

# Exiles with hope

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[ 0 : 00 ] 1 Peter, Peter's first letter, are you persecuted for your faith? Has any one Christian person known to you been taken to the authorities and forced to recant their faith?

Have the masters of the churches in Brighton been arrested in the middle of the night or taken so that you don't know where they are or what will happen to them?

And presumably the answer to those questions, I hope, is no. We are not in that sort of situation. We might be one day, but we're not there at the moment.

But this is probably what was beginning to happen to the people receiving this letter. There was a persecution that arose sometime later. Got some dates coming up in a moment.

But this is just what was beginning to happen to them. And Peter writes to them in that context. He writes to them to advise them, to reassure them, to encourage them, to direct them.

[ 1 : 28 ] And seeing as it's a letter written to people either under persecution or imminently under persecution, does that mean it's irrelevant to us?

And I think the answer is no. Because if they could receive encouragement and advice and strength from Peter, how much more should we?

We're not under the same stresses. He could encourage them to be joyful. We're not under the same stresses. How much more could he encourage us to be joyful? Let's think of who's written this.

It says in the first verse, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. So this is the Peter who was Jesus' friend, one of the fishermen that Jesus befriended.

He's an apostle. That's an important word. It means an officially sent representative. Jesus officially sent some representatives into the world, nominally 12.

[ 2 : 39 ] And Peter says, I'm one of them. You should listen to what I say because I'm officially sent by Jesus. I'm an apostle. The date of the letter, I mean, we put dates on our letters when we send them usually, but they didn't in those days, probably 62 or 63 AD.

So that's 30 or so years after the death of Jesus. And in the following year, persecution by the Emperor Nero will come.

And I'm not a historian, but from what I've read, it was a nasty persecution.

And people did start losing their lives because they're Christians. The letter, as we look at it, as I read it, is a sort of jumpy letter.

He thinks about one thing, then he jumps to something else. And having thought about that, he jumps to something else. And then he jumps around a bit. This is my impression of it. Maybe you'll feel the same.

[ 3 : 41 ] Got a sort of jumpy writing style. It makes it a little bit difficult to gather his thoughts together because he's jumped around. That's probably the sort of person he was. But if you wanted to summarize the whole of this letter, here is a possible summary.

And it's in chapter 5, almost the last verse, where he says, I've written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God.

Stand fast in it. And you can imagine the people who are beginning to be persecuted thinking, well, have we got the right end of the stick here?

Is God really in this message? It would be much easier for us if we denied that. And Peter says, no, this is the message that saves.

This is the true grace of God. And he says, and when you're under pressure, you stand fast in it. You know, if that was what he said to them, how much more does he say that to us?

[ 4 : 50 ] This is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it. So how does he set about doing this, this encouraging and testifying and so on?

Well, he tells people how privileged they are to be Christians. He goes around this several times. He says God chose them. Christ died for them. Christ is risen for them. And he tells them to have a perspective that the goal and fulfillment of the Christian life is not actually here and now. Here and now can be difficult and painful. He says it in 4:12, doesn't he? He says, dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on to test you. And they found it really difficult. And he says, you shouldn't be surprised at that. The Christian life is not just about the here and now. It's more about the future.

So he gives them that perspective. Their home and goal and fulfillment of the Christian life is future glory when Christ comes and puts everything right. And that goes throughout the whole letter.

[6:07] I'm just sort of introducing the letter to you at the moment. I think this is such an important thing for us. And I shall perhaps re-emphasize this as we go through. Different ways we're pressurized just to think about here and now.

And Peter says, you should not be just focusing on here and now. You should be looking for future glory. That's what makes sense of the Christian life.

And that's actually what it's all about. Until then, they are to live in confident dependence on the glorious future, which he says in 1:13.

Set your hope on the grace that is to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is to be revealed at his coming. In translation, set your hope fully on the grace that is to be revealed.

Set your hope purposefully on the grace that is to be revealed. And live the sort of lives that fit with the future rather than fit in with what everybody else is doing now.

