

STUDY THE BIBLE 12 (STB-12)

"1st & 2nd PETER"

"Suffering and Hope For Persecuted Believers"

"That the **trial of your faith**, being much more **precious** than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:" (1 Pet 1:7)

Peter writes his 1st epistle with a deep and true sympathy for suffering Christians.

1st and 2nd Peter are remarkable books not only for what is written therein, but they come from a man whose life had been radically transformed and changed from a strong minded and impulsive leader to that of a wise and comforting father. Upon studying these two books, you can't help but notice a 'changed' Peter.

The study of Peter's life shows one of gradual change. There are three parts to his life:

Firstly, after the cross, and then for another 10 years, Peter is leader of the apostles (33-45AD)

Secondly, Paul then becomes the chief apostle around 45AD with his first trip.

Thirdly, Peter emerges again after 20, or so, years, to write 1&2 Peter (65-66AD).

1. PETER, THE ORIGINAL LAWMAN, becomes more FATHER LIKE

Although there are 14 quotes from the Old Testament in 1&2 Peter, there is not a single reference to the law. Over time, Peter slowly realizes, that the very thing he had been zealous about, the law, was not able to be borne (endured) by him or his Jewish fathers. As such, his life had been radically transformed and changed from a strong minded and impulsive leader to that of a wise and comforting father.

He seems slow to catch on, as it is about **10 years after** the cross, that he realizes that there is no such thing as **unclean food**.

It's about **15 years after** the cross that God shows him that Gentiles are **not** 2nd class citizens.

2. AS A CHRISTIAN, PETER WRITES TO GENTILE CHRISTIANS

His readers were not Jews. *Which in time past were **not a people** (these are Gentiles. Jews were the people of God), but are now the people of God (Christians): which had not obtained mercy, but **now have obtained mercy**. 1 Pet 2:10*

Paul also refers to the Gentiles in similar manner as follows

*As he saith also in Osee, (Hosea) I will call them my people (Christians), which were **not my people** (Gentiles); and her beloved, which was not beloved. Romans 9:25*

*For as ye **in times past have not believed God** (unsaved Gentiles), yet have **now obtained mercy** through their (Israel's) unbelief: Rom 11:30*

3. 1&2 PETER ARE WRITTEN IN THE MID 60'S.

Peter writes to **Gentile Christians** (1 Pet 2:10, 12; 4:3, 16, 17) from physical **Babylon** (not Rome which is called spiritual Babylon) around **65-66AD** just before Paul's 2nd Roman imprisonment in 66AD. He **writes to the churches** throughout Asia Minor – Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia which had largely been founded by Paul. Peter has not visited these churches as he calls them 'strangers' (1:1)

Paul indeed had founded the churches and written to the Galatians and Ephesians.

It is wrongly assumed that Peter went to Rome at some point in time, as **Peter writes from the actual physical Babylon**. In the book of Revelation (Rev 17:5, 18), Rome is called **the Whore of Babylon**, and this Rome is spiritual Babylon. Indeed, the **pagan religion of Rome** comes directly from the **Babylonians**.

Nero's persecution of the Christians was very severe (**64-67AD**), and had previously set fire to Rome and he blamed the Christians. Nero has gone after Paul and put him in prison.

The church was about **30 years old** and churches everywhere, and indeed individual believers, were undergoing persecution (5:9). It seemed like the end of the world had come, and it was literally a '**fiery trial**' (4:12). Christians were being burnt in Nero's gardens and it looked like '**the devil as a roaring lion**' (5:8) was about to devour the church.

Peter writes to **encourage these Paul founded churches** to bear up under suffering. He reminds them that Christ had suffered as well (1:11). Although he started out with a ministry to the Jews (Gal 2:7), he seems to have swung to a ministry to the Gentiles.

John Mark (Marcus), the nephew of Barnabas (being the son of his sister Col 4:10), who writes the gospel of Mark), was with Peter at the time of this writing (5:13). This is John Mark who left Paul on his first trip (45-48AD) and joined up with Barnabas (Acts 15:37), and lastly ends up with Peter.

4. CHOICE OF WORDS

Having had a ministry to the Jews, Peter, being a Jew, has an ingrained familiarity with the language, and uses Jewish words and terms, when he writes to Christians.

sprinkling of the blood (Heb 9:13; 1Pet 1:2); **prophets** (1Pet 1:10); **oracles of God** (Acts 5:12; Heb 7:38); **tabernacle** (2Pet 1:14; Ex 25:9); **priesthood** (1Pet 2:5,9; Ex 40:15); **stone of stumbling** (1Pet 2:8; Is 8:14); **rock of offence** (1Pet 2:8; Is 8:14); **mount** (2Pet 1:18; Ex 19:11); **angels** (1Pet 1:12, 3:22; 2Pet 2:4, 11); **stones** (1Pet 2:5; Ex 25:7); **astray sheep** (1Pet 2:25; Is 53:6-7); **precious** (1Pet 1:7, over 50 times in the OT); **Sarah and Abraham** (1Pet 3:6; Gen 17:15); **Noah** (Gen 7:1; 1Pet 3:20); **pilgrims** (1Pet 2:11; Heb 11:13)

5. PETER'S WRITING STYLE

Peter writes from the heart. Peter is straight forward man. There are no hidden agendas. His writings leave the reader in no doubt as to his intense earnestness. There is nothing pretentious about Peter. His life, his thoughts and his writings simply express who he is. His mind is filled with the Old Testament.

