

# First Peter – Connections and Complexity!

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] We're going to look tonight from verse 18 through to the end of the chapter at these verses. Perhaps we'll just read through them. That's 1 Peter chapter 3 and at verse 18. We can read from verse 17 because it flows into verse 18. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is eight persons, were brought safely through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

Well, I've given this title this evening, as you can see from your bulletin sheet, the title of Connections and Complexity, because the passage is full of connections. It does make connections with Noah. It makes connections with the previous passages that we saw in 1 Peter, with the other parts of chapter 3 particularly, but it's also complexity as well as connections, because this is an exceedingly difficult passage, and there are aspects to it that we cannot be absolutely sure about in terms of what exactly is meant. That doesn't mean we should leave it alone, and as I've said a number of times, doing this kind of study of a letter and doing it in some detail means that we have to try and, with God's help, reckon with passages in the Bible that otherwise we might tend to leave aside and not really look at because we might think that, well, they're just too complex, there's just too much uncertainty in it, and we mustn't treat any of God's Word like that, because every part of God's Word is given to us, however difficult it may be to understand, so that by a proper study and help from others, and especially by the guidance of God Himself, we can draw something from these difficult passages that will be of help to us also in our own lives today. One thing we must do always is keep all the passages of God's Word that we look at in their context. In other words, we're not going to lift this, it wouldn't be right for us just to lift this passage out and look at it in itself or look at something of the theological points or other points that Peter makes as if it had no relation to the rest of the letter. It's obviously something that Peter included with a view to instructing or guiding or encouraging those that he was writing to, and indeed we'll see that there are some very close connections with their circumstances in the world that we've already seen as we've gone through 1 Peter, are circumstances of real difficulty, and persecution even it seems at times, because they are suffering for what they believe, they are suffering for doing good, and Peter is bringing them this encouragement and this advice and this counsel that that, as in verse 17, is far better than if we should actually suffer for doing evil. We saw the example of Christ Himself as fitting into that in verse 18 last time.

Then he goes on to speak about Christ again, but in a very much more difficult framework, as we've said. The two things we can divide it into, just to try and help us understand it, the two things we're going to look at is how it refers to Christ's preaching to the Noahic generation, that's the generation of Noah. Christ's preaching to the Noahic generation, because that's really what it says, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because formerly they did not obey when God's patience waited in the days of Noah. So it's a reference to the days of Noah and Christ actually going to preach to that generation of Noah, and we need to look at some of the detail of that and see what exactly is meant by that and how we can understand that. And secondly, he moves on to speak of baptism and its link with the Noahic flood, because here he says baptism, verse 21, which corresponds to this, that's the water of the flood, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience.

And in some ways we would like to actually extract that and just look at it on its own, but it is really important because the passage is so tightly bound together and the thoughts are actually so much interacting with one another that we can actually hopefully deal with it in one sitting, as it were, and just look at the main points. And then we'll look thirdly at the helpfulness of these points for Peter's readers and hopefully for ourselves, and how these points will be helpful to us in our circumstances as well. Well, let's seek with God's help to work our way through these verses. Christ's preaching to the Noahic generation. Well, he says in verse 18, Christ suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God. And we saw something of that last time, and he then goes on to speak, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit.

Now, what does he mean by that? Because that's the way that he begins then to introduce what follows, that Christ was put to death in the flesh. That's reasonably easy to understand, but then alongside of that he is saying that he was made alive in the Spirit. And we have to take that as a reference in its own way to the resurrection of Christ. On the one hand, he was put to death. On the other hand, he was made alive, and he was made alive in the Spirit or by the Spirit. And what is it that he's saying here to us in regard to the comparison between being put to death in the flesh and being brought or made alive or quickened in or by the Spirit? It doesn't mean that what he's doing here is comparing in terms of Christ's humanity, that he was put to death in his flesh in the bodily sense, but that his spirit, his soul, his human soul remained alive. It's a comparison between what we say his death and his resurrection. And in fact, it seems best that we would have a capital S on that word of the Spirit, because the Bible does speak, does teach us in a number of places, particularly in the Roman epistle, the epistle to the Romans, and at the beginning of Romans, how Jesus is described there as the one about whom the gospel really is. He is the substance of the gospel. And Paul is saying,

[ 7 : 48 ] I have been set apart for this gospel of God, which concerns his Son. And then he talks about two phases of Christ's experience or ministry. The first phase is that he was descended from David according to the flesh.

