

Outline of  
1 & 2  
Peter



# 1 Peter

## Authorship

Although some commentators question Petrine authorship, others have argued forcefully for it; the situation presupposed in the letter fits Peter's lifetime. The tradition of Peter's martyrdom in Rome is virtually unanimous. By the late first century 1 Clement accepted this tradition, and excavations indicate a second-century memorial in Rome to Peter's martyrdom. Other early Christian traditions also support this tradition as well as the view that Peter was the author of the letter, which is cited by authors from the beginning of the second century. Given this tradition of his martyrdom in Rome, the likelihood that letters he wrote would be preserved, and the fact that most letters were either authentic or written long after the purported author's death, the burden of proof is on those who deny that Peter wrote the letter. One commentator (Selwyn) thought he could detect parallels to Silas's (5:12) style in 1 and 2 Thessalonians. This argument alone is not conclusive, but arguments against Petrine authorship are even weaker (for those based on Greek style, see introduction to James).

## Date

Three basic periods of persecution have been suggested as the background: the time of Trajan (early second century), the time of Domitian (see introduction to Revelation) and the time of Nero, which would be the time of Peter's martyrdom. First Peter implies an atmosphere of severe repression, but not the official court prosecutions of Trajan's time. Church leadership in the epistle (5:1-2) also fits the first-century model better than a later date. A pseudonymous letter attributed to Peter as early as the Flavian period (after Nero but still first century) is unlikely.

## Unity

The first section of 1 Peter (1:1-4:6) does not explicitly indicate that fatal persecution has begun; the second part (4:7-5:14) is more explicit. Some writers have therefore divided the letter into two parts, usually arguing that the former was a baptismal homily (due to abundant parallels with other parts of the New Testament). But the difference of situation presupposed between the two sections is not significant enough to warrant such a division, and there appear no other compelling reasons to divide them.

## Provenance and Audience

It is widely agreed that "Babylon" (5:13) is a cryptic name for Rome (linked early in Jewish views on the four kingdoms), as in some Jewish works and undoubtedly in the book of Revelation. The situation of persecution described here fits Rome, and it would be appropriate for Peter to send advance warning of that situation to believers in Asia Minor, the stronghold of emperor worship. An audience in Asia Minor would probably include Jewish Christians, but Peter's audience probably includes Gentile Christians (cf. 1:18; 4:3-4).

## Situation

A fire devastated Rome in A.D. 64 but suspiciously left unscathed the estates of Nero and his older boyfriend Tigellinus. Like any good politician, Nero needed a scapegoat for his ills, and what appeared to be a new religion, understood as a fanatical form of Judaism begun by an executed teacher three and a half decades before, filled the need perfectly.

Romans viewed Christians, like Jews, as antisocial. Certain charges became so common that they were stereotypical by the second century: Romans viewed Christians as “atheists” (like some philosophers, for rejecting the gods), “cannibals” (for claiming to eat Jesus’ “body” and drink his “blood”) and incestuous (for statements like “I love you, brother,” or “I love you, sister”). Judaism was a poor target for outright persecution, because its adherents were numerous and it was popular in some circles; further, Nero’s mistress, Poppaea Sabina, was a patron of Jewish causes. By contrast, Christianity was viewed as a form of Judaism whose support was tenuous even in Jewish circles, and therefore it offered an appropriate political scapegoat.

According to the early-second-century historian Tacitus (Annals 15.44), who disliked Christians himself, Nero burned Christians alive as torches to light his gardens at night. He killed other Christians in equally severe ways (e.g., feeding them to wild animals for public entertainment). In all, he may have murdered thousands of Rome’s Christians, although most Christians there escaped his grasp. Thus, even though the Greek part of the empire loved Nero, Christians saw him as a prototype of the antichrist. Nero died in disgrace several years later, pursued by fellow Romans who hated him.

**Source:** Keener, Craig S. (2014). *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament, Second Edition*. InterVarsity Press.