[7:11] That's the sort of thing in 2:12. Everybody else, he says, is... That's not a very good verse for that, is it?

The pagans are doing all sorts of pagan things and they want you to join in. But don't because your lives should be fitting in with the future, what is yet to come.

So, let's just try and give you an idea of the sort of things he's going to be saying. So, let's look this morning at three things. Who they are. Why they should be thankful to God.

Verses 3 to 9. And why they should feel privileged. First of all, we'll look at who they are. Who is he talking to? Secondly, why they should be thankful to God.

Because he says, praise be to the God and Father. Why should there be praise to God? And why should they feel privileged in verses 10 to 12.

[8:08] Okay, let's do that. So, first of all, who is he writing to? I can show you the geography. These are churches. And I think we would nowadays call this Turkey, wouldn't we?

Is that right? So, we've got, according to this map, what does he say? Pontus. Galatia. Cappadocia. Bithynia. They're all over the place in that area. That's, I mean, in a simple, that's where they were. But actually, there's more to it than that.

That's where they were. That's what God had done in the 30 years since Jesus went to heaven. Churches have sprung up all over this area. And I think we could pause and say, that's a pretty miraculous thing, isn't it?

That's what God did. But I can think, say a few more things about where they are. He calls them exiles.

[9:15] And he, or strangers, if you like. I think this is a very important keynote that he's sounding. They are not at home. This is not where they belong.

They're there as exiles. They're there like the Jewish people were in Babylon. That's not their home. And he sounds this note right at the beginning.

Christian, this is not your home. You're just passing through. You're here temporarily. Not at home. Waiting to go home.

And of course, the temptation that the Babylonian exiles had was to just settle in so much that they didn't want to leave. And that's why in Isaiah it says, flee from Babylon.

Get out. Be ready to go. And the Christians here, we have the same temptation, don't we? To be so comfortable here that we don't really want to leave.

[10:16] To be so wrapped up with things here that we feel this is home forever. And Peter says, no, you mustn't think that. You're an exile.

You're on your way to somewhere else. And at this point, I guess if you were to take a snapshot of civic life in Bithynia, these Christians, they're not MPs.

They're not prime minister. The Christians are on the edge of things. They're marginalized. It's getting a little bit difficult if you say you're a Christian at work.

It gets a little bit difficult for you. These people are, in a sense, nobodies. They're marginalized. They're not where the action is. They're not on the front cover of Hello magazine or anything like that.

But they're God's people. A little bit like what Paul says to the Corinthians. He says, just take a look at yourselves. How many right honorables are there sitting in the congregation this morning?

[11:35] How many sirs? I mean, we might occasionally have one or two professors. But by and large, not many noble, not many wise, not many esteemed in this world.

But God chose people like you to do his work, to show his glory. He chose nobodies to bring to nothing the things that think they're special.

And I think he wants us to have a sense of how privileged we are to be Christians. Well, they're not at home. Second thing, where are they?

They're actually caught up in the grace of the Almighty Trinity. So where are they? They're not at home geographically. They're nobody's socially.

But they're in the heart of the Trinity, theologically. Which I think is an amazing thing. He refers to God the Father, God the Spirit, God the Son.

[12:41] NIV says, It's a grand way to begin a letter.

Dear friends, you are nobodies, but you are caught up in the Almighty Trinity by his grace. The Father chose you. Before the worlds were made, he chose you to inherit glory.

That's a thought, isn't it? I'm not going to stop to explore that, but I'll just say that's the thought there.

The Holy Spirit, the Spirit who brooded over the face of creation when it was all dark and brought life out into creation, this Spirit has sanctified you.

Not meaning, I think, changed your behavior, but changed your position. The Spirit has brought you from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his Son.

He's sanctified you. He's brought you into a new position. And this, from one realm and transplanted into another. And trinitarianly, the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, is the one into whom you've been brought into a relationship of obedience and sprinkling.

[14:08] You've come to call him Lord and to be his servant. You've come from ignoring him and resisting him and neglecting him to honoring him, worshipping him and serving him.

