

Elect Exiles Discussion Guide for 1 Peter 1:1-2

From the very beginning of the letter of 1 Peter we are given some important truths about what God thinks about us. As Peter addresses his original audience in the areas that are today western Turkey, we know that God is using Peter to address us as believers in Jesus today.

1 Peter 1:1-2

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

In verse 1, the most important identifiers of the readers are not the places where they live, but rather the words *elect exiles*.

These two words have rich Biblical and theological significance. For Jews, they would hearken back to the days of exile to Egypt and Babylon in which God had neither forgotten nor forsaken his people. The Jews learned in those experiences that just because they did not live in their homeland did not mean that God had not prepared for them a home.

They knew this truth because God declared his people (the Jews) to be elect, which means chosen. God chose his people not because any special righteous quality that they possessed on their own, but simply because he loved them and wanted to display his glory to all the nations through them. Deuteronomy 7:6-8 is one of many Old Testament passages that demonstrates this chosenness.

Deuteronomy 7:6-8

"For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

7 It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples,

8 but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

We know contextually that when Peter writes to elect exiles, he is not merely writing to people of Jewish blood. Peter is writing to churches- households of faith in Jesus Christ- who are gathered not on the basis of their bloodline, but on the basis of belief in salvation through the blood of Jesus.

Verse verifies *how and why* the elect exiles of the New Testament are chosen:

- According to the foreknowledge of God the Father
- In the sanctification of the Spirit
- For obedience to Jesus Christ
- For sprinkling with his blood

Peter then gives a modification of a common Greek greeting “grace and peace” and multiplies it many times over for those who are under the grace and peace of God.

In your discussion, whether it is with a life group or with your family, focus on those words *elect exiles*. Why are they important in light of everything you know about God, the Bible, and salvation?

Discussion Questions:

- **Why do you think some people are uncomfortable with the idea of being chosen (elected) by God?**
- **If God elects his people, then where does the responsibility for their salvation lie?**
- **Does it seem like an oxymoron that someone would be elected to be an exile?**
- **In what ways are New Testament believers’ exiles like the Jews were exiles?**
- **Is the “exile” of New Testament believers different of the exile of the Old Testament?**
- **Why is it hard to live as an exile?**
- **How does being elect make it easier to live as an exile?**
- **In what ways are all of the persons of the Trinity involved in election?**
- **How do you intend to live in a way that is “set apart” in your exile this week?**