That's the first phase, right up to his death. But then he says, Now, briefly, that really seems to indicate that Jesus was declared, the word way better, as an inauguration. Rather than a declaration, it's an inauguration. Think of an inauguration like, for example, years ago, when Prince Charles was inaugurated in Carnarvon Castle as the Prince of Wales. It was a formal occasion, though he was designated to be the Prince of Wales. Strictly speaking, he entered into that office, if you like, or that role at that point of his inauguration.

And what Paul is saying is that for the Lord, for Jesus, on the one hand, he had a phase to his ministry in this world that ended with his death. And the second phase began with his resurrection.

And his resurrection established him not as the Son of God, but as the Son of God in power. As the Son of God with the power that overcame death, he was inaugurated into that phase of ministry by the Spirit of God in the Spirit's role in his resurrection. Now, these are things which are mysterious, and the Lord refers to it there. It doesn't mean we understand everything about it. But it brings us very precious references to the way in which God as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, how he was involved in terms of his three persons in our salvation, and not least in the resurrection and the ministry of Jesus. The Father sent the Son, the Son willingly came, the Spirit endowed him, and the Spirit has a role in his rising from the dead. Now, come back to Peter, where you find that he was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit, in the spiritual realm, in the realm of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit's jurisdiction or ministry. He was made alive in that regard. He overcame death by resurrection and by resurrection in the Spirit or by the Spirit. So, we can follow it reasonably well, I think, up to that point because that's backed up by the Romans passage that I've mentioned. But then he goes on to say, in which or by which he went. Now, he's still talking about Jesus, still talking about the Lord, but in which refers to the Spirit. And if we take it as the Holy Spirit, then take that with you into the way that verse 19 develops. In which Spirit, you could say, he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison. Proclaimed is a word that means really preaching. It's used elsewhere in the New Testament very often for preaching the gospel, for announcing the salvation that God has prepared.

So, let's look at how this develops. And first of all, we have to work out what is meant by the spirits in prison. Who are the spirits in prison? Some interpreters, commentators take it that this is a reference to angels, that they are now kept in prison, angels that are not good angels, that they're kept there until the day of judgment when all will be revealed by God. But that really doesn't fit with what Peter is saying in relation to these spirits in prison because he talks about them formerly in the days of Noah not obeying. And that's not obeying the message that God sent by Noah to that generation. And there's nowhere in the Bible, as far as we know, that speaks about angels disobeying the message of the gospel. So, this is talking about human beings and referring to them as spirits in prison because as Peter wrote this letter, they were in a lost eternity. They had refused the message of God through Noah as a preacher of righteousness, as we'll see in a moment.

[ 12 : 35 ] And because of their refusal, they were swamped, they were overcome in the deluge of the flood, as we read in Genesis, as God's judgment of the world of that day. Very clear from Genesis that that's what happened. God had actually foretold that through Noah. God had specified this was what he was going to do. And yet this is what many people disregarded. So, we take it that in prison means in the place of the lost.

There is an interpretation that says that after his resurrection or even in the time between his death and resurrection, that Jesus went and preached to those in hell. It's called the descent into hell.

And that preaching, some people would regard it as giving a second opportunity to those who are in prison in a lost eternity to change their ways and to come to know God. Now, there's no evidence at all in the Bible. In fact, it's the other way about, of a second chance being given to people once they leave this world. So, we don't accept that interpretation. And that's one of the reasons why we cannot.

What this is saying to us, as far as we can see, and it's the best interpretation that I've come across and all the different interpretations that exist, that Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, who was active in Noah's day, actually went and preached to those people who are now, as Peter writes, in prison in a lost eternity, held there forevermore, even when the judgment takes place, they will not have the opportunity again of salvation. It's the place of the lost. It's the place in which they have their abode while this letter was being sent by Peter to these suffering Christians. So, you remember, we read actually in chapter 6 of, well, I think it's actually before the part that we read in Genesis chapter 6, where God was revealing to Noah how he would actually come and destroy the earth with a flood, where he said, where he saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, where he said in verse 3 of chapter 6,

It's, my spirit shall not always strive with man. Or it's translated here, abide in man forever, for he is flesh. I think it's better in the old translation, my spirit will not always strive with man in that his days are 120 years.

[ 15 : 23 ] It's referring to that generation. For 120 years, while Noah was building his ark, they heard the gospel. They heard the message of salvation. They heard through this Noah as a preacher of righteousness that there was salvation if they turned to God.

And that generation, apart from these eight in the ark, all perished. They're in prison in the place of the lost, as Peter writes.