You've been brought to obedience of Jesus Christ. And the place of obedience of faith, in that sense, is the place of sprinkling by his blood. And the sprinkling of his blood washes all my sins away.

Though your sins be red as scarlet, they shall be white as wool, white as snow. That's what the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus does.

And you who are, in the world's eyes, nobodies, are caught up in the almighty trinity by the foreknowledge of God the Father, the mighty work of the Holy Spirit, and the cleansing of Jesus Christ.

I would say amen. I mean, that's an amazing way to begin a letter, isn't it? Sprinkling makes clean. Obedience marks those who turn from self to yield to Christ as Lord.

[15:22] And, of course, you can't be saved by the blood unless you're saved by the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord. Repenting is turning to him in those first steps of obedience.

So who are they? They are geographically distant, socially marginalized, but spiritually caught up in the purposes of the almighty trinity. And I think that first point is helpful to us, isn't it?

It's helpful to them and it's helpful to us just to set our minds in the right way of thinking about where we are and who we are. That's point number one. And we're not being persecuted, I think, in the sense of being carted off and shot like the people in those days.

But we have trials, don't we? We have trials, we have difficulties. They're not of the same form, but we nevertheless have them. Getting older, family, work, relatives, all sorts of things like this.

Employment, education, study, you name it. And the comfort that Peter brought to them is the same comfort to us, isn't it?

[16:37] You too are enwrapped in the trinity. Yeah, okay, let's move on. Second thing, they should be thankful to God.

So I'm looking at verses 3 to 9. Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his great mercy, he has given us new birth into living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ

from the dead and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade.

This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith, of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire, may result in praise, glory, and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

Though you've not seen him, you love him. And even though you don't see him now, you believe in him, and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

[ 17 : 53 ] So why should they be thankful to God? The verses are rather jumpy to my mind. He jumps from one thing to another. And it's one long, jumpy sentence. I think I'm correct in saying that. But the idea behind it is a time thing.

Where we are now and what's coming. Where we are now and what's coming. It's a time scale thing. Let's look at a few things of the now.

He says in verse 6, he says, Now, the word is there, Now, for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.

That's now, he says. A bit later on, he talks about slaves perhaps being beaten unfairly. And he gives various examples of the sort of things you might suffer now.

Now, he says, What have I put about this? He says, And your faith will be tested. In verse 7, He talks about the proven genuineness of your faith.

[ 19 : 08 ] It's a word which means you test something to see how good it is. How strong it is. Like, I don't know whether policemen do this these days, police officers, going up and down the street at night, checking the doors.

Have they locked it? And the idea of the check is not to break the door, but to check that it is actually locked. And he says, What's happening now is your faith is being tested.

See whether it's the right stuff. Let's come back to that in a moment. And he says, Now you live by faith, not by sight.

In verse 8, he says, You have not seen Jesus. You have not seen him. This is the reality of life now. There's stress.

There's grief. There's trials. And we don't see Jesus. We have to trust him. We have to walk by faith. And I'll just stop to contrast that.

[ 20 : 12 ] With the idea that some Christian teachers wrongly teach, that in this life, we're always going to be healthy. We're always going to be happy.

And God will give us loads of money. That's not true. That's a false teaching. It gives a false expectation about life. And if you've been taught that, you will end up being very disappointed and think that God has deceived you.

But it wasn't God who deceived you. He never said that in the first place. We shouldn't be surprised if life is tough. We shouldn't be surprised by that.

That's the nature of life in this fallen world. We shouldn't assume that emotionally, we'll always be on a high. He says, you may have to suffer grief.

Now, you know, there's a sort of, sometimes a sense that we're letting the Lord down. If we don't say to him, I'm really cheerful, how are you today? Oh, I'm rejoicing.

[ 21 : 16 ] When perhaps you're not. I mean, if you are rejoicing, praise the Lord. But if you're not rejoicing and suffering grief, that's okay too. Because Peter says it's okay. You may have to suffer grief in various kinds of trials.

