

27 GEMS – A Survey of 1 Peter

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The MESSAGE of 1 Peter:

1 Peter is the 13th shortest book in the New Testament - **1,684** words in the Greek language.

1 Peter was likely written in the early stages of the great Christian persecution of **64AD** by Nero.

1 Peter mentions the topic of **suffering and persecution** over 15 times.

1 Peter has been labeled the "**Job**" of the New Testament, due to its contents and theme.

1 Peter speaks of the **sufferings of Christ** in every chapter.

1 Peter has more **Old Testament quotations**, proportionately, than any other NT book.

"The image of Peter in the Gospels and in his own writings are amazingly and gloriously different. In the Gospels, Peter saw his Lord transfigured; but in his letters, we see Peter transfigured by the boundless grace of God." - Robert Lee

The MEGA-THEME of 1 Peter:

"Standing with Grace & Power in Persecution!"

The MEGA-STRUCTURE of 1 Peter:

"Peter's Principles for Persecution"

#1 - The Principle of **SECURITY!** (1:1-12)

#2 - The Principle of **SEPARATION!** (1:13-21)

#3 - The Principle of the **SCRIPTURES!** (1:22-2:3)

#4 - The Principle of **STIMULATION!** (2:4-12)

#5 - The Principle of **SUBMISSION!** (2:13-3:12)

#6 - The Principle of **SUFFERING!** (3:13-4:19)

#7 - The Principle of **SERVING!** (5:1-4)

#8 - The Principle of **STANDING!** (5:5-13)

#1 - The Principle of SECURITY! (1:1-12)

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied. 3 Blessed [be] the God and Father of

our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

- Here we are introduced to the author of this letter: Peter, the apostle. He was not merely an apostle, but in a sense Peter was the leader of the larger apostolic group. Peter was an important and influential man in the early church, the Christians reading this letter would do so with a great sense of importance.
- Peter's name is mentioned in the Gospels more than anyone except the name of Jesus; no one speaks in the Gospels as often as Peter did; and Jesus spoke more to Peter than to any other individual - interesting indeed!
- Peter addressed the letter to all Christians everywhere, scattered abroad through the persecution of Rome. Most likely, this was written around 64AD when Nero unleashed a horrible wave of persecution against all believers, which would last for 200 years!
- Peter here reminds them of numerous eternal truths, meant to give them a sense of SECURITY in the midst of their persecution:
 - "***elect***" - Peter reminds them that they have been selected and chosen by the Lord for salvation, from eternity past! The Lord elected them and selected them individually and personally to enter His Kingdom!
 - "***a living hope***" - Jesus was now their Living Hope, and their secure guarantee of Heaven! Their hope was real, and tangible, all in the Person of Jesus Christ, the risen God-Man!
 - "***an inheritance***" - Though they were persecuted and distressed, they would soon claim their Heavenly inheritance in the Kingdom, which no one and no thing could take away from them!
 - "***kept by the power of God***" - Though they were weak in their trials, Peter reassured them that God saved them, and was keeping them saved by the power of His infinite Grace and Faithfulness! They were secure in His loving power and protection!

#2 - The Principle of SEPARATION! (1:13-21)

"Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming

yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." 17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay [here] in fear.."

- Peter mentions a second Principle that they need to keep in mind during their Persecution: *the need for Holiness and SEPARATION!*
- **"holy"** is the Greek word **"hagios"** meaning *"to be set apart, to be different, to be separate, to be clean and pure"*
- During their trials, Peter wanted them to remember to not give in to the temptation to start sinning and living a loose moral life. Peter challenged them to focus their thinking and be serious about godliness. As the Lord said in Leviticus 11:44, His followers were to be holy just like He was. Peter, continuing with the image of a pilgrim and stranger (v.1), exhorts them to pass their short journey thru this life in a mindset of reverence and respect for the Lord, in all holiness of mind and character.

Proverbs 14:27 - "The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, To turn one away from the snares of death."

#3 - The Principle of the **SCRIPTURES! (1:22-2:3)**

"..having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, 24 because "All flesh [is] as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, 25 But the word of the LORD endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.. 2:2 ".. as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.."

- Another crucial principle for Christians to navigate times of trial is to hold to the SCRIPTURES no matter what. Peter tells us here that while the world is full of perishable and temporary things, the Word of God is eternal and living. Therefore it is sufficient to help us in all of our needs. Peter encourages his readers to have an insatiable and constant hunger for the Word, just as infants do for milk!
- If it is by the Word of God that *the universe came to exist* (Gen 1:1), and that *the universe is sustained* by moment by moment (Heb 1:3; Col 1:16), then why would you not feed yourself on it regularly for power, nourishment, and spiritual life?!? (Read Psalm 1; 138:2; John 17:7)

#4 - The Principle of **STIMULATION! (2:4-12)**

"Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being

built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ... 9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ... 11 Beloved, I beg [you] as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.."

