

## **The Half Hour That Changes the World**

**1 Peter**

**Book 60**

### **Basic Questions behind the book:**

*How do we as Christians respond to suffering?*

### **Summary of book:**

This letter is meant to encourage people that are finding life tough. Peter writes it out of his persecution. Throughout the Roman Empire, Christians were being tortured and killed for their faith, and the church in Jerusalem was being scattered throughout the Mediterranean world. To convey his message, Peter uses several images that were very special to him because Jesus had used them when he revealed certain truths to Peter. Peter's name (which means rock) had been given to him by Jesus. Peter's conception of the church - a spiritual house composed of living stones built upon Christ as the foundation - came from Christ. Jesus encouraged Peter to care for the church as a shepherd tending the flock. Thus, it is not surprising to see Peter using living stones (2:4 - 9) and shepherds and sheep (2: 25; 5:2, 4) to describe the church.

This letter is full of surprises. While it is written by the blundering big-mouthed fisherman, it turns out to be gentle and pastorally sensitive. And, despite the fact that Peter was once rebuked by Paul for not mixing with the Gentiles, there is plenty here that echoes the teaching of Paul. Peter introduces a couple of concepts which we've heard before, but in a fresh way. Peter also tells us that those who have trusted Christ are a 'royal priesthood and a chosen people'. This is where the teaching about 'the priesthood of all believers' comes from.

### **Vital Statistics:**

Purpose: To offer encouragement to those Christians that were suffering.

Author: Peter.

Recipients: To the Jewish Christians driven out of Jerusalem and scattered throughout Asia Minor, and all believers everywhere.

Dating: The date is believed to have been around AD 62 - 64, possibly from Rome.

Setting: Peter was probably in Rome when the great persecution under Emperor Nero began.

***“You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” (2:9)***

***“These have come so that your faith...may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed.” (1:7)***