

Out of darkness, into light

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[0 : 00] Now, turning back to the chapter that we read, 1st Epistle, General of Peter and Chapter 2.

And we can look this evening at the words that we have at the end of verse 9 in Chapter 2. 1st Epistle, General of Peter and Chapter 2.

We can look at these words, 1st, we'll have a look at the darkness of Egypt, looking back to when God called his people out of Egypt.

2nd, we can look at uncertainty and knowledge, and 3rdly, that light and love.

[1 : 18] And firstly, coming to the darkness of Egypt, and of course here, we have the people of God depicted for us as a chosen people.

They are a royal priesthood, and they are a holy nation. But there would not be any of that if it was not for the fact that God had called them out of darkness into his own marvelous light.

Though the language that is used here is figurative, and yet the meaning of it is very clear.

And as I mentioned before, we can look back on the time that God called Israel forth out of Egypt, to lead them to the land that he had promised them.

And that will give us an indication of what Peter is getting at with these words. And of course, they are fitting words to follow the question that we had this morning, the question that we were debating on this morning.

[2 : 49] And the deliverance, it was the deliverance that God brought for his people, taking them out of Egypt, that led to Israel, themselves being called a chosen people, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, and a peculiar people.

Now that deliverance, that deliverance began at the hour of midnight, when Egypt was enveloped in the darkness of the night.

And that darkness was going to be made far much worse by the plague that was about to strike them. Because it was on the stroke of midnight, if we look back to chapter 12 in Exodus, it was on the stroke of midnight that the destroying angel struck.

And from the firstborn of Pharaoh, to the firstborn of the lowest slave in the land, death was to be found in every home, except the homes of the children of Israel.

And the homes of the children of Israel, as we know, were under the sheltering blood of the Passover lamb. And even amongst the firstborn of the animals, not even the firstborn of the animals, were exempt from this dreadful plague.

[4 : 29] So that Egypt really, at this point, was a place of darkness and of death. They had just recovered, or they were just recovering, from the plague of thick darkness.

A darkness that was so thick that Scripture says it could be felt, or it could be hunted. And now here they were, visited by this plague of death.

And as Scripture reveals to us, a great cry came up from Egypt. No one could say, well, that is all symbolic, but it's not symbolic.

God was bringing home to Egypt the truth about themselves. They were a people who gave no place whatsoever to God.

And because of that, darkness and death reigned supreme in Egypt.

[5 : 49] Darkness and death reigned supreme. And it was out of this fearful darkness, that God called forth Israel into his own marvelous light.

And Israel departed from Egypt, full of possessions. Full of possessions.

They had gold, they had silver, they had jewelry, they had everything that you could think of. Given to them by the Egyptians. Because the Egyptians were glad to see them depart.

And that in itself reveals to us the darkness, that ruled over the nation of Egypt. If these people knew that Israel were the people of God, and that if they would stay in their midst, then they would bring a blessing to them.

But no, they were so blind, that they were simply glad to see them depart. And after all Israel were a people that were worshipping a strange God.

[6 : 56] And because of this strange God, it was because of this strange God that these plagues had come upon them. And that was true. But even after God showed his power in Egypt, to the Egyptians, displaying his power, they still stubbornly refused to acknowledge him.

And so God, as we read in Scripture, during the wilderness wanderings of Israel, God went before them at night as a pillar of fire.

He was their light, guiding them in where, in the way that he wanted them to go. Now the question, we can pose the question here.

Well, what darkness is the true Israel, the judge of Jesus Christ? What darkness are they called forth from?

And you could say, they are called from the same fearful darkness that God called Israel out from when he called them out of Egypt.

[8 : 17] They are called out of the land of idolatry, just the same as Abraham was, just the same as Israel was when he called them out of Egypt.

A fearful darkness. And we'll see that as we go on.

Now, we come to Abish in Ephesians chapter 5, where Paul says, you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

And Paul is expressing there something that we ought to be familiar with. We all should be familiar with it.

