

Where Angels Long To Look

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[0 : 0 0] Hello there, it's Robin again with a third message from 1 Peter and this time I'm reading from 1 Peter and chapter 1 and from verse 10 down to verse 12.

Let's hear God's word. Concerning this salvation, the prophets who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ 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 have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

Even angels long to look into these things. If I were to say to you, you don't know how good you've got it, you might think I've gone slightly mad due to the current situation in which we are living, the challenging circumstances of the coronavirus, not to mention some personal trials that you may be going through as well.

Well, I don't mean to diminish these things at all. What I do mean though is we don't know how good we've got it in terms of our place in salvation's story.

[1 : 2 6] Our place in salvation's story. Peter is emphasising here to his readers just how blessed we are to have an inspired Bible, to have the inspired scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

And the way in which that unfolds first comes through Peter talking about prophets. Then it comes through Peter talking about a pattern. And then it comes through Peter talking about preaching, the preaching of the gospel.

So prophets, a pattern and preaching. So first of all, prophets, Peter says in verse 10, So there we read that the prophets themselves searched their own prophecies or rather the prophecies they had been given, the words that had come to them from God himself.

They searched, they diligently looked into the prophecies that they were given because they wanted to know things. They wanted to know things more precisely, more exactly.

They were trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

[3 : 1 3] Isn't that interesting? You know, sometimes maybe when we're reading the Old Testament and looking at the lives of the prophets, we might be quite envious of them and think, how amazing to be granted this word from the Lord and to be commissioned to go and preach that to the people of God and to say to them, Hear, O Israel, thus says the Lord.

What an extraordinary position to be in and what an amazing amount of light they must have had into God's plans and purposes. Well, in fact, Peter tells us here, they were searching and looking into things that we now know about in far greater measure because in salvation story, we exist after the coming of Christ into the world, after his sufferings and the glories that would follow.

And therefore, we have had revealed to us much more than those prophets knew. They were trying to work out the exact time and circumstances in which all this would happen.

Imagine someone like Isaiah and he's writing the servant song, Isaiah 53, and talking about this one by whose wounds we will be healed and so on.

But he's wondering, when exactly will this take place? Who exactly will this be and what will he be like? Well, we now know that. Isaiah very probably didn't know this wouldn't happen for another 700 years or so, and it would be Jesus of Nazareth who would be this suffering servant.

[4 : 49] We do know that now. We have been given a great deal more light into salvation's story, and that is something we should not take for granted. Well, if the prophets were searching with the greatest care, surely we should look into the scriptures and value them and relish reading them and not take them for granted.

That is the prophet aspect. The Old Testament all points to the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

And indeed, Jesus chided some disciples after his resurrection, whom he met on the road to Emmaus, talking about the scriptures in exactly these terms.

Did not the Christ have to suffer these things before entering into his glory? And he then opens up the Old Testament scriptures to them, showing how these things all point to those sufferings and to the glories that would follow.

That would have been the most amazing Bible study ever. So, there we have it. We have the prophets predicting the coming of Christ.

[6 : 02] The Old Testament bears witness to Jesus and his coming into the world and his sufferings and the glories that would follow. But secondly, Peter here tells us about that pattern.

Suffering followed by glory. That's the pattern that's revealed here. The pattern of Christ is one of suffering first and glory after.

Christ became a servant. He took a human nature to himself and he became very lowly, didn't he? And then the very depths of that lowliness were experienced on the cross itself of abandonment, dereliction and pain and suffering.

That's the suffering part. But then it didn't end there. Thanks be to God. From death itself, from a tomb, Jesus was raised to life and highly exalted.

And that culminating in his ascension to God's right hand to begin his reign as God's chosen king over the entire universe.

[7 : 12] Sufferings now, glories later. That was the pattern that Christ's life followed. And it's a pattern which our lives follow too.

It's not the same as Christ because our lives aren't saving in the way that Christ's suffering and glories are saving for all those who believe in him.

But it is yet a pattern we're called to live out. We're called to share in his sufferings that we might also share in his glory to come.

And that again is what Peter's talking about. It's about enduring trials in the present time and giving us reasons, good things to rest upon and rely upon in the midst of trials.

And one thing he's telling us about is it shouldn't come as a surprise if we're suffering now. That's the first thing. But also we have glory to look forward to after that.

[8 : 09] Because our pattern follows Christ's pattern. And that pattern is suffering now and glory later. And that sure is something to look forward to.

Finally, we've had the prophets. We've had the pattern. Now we come to the preaching. And this brings us again back to the fact that we have the entire scriptures.

We have the complete canon of the Bible. Because we don't just have the Old Testament prophets that were talking about one who would come. We have the apostles who then saw it all happen and then declared it to the world.

Verse 12. Peter emphasizes that it was not their original audience, ultimately, that the prophets were serving. 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 have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

That is, the apostles of whom Peter was one are inspired in the same way the prophets were. Peter calls the Holy Spirit the Spirit of Christ in reference to the Old Testament prophets to really show that continuity.

[9 : 33] It's not a different God or a different spirit in the Old Testament. Same spirit. In fact, it's the Spirit of Christ who is speaking about the sufferings of Christ that will come and the glories that will follow.

And it's the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, the one who was poured out in such boundless measure on the day of Pentecost and who clothed Peter himself and the other apostles with power.

He is the one who is inspiring their message as well. And that's how we have the New Testament too. All inspired by God. Utterly reliable.

Completely authoritative. And that is why we can believe in one who we have not yet seen.

We haven't seen Jesus yet we love him and we do not see him now yet we believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy. Because we have the totally reliable testimony of the Old and New Testaments inspired by the Holy Spirit himself.

[10 : 40] In that preaching of the gospel. God's revelation to us in the scriptures is completed. And that gives us even more confidence and assurance that the one the prophets were speaking about, he is Jesus.

And all the things they were speaking about are fulfilled in him. All the promises of God are yes and amen in Jesus. Isn't that wonderful?

We see prophets who spoke of what was to come and we know more than them and that's something to be humble about and to rejoice in and to make sure we don't take the scriptures for granted.

We have a pattern laid out for us which should mean we ought not to be surprised at our present sufferings but we should also have great hope in our future glory.

And finally we see in the preaching of the gospel that confirmation that everything that was said in the New Testament was referring to Christ and is fulfilled in him.

[11 : 47] And in that we have the complete scriptures all inspired by the Holy Spirit. And do you know what Peter says to round it off? Even angels long to look into these things.

And that's what brings me back to what I said at the start. We don't know how good we've got it because even angels wish they knew more about the glories of the gospel.

The angels in heaven haven't experienced sin. And so it is something of a mystery to them, the gospel. It's something we understand though because as sinners we've experienced the alienation from God, the separation of God that that brings.

And also therefore we experience the joy, the boundless joy, the inexpressible joy when we see that we've been reconciled to God, that the barrier has been removed by the blood of Christ himself, the one who came to take away our sins and save us from sin.

And so even angels long to look into what we have firsthand experience of the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. So I know things are tough at the moment, but there's plenty that can encourage us and keep us full of joy.

[13 : 08] We experience something even the angels in heaven would love to know more about.