So, how did Jesus proclaim to them? Well, he proclaimed because he existed, of course, as the Son of God. He existed in his deity before the world was even created.

And because he is revealed as the mediator, the Savior, it's quite proper that Peter should represent him as through the Spirit in Noah's day, proclaiming a message of salvation, of repentance, and of judgment, and of doom if people didn't do that, to that generation.

And that's why it's saying here that he proclaimed this to the spirits in prison. Noah's ministry in 2 Peter, it refers to Noah in 2 Peter 2 and verse 5, where it speaks about God not preserving the ancient world, but, sparing the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher or a herald of righteousness, with seven others when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly.

[ 17 : 01 ] There's Noah, he's mentioned specifically as a herald, a preacher of righteousness. Righteousness. Righteousness was the theme of his message. Righteousness was the topic that he majored on to a world that was corrupt in his own day, pointing them to the righteousness of God, pointing them to the righteousness they ought to have in relation to God.

But they're now in prison because, it says here, who formerly disobeyed, because they formerly, or in former times, did not obey when God's patience waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared.

What was it that Noah preached? Well, we can tell from the fact he's called a preacher of righteousness, and the context in which he was set in his day, that he actually preached a message of righteousness, a message that emphasized the holiness of God, the righteousness of God, the claims of God, the wickedness of rebellion against God, the seriousness of sinning against God, of deliberately rejecting the message that God had sent.

And you do notice how, in relation to their disobedience, it points out very clearly God's patience.

All the time that they went on sinning, filling the world with violence and with wickedness, encouraging one another in ungodliness, God was waiting patiently.

[ 18 : 40 ] God was actually saying to them, I'm here for you. Through Noah, he was declaring himself as a patient God, while the patience of God waited in the days of Noah.

In other words, although it was such a long time, relatively speaking, compared to our days of 120 years, here they were listening to this message of God through Noah, a message of righteousness, of repentance, a message in which the patience of God was evident.

Yet only eight went into the ark and were saved. God gave them plenty time to turn and to change and to heed the message, and they didn't do it.

That's what he's doing right up to the present day. That's what he's doing tonight with you and with me. If we haven't yet come to accept the Lord for ourselves, if we haven't yet come to repent of our sin, to turn to God, to find Him as our Savior, to trust in Him, to trust our lives and our eternity to Him, don't you see how patient God has been with you right up to the present day?

And even as Christians, isn't God patient with us every day as well? Don't we come every day to acknowledge our failures, to acknowledge how far short we come of what He expects us to be and requires us to be?

[ 20 : 12 ] But He's patient. He doesn't just wipe us away. He doesn't say, well, that's it, I'm done with you. Patience of God. And that's one of the things that comes through even in the ministry of Jesus.

Look through the Gospels and see how patient Jesus was in dealing with people who refused Him, who ridiculed His claims, who eventually ended up calling for His crucifixion.

The patience of God. But now, if you're not saved here tonight, the patience of God is not brought before you so that you will delay.

It was delay that led to the overthrow, to the destruction, to the death of the majority of Noah's generation.

It was delay in regard to the words that they were receiving from this preacher of righteousness. And because they delayed and did not accept that message, they perished.

[ 21 : 17 ] Don't delay. Don't put it past tonight. That's what this is saying to us.

Delay leads to death. The patience of God is not so that we will delay, but so that we will see God and admire Him in His patience and say, Lord, You have been so patient with me.

And I know that Your patience has not been something that I have respected up to now. But Lord, where would I be tonight if You had not been patient with me?

And so, Lord, help me to trust in You, to accept You, to receive You, to honor Your patience with me by giving myself to You as You call upon me in the Gospel.

So, there is the spirits in prison by which He proclaimed, by the Spirit of God, He proclaimed to them, and they formerly, in those days, they disobeyed despite the fact that God's patience waited in these days of Noah while the ark was being prepared.

[ 22 : 39 ] And He goes on to say, which a few, that is eight persons, were brought safely through water. That's not really a very accurate translation, actually. It's better something like water in which eight people were saved by water, saved through water.

And that's also very difficult to understand what that means. But if you think of the water of the flood conducting those in the ark and the ark itself onwards to safety, and that's one way we could understand it, that the waters of the flood conducted the ark safely to its resting place, finally, until, and it remained there until the water subsided.

So, the water was instrumental. The same water that had actually come to overflow the wicked in the world was the same water that upheld the ark and delivered it safely to its resting place.