And that is this, that Paul is pointing out to those to whom he is writing, just as Peter is pointing out here as well, that there was this time when these people who were no light in the Lord, they had no true knowledge of God.

[9 : 29] But now the time has come when they have this true knowledge of God. Which brings us to the second thing that we have, uncertainty and knowledge.

and really what is brought before, what is brought before us here by these words that we are looking at at the end of verse 9, and by the text that we quoted, that we quoted from Paul in Ephesians chapter 5.

What we are looking at is something that is very important to salvation. repentance towards God. There is a change of mind, there is a change of heart.

To the extent that one is no longer an enemy of the gospel, but one is now open to what the gospel has to say to him or to her.

Instead of looking at the gospel as being something that is insignificant to her lives, something that is of no value to her lives, we are now open to hear what the gospel has to say to us.

[10 : 45] In other words, the darkness that the Christian is called out of by God is a state in which God who is light and in whom there is no darkness at all.

God who is the father of lights, the state that they are called out of is a state where God's light was not shining at all.

God who is light, he was not shining, this light was not shining at all upon their lives. It is the same fearful darkness that he called the children of Israel out of Egypt.

God's light was not shining at all upon their lives. Now, the result of that is that here I am and that light is not shining upon my life at all, which leads me to ignorance, to ignorance and being mistaken in all the thoughts that I give place to about God.

For instance, I am here in this world and suddenly I confront difficulty. Suddenly I confront tribulation.

[12 : 14] And I start thinking, well, if there is such a thing as a God, why is he letting these things happen within my life? You see, we are looking at God as somebody who ought to make the path smooth for us within our lives.

And when we confront affliction, tribulation, we suddenly think, well, what sort of God is this? Why is he letting this happen to me? We are mistaken, we are ignorant.

in all the thoughts that we give place to about God. And the upshot of that is that we can never come into possession of true holiness without which no man can see the Lord.

Without which no man can see the Lord. And it follows from that.

It follows on from that. But corruption reigns within every one of my faculties. My will, my conscience, my affections, etc.

[13 : 31] Corruption reigns. My will makes wrong choices. my conscience, my conscience, my conscience, is deadened by sin, and it cannot discern between that which is good and right as a dot.

And my affections are given over to the idol or to the idols, and very often it is blue down. Not just the one idol we are, we are many.

men. And so the result of this ignorance, this error, and this corruption is uncertainty.

I don't know what lies ahead of me. My life is clouded by this uncertainty, and I'm left with nothing but a fearful looking towards the judgment that is before.

Unless I convince myself that there is no such thing as a judgment waiting for me. As many do today. But the fallacy about that, what people do today, is they think it is something new.

[14 : 49] Because of the knowledge that we gather to ourselves today through the internet and everything else, they think that this is something new, denying that there is such a thing as a judgment. It is not new. It has been with us down through the ages.

You see, we could almost divide the world into three groups. one group is this people who know that there is a judgment ahead of them, who are convinced about it, and who have nothing but this fearful looking towards it, and they are doing nothing about it.

They decide to do nothing about it. They decide, well, I've put plenty of time. then there is the second group who deny that there is a judgment altogether.

And then you have the third group who are seeking to do something about it, or who have already done something about it. And that uncertainty with which your lives have clouded, which absolutely dominates your lives, it leads to the lack of this elusive thing that we call contentment.

We are discontent with our lives. And we think that that discontentment can be cured by wealth or by whatever. If we win the lottery, then everything will be fine.

[16 : 29] And so we are looking around, seeking, for something that will give us this contentment. And you see, every Christian, before it comes to a true knowledge of God, is involved in this darkness, with every other passion that belongs to the human race, is involved in this darkness.

