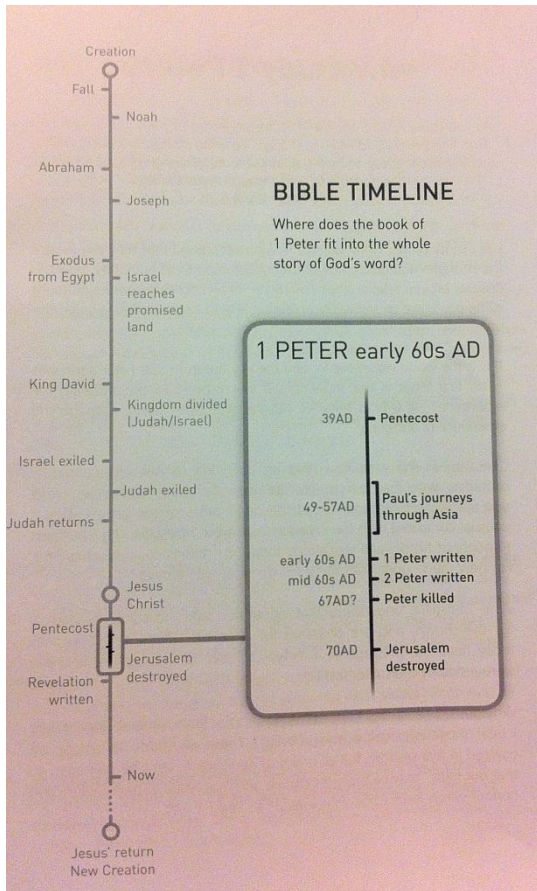


1 Peter 1:1-21 Living With Hope



Introduction

- *Share with the group something that you have looked forward to with great excitement.*

The letter was written by the apostle Peter to a group of churches in modern-day Turkey. These Christians were facing trials and misunderstandings because of their faith (v6). Peter urges them to accept this suffering as part of being a Christian and look forward with hope to the glory of heaven. Suffering and hope are the two great themes of the letter.

1 Peter 1:1-6

¹ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To God's elect, exiles scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, ² who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood:

Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

³ Praise be to the God and 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, ⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.

- *How does Peter describe his readers in v1-2?*
- *What encouraging facts does Peter remind his readers of in v3-6?*
- *When will Christians enjoy all of this?*
- *What truths mean we can know that this really is in our future?*

1 Peter 1:6-9

⁶ In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷ These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹ for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

- *Why do you think Peter might need to remind his readers of their heavenly inheritance?*
- *How does God use suffering in the lives of Christians?*
- *Peter's readers cannot see Jesus. Instead they see their suffering. So how does Peter encourage them?*
- *How should we encourage Christians who are suffering trials and griefs?*
- *What promises can we offer such people?*
- *What promises should we not offer?*
- *How should the teaching of these verses affect our evangelism?*

Getting personal

- *How do you react to suffering and difficulties in your life?*
- *Do you know, and cultivate, the deep-down joy of knowing Christ and your future so that no difficulty can extinguish that joy?*
- *Would it help to read 1Peter 1:3-9 every morning, until you find yourself recalling its great truths throughout your day?*

1 Peter 1:10-12

¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, ¹¹ trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

- *What did the old testament prophets' message centre on (v11)?*
- *We are living on earth after the Lord Jesus died, rose, and went to heaven in glory. Why are we in a privileged position?*
- *How is the shape of the Christian life similar to the shape of what Christ experienced (end of v11)?*

Explore more

- *What do v10-12 teach us about what the Holy Spirit was doing in Old Testament times?*

John 14:25-27

²⁵ "All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Acts 1:1-3

¹ In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach ² until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through

the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. ³ After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

- *What do these verses tell us about what the Holy Spirit did through the apostles in the New Testament?*

1 Peter 1:13-21

¹³ Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. ¹⁴ As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. ¹⁵ But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶ for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

¹⁷ Since you call on a Father who judges each person's work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. ¹⁸ For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. ²⁰ He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. ²¹ Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

In v7 Peter talks about "when Christ Jesus is revealed". We can rejoice in suffering because of our certain hope in Christ's return.

In v13 Peter uses the same phrase "when Christ Jesus is revealed", and v13 starts "therefore". Peter is telling us how we should live in the light of Christ's future return.

- *How does Peter describe our past lives, from which we've been rescued (v18)?*
- *How does the new way of life that Christians should lead?*

Exodus 12:21-36

²¹ Then Moses summoned all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go at once and select the animals for your families and slaughter the Passover lamb. ²² Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and

put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. None of you shall go out of the door of your house until morning.²³ When the Lord goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down.

²⁴ “Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants.²⁵ When you enter the land that the Lord will give you as he promised, observe this ceremony.²⁶ And when your children ask you, ‘What does this ceremony mean to you?’²⁷ then tell them, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.’” Then the people bowed down and worshiped.²⁸ The Israelites did just what the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron.

²⁹ At midnight the Lord struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sat on the throne, to the firstborn of the prisoner, who was in the dungeon, and the firstborn of all the livestock as well.³⁰ Pharaoh and all his officials and all the Egyptians got up during the night, and there was loud wailing in Egypt, for there was not a house without someone dead.

³¹ During the night Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, “Up! Leave my people, you and the Israelites! Go, worship the Lord as you have requested.³² Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. And also bless me.”

³³ The Egyptians urged the people to hurry and leave the country. “For otherwise,” they said, “we will all die!”³⁴ So the people took their dough before the yeast was added, and carried it on their shoulders in kneading troughs wrapped in clothing.³⁵ The Israelites did as Moses instructed and asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and for clothing.³⁶ The Lord had made the Egyptians favourably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for; so they plundered the Egyptians.

In 1 Peter 1:9, Peter uses the language of the Passover. Passover was when God delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. The Israelites had to kill a lamb and paint its blood round their doors (Exodus 12:21-23). That night the angel of death “passed over” their

houses killing all the firstborn sons and animals in Egypt, but not those in houses marked with blood (Exodus 12:29-30). In the morning the Egyptians let God’s people go free (Exodus 12:31-36).

- *1 Peter 1:19 describes Jesus as “a lamb without blemish”. How is what Jesus has done for us like what the lambs did for the Israelites?*

Knowing the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ’s return makes a difference to how someone lives now. There’s a link between what we believe and how we live.

- How would unbelief in future glory affect a person’s attitude to suffering now?
- How would unbelief in God’s judgement affect a person’s attitude to suffering now?

Getting personal

- To what extent are you living in the light of Christ’s return? Have you realised that you need to have the right understanding to live the right way?
- What can you do to make sure that you have this right understanding of the Christian life?

Prayer

What can you find in these verses to thank God for? Spend time in prayers of thanksgiving for these things.

Use the words of v3-5 to pray for Christians going through difficult times. Ask God to give them a strong sense of their heavenly inheritance.

The Grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

(2 Corinthians 13:14)