



# Chosen with a Purpose

1 Peter 1:1-2



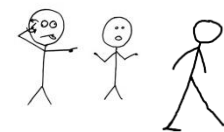
## Introductory Matters

The book of 1 Peter is a letter. Thus we should ask: Who wrote it? To whom? When? Why?<sup>1</sup> The letter begins with a greeting (1:1-2) which answers two of these questions. Read 1 Peter 1:1.

- ✂ *Author:* “Peter, an apostle<sup>2</sup> of Jesus Christ” (1:1) and “witness of Christ’s sufferings” (5:1).
- ✂ *Recipients:* “To God’s elect, exiles scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia” (1:1).<sup>3</sup> Mix of Jewish and (mostly) Gentile Christians.
- ✂ *Date:* Likely sometime between AD 62 and 64, from Rome.<sup>4</sup>
- ✂ *Purpose:* To encourage believers to “stand fast” in the “true grace of God” (5:12) in a society that is opposed to their values and lifestyle, and to encourage believers to endure suffering.

## Chosen Foreigners

- ❑ The letter is addressed to “God’s elect, exiles scattered...” (1:1b, NIV). The word “elect” (*eklektōis*) means “chosen.” Peter says Christ-followers are God’s “chosen people” (2:9).<sup>5</sup>
- ❑ The word translated “exiles” (*parepidēmois*) means “people who temporarily live in a foreign place.” The word can also be translated “resident aliens, foreigners, sojourners, or strangers.” Peter later calls his recipients “foreigners (*paroikous*) and exiles” (2:11). Most interpreters believe these descriptions are metaphorical. As “citizens of heaven” (*Philippians 3:20*) believers are “foreigners and strangers (*xenoi kai parepidēmoi*) on earth” (*Hebrews 11:13*).
- ❑ These chosen foreigners are “scattered”<sup>6</sup> throughout the regions in which they live.
  1. In what ways are Christ-followers like exiles, resident aliens, foreigners or sojourners in this world?
  2. In what ways have you personally felt like a “foreigner” (*because you are a Christian*) in the places you live, socialize, work, or play?



- ❑ As believers, we are “foreigners” in relation to the world *because* God chose us to be part of His family and kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> To answer these questions we should first read the entire letter. The author and recipients are often identified at the beginning of a letter. The purpose of a letter is usually evident in its content. Sometimes these questions are difficult to answer. Study Bibles, Bible handbooks and commentaries typically address these kinds of questions.

<sup>2</sup> ‘apostle’ (*apostolos*) – in this context, one commissioned by Jesus Christ as a representative. Peter was one of Jesus’ close disciples. His birth name was Simon, but Jesus gave him the name Peter (*Petros*) which means ‘rock.’

<sup>3</sup> The NIV adds the word ‘provinces.’ These place names could refer to either provinces or regions in Asia Minor north of the Taurus Mountains, which includes a large part of modern Turkey.

<sup>4</sup> Peter’s reference to ‘Babylon’ (5:13) probably means Rome.

<sup>5</sup> In the Old Testament, Israel is called God’s chosen people (*Deuteronomy 7:6*). Peter applies this designation to all Christ-followers, whether Jewish or Gentile (non-Jewish) (1 Peter 2:9). They are chosen because of God’s grace.

<sup>6</sup> The word translated ‘scattered’ (*diasporas*) means ‘of the dispersion.’ The word *Diaspora* was used to denote the dispersion of Jews outside their homeland after the Babylonian conquest. Peter applies this term to Christ-followers.

