

# The Epistles

Lesson #119  
1 Peter 1:1-25

## Outline

### **I. Salutation (1:1-2)**

### **II. Suffering Christians Should Remember Their Great Salvation (1:3-2:10)**

- A. The certainty of their salvation (1:3-12).
  - 1. It is preserved by the power of God (1:3-5).
  - 2. It is proven by the trials from God (1:6-9).
  - 3. It was predicted by the prophets of God (1:10-12).
- B. The consequences of their salvation (1:13-2:10).
  - 1. The preeminence of holiness (1:13-23).
  - 2. The power of the word (1:24-25).

## Notes

### **Verses 1-2**

- The designation “elect” reminds the scattered Christians in danger of persecution that God’s purposes for them are certain and gracious. “Strangers” points to the fact that Christians are pilgrims who do not reside permanently on earth. They belong to the heavenly realm. The letter is addressed to Roman provinces north of the Taurus Mountains in what is today Turkey.
- The sanctification of the Spirit is His operation of purifying Christians through the word for their service. The goal of election and redemption is obedience to Jesus Christ, who shed His blood on Calvary (cf. Romans 1:5).

### **Verses 3-5**

- The nature of this salvation according to the mercy of God evokes praise to God the Father, who is the source of salvation. The Christian has a “lively hope” because Jesus has been raised by the Father. The inheritance will never be soiled; it awaits the faithful Christian.
- Vs. 5 is a great assurance of the power of God who can bless the faithful Christian with the promised inheritance at the end of time. The verse is not intended to be a promise of preservation from apostasy.

### **Verses 6-9**

- The future inheritance was to them a source of fantastic joy, even in the midst of their many sufferings and trials. When gold is refined, its impurities are removed by a fiery process. Though extremely durable, it belongs to this world. Faith, which is more valuable than gold because it lasts longer and reaches beyond this temporal order, is purified in the tests of life. Gold, not faith, is presently highly valued by people. But God will set his stamp of approval on faith that has been tested and will show this when Christ is revealed.
- Without seeing Jesus, Peter’s readers have come to love Jesus because they believe he loved them enough to die for them. Christians do not rejoice with inexpressible joy

because of sufferings but because of the glorious expectation of their future with Christ.

- Our faith is designed and adapted to secure salvation. The fact of their faithfulness, peace, and joy in the face of trials gave proof that they would be saved.

### **Verses 10-12**

- In predicting the future, they did not always understand their prophecies. The prophets longed to see the Messianic time and so searched into what they could know of it (cf. Luke 10:24). The motivating force in prophecy is not the human will but the Holy Spirit of God.
- The unity of the Old Testament and New Testament writings centers in Christ and His salvation. This message of salvation has come to us through people under the power of the Holy Spirit, who has come from heaven. The scriptures reveal that the angels have intense interest in human salvation. They observed Jesus in his early life (1 Timothy 3:16), and they rejoice at the conversion of a sinner (Luke 15:10). This impresses upon Christians a sense of the value of the gospel which they have received.

### **Verses 13-23**

- Becoming a Christian must result in a life of holiness, reverence, and love. Moreover, since the prophets and the angels take great interest in this salvation, how much more should Christians pay careful attention to its results! "Gird up the loins of your mind" presents the figure of a man gathering the folds of his long garment and tucking it into his belt so that he can move freely and quickly.
- The Christians' lifestyle is not to conform to the base desires that formerly dominated them and kept them from God. Christians must not allow the world to squeeze them into its sinful mold (cf. Romans 12:2). Peter exhorts Christians to control their desires rather than to be controlled by them.
- Vs. 17 carries on the call to a lifestyle that is different from the non-Christian. Christians invoke God as "Father" and that as His children they should call on Him constantly in prayer. But God is judge as well as Father, and those who call on His name must remember that He is impartial in judgment.
- The redemption of Christians is from the "vain" lifestyle of their ancestors. This implies Peter's readers had come from a pagan lifestyle rather than a Jewish one, for the New Testament stresses the emptiness of paganism.
- The value of the purchase price of redemption was "precious." When Israel was in bondage in Egypt, the Passover lamb was killed and its blood provided release from slavery and judgment. Because Jesus is without sin, He is unique and His life is of infinite value as the sacrificial lamb.
- Redemption was in God's plan before creation (Ephesians 1:3-4). Now this redemption has been revealed in Jesus of Nazareth "in these last times." With the coming of Jesus, the last age has come (Acts 2:17; Hebrews 1:2; 9:26). Salvation in Christ, purposed from eternity, is now made plain.
- Obeying the truth, which culminates in the act of baptism, purifies the soul by cleansing the conscience (Hebrews 9:14; 10:22; 1 Peter 3:21). Love is to be "with a pure heart," so Peter exhorts Christians -- because they are purified -- to love fellow Christians purely and fervently.

- Our physical birth does not result in our being “born again.” The result of a physical birth is only corruption and decay. We are “begotten” only to die; it produces no permanent, enduring life. It is in this sense that this is spoken of as “corruptible seed.” On the other hand, truth communicates a living principle to the soul which can never decay. It endures because the God who speaks it is the eternal, faithful, powerful One who keeps His promises.

**Verses 24-25**

- The quotation from Isaiah 40:6-8 supports the assertion of the character of God, with its stress on the abiding faithfulness of the Lord’s statements. The point of Isaiah’s prophecy is the perishable nature of all flesh and the imperishable nature of God’s word. To the exiles in Babylon, the message was that while human help is weak, God’s promise of restoration will not fail.
- Peter now applies Isaiah’s words. Since Jesus is equivalent to the Lord in the Old Testament, His words endure. The reliable message about Jesus as proclaimed to Peter’s readers gives life and transforms life so that we can be saved.