There may be some things that make you weep. There may be some things that give you sleepless nights. There may be some things that, I mean, you can't really smile and seem bouncy when you come to church.

That's okay. That's the reality of the now. And of course, for us in the West, ease and comfort is the thing that we have. I think we probably don't realize how privileged we are, particularly in the West here.

We have things like running water. We have things like central heating. We have things like a room that you cook in, a room that you sleep in, and a different room that you can sit on a comfy chair and watch the television in.

I mean, many places in the world, wow, you live like princes and kings over there in the West. Here he says, you shouldn't automatically expect that life will be easy and comfortable in the now.

[ 22 : 28 ] Yes, God is gracious and kind, but his main promises don't guarantee us ease and comfort, nonstop happiness in the now. But let's see what he says about the future.

He says that being born again, verse 3, I expect most of us in the room would say that being a Christian, you have to be born again.

I mean, after all, Jesus said that, didn't he? You must be born again. And he said, what is the nature of the new birth in verse 3? In his great mercy, he has given us new birth into a living hope.

Well, that's interesting, isn't it? Really, that he should put it that way. What is the new thing that has come into my life since I became a Christian? Hope for the glory of the future.

I mean, there's other things as well. I mean, there is a deep existential change, a change inside, a change of status. But the thing that he picks on here is what's different about the Christian?

[ 23 : 39 ] What's the new thing that happens? They have a hope for the future. We have been born again into a living hope. And he ties that to Jesus and his resurrection.

Jesus rose from the dead and he will return to spread his resurrectionness to all his people and to the whole universe.

The hope draws its power and its reality from the resurrection of Jesus. He rose from the dead. He will bring us to. He will make all things new. He will do this.

This is our hope. And it's a future hope. That's what we're looking forward to. And we only experience it in part now. And we'll look at the part that we experience at the moment.

Born again into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus. And in verse 5, he has the same thought, doesn't he? You are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

[ 24 : 45 ] So it's not here yet. You don't see it yet. You're hoping for it. You're trusting for it. But it isn't revealed until the last day. And on the last day, it will be revealed when Jesus comes.

And in verse 7, he talks about resulting in praise, glory, and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. So you can't escape it, can you?

He tells us about the now and he tells us about the future. And he says, that's where the Christian is looking. That's the sort of center of gravity, if you like. We're looking forward to the future, to the glorious future.

In verse 9, he says, talks about the salvation of your souls, which is the goal or end result of your faith. So I don't think we can miss this. It's a forward-looking, and if you wanted to be technical, you would say it's eschatological.

It's looking forward to glory. And let's just think about this future hope. He says in verse 4, It is an inheritance that can never perish, never spoil, and never fade.

[ 26 : 06 ] And I guess it's difficult for us to imagine this, isn't it? It's a thing that we receive by faith.

He's told us the future will be grand and wonderful, and here it's done by negatives. Stuff on earth perishes. That won't.

Stuff on earth spoils. That won't. Stuff on earth fades. That will never fade. That's right.

And he impresses this upon people, and let's impress this upon ourselves. Let's not lose sight of this. The Christian life is about the glory that is yet to come.

It's a living hope that we have. An inheritance that won't spoil, or fade, or perish. And, I mean, we're all, unless Jesus comes first, we're actually all going to die.

[ 27 : 09 ] It's a little bit of something that you put off thinking about, you know, like buying a pension. But, that's the reality. And I guess, the closer we get towards that, the more important it is that we set our minds on that.

It was said of the Puritan Richard Baxter that he thought about heaven every day. And, let's see if I can get the quote right. There was heaven in Richard Baxter before Richard Baxter was in heaven. I think it's something like that. We're probably about a million miles from that, aren't we, these days in our Christian faith? But, I mean, it's worth taking that thought, isn't it?

Let's think about heaven. Let's set our minds on that. And, of course, we have to fight to do that and not let ourselves be pushed around by distraction.

The worries of this life, the desires for riches, as Jesus said when he talked about the parable of the seed, our preoccupation with health, wealth, ease and comfort.