And then there is this grouping around, as is always the case in darkness, when darkness is there. If you remember yourself, before streetlights came to be found within our villages, and remember, some of you will remember leaving the house, during a very dark winter night, with no stars in the sky, no moon, nothing to give you light, you might have been unfamiliar with the territory that you were walking upon, and you were just simply groping around, trying to feel your way, until your eyes would adjust to the darkness.

And that's the way we are when we are in this darkness, groping around, looking for meaning, but because of the darkness, we are looking in all the wrong places.

And then we have got to pose the question, what is this marvelous light, that God calls his people to? What is it?

Well, to answer that, we have got to go back to creation, where God said, let there be light, and there was light. And the Christian church, the church of Christ, is a new creation, where God again commands the light to shine.

[18 : 28] He commands the light to shine in the darkness of your heart and my heart, giving us what? Giving us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Christ. And we go to the cross of Christ.

We go to the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. We go to the teaching of Jesus Christ. We go to the miracles of Christ. They are all a revelation to us of God.

The heart of God, the mind of God, the compassion of God, the mercy of God, the truth of God, all is revealed in Jesus. And if you remember Moses coming down from the mount, and his face was shining, and the children of Israel, could not look upon his face.

His face was shining with the glory of God. So he had to be a veil upon it. And yet here we are. Once this light shines within our hearts, we behold the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ with unveiled faces.

[20 : 10] The blindness has been removed, the veil has been taken away, and we behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ with unveiled faces.

And this light, our hearts, our minds, our understanding is filled with this light. so that we now rejoice in the gospel that tells us about God's Son, Jesus Christ, the revealer of the Father.

The revealer of the Father. Now we might have been taken to this point in different ways. I am not saying that we are all taken in the same way.

but this is the actual point. When you and I attain to just views of God, or right views of God, and in attaining to these right views of God, it changes out the views that we have on every other subject.

And that's the wonder of the transformation. We now see, begin to see, everything in relation to this God.

[21 : 43] Our way of thinking is totally transformed. And so we know are no longer walking in darkness, but we know have the light of life.

What do we mean by the light of life? Well, it means far more than what I am going to bring before you, but this is part of it. The light of life takes us back to the creation when God created man and woman.

And here we are without any true knowledge of God, and suddenly the light shines, and we suddenly see what the purpose for our lives is, to glorify this God.

our lives being purposeless, our lives now becomes purposeful.

And we rest in the revelation that has been given to us. And we know that from the one our lives are to be lived out, endeavoring to glorify this God, endeavoring to glorify this God.

[23 : 15] God, we are no longer walking in darkness, but we have the light of life. The blindness has been taken away, it's been removed.

Our wrong thinking has been corrected. And every question that we had about God and about life in relation to God is no answer.

it's no answer. All the wrong thinking is corrected.

Every question, foolish and otherwise, may be the way of, but they know, receive an answer.

And a Scottish theologian put it beautifully about this light. it's a beautiful illustration. He said that this light is like the sun. The sun reveals itself.

[24 : 35] And when the sun reveals itself, it reveals everything else. It reveals everything else. You think about the sun rising during the morning, dispelling the darkness, darkness.

And the first thing the sun is revealing is itself. And then everything else that was hidden from you is also revealed. And that is what this light is like.

Which takes us to the final thing that we have, the light, light and love. No, this, when this light, comes, as scripture very clearly brings before us, this light brings with it knowledge.

Knowledge of God. Knowledge of the glory of God revealed by Jesus Christ. And none of us can commit to possession of this light without believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Without first believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. And this light is without corruption. It is pure.

[25 : 59] It does not lie. It is truth. And it produces the fruit of holy conduct within our lives.

sin. We are no longer at home with sin. We are no longer at home with the things that are contrary to God.

We are no longer at home with a life that walks contrary to the scriptures. of the Old and New Testament. We want to bring your lives in line with the Word of God.

Our true knowledge of God influences our lives so much that it awakens holy desires within our hearts.

We desire to be like God. We desire to be like Christ. And that is a holy desire. That is a holy desire.

