

## The Book of I Peter Part 1 – I Peter 1:1-5

Our study in the New Testament now continues with the book of I Peter, and if I would title the first two chapters, I would give it a title of "Elected Foreigners." Peter's epistles like that of James were written primarily to Jewish Christians of the dispersion although it's evident that there were also Gentiles in the churches during this time.

Let me ask you to open your Bible and have it ready as we look through the Scriptures. I think it's very important that you follow along and read along and check up on me and check up on anyone who is claiming to present the Word of God. Make sure they're doing that, and that's the reason that we need to have a Bible open whenever we study the Word of God.

Verses 1 and 2 of I Peter, the epistle, is to Christians in Asia Minor, and this would be modern-day Turkey. And Peter lets the Christians know that their election is according to God's foreknowledge, and this election has been made possible by the blood of Jesus Christ, obedience to the Word, and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

In verses 3 through 12 of I Peter, Peter praises God for the living hope, incorruptible inheritance, and glorious salvation to be revealed at the coming of Christ for those who are in the churches. And despite severe painful experiences, their sincere or real faith in these Christians, their real faith through the power of God has protected them, and the result is indescribable joy, and their salvation was foretold by the prophets and preached in the Gospel by those inspired by the Holy Spirit.

And then we see in verses 13 through 25, because of salvation, Peter directs the people of God to

act, and this would be their testimony, to act in the appropriate manner, showing that they are the people of God. The people of God should conduct themselves in holiness and fear, always remembering that they have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. That's you and I today. We're to show this holiness. We're to have this holiness exhibited in our lives.

And Peter goes on to say in these verses that Christians are to love one another fervently with pure hearts, and Christians have been born again by the incorruptible Word of God, which lives and abides forever.

Let's look now at some of the things that lead up to our study, and we want to, by way of introduction, say that the date of this epistle was around A.D. 67 or 68, and it was apparently during or just previous to some major persecution that was taking place. The setting here is that this letter was written to Christians both Jews, in I Peter 1:1, and Gentiles, I Peter 2:10 talks about that, and Asia Minor, evidently from Babylon, and you can read that in I Peter 5:13, and we'll read that in just a moment. It was written to stimulate them, to give them a joyful hope in the face of coming persecution.

In I Peter 2:10 it says, *Which in time past were not a people....* He's speaking to the Gentiles here, about them. He says, *[B]ut are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*

In I Peter 5:13 it says, *The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you: and so doth Marcus my son.* So evidently, this was written from Babylon at this time.

And the author, of course, is Peter the apostle. In verse 1, it says, *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia*, and these five Roman provinces that I just mentioned, that the Bible mentions in verse 1 of I Peter 1, these five Roman provinces are now modern-day Turkey.

Well, what about the recipients of the letter? In I Peter 1, verses 1 and 2, and I've already mentioned this that it says there in verse 1, *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers...* These are pilgrims, in other words... *to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia*. These were scattered people, dispersed.

And in verse 2, it says, *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.*

The elect is mentioned there, and notice it says the elect according to, not because of, the foreknowledge of God. God does not force anyone to do anything. Each person has a responsibility to act upon their own. God has given all of us a free will. God does not choose who's going to be saved and who's going to do this or who's going to do that. Now, He does call certain people for certain jobs within the Christian community of those people who have been saved, but nowhere does He force anyone to accept His Son as the Savior. It says in that verse, again, in I Peter 1:2, "elect according to," not because of, the foreknowledge of God.

In Romans 8:29, we read another verse, and we are elected for children of God for a certain purpose. It's the children of God who are elected, not those people who are unsaved. Verse 29 of Romans 8 says, *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be*

*conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

We are to be conformed to the image of God's Son. In other words, as we grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, as we study His Word, and as we grow closer to the Lord through prayer and study, we become more and more like the Lord. Now, don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that we become little Jesuses as such, little Christs. We are actually children of God who are being transformed daily as we study His Word, and one day the Bible says that we are going to be perfected, that we are going to be as such individuals that we have been made perfect at that time, and that time is coming when Jesus will come back, I believe, in the clouds and say, "Come up hither" and receive us unto Himself, or when we go to be with Him in death.

I believe when a Christian passes from this life they go immediately to be with the Lord. At that time we become perfect. This body is done away with. This old sinful body is gone. And remember, the Bible tells us that, wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin so death passed upon all men, this body has to die. And after death, we know that comes eternal life through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. And the way to have that, we have trusted Him as our Savior and we've received Him.

But notice in I Peter 1:2, the saved people are to be obedient to God, do what God says. Peter tells the people of God how they are saved, and it says by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. And I call your attention to Exodus 24:8: *And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.*

All through the Bible we read about the sprinkling of the blood. We see that without the shedding of blood is no remission, no remission of sin. All through the Bible we see this, and that points, of course, to the shed blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Let me read verse 2 of I Peter 1 again, if you would: *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.* It's through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, notice with me if you would, and we're going to look with verses 3 through 12 under this heading, "Salvation in Christ." I Peter 1:3-5 says, *<sup>3</sup>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, <sup>4</sup>To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup>Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

There are so many things in those verses that we could speak about today. There are so many blessings that we could look at and say we're saved forever by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and one day we're going to be resurrected. We're going to be with Him and this eternal hope, this eternal faith that we have in our Lord, this eternal blessedness of knowing that one day we're going to be with Him, and it's not going to fade away. Our life is going to go on after receiving Jesus Christ as Savior. And the Bible talks about a living hope here in verses 3-5.

And I want you to know that God wants the saved to know what their future is and why,

according to verses 3-4. It's a living hope because of God's abundance. In other words, it's more than enough mercy in verse 3. It's a living hope because Jesus has been raised. He's been resurrected from the dead according to verse 3.

As we look on, we see that there is no corruption. No corruption. It's a living hope because of a wonderful inheritance that is incapable of being corrupted, defiled, or that will gradually disappear. It's not going to gradually disappear. It's going to be forever according to I Peter 1:4, contained in that verse. It's a living hope reserved, booked in advance in Heaven. Who could improve upon that travel agent who has booked us in advance, and that travel agent is none other than God Himself who said, "I gave My Son that you could be assured that one day you are going to be with me in paradise. You are going to be with me in Heaven."

Remember what Christ told the thief on the cross: "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." And we have that knowledge of knowing that Jesus Christ gave His all that we could receive all, and one day we're going to be with Him and we're going to see Him as He is, and that's going to be a glorious time.

And notice, if you would also, that you, the saved, are kept by the power of God through faith according to these verses that I've just read. You're not kept by yourself. There's no way that you can keep yourself saved. It's by the power of God through faith that we have been saved and we're kept saved, and it's going to be until it's time to reveal your salvation as a Christian in the last time.

In I Peter 1:5 it talks about that. Salvation here is the inheritance spoken of in verse 4. Let's read those verses once again. Verse 4 says, *<sup>4</sup>To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven*

*for you... Listen carefully now... <sup>5</sup>Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

My question to you today is do you know Christ as your Savior? Have you trusted Him? Is He living for you? And of course, the answer is yes. He's alive for you and you need to trust Him. Ask Him to come into your heart today. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

May the Lord bless you as you look to the Lord for your help in time of need. Trust Him as your Savior. Live for Him as your Lord.

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