[ 28 : 17 ] I mean, all those things matter to a degree, but they're not the main thing. You know, we've got to try and keep the main thing, the main thing. So, he says, set your hope purposefully on the grace that is to be revealed, future.

Why they should be thankful to God. Just continuing, some of the things he says about the now. You're born again now, verse 3.

You're currently shielded by God's power, verse 5. That's so comforting, isn't it? You have faith. Oh, Lord, my faith is weak and wobbly, but he says, there's something more going on.

You're shielded. Your faith is shielded by God's power and he'll make sure that you don't get lost. He'll make sure that you don't get sort of lost without trace and the waters don't go over your head. kept by the power of God. And he says, you haven't got to wait till heaven to rejoice, verse 6.

[ 29 : 27 ] In all this, you greatly rejoice. He says, there's a way of holding these things now that gives us joy now. We don't have to wait for heaven to rejoice.

We can praise God now. Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has given us new birth into a living hope. We can praise him now and we can rejoice that all will be well. The plan won't go wrong. The place in heaven has been reserved for you. It's there with your name on it, just waiting for you to come. I've gone to prepare a place for you, says Jesus. If it wasn't like that, I would have told you. And so important that we grasp this. And learn to live accordingly.

Verse 7, he talks about this testedness. I knew I was going to come back to this. At least I thought I was. The proven genuineness of your faith of greater worth than gold which perishes even though refined by fire.

[ 30 : 32 ] He says, here's a way to understand what's happening. You're being tested. Not in a malicious sense, but like the police officer tests the door to show that it's solid.

Not to try and make a problem, but to show... The police officer goes up down the street, there's the different shops, there's Nando's, there's KFC, there's Domino's, and he just, at the middle of the night, tests the door.

Yep, that's locked. Good. That's locked. Good. That's locked. Good. Just to prove it's solid. And he says that this is what's happening to your faith.

Is it solid faith? There's different sorts of faith, you know. All sorts of people can have faith in all sorts of things. Just having faith could be anything.

believing that Jesus is the Son of God. Well, yeah. Satan believes that. It's really, have you got the sort of personal faith that is saving faith, that is the real thing?

[ 31 : 47 ] And he says that's what's happening. It's just being tested to show that it is the real thing. And he says, now where does he use this word precious?

Precious. Somebody help me. Yeah, is it?

I wonder what word I've chosen there. Is it a greater worth than gold? Is it more precious than gold in anybody's? More precious, yeah.

This word precious crops up a number of times. And it's worth thinking about the word precious. precious. Not meaning in this case sort of very sentimental, but meaning really valuable.

And he says real saving faith. Worth. Greater worth. It's precious.

[ 32 : 47 ] And actually, it's more precious than gold. gold. Now, if you were an Indian lady, an Indian married lady, perhaps a Sri Lankan married lady, you would have a tarry of gold that you would carry around your neck, which is the family, that's a pension fund, that's a mortgage and everything else in gold around your neck.

And, you know, you're a walking bank deposit. But, Peter says, if you've got saving faith, that's more precious than gold.

It's a thought, isn't it? That's more precious than gold. And, in the now, verse 8, you genuinely love Jesus.

I mean, I've heard various people tell me they love Jesus and then go on to live in a completely different way. But, there is a genuine love for Jesus, which has genuinely been put into somebody's heart.

And, they really do know him and love him. And, he says, that that is possible in the now. You can be that person. And, in verse 8, he goes on to say, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, or joy unspeakable.

[ 34 : 20 ] I don't think that he's trying to say that this is superlatively intense. but, I think, what he is saying is, it is so deep, it's very difficult to put it into words.

A Christian person, having been saved by the Lord Jesus, knowing the forgiveness of their sins, knowing that they have a saviour, know they go up and down, but there is a joy and an assurance and a depth to that that you can't really put into words.

And, he says, that's you, if you're a believer. You believe in him and you are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.

You have a sense of the glory that is to come and you already have it now. Yeah, it comes and goes, doesn't it? But, yeah, that's what we have now.

