

Joyful Life Bible Studies

I PETER

Introduction and Background

Lesson 1

With great *joy* we welcome you to the Joyful Life Bible Study. Our purpose for this study is to enrich you in your knowledge of the Word of God, exhort you to apply to your life what you learn, and encourage you in your walk with the Lord. One added joy will be the opportunity for fellowship with other Christian women.

With the upheaval in our nation of the threat of terrorists, the devastation of hurricanes and the liberal political agenda, you will appreciate the emphasis on *hope* in our study of I Peter. Each chapter of this epistle provides practical, applicable instruction on how we are to live in these turbulent times.

*Praise be to God and the
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!
In His great mercy He has given
us new birth into a living hope through
the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

I Peter 1:3 NIV

BACKGROUND TO I PETER

AUTHOR OF THE LETTER:

- Peter, the Apostle

WRITTEN TO:

- Believers scattered throughout Northern Asia Minor
- All believers everywhere

DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING:

- Approximately A.D. 64
- From Babylon

THEME:

- Hope

PURPOSE FOR WRITING:

- To encourage Christians to stand fast in the grace of God
- To comfort believers in their suffering
- To bring believers into spiritual maturity and into a life of strength, blessing and hope



FIRST DAY: The Introduction

1. Review the Introduction on page one of this lesson. In what way does it affect your desire to study I Peter?

2. Note the phrase, sentence or thought that especially caught your attention.
 - a. Share why.

3. With the Introduction in mind take a moment to write a prayer to the Lord expressing your greatest desire in relationship to your study of I Peter.

*Open my eyes to see wonderful things in Your Word.
I am but a pilgrim here on earth: how I need a map –
and Your commands are my chart and guide.*
Psalm 119:18,19 TLB

SECOND DAY: The Author

1. Notice from the Background on page two that Peter is the author of I Peter. There is more written about Peter in the New Testament than any of the other apostles. Choose a few of the following references about Peter and write a short phrase describing the event:
 - a. Matthew 4:18-20
 - b. Matthew 14:25-33
 - c. Matthew 17:1-13
 - d. Matthew 26:69-75
 - e. Acts 3:1-10
 - f. Acts 10:9-16; 28
 - g. Acts 12:1-11

Challenge: From John 1:40, 42 list Peter's other names.

a. Record the meaning of the name: *Peter*.

2. What stands out the most to you about Peter's life?

*And Simon Peter answered and said,
"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."
Matthew 16:16*

THIRD DAY: The Recipients and Date and Place of Writing

1. Read and compare I Peter 1:1 with the Background information on page two concerning the recipients of this letter. Where were these believers living?

a. Highlight or circle the names of these provinces on the map on page two.

Advanced Students: What was happening around A. D. 64 that may have caused the Christians to scatter?


2. Bible commentators agree that it is difficult to determine the exact background of the exiles that Peter addressed in his letter. They also agree that these exiles included both Jews and Gentile believers. How does I Peter 2:10; 4:3 support this view?

3. According to I Peter 5:13, where was Peter when he wrote this letter?

Note: If this reference to Babylon was literal, he may have been writing from Mesopotamia (Babylon on the Euphrates) or Old Cairo (Babylon on the Nile). If the location was symbolic, as many Bible scholars believe, he was referring to Rome.

FOURTH DAY: The Theme of I Peter

1. You will recall from the Background information on page two that the theme of I Peter is *hope*. Define the word *hope*.
2. Peter has sometimes been called the *apostle of hope*. Although Peter wrote this letter to believers many centuries ago, it is timeless in its application. In what way does *hope* affect your perspective in troublesome times?
3. In what way does the theme of *hope* whet your appetite to study I Peter?

*My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
When all around my soul gives way He still is all my hope and stay.*
- selected 

FIFTH DAY: The Purpose for Writing

1. Concentrate on Peter's purposes for writing this letter as you write them from the Background information on page two.
2. Which of these purposes especially speaks to you?
 - a. Why?
3. In what way do these purposes address the needs of Christians today?

*I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying
that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.*
I Peter 5:12b NIV

