

Letters of Peter 1

Nancy Gear, October 23, 2022

Plan for this morning

- Examples in our Liturgy
- History
- 1 Peter – Major Themes
- Questions for Table Discussion

1 Peter in BCP

- *Compline*
 - Be sober be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith. *1 Peter 5:8-9a*
- *Daily Devotions*
 - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. *1 Peter 1:3*

1 Peter 4:1-8

Epistle for Holy Saturday

Good Stewards of God's Grace

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), ²so as to live for the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires but by the will of God. ³You have already spent enough time in doing what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry. ⁴They are surprised that you no longer join them in the same excesses of dissipation, and so they blaspheme. ⁵But they will have to give an account to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶For this is the reason the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that, though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does.

⁷ The end of all things is near; therefore be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. ⁸Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.

History

Peter 1

- Fair agreement that 1 Peter was written by the Apostle Peter from Rome just before his death.
- Focuses on providing comfort to Christians who are struggling because of their faith.
- Peter is writing to “exiles of the Dispersion” in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. Almost certainly the recipients were gentile Christians.
- It is not thought that there was governmental persecution, but rather they were not accepted by the community where they were living. He refers to the readers as aliens and exiles.
- Almost every verse can be read as a parallel passage to some other New Testament writing.

Peter 1 Parallels with other NT writings

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1:1	Heb. 11:13; James 1:1	2:2-6	Eph. 2:18-22	3:1-6	1 Tim. 2:9-11
1:2	Heb. 12:24	2:5	Rom. 12:1	3:8-9	Rom. 12:16-17
1:3	Eph. 1:3	2:6-8	Rom. 9:32-33	3:9	Luke 6:28; Heb. 12:17
1:3-5	Titus 3:4-7	2:7	Matt. 21:42	3:14	Matt. 5:10
1:4	Matt. 6:20	2:9	Titus 2:14; Rev. 1:6; 5:10	3:18	Rom. 6:10; Eph. 2:18; Heb. 9:28
1:6-7	Rom. 5:3-5; James 1:2-3	2:10	Rom. 9:25	3:22	Eph. 1:20-22; Col. 2:15
1:10-12	Eph. 3:2-6	2:11	Heb. 11:13; James 4:1	4:8	James 5:20
1:12	Matt. 13:17	2:12	Matt. 5:16	4:10-11	Rom. 12:6-7
1:14	Rom. 12:2; Eph. 2:2-3	2:13-17	Rom. 13:1-7	4:13	Matt. 5:10
1:17	Luke 11:2	2:16	Gal. 5:13	4:14	Matt. 5:11; Heb. 13:13
1:20	Eph. 1:4	2:19-20	Luke 6:32-33	5:2	Acts 20:28
1:22	Rom. 12:9-10	2:24	Rom. 6:2, 11; Heb. 10:10	5:4	Heb. 13:20
1:23-2:2	James 1:10-11, 18-22	2:25	Heb. 13:20	5:5-9	James 4:6-10
2:1	Eph. 4:25, 31; Titus 3:1; James 1:21	3:1	Eph. 5:22		

- Main purposes of the letter are clearly stated: to encourage the readers, to testify to them concerning what constitutes “the true grace of God,” and to exhort them to stand fast in that grace (5:12).
- Genre of letter: parenesis — a type of teaching that seeks to motivate an audience to live in accord with what they already know to be true. There is an emphasis on suffering, and indicates why the readers need the motivation that this letter seeks to provide: they are undergoing hard times.
- Scholars believe that the suffering shown here is social ostracism and general harassment rather than official persecution of the church.

Peter 1

Major Themes

- Suffering Abuse for Christ, loss of status and social reputation.
 - they should know that trials can be a proving ground for faith, serving to refine it just as precious metals are purified in a hot fire.
 - the readers are urged to understand what is happening to them as sharing in the suffering of Christ.
- Christians as the New Israel
 - Christians are described with terminology and categories traditionally used for Israel. Gentiles who believe in Jesus are identified as “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people”.
 - The letter does not speak explicitly of a transfer to privileges but rather stresses the inclusion of Christians in the blessings of Israel.
 - Supersessionism — have the Christians replaced the Jews as the chosen peoples.
- Baptism and Spiritual Growth
 - Readers are addressed as persons who have begun a new life, and acquired a new identity. They are urged to discipline themselves for a way of life appropriate to that identity.
- Submission to Earthly Authorities
 - Notice the emphasis on submission to non-christian authorities.