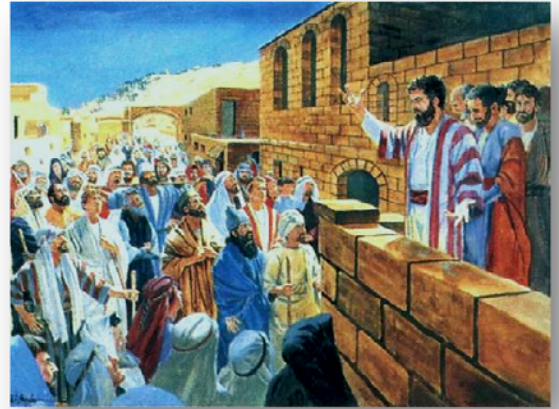


## 60 – 1 Peter : Steadfastness and Joy Even in Trial

- Peter, the bumbling, stumbling fisherman who seemed to always speak before thinking, is the accomplished author of this letter. **Peter changed dramatically after he was filled with the Holy Spirit** during the Feast of Weeks (*Pentecost*, Acts 2) and preached a mighty sermon after which 3,000 people were saved. This letter reveals the new creature in Christ that Peter became.
- This is another relatively short book, but very full of important encouragements and truths to the believer, at that time, and throughout the ages. Here are a few of the comments made about this book:



**“It is one of the finest books in the New Testament.”**  
(Oservald)

**“Worthy of the prince of the Apostles, and full of apostolical dignity and authority.”** (Erasmus)

**“Peter has been called the ignorant fisherman, but no man who had spent three years in the school of Jesus could be called ignorant. The Epistles of Peter confirm this. Peter deals with doctrine and handles weighty subjects. In the first few verses he deals with the great doctrines of election, foreknowledge, sanctification, obedience, the blood of Christ, the Trinity, the grace of God, salvation, revelation, glory, faith, and hope.”** (McGee)

- **Peter wrote his letters after Paul** had written his, probably somewhere between A.D. 64 and 67. At this time Nero was the emperor of Rome, and there was very heavy persecution of Christians.
- The **theme of this book is the hope of believers, especially in trying times**. Peter does discuss very practical doctrines and beliefs of the church, but this letter’s main message is hope in trials, even through suffering. He speaks of experiencing joy, even in suffering. Peter spoke from his heart as one who could relate, as he himself experienced great suffering. His message encourages believers to be steadfast and endure with excellent behavior, as they live in a pagan culture.
- This book is addressed to “pilgrims” (or “strangers,” literally Gr. *parapidemos*, an alien or foreigner) that were “scattered” (*diasporas*, Jews living outside Jerusalem were referenced as living in the diaspora) through five Roman provinces in Asia Minor (today’s northern Turkey). These churches were both Jews and Gentiles living among “the enemy” in places that were known for their pagan beliefs. He is also addressing us today, as **we are strangers and pilgrims in a foreign land, amidst pagan culture**. Peter writes to encourage these believers to face persecution in a way that honored and evidenced Jesus. They are encouraged to lift their eyes above their problems and keep them on their eternal destiny.