- Next Peter seeks to STIMULATE his readers by using 4 different word pictures to stir them up to action and growth:

"living stones" - They are part of a spiritual Temple, being formed, shaped, assembled by the Spirit. They should be patient, and allow the Lord to do His work in them, and with them.

"holy priesthood" - They are spiritual priests, representing the Lord, offer spiritual sacrifices of praise and worship. They should seek to be the best representatives possible to this fallen world..and keep worshipping.

"chosen generation" - They are especially picked, chosen, selected by God for salvation. They should feel loved and extremely valued by the Lord who has invited and called them.

"sojourners and pilgrims" - They are not permanent residents of this world, only passing thru to the Kingdom! They should stay Heavenly minded and focused in their living.

#5 - The Principle of SUBMISSION! (2:13-3:12)

"Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, 14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and [for the] praise of those who do good. ... 18 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. 19 For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. ... 21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.. 3:1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, ... 7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as [being] heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered. 8 Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; 9 not

returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing."

- In addition, Peter tells them that SUBMISSION is essential to maintain during a time of trial and difficulty. Rather than seeking to rebel, and throw off authority, believers are to continue to trust in the Lord's control of all things, and keep obeying the leaders in their lives.
- Christians are to submit to the laws of the land (*Romans 13*) unless they go against the clear teaching of Scripture; Slaves were to obey and serve their human masters well; Wives were to honor and respect their husbands; Husbands were to submit to Christ and lovingly care for their wives; Finally, all believers are to submit to the Lord and walk in love towards each other.
- Since we see submission even within the Godhead, from the Son towards the Father (*Phil 2:5-11*), and from the Spirit towards the Son (*John 16:14*) ...who then are WE not to submit to the authorities placed in our lives. Submission makes us very Christ-like, but prideful rebellion in us imitates Satan in his fall from glory (*Isa 14; Eze 28*)

#6 - The Principle of SUFFERING! (3:13-4:19)

"And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, [you are] blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled." 15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; ... 18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit...4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ... 7 But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. ... 10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ... 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. ... 19 Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator."

- Peter here reminds his readers that SUFFERING is bound to happen during a time of trial and persecution. He gives numerous instructions as to how to navigate a time of suffering, in a way that glorifies Christ:

Suffer for Righteousness - Peter says that even for doing

good/righteousness, you will at times suffer, but God is pleased with you as you navigate the trial in a Christlike fashion.

Honor Christ as your Master - *Make sure to recommit yourself to Christ as your Lord and Master, the One who is above the trial and in total control of your life.*

Be Ready to Answer - *Always be prepared to give a good answer to unbelievers who will ask you about your faith in times of trials, as this could be a strategic opportunity for them to come to Christ.*

Remember Christ's Suffering - *Encourage yourself by remembering that Jesus was also rejected and persecuted, and we are His servants, and will be treated in a similar fashion at times.*

Be Serious in Prayer - *Be sure to keep praying for the Lord to work and watching for the Lord's soon return, for His followers.*

Keep Using Your Gifts - *Don't stop using your talents/gifts, but look for ways to keep investing them in trials, to reach others for Christ.*

Ensure You're not Committing Evil - *Examine your life and be sure you're not suffering due to something you brought upon yourself, or a wrong that you committed against someone.*

Commit Yourself to the Lord - *Ultimately, commit yourself into the hands of the Creator that loves you, and died for you.*

#7 - The Principle of **SERVING!** (5:1-4)

"The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: 2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; 3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; 4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away."

- Here, Peter speaks directly to the Elders of the churches receiving this letter. He tells them how to serve the Lord in their ministry office of pastors, elders, or bishops/overseers:

"Shepherd the flock" - *They were to feed and nourish their people with the Word of God, and protect them from spiritual "wolves".*

"serv*ing as overseers" - *They were to manage and oversee the

ministry, but in an attitude of service as Christ showed us.

"willingly" - *They were to do this not because they were forced to, but because they wanted to serve their Master willingly.*

"eagerly" - *They were to pastor not for a paycheck or benefits, but rather eager to give back to their Savior and His flock.*

"the crown of glory" - *If they served well faithfully, they would be greatly rewarded and compensated by Christ at His return.*

#8 - The Principle of **STANDING! (5:5-13)**

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. 10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you."

Lastly, Peter exhorts his readers to STAND against the devil, in their time of trial and persecution. He describes the enemy as a stalking lion, on the hunt for a victim to devour and destroy. In context, Peter just challenged them to be humble, and not walk in pride. So we understand that one of Satan's major strategies is to seduce us into being prideful, rebellious, and resistant to the authorities the Lord has placed in our lives. Conversely, humility is one of the greatest weapon in the spiritual arsenal of the Christian. Clothing ourselves with the humility of Christ (Phil 2:5-11) and resisting the traps of pride and self, is essential in a time of persecution and difficulty.