Glorious joy. And, in verse 9, he says, even now, God is producing salvation in you. You are receiving, present tense, the result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

[ 35 : 40 ] What's God doing at the moment? He's working salvation in me. I'm a believer. He's working stuff in me. And you say, I can't see what God's doing at all.

I've got so many problems and I'm just praying about these things and I can't see what God's doing. And, you know, maybe the answer is he's working in you, changing you in a way you don't realise. As he puts you under pressure, something gets tested, some things get moved out of the way. You get changed. Even the fact that you're praying so much is something that God is doing and he's working in you the salvation of your soul.

which I think is a great thing, isn't it? He's working in you the salvation of your soul. That's what he's doing. So, things to be grateful for, reasons to praise God, that the things of the now and the not yet, the things that are difficult in the now, the things we have in the now, it's a sort of rich mixture, isn't it, to say, praise the Lord and praise the Lord that this is the Christian life.

Third thing, why they should feel privileged. So, I'm now looking at verse 10. I, to my mind, he's jumped. He talked about salvation for their souls in verse 9 and now he jumps, as I understand it, perhaps I just don't understand properly what he's trying to do.

[ 37 : 15 ] Concerning this salvation, he says, the prophets who spoke of the grace that was to come to you searched intently and with the greatest care trying to find out, excuse me, the time and circumstances to which the Spirit in Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Christ.

Does yours say Messiah there? Christ? Mine says Messiah. I looked it up. It is Christ. I don't know why they put Messiah there. Excuse me.

And the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who preach the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

Even angels long into these things. Well, I think he's jumped to this matter of the prophets and my understanding of it is that at least he's saying this that you should feel very privileged.

At least he's saying this. Now some of us went to a wedding on Monday which was a great day and I think of how much preparation was put into it.

[ 38 : 29 ] Preparation for a wedding budgeting getting the food arranging the venue tidying it all up decorating it flowers you know you name it so much preparation it makes for a great day doesn't it?

Thank you so much that's really good thank you. A lot of thought a lot of preparation and we benefited from that those of us who were able to go to that wedding and at least Peter's saying this just think of the amount of preparation that has been put in to your salvation.

Just think amount of preparation that's been put in to your salvation. The ministry of the prophets the Hebrew scriptures the Old Testament and Peter says just think of all that.

Now I have heard it said that of church ministry that people say we don't bother with the Old Testament we just just think about Jesus.

I'm all in favour of thinking about Jesus but Jesus would surely like us to look at the Old Testament because that's all about him and here Peter is saying just think of the of the ministry of the prophets.

[ 39 : 49 ] Let's just see what he says about this. Think of the hours and years they spent in their ministry and this building up of the layers of scripture so we've now got a complete Hebrew Old Testament and he says in chapter in verse 12 what they were doing it was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you.

Who were the prophets serving? You. Who is the Old Testament written for? You. They were not serving themselves but you.

Whose book is the Old Testament? Does it belong in the synagogue but not in the church? No. The Old Testament is our book because the prophets were serving us when they wrote it down and let's see in terms of the agent of the Old Testament in verse 11 it says the spirit of Christ was pointing and predicting the sufferings of the Christ and the glories that would follow.

So there's our Old Testament and he says if you want to put it in a nutshell the Holy Spirit was there pre-witnessing predicting the sufferings of the Christ and the glories that would follow.

Talking about heaven. Old Testament talks about heaven. And he says that's our Old Testament and it is the person who's doing it is the Holy Spirit it's not just a human book and it's about Christ and the after glories and it has this conundrum sort of built in how is it all going to happen?

[ 41 : 39 ] And he says in verse 10 the prophets searched intently and with the greatest care trying to find out the time and the circumstances to which the spirit of Christ was pointing.

So in the Old Testament they're writing it and I think how is that going to happen? God has told me that the Messiah will be born of a virgin.

How will that happen? God has told me that he'll be a king and he'll reign in a kingdom and how is that going to happen? And God's told me that the temple is going to be rebuilt and it's these ridiculous proportions.

