second coming of Christ (3:1-7)
 - b. Warning that the day of the Lord will come – unexpectedly (3:8-10)
 - c. The consequences of knowing that the day of the Lord will come (3:11-18)