### Highlights

<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Greetings to those in foreign places, among the pagan</li><li>▪ living hope through the resurrection, inheritance reserved for us; kept by God’s power through faith;</li><li>▪ we may be grieved by trials (for a time), to test the genuineness of our faith</li><li>▪ We love Jesus even though we haven’t seen Him, and rejoice, looking forward to “end of our faith” (<i>even angels desire to look into these things!</i>)</li><li>▪ Therefore be strong, be sober, rest your hope on his grace; don’t conform to former lusts, but be holy in all that you do; not redeemed with corruptible things, but precious blood of Christ, lamb without blemish.</li><li>▪ He was foreordained before foundation of world; through Him we believe in God who raised Him.</li><li>▪ With purified souls love on another fervently with pure hearts, being born again, incorruptible, through the word of God which abides forever. Man’s glory fades, but the word of the Lord endures forever.</li></ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Lay aside malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, all evil speaking, desire the Word and grow with it.</li><li>▪ We are living stones, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious, being built into a spiritual house, holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices to God. Reference to “chief cornerstone” (Jesus) of house (Ps 118:22) precious to those who believe, but rejected by those who don’t.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are a “chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people” so we praise Him who called us out of darkness into His “marvelous light.” Those without mercy now have obtained mercy.</li> <li>▪ Flee fleshly lusts, act honorably among Gentiles, so they glorify God for your coming among them.</li> <li>▪ Submit to governments, so you can silence the “ignorance of foolish men” as free, but not using your freedom as an excuse for sin. Instead, act as “bondservants” of God.</li> <li>▪ Honor everyone, love the brothers, fear God, honor the king. Submit to masters, whether good or bad.</li> <li>▪ Because you love God, you endure grief, suffering wrongfully. If you do good and suffer and endure it patiently, that is commendable. Christ also suffered, giving us an example.</li> <li>▪ We are healed by His stripes. We were like sheep gone astray but have now returned to the “Shepherd and Overseer of our souls.”</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wives submit to husbands so your behavior might win him over (without a word); don’t just adorn the outside, but the heart (incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, precious to God);</li> <li>▪ Husbands, be understanding, honor your wife, become heirs together so your prayers aren’t hindered.</li> <li>▪ All be of one mind, have compassion, love, be tenderhearted, courteous, not returning to evil, bless others. Ref. Psalm 34 (eyes of the Lord on the righteous, his face against those who do evil);</li> <li>▪ don’t be afraid of man’s threats, always be ready give defense of your faith, have a good conscience, so that those who defile you are ashamed since you do good. Christ suffered to bring us to God, death in His flesh, alive by the Spirit, He went and preached to spirits in prison.</li> <li>▪ 8 souls saved through water (Noah/flood), “antitype” is baptism, response of a good conscience toward God through Jesus who has gone into heaven, at the right hand of God, all authority made subject to Him.</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have same mind as Jesus, live not for lusts but will of God. Enough of past doing like Gentiles, walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, abominable idolatries. They think you are strange because you don’t run with them anymore, and speak evil to you. They will give account to Him.</li> <li>▪ End of everything is near, be serious, watchful in prayer. Love each other, be hospitable without grumbling. Each has received a gift, use it as good stewards the best way so God is glorified.</li> <li>▪ Don’t think your trials are strange, but rejoice that you take part in Christ’s sufferings. When His glory is revealed you will be filled with joy. If you are reproached for His name, you are blessed.</li> <li>▪ Don’t suffer because you do wrong, but because you do good as a Christian, and don’t be ashamed by that, but glorify God with it. Judgment begins with the house of God, with us first, what end will be for those who don’t obey? (ref Proverbs 11:31) Commit yourself to doing good, even if you suffer by His will.</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Shepherds, take care of God’s flock, serve willingly not for gain or to lord it over them, be examples, when Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive crown of glory.</li> <li>▪ Younger ones submit to elders, be submissive to each other, be clothed in humility, God resists proud, gives grace to humble (ref. Prov. 3:34) Humble yourselves, cast all cares on Him, for He cares for you.</li> <li>▪ Be sober, vigilant, adversary seeks whom he might devour, resist him, be steadfast in faith, know that your sufferings are same as other brothers around the world.</li> <li>▪ Benediction and blessing, greetings from others.</li> </ul>

Most of this book is fairly straightforward and easily interpreted. However, two separate passages, all relating to a similar subject, have been debated since they were written. “...by whom also *He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.*” (3:19-20) and “*For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.*” (4:6) Did Jesus actually descend into hell, as many of our creeds indicate? Remember those creeds are written by man, not by God. There are those who support this belief, and use these and other scriptures as reference, and there are just as many who say Jesus did not descend into literal hell. Some argue the distinctions between **Hades** (the holding place of the sinful dead, awaiting judgment) and **Gehenna** (final Hell after judgment). Others say His “descent” is only to earth, and His “ascent” is to heaven. He came down, and He went back up. So who are these prisoners, or dead? There are many ways to explain these verses, usually by looking carefully at the original construction in Greek, to see that Jesus was preaching *through the Holy Spirit, through Noah* during the time indicated in the verses above. There are other scriptures referenced in this controversy: 2 Peter 2:4-5, Ephesians 4:9, Luke 16, 2 Corinthians 12:2-4, Jude 1:6 for starters. We should indicate that there is absolutely no scriptural evidence to believe that there is a second chance of salvation after death. The scriptures say otherwise. If Jesus did descend to “hell” it would have been Hades, and Jesus did not preach salvation, but proclaimed His victory over death. This is a debate that is not likely to go away until we can know the truth from the One who IS Truth.