He is thoroughly familiar with Old Testament words, phrases and recollections, and constantly uses them.

His epistles show three things, Firstly, that his mind is filled with words and phrases of the Old Testament; that he has spent time with Christ on earth, and thirdly, defers to Paul and his doctrine. Peter has been a work in progress. He now speaks with authority, but with gentleness and warmth, as one who knows the power of temptations, the horrifying pain of disloyalty and of not being steadfast. He humbly speaks, as one who remembers ever so clearly, of how he had fallen. His words are forceful and simple.

He lacks the train (skill) of reasoning and the subtle logic of Paul, and he gets straight to the point. Peter's use of the words of Christ, and against the backdrop of the Old Testament, have been unconsciously, and thoroughly soaked into his being, such that his thoughts and words are one and the same. There has been a literal renewal of his mind, and more importantly, his heart (Rom 12:2).

KEY POINTS of 1st PETER Election (1:2)

1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

Election occurs **after salvation** not before. When a saved person is in Christ, then he is elected to be something, and in this case **elected unto obedience**.

An analogy is that a man must be in a football team before he can be elected as captain. He is elected for a purpose.

As Ephesians 1:4 says *According as he hath **chosen us IN** (not into) **him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Ephesians 1:4*

After we are saved that is when we are chosen and not before. Being saved means we are in Christ, and this is when we are chosen to be something - holy and without blame.

Eternal security (1:4)

*1:4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that **fadeth not away**, reserved in heaven for you,*

*1:5 Who are **kept by the power of God** through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Loss of salvation is pure Roman Catholic doctrine. Their Jesus has to be constantly eaten all the time to stay saved. Truly, "Once saved, always saved!"

Trial of your faith (1:6-7)

*1:6 Wherein ye **greatly rejoice**, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in **heaviness through manifold temptations**:*

*1:7 That the **trial of your faith**, being **much more precious than of gold** that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*
Have you got trials? Praise God. This is called putting money into your spiritual bank account in heaven. This is the real investment. Investment in Real Estate down here, or shares on the Stock Market are not investments at all.

Sufferings of Christ are an ensample and encouragement to us (1:11)

*1:11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand **the sufferings of Christ**, and **the glory that should follow**.*

For as the sufferings of Christ **abound in us**, so our **consolation also aboundeth** by Christ. 2 Cor 1:5

As we suffer for Christ, we shall also be a "...a **partaker of the glory** that shall be revealed:" 1 Peter 5:1

Christ was foreordained (1:20)

1:20 Who verily was **foreordained before the foundation of the world**, but was manifest in these last times for you,

As God is eternal, he knows everything that will happen from the start to the finish of time. This is called **foreknowledge**. But he had only made one thing happen and brought it to pass, and this is called **foreordination**. God orders it beforehand, from before the time the world began. That is God orders that Christ will appear on earth.

All flesh is grass (1:24)

1:24 For **all flesh is as grass**, and all **the glory of man as the flower of grass**. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

Anything you do down here in the world, that is not for the Lord, counts for nothing. Any glory down here simply glorifies the man and the world, and is worthless. This is very important to remember.

Peter is not the rock (1Pet 2:5-6; Matt 16:18)

2:5 Ye **ALSO**, as **lively stones**, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

2:6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a **chief corner stone**, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

2:7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made **the head of the corner**, 1 Peter 2:7

Peter says he is just one of the lively stones. He is not 'the chief corner stone' or 'the head of the corner' which are used to erect buildings, and the point from which all other measurements and directions are taken.

Christ was sinless (2:22)

2:22 Who did no sin, neither was guile (deceit) found in his mouth:

Yes, Christ knew no sin (2Cor 5:21), did no sin (1Pet 2:22), and in him was no sin (1John 3:5), Furthermore, he spoke no sin (1Pet 2:22). The Passover lamb in the Old Testament was examined for defects for four days before sacrifice. Christ, as the perfect **Passover** Lamb, was also examined for four days before the cross. When God sees the blood, he **PASSES OVER** that person. God has peace not wrath toward him.

By "stripes ye were healed" is for sins (1Pet 2:24; Is 53:5)

2:24 Who his own self bare our **sins** in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to **sins**, should live unto righteousness: by **whose stripes ye were healed**.

But he was wounded for our **transgressions**, he was bruised for our **iniquities**: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with **his stripes we are healed**. Isaiah 53:5

See that? Transgressions and iniquities are sins. This healing is not for physical body. Physical healing is **not** guaranteed by the blood of Jesus.

