



Additional 1 Peter Introductory Information

Who: First of all, this letter is named after Peter the Apostle of Jesus Christ. This is Peter, the disciple who used to be a fisherman, denied Jesus three times, and all that stuff. However, just because the letter is named after Peter does not mean that Peter wrote the letter. In fact, it is widely believed that he did not physically write this letter. In fact, Peter seems to suggest such himself at the close of the letter when he says that the letter was “through Silvanus, our faithful brother.” Silvanus is more famously associated with the Apostle Paul. Some have argued that Silvanus was simply the messenger of the letter that Peter wrote, but there is one big problem with that theory.

- This letter is written in exceptional Greek. It would have been odd for Peter, a Hebrew, to have such a good handle on the Greek language.
- Furthermore, what we know about Peter's life doesn't leave much room for an intensive study of the Greek language.
- Therefore, it's widely understood amongst scholars that Peter commissioned Silvanus to write this letter based on conversations the two have shared. This would not have been very uncommon back then. It was actually very common to dictate and even commission letters like this.

As far as who the letter was to Peter refers to his audience as those who are “aliens” and “scattered.” What this means is that these are Christians who are scattered throughout the known world, specifically an area referred to as Asia

Minor. Which, by our standards, was pretty small, and we'll get to a map in just a moment, so you'll be able to see that for yourself. However, by the standards of that time, Peter's audience and the scope of this letter were huge. We also know that his audience is predominantly Gentile, meaning they were of non-Jewish heritage (thus why the letter was in really good Greek). There are a few reasons we are certain of this other than the language the letter was written in.

- Peter never refers to the Jew... which was unheard of in a letter that would have been addressed to Jews. Jews loved that they were Jewish, and they never missed out on an opportunity to talk about their heritage with other Jews. In all seriousness, the messianic connections between Jews and their heritage were far too great to leave out of a letter like this. So, since there is no mention of such heritage in this letter, we can be certain this was not written to Jews.
- Peter also describes his audience as being once outside the covenant and now in the covenant. Another dead giveaway since Jews have always been in the covenant.
- Finally, there is another even more subtle reason, and it is that Peter refers to himself as... Peter. Peter is a Greek name. His given, Jewish, name is Simon, and that is how Jews knew him and referred to him. The fact that Peter calls himself Peter is yet another reason to be certain that this letter is meant for Gentile Christians.
- It should be noted that the Gentile focus of this letter makes a great deal more sense of Silvanus' involvement. Silvanus has served extensively with Paul, whose ministry was exclusive to the Gentiles. This, along with the presumed date of this letter, also makes a little more sense of why Peter was even sending this letter since traditionally, his ministry was exclusive to the Jews.

When: It is widely believed that Peter was martyred in Rome somewhere around 64-68 AD. He was likely martyred around the same time as Paul, who was also killed in Rome. So chances are their associates intermingled a bit. It is very likely that Silvanus told Peter stories of the church in Asia Minor, one of Paul's main missionary territories, and that Peter was moved to encourage

them. So we would be wise to guess that this letter was penned sometime in that same window of 64-68 AD.

Where: As we have said, this letter was sent to various locations that all fall within a larger area known as Asia Minor. For the most part, this is the location of modern-day Turkey. We're not sure why Peter picked this particular area, but by the standard of that day, these communities were big, and they were crowded. It is assumed if we prescribe to the belief that Silvanus wrote this letter on Peter's behalf that perhaps he also inspired it. Silvanus would have been through this area with Paul and would have intimate details of the church there. It is possible that Silvanus had told Peter about the persecution taking place throughout Asia Minor, and Peter was compelled to write a letter of encouragement. This is a pretty sound theory.