How is that going to happen? And all these things and the prophets it says are searching intently how can this all be?

And have I given all the words for that? I think I have. So it's got this conundrum this unanswered question how is it all going to happen?

[ 42 : 43 ] And he says about the angels even the angels long to look long to look into these things and the word for longing to look in one ancient manuscript it's used of somebody leaning over a balcony trying to get a view across the street like this and he says the angels are sort of wondering how is it and the angels long to look into these things imagine the angels longing to look into what has been revealed to us in the gospel how is a Christian and we know it all because we look back and he says this is shown to us in the gospel how can the virgin give birth?

How can the king suffer? How can the kingdom come? And we know we've been let in on it the angels have been for centuries or millennia have been wondering what we know how can Christians pray?

How do they pray in the name of Jesus? We do it we know it I think the sense that we're privileged does that make sense? I hope it does and he says that the prophets were working this preparation and all these things that were going to be predicted and fulfilled and they wondered how it was going to fulfill it and how is it all going to make sense and somebody came and preached the gospel to you and it all fell into place no my chains fell off my heart was free I rose went forth and followed thee thine eye diffused a quickening ray and I just saw it and it was all there and when I began to read my Old Testament I said yes it's all about Jesus it's all here and he says this is your privilege that you have you have heard and understood and entered into there's things that kings and prophets longed to see and hear and understand and you've got it

I think that's what it's saying and I think it means that we're tremendously privileged and he says it was revealed that they were not serving themselves but you when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who preach the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven he's got this really high view of what gospel ministry is isn't it explaining about Jesus the Holy Spirit is sent from heaven to accompany that so that people say yes so that people see I can see that by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven and that's you that's you through the gospel if you like it's like the last piece of a jigsaw and you put the last piece in which is that Jesus died on the cross for my sins and rose again on the third day according to the scriptures yes

Eureka I found it this is the answer to everything another example I thought was how to hold a funny shape I couldn't really you'd have to go with me on this there are some things that you you look at them how am I supposed to pick that up where do my hands go and they say no you've got it upside down excuse me your hands go there your face goes there and it just fits all right and the Old Testament I think was like that they said how does that all when you get Jesus into it it all fits together and makes sense or yes a puzzle picture a puzzle picture is it a duck or a dolphin or is it an old woman eating a cake do you know these sorts of puzzles have you seen them and you look at it and you think oh god I know it looks like a duck to me and they say well look that's the old woman that's her nose and that's the cake oh yeah all makes sense now and I think this is these are the sort of things that Peter is saying when the gospel of Jesus comes you are privileged to have it

explained to you and it all makes sense it all makes sense switching on a light in a darkened room or the bringing of long awaited news all these sort of ideas about the gospel which has now been preached to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven

[ 47 : 22 ] I just say we're immensely privileged to have heard the good news and if you're a believer to have believed the good news and if you're not a believer and you think oh he's just been going on for a long time about something irrelevant that's not the way to understand it you haven't got it yet have you you need to ask God to show you about Jesus about your need about what the gospel really says so that you can be part of this and you can say wow it is great it is a privilege it is fantastic and at very least this provokes our gratitude and respect for scripture doesn't it somebody wrote and said you should be teaching your church why they believe the Bible I don't know whether I should really but here's Peter teaching us why we should believe the Bible the New Testament is the gospel and the Old Testament all the preparation for it inspired by the Holy Spirit so just to conclude

Peter said I've written to you briefly to encourage you and testify this is the true grace of God stand fast in it and we've looked and we've looked at where people are geographically marginalized but taken up into the almighty trinity being thankful currently there are trials and suffering but the future hope is untouched by that will never perish spoil or fade it's kept for you and you're kept for it you're kept by the power of God even now you love Jesus you can actually rejoice and the grittiness is actually your faith being tested to show that it's real because God is working salvation in you and we should feel privileged at least for this reason that we had a book written specially for us by the prophets and the gospel fulfills it kings and prophets long to hear what we hear and we have it all the time this is the true grace of God stand fast in it  
Amen Amen