

## 1 Peter 1

**Read 1 Peter 1:1-2:** Peter is writing to believing Jews have been scattered all over the world. Initially, the gospel was only preached in Jerusalem and Judea and Israel.

*"It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; <sup>8</sup> but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)*

The church came under attack and souls were martyred. People had to run for their lives; and re-settle in areas that were less threatening.

*Now <sup>[a]</sup> Saul, still breathing <sup>[b]</sup> threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, <sup>2</sup> and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. (Acts 9:1-2)*

What Satan intended for evil, God used for explosive-worldwide church growth. The attack against the church became an effective worldwide evangelism staging.

*As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about <sup>[o]</sup> this present result... (Genesis 50:20)*

*Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger And the staff in whose hands is My indignation, <sup>6</sup> I send it against a godless nation And commission it against the people of My fury To capture booty and to seize plunder, And to <sup>[g]</sup> trample them down like mud in the streets. <sup>7</sup> Yet it does not so intend, Nor does <sup>[h]</sup> it plan so in its heart, But rather it is <sup>[i]</sup> its purpose to destroy And to cut off <sup>[j]</sup> many nations. (Isaiah 10:5-7)*

**Read 1 Peter 1:3-5:** There are privileged families in the world. A select few are born into tremendous advantages and protections and opportunities. We cannot control our family's socio-economic situation. We cannot control which country we were born in. That is one unique aspect of the gospel. You do not have to be a Jew to be able to accept an invitation to be adopted into God's family, with all of its privileges. The Jews had all of these advantages at one time. Now the heathen around the world may shed their old identities; and become new men in Christ.

*But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the <sup>[h]</sup>rich root of the olive tree, <sup>18</sup> do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. <sup>19</sup> You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." (Romans 11:17-19)*

God has made us who follow Christ as our savior to be born again. It is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead that has made a way for us (dead sinners walking) to have a chance at heaven. He was able to receive life after death. He overcame death. We also need to supernaturally overcome our destiny with death and hell by supernatural means.

*Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born <sup>[b]</sup>again he cannot see the kingdom of God." <sup>4</sup> Nicodemus \*said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" <sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. <sup>6</sup> That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (John 3:3-6)*

To be born again is to be born from above (heaven). Re-creation is like a potter who took a lump of clay and formed a plate, that became marred...and then put it back on his wheel to turn it into a cup.

*Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something on the <sup>[a]</sup>wheel. <sup>4</sup> But the vessel that he was making of clay was spoiled in the hand of the potter; so he remade it into another vessel, as it pleased the potter to make. (Jeremiah 18:3-4)*

It is the work of Jesus that has made a way of salvation for us. Our part is partially to be willing to exchange the old self life for a better one.

Eternal life by definition, is: a spiritual life unending, not subject to being revoked from bad behavior, not something that can be forfeited or fumbled or abandoned. Whatever performance criterion we put on eternal life would ruin it. Mankind fumbles any test that he is given. The Law of Moses was a perfect example. Man had a path to God as long as he followed the rules. Nobody could follow the rules.



*But now apart <sup>[k]</sup>from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, <sup>22</sup> even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those <sup>[l]</sup>who believe; for there is no distinction; <sup>23</sup> for all <sup>[m]</sup>have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; (Romans 3:21-24)*

What about those who seemed to be Christians, who then abandon their faith? Did they lose their salvation? According to the verse below; they never had it.

*They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that <sup>[d]</sup>it would be shown that they all are not of us. (1 John 2:19)*

Jesus not only provides eternal life in himself...but he perfects those who follow him. We might be slothful about our faith; but God is faithful.

*<sup>[j]</sup>fixing our eyes on Jesus, the <sup>[b]</sup>author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2)*

*If we <sup>[d]</sup>deny Him, He also will deny us; <sup>13</sup> If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself. (2 Timothy 2:13)*

**Read 1 Peter 1:6-9:** We all have personal interests that can retard our spiritual growth. The things of heaven and the things of earth do not always mix. We unknowingly might be holding on to a mixed bag of what blesses us and what harms us. We tend to hang on to some things that seem harmless, but may not be healthy for us. It is hard to change a person's personal preferences and heighten their personal awareness.

