

We don't hear about Peter in Acts after the meeting in Jerusalem when the disciples get together to decide if Gentile believers must follow all the Jewish laws. (Thankfully that was a big NO.) But we have these two letters from him. We don't know exactly when he wrote these letters although he was apparently in Babylon when he wrote them. We do know that he is familiar with Paul's work because he mentions how Paul's letters can be hard to understand. He also mentions Silas who apparently acted as scribe for both Peter and Paul, and even called Mark, who traveled with Paul, his son. Most scholars estimate he wrote the letters around 66 A.D., probably sometime after Paul's death.

The letters are short. First Peter is five chapters long, while Second Peter contains only three chapters. They are written to the church in Asia Minor (most of modern-day Turkey), to people suffering persecution. The letters urge steadfastness in faith and give advice on how to live holy lives. They remind people of Christ's suffering and resurrection. They emphasize love—it's where we see the well-known phrase "Love covers a multitude of sins." First Peter gives advice to elders. Second Peter also warns about false prophets and the return of Christ.

Together, these two books could serve as a handbook for Christian living.