## **A. SALVATION**

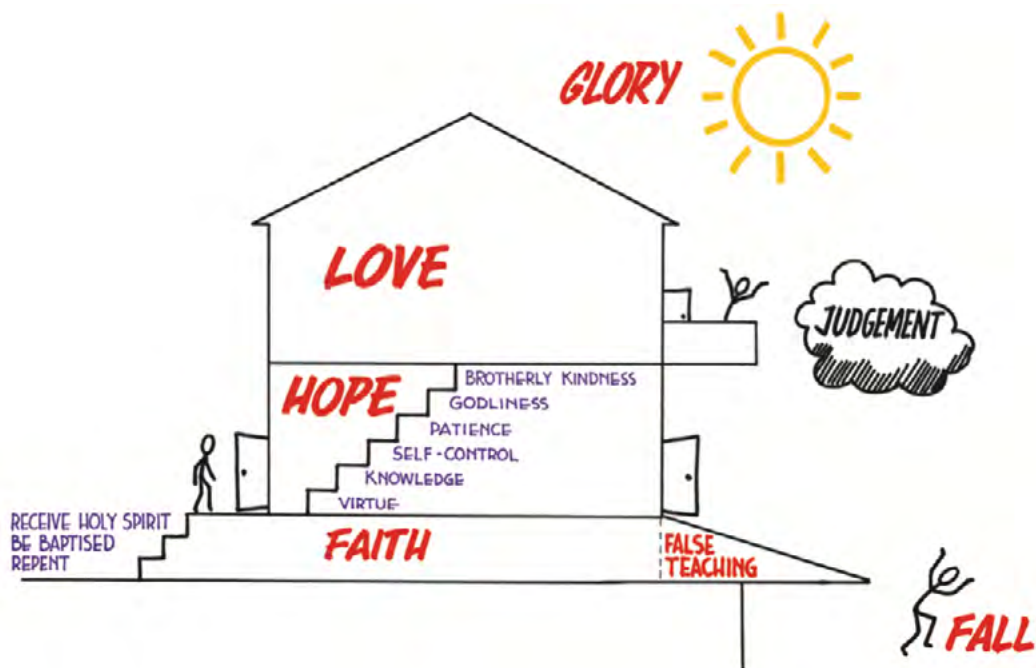
1. **INDIVIDUAL** ~ *the word of God*  
A living hope · A tested faith · A joyful love
2. **CORPORATE** ~ *the people of God*  
A spiritual house · A royal priesthood · A holy nation

## **B. SUFFERING**

1. **NOT DESERVED** Right, not wrong
2. **NOT REVENGED** Good, not evil
3. **NOT SUCCESSFUL** Spirit, not body

## **C. SUBMISSION**

1. **SUBJECTS** To rulers (national and local)
2. **SLAVES** To masters (even harsh)
3. **WIVES** To husbands (especially unbelievers)
4. **YOUNGER** To elders (who serve, not lord)



Chapter

1

**1Pe 1:1-9** He blesses God for his manifold spiritual graces;  
**1Pe 1:10-12** shewing that the salvation in Christ is no news, but a thing prophesied of old;  
**1Pe 1:13-25** and exhorts them accordingly to a godly conversation, forasmuch as they are now born anew by the word of God.

Chapter

2

**1Pe 2:1-3** He exhorts them from the breach of charity;  
**1Pe 2:4-10** shewing that Christ is the foundation whereupon they are built.  
**1Pe 2:11-12** He beseeches them also to abstain from fleshly lusts;  
**1Pe 2:13-17** to be obedient to magistrates;  
**1Pe 2:18-19** and teaches servants how to obey their masters;  
**1Pe 2:20-25** patiently suffering for well doing, after the example of Christ.

Chapter

3

**1Pe 3:1-7** He teaches the duty of wives and husbands to each other;  
**1Pe 3:8-13** exhorting all men to unity and love;  
**1Pe 3:14-18** and to suffer persecution.  
**1Pe 3:19-22** He declares also the benefits of Christ toward the old world.



Chapter

4

**1Pe 4:1-11** He exhorts them to cease from sin by the example of Christ, and the consideration of the general end that now approaches;  
**1Pe 4:12-19** and comforts them against persecution.