Women have a hidden man of the heart (1Pet 3:4)

Women to have a meek and quiet spirit (3:4)

3:4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a **meek and quiet spirit**, which is in the sight of God of great price.

As the outward fashions of the world fade away, the finest ornament a woman can have is an easy state of mind, void of passion, pride, and anger, to be displayed in quiet behaviour towards their husbands, and indeed their families. This happens on the inside of the woman which is called the inner man.

Spirits in prison (1Pet 3:19)

3:19 By which also he went and **preached unto the spirits in prison**;

3:20 Which **sometime** were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, **eight souls** were saved by water.

These spirits are the sons of God, angels, who left their first estate and had physical relations with the daughters of men. These are kept in chains of darkness.

That the **sons of God** (angels) saw the **daughters of men** (women on the earth) that they were fair; and **they took them wives** of all which they chose. There were **giants** in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and **they bare children to them**, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. Genesis 6:2-4

And the **angels which kept not their first estate**, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in **everlasting chains under darkness** unto the **judgment** of the great day. Jude 1:6

Christ went to declare certain things to these disobedient spirits. He didn't go to 'convert' them or witness to them. Maybe he said "I am Christ. I was in heaven, you wanted to be like the most high, and you have now been thrown into this prison called hell. You will be thrown into the lake of fire."

Water baptism washes the body only (1Pet 3:21)

3:21 *The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:* Water baptism is a work not needed to get saved or stay saved. Paul said *For Christ sent me not to baptize (with water), but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. 1 Corinthians 1:17.* Many people would rather have the work of water as evidence of their salvation, than the inner change of the heart of true salvation.

Suffering makes you cease from sin (1Pet 4:1)

4:1 *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for **he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;***

Suffering helps to focus the mind and concentrate on the Lord. When in the 'prison' of suffering, we cry out with all our heart unto the Lord. Our minds don't have time for sin.

Charity covers sins (1Pet 4:8)

4:8 *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.*

Yes, **charity is love between Christians**. It's a special kind of love and is best described in 1st Corinthians 13. Study Romans chapters 12, 14, 15 for a full description on how to be charitable, that is to love, to other Christians. Only the King James Bible uses this word "charity".

Fiery trials (1Pet 4:12-13)

4:12 *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:*

4:13 *But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with **exceeding joy.***

When **suffering for Christ** we can be glad with exceeding joy. Suffering brought about by sin is not cause for joy.

Feed the flock (other Christians) (1Pet 5:2)

5:2 *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;*

*Let the elders that rule well be counted **worthy of double honour**, especially they who **labour in the word and doctrine.** 1 Timothy 5:17*

Feed God's sheep with the word and sound doctrine.

KEY THEMES of 2nd PETER

The Bible interprets itself (1:20-21)

1:20 *Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.*

1:21 *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

The Bible interprets itself. Proper study will reveal this. It is not to be privately interpreted.

False teachers in the last days (2:1)

2:1 *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*

These people sneak into the church and are not saved. They just pretend to be. They teach wrong doctrine.

As stated before, **100% pure Christian** doctrine is to be found **only** in Paul's writings.

(2Pet 2:6-7, 10)

2:6 *And turning the cities of **Sodom and Gomorrha** into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;*

2:7 *And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:*

2:10 *But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the **lust of uncleanness**, and **despise government.** Presumptuous are they, **selfwilled**, they are not afraid to **speak evil of dignities.***

These are male homosexuals. Sodomites. These belong to the LGBTIQ crowd. Birds of a feather flock together. They hate all authority but their own. As Paul says *And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; **men with men** working that*

*which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.
Romans 1:27*

The lie of the Gap Theory flood is exposed (2Pet 2:5; 3:5-6)

*2:5 And spared not **the old world, but saved Noah** the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;*

*3:5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were **of old, and the earth (the old earth)** standing out of the water and in the water:*

*3:6 Whereby **the world that then was, (the old world)** being overflowed with water, perished:*

The old world is Noah's world, not the world between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. The Gap Theory is just Satan's theory.

The last days with scoffers (2Pet 3-4)

*3:3 Knowing this first, that there shall come **in the last days scoffers**, walking after their own lusts,*

3:4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

What do people of the world say? "We've been here before. We'll get through all this." "The sun will shine tomorrow morning." And so on.

The Millennial fire and new heaven and earth (2Pet 3:10, 13)

3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 3:13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

This happens after the 1,000 year reign of Christ on earth. Fervent heat is extremely hot heat.

Paul better than Peter (2Pet 3:16)

*3:16 As also in all his (Paul) epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are **some things hard to be understood**, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

It took Peter 5 years to come to the knowledge that there was no such thing as "unclean" food, and 10 years for the fact that Christians were not 2nd class citizens and should be accepted by God.

As Paul takes over the mantle of chief apostle with his first trip in 45AD, Peter drops into the background for about 15 years. He then re-surfaces with 1&2 Peter.

Peter was a little slow initially but is earnest in his pursuit of the truth of Paul's doctrine. He ends up writing from the far flung region of Babylon, of all places.

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Harley Hitchcock