

Hope & Knowledge

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The General combined theme of I and II Peter is Hope and Knowledge.

As the Christians began to be noticed as being different from the Jews, they were persecuted for their practices; rather than ignored, as they had been in the past. This is the situation that Peter was addressing in I Peter, to both converted Jews (I Peter 2:4) and Gentiles (I Peter 2:10), primarily in the churches of northern Asia Minor (I Peter 1:1). The primary intent of this epistle was to warn of the coming suffering (I Peter 4:12-16) as well as to encourage them with the Hope of Christ Jesus (I Peter 1:13). It was also intended as an encouragement to them to be strong in the Lord, and to grow up in Him (I Peter 2:2). They had to learn to put away the things of their past and to desire and trust in Christ for hope and His will. Peter ends his epistle by reiterating that they should cast their cares (I Peter 5:7) upon the Mighty hand of God and in so doing be vigilant and steadfast in the faith, especially during this time of persecution.

Shortly after I Peter was penned, came II Peter, which was also written as an encouragement, although from a knowledge of Christ standpoint. II Peter 3:1 gives us the idea that Peter was once again addressing those individuals that he wrote to in I Peter and also shows us that they were still in his thoughts. However, this time he was warning them against false teachers (II Peter 2:1) and scoffers (II Peter 3:3). Once again Peter encourages these people by reminding them that the Lord is not slack concerning His promise (II Peter 3:9) of returning, and again reminds them of His grace, mercy, and long-suffering. He was reminding them that all this, including the exposure of false knowledge, could be found in the true Knowledge of Christ Jesus.

Both epistles together show us that the Hope of our Saviour can be found in the Knowledge of Him.