Chapter

5

**1Pe 5:1-4** He exhorts the elders to feed their flocks;  
**1Pe 5:5-7** the younger to obey;  
**1Pe 5:8** and all to be sober, watchful, and constant in the faith;  
**1Pe 5:9-14** and to resist the cruel adversary the devil.

# 2 Peter

## Authorship

Regarding authorship, 2 Peter is one of the most disputed letters in the New Testament. A number of scholars argue that the style differs so much from 1 Peter that the same person could not have written both unless he were purposely trying to alter his style. But some scholars respond that Peter could have given literary freedoms to his amanuenses, using a different scribe (1 Pet 5:13) for each, with the second being more accustomed to bombastic Asiatic rhetorical style. (Although many second-rate rhetoricians preferred flowery Asianism, Atticist style became predominant and ultimately flourished by the early second century. This style might provide a clue to the destination or, more likely, the date [before the second century], although it might reveal only the rhetorical training of the author or scribe. Quintilian noted that a third style, the Rhodian, less redundant than the Asiatic school but less concise than the Atticist, was sometimes also used.)

The most important argument against Petrine authorship is the letter's clear dependence on Jude, yet defenders of Petrine authorship counter that Peter could have incorporated much of Jude's letter, instructed a scribe to do so or (much less likely) even used Jude as his scribe. (That Jude used 2 Peter is improbable, based on simplifications of imagery, expansions of allusions, etc.) Others argue that a later writer, maybe a close associate of Peter, wove together Petrine material with material from Jude.

The attestation for 2 Peter is weaker than that for most other New Testament books but stronger than that of early Christian books that did not become part of the New Testament, especially those claiming to be Petrine. The early church did debate its genuineness, although its existence is attested early. But pseudepigraphic documents were generally written in the name of a hero of the distant past; although a second-century date for the letter is possible, no internal evidence necessarily precludes a first-century date. Second-century Gnosticism is probably not in view, and the end's delay was an issue perhaps as early as the first New Testament document (1 Thessalonians).

## Opponents

One suggestion of the heresy combated in this letter is second-century Gnosticism or a first-century proto-Gnosticism; "knowledge" (a favorite emphasis of the Gnostics, though hardly limited to them) is mentioned seven times in the letter. Gnostics denied the future coming of Christ, and many of them believed that bodily sins did not matter. Gnosticism did not, however, create these ideas from nothing; they developed earlier Greek (plus Jewish and Christian) ideas that were already evident in the first century.

Given the reports of charlatans so prominent in antiquity and parallels to all the ideas in existing Greek and Jewish conceptions in the first century, it is likely that the opponents are simply Diaspora Jews almost completely overtaken by Greek thought (perhaps even more than Philo was). Parallels in Diaspora Jewish literature as well as Judean works in the so-called Pseudepigrapha suggest an audience with a strong background in Jewish literature.

**Source:** Keener, Craig S. (2014). *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, Second Edition. InterVarsity Press.

Chapter

1

**2Pe 1:1-4** Confirming them in hope of the increase of God's graces,  
**2Pe 1:5-11** he exhorts them, by faith, and good works, to make their calling sure;  
**2Pe 1:12-15** whereof he is careful to remind them, knowing that his death is at hand;  
**2Pe 1:16-21** and warns them to be constant in the faith of Christ, who is the true Son of God, by the eyewitness of the apostles beholding his majesty, and by the testimony of the Father, and the prophets.

Chapter

2

**2Pe 2:1-6** He foretells them of false teachers, shewing the impiety and punishment both of them and their followers;  
**2Pe 2:7-9** from which the godly shall be delivered, as Lot was out of Sodom;  
**2Pe 2:10-22** and more fully describes the manners of those profane and blasphemous seducers, whereby they may be the better known, and avoided.