It is like taking a soft and comforting blanket away from a small child. There might be a protest.

Trials by definition are good for us. In other words; the end result will yield more peace and joy and spiritual health. The hardships, trials, setbacks and disappointments serve a valuable purpose in our lives. When something becomes too heavy or too contaminating to carry, we have to drop it. In other words; trials force us to re-prioritize because there is too much to carry. When I am belittled for the gospel I have two choices. I can either stop being faithful to my calling; or I can have less regard for those friends who are being critical. We all have personal preferences and past times. When those come in conflict with the gospel have to ignore our conscience, or push aside our entertainment.



How are trials a proof of our faith? When we make sacrifices; it becomes more apparent what we are committed to. Additionally, we can be compared to tea bags. Put us in hot water and you will see what is inside. Does cursing flow; or do we turn to God?

Think about the great Biblical examples of godly men. Joseph was betrayed and sold into slavery by his brothers (for doing the right thing). Then he was put in jail for a sexual crime that he refused to commit. David put his life on the line to protect his people from the cruel invaders; to only be hunted as a fugitive.

Abraham traveled across the known-world to find the city of God, to end up in a famine...and be forced to travel to Egypt for food...and then have his wife taken from him. Job was a shining example of righteousness, who had everything stripped from him, including his health. These men did not raise their fist at God.

*Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. <sup>2</sup> The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it."*

*<sup>3</sup> The LORD said to Satan, "Have you <sup>[a]</sup>considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man <sup>[b]</sup>fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him to <sup>[c]</sup>ruin him without cause." <sup>4</sup> Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. <sup>5</sup> However, put forth Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse You to Your face."*

*<sup>6</sup> So the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your <sup>[d]</sup>power, only spare his life."*

*<sup>7</sup> Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. <sup>8</sup> And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes. (Job 2:1-8)*

*My servant Job will pray for you. For I will <sup>[a]</sup>accept him so that I may not do with you according to your folly, because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has." <sup>9</sup> So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD told them; and the LORD <sup>[b]</sup>accepted Job.*

*<sup>10</sup> The LORD restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends (Job 42:8-10)*

Whatever the case may be; it seems that the righteous often are known for their beatings and character.

Paul describes a rejoicing and inexpressible joy and full of glory. Sometimes during worship we can become completely overcome with emotions. This can be a confirmation that God is with us.



**Read 1 Peter 1:10-12:** We take it for granted that the Old Testament prophets; and even the angels themselves did not know how the scriptures would become fulfilled. The prophets spoke of God's grace for our impossible sinfulness.

*"Comfort, O comfort My people," says your God. <sup>2</sup> "Speak <sup>[a]</sup> kindly to Jerusalem; And call out to her, that her <sup>[b]</sup> warfare has ended, That her <sup>[c]</sup> iniquity has been removed, That she has received of the LORD'S hand Double for all her sins." <sup>3</sup> A voice <sup>[d]</sup> is calling, "Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup> "Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the rough ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley; <sup>5</sup> <sup>[e]</sup> Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, And all flesh will see it together; (Isaiah 40:1-5)*

Even more perplexing to the Old Testament saints were the writings about a suffering messiah.

*For He grew up before Him like a tender <sup>[a]</sup> shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should <sup>[b]</sup> be attracted to Him. <sup>3</sup> He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of <sup>[c]</sup> sorrows and acquainted with <sup>[d]</sup> grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. <sup>4</sup> Surely our <sup>[e]</sup> griefs He Himself bore, And our <sup>[f]</sup> sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, <sup>[g]</sup> Smitten of God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But He was <sup>[h]</sup> pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our <sup>[i]</sup> well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. <sup>6</sup> All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To <sup>[j]</sup> fall on Him. (Isaiah 53:1-6)*

**Read 1 Peter 1:13-25:** Are our minds focus for action; or are we just along for wherever the ride takes us? Why would God send us someone to minister to, if we would hesitate to minister to them?

Being holy is to be different than everyone else. We have a special purpose on earth. It is not to get caught up in the day-to-day routines that everyone else does. We are here as thankful witnesses as to what Jesus has done for us. Jesus only came to save men; and encourage us to follow him. This may be his most-important work. What else do we have that is more important than the blood of Christ?