[27 : 25] love. And we will never be comfortable with what we are ourselves until finally we attain to the complete likeness of Jesus Christ our Savior.

love. And through knowledge of God leads to love for God which is a great transformation from enmity towards God which we were giving place to within our hearts while we were in that darkness.

and through knowledge of God also leads to us being at one with God's mind and with God's will.

Why? Well if you go back to the chapter that we were reading this morning from which the question was taken. Why are we at one with God's will and mind?

Because we have been given the mind of Christ. we have been given the mind of Christ. How do we know that?

[28 : 47] Because we have a burden for the lost. We love the Lord's people but we also love every other person even our enemies and we would not and we do not desire that any of them would end up in a lost eternity.

We have the mind we have been given the mind of Christ. Was that not why he came into the world to save? God's love.

And then there is this. It is impossible for any one of us to be in possession of this knowledge of God without that producing a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory within our lives.

we rejoice in God we rejoice in Christ we rejoice in the word of God after all this is life eternal to know the one and only through God and Jesus Christ who may ascend and therefore this life produces three things and you cannot to these three things that I'm going to be up you cannot to them yourselves produces three things one is a desire for holiness second one is joy that is unspeakable and full of glory third it produces a love for God a love for Jesus Christ a love for God's people a love for God's word everything that has

God's name stamped upon it we love and this light will not produce perfection while we are in this world but yet this light is real and it produces growth in the lives of all those that it has touched we grow in grace and in knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and also this light can never be put out it can never be extinguished and as Archbishop Leighton was putting it he said old inheritance the new Jerusalem does not need the light of the sun or the moon to shine on it because the glory of the

[31 : 54] Lord does lighten it and the lamb is the light of it and this uncreated light he says is the contentment of our souls the beginnings of it are the beginnings of our joy when it touches our lives it is the beginnings of our joy the beginnings of it are the beginnings of our joy and the beings of it he says as they are sent from above leads us to the fountain and its fullness and then he quotes Psalm 36 with you is the fountain of life and in you light we see light scripture is beautiful isn't it in you light we see light till the light of

God comes and shines within our heart we remain in darkness and we finally end with us and that is that we cannot produce this light ourselves by exercising the gifts that we have or the abilities that we have no matter how great they are we cannot produce it it's a gift from God and he gives us understanding God himself gives us understanding to understand the revelation that he is giving to us he opens our hearts giving us the capacity to love himself so that we are enlightened we are sanctified and we are blessed by this revelation revelation by this revelation and it is this knowledge that leads to wisdom and it is the enjoyment of God that gives one through contentment what we were talking about before about the uncertainty and the discontentment once that uncertainty was clouding your lives but now when we are brought to enjoy

God we suddenly find true contentment and this light is marvelous it's marvelous because it enables me and you to see the invisible and the eternal we see the king in all his beauty and the land that is afar what is invisible what is eternal it enables us to see Christ it enables us to see God and it enables us to rejoice in the Holy Spirit the unseen and the eternal and it also shows up it also shows up the things that are visible and are temporal for what they are they are shapeable things they are perishable things they will pass with using and this light enables us to distinguish between reality and fantasy the reality of God do you remember do you remember yourself when this light shone within your heart and you subtly had no doubts whatsoever that God exists and that he is the rewarder of all intelligently seeking do you remember that time when you subtly came upon this great discovery

God God is alive God is real Christ is alive Christ is real and suddenly your whole world was changed and you wanted nothing you wanted nothing but more and more and more of this Christ and of this God and the other thing the final thing that this light does it transforms our hearts which were nothing but wilderness it transforms our hearts into a fruitful garden rich in the fruits of righteousness and it is those of us who have that light and who confess to have this light that should be partaking in the

Lord's Supper in the next Lord's Day coming and if this light has shone in your life then it is true that your place is at that table deny not the light that God has gifted to you and may he bless to us these few thoughts on his world let us pray me I will I will.

[38 : 29] I will start je■eli would you