Chapter

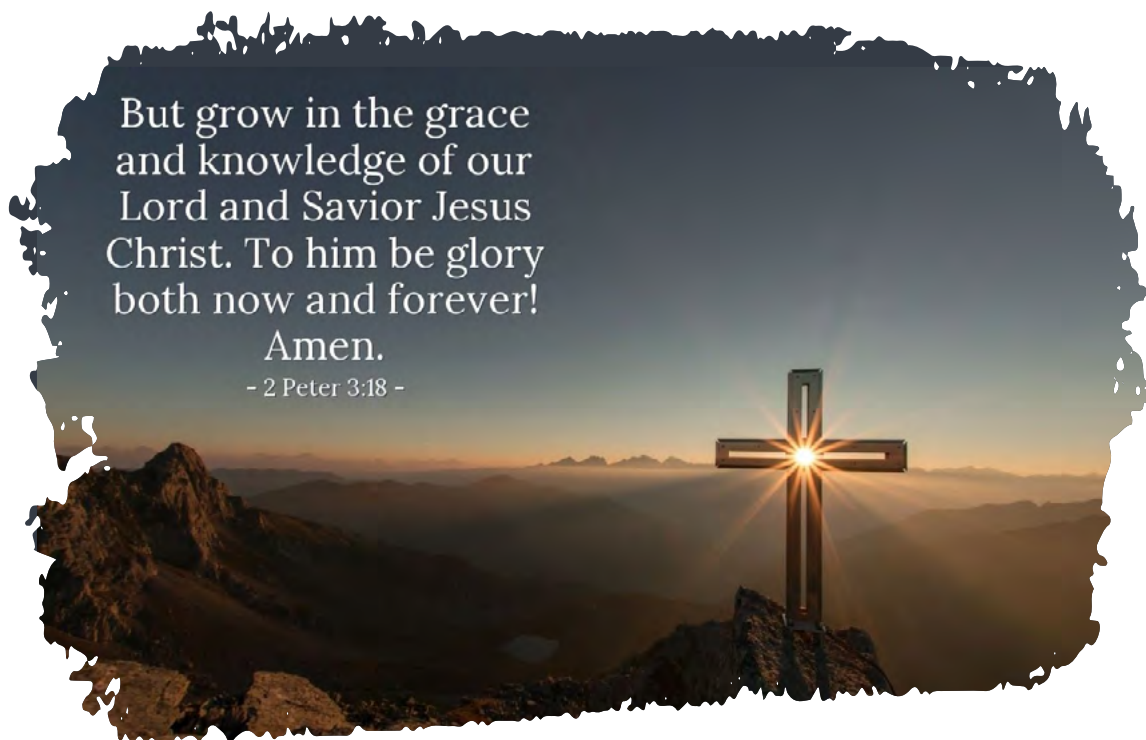
3

**2Pe 3:1-7** He assures them of the certainty of Christ's coming to judgment, against those scorers who dispute against it;  
**2Pe 3:8-9** warning the godly, for the long patience of God, to hasten their repentance.  
**2Pe 3:10** He describes also the manner how the world shall be destroyed;  
**2Pe 3:11-15** exhorting them, from the expectation thereof, to all holiness of life;  
**2Pe 3:16-18** and again to think the patience of God to tend to their salvation, as Paul wrote to them in his epistles.

But grow in the grace  
 and knowledge of our  
 Lord and Savior Jesus  
 Christ. To him be glory  
 both now and forever!

Amen.

- 2 Peter 3:18 -



# Quiz on 1 and 2 Peter

1. According to First Peter Chapter 1, what is more precious (or of better worth) than gold?

2. With what were we redeemed, according to First Peter Chapter 1?

3. How should we respond if anyone asks us for a reason for the hope that is in us?

4. With what should wives adorn themselves, according to First Peter Chapter 3?

5. 'A roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.' Who is this roaring lion?

6. What did Peter say covers a multitude of sin?

7. According to Second Peter Chapter 1 Verses 19-21, how do prophecies come about?

8. With the Lord, one day is equivalent to how many years?

9. Second Peter Chapter 3 warns that the day of the Lord will come like what?

10. According to the last Chapter of Second Peter, how should we grow?



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