That's one way of looking at it, and it's really the only way I can make sense of it anyway myself. And if you have a better view than that or a way that looks at it differently, I'd be glad if you could actually tell me, because there may very well be a better way of understanding it, but that's one way we can.

So, there's Christ preaching to the Noahic generation, and there's a lesson for us in terms of God's patience, of the message of the gospel, of God saying, this is an urgent matter, it's a serious thing, don't delay in the matter of your soul.

[ 24 : 14 ] Well, secondly, he then goes on, it's connected to that, in which eight persons were brought safely through or by water, baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, or again, you could translate the appeal of a good conscience to God.

So, what is this actually saying? Well, there's a correspondence between the water of the flood of Noah's day as conducting this ark to safety, and the water that's used in baptism.

Let me say, it's not, to my mind, at least, it's not an indication of a flood of water to be used in baptism. It doesn't actually mean that we require people to be immersed, though that is, according to our confession itself, for those that use it an acceptable way of baptizing, though we use pouring or sprinkling as more appropriate.

But anyway, it's what baptism itself signifies. It doesn't mean that baptism itself conveys anything of spiritual power or significance. The Lord says here, baptism now saves you, you can see the way that connected with that is through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In other words, it's what baptism signifies. And what does baptism signify? We're not dealing with whether it's adult baptism or child baptism, that's a different area of study in baptism.

[ 25 : 46 ] We're dealing with the nature of baptism itself, what baptism itself signifies and means to us. And he says, it's not something outward, it's not something that is actually applicable, although it's applicable outward, it's applied outwardly, but it's not, in terms of what it means, confined to what is outward.

It's not for a removal of dirt from the body as he puts it here. But it is, he says, the appeal of a good conscience toward God. Now then, that's, again, something that's a bit complex, but baptism signifies union with Christ, it signifies washing from our sin, from the defilement of sin, it signifies God's forgiveness and God's sanctifying of us or washing us from our sins.

And that doesn't mean that a person who comes to seek baptism or parents coming for child baptism need to demonstrate that person being baptized is absolutely sure of their salvation.

This is really something that sets out in baptism and what happens in baptism as a covenant sign, and it's saying to us the salvation that God is pledging to his people, that God is making available in Christ, it's yours if you take it.

It's yours if you have it. It's yours if you trust in Christ. And that's what baptism signifies to us. It doesn't convey that salvation. It doesn't even necessarily mean the person baptized is there and then saved, but they're made members of the visible church and have access to the promises of salvation in Christ.

[ 27 : 30 ] And God is saying that's yours if you take Christ, if you take that salvation. And it raises the question always, doesn't it, about our baptism, whether we were baptized as infants or adults.

It raises this question we should be putting to ourselves all the time. Am I in reality in my life, in my lifestyle, in my relation to God, am I what my baptism signifies to me?

Do I know for myself personally what it means to be washed from my sins? Have I come to accept the Christ who is central to God's covenant promises?

And therefore, do I have in my possession forgiveness of sins, the washing from my sins by the Holy Spirit that comes with Christ and having Christ?

That's a question for every single one of us, however long we've been on our journey and whatever experiences we've had. So, he's saying baptism, which corresponds to this in terms of water, now saves you through the resurrection of Christ.

[ 28 : 45 ] Christ's resurrection that provides the efficacy, the power to cleanse us from our sin and baptism is symbolic or representative of that.

This Christ where he says the appeal of a good conscience. Now, if you reflect back to verse 16, you can see there that he refers there to giving an account of the hope of the hope that's in us, but doing it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience so that when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

Go back to chapter 2 and you'll find there in verse 12 where you find keep your conduct honorable among the Gentiles so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

And then verse 20 of chapter 2, for what credit is it if when you sin and are beaten for it you endure, but if you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God.

In other words, Peter is saying this is something you need to take with you into your situation of suffering, of doing good and yet suffering because of it. You're God's people.

[ 30 : 07 ] You carry in your baptism God's own promise that you are His people, that He will look after you, that forgiveness is yours, that you have privileges above other people, and that good conscience in a lifestyle that seeks to follow Christ and the example that He set just as we've mentioned in these verses I've just quoted, that's the connection in these passages with this passage we're looking at tonight.

The appeal of a good conscience which says, Lord, I know that I'm not what I should be but I know I'm seeking, striving to live for You and I know it's difficult, surrounded by opposition and I know the bite of the world and I know the suffering that goes along with being faithful to You.

but that appeal of my conscience in regard to that, a good conscience, is something that's reflected in my baptism because my baptism sets out what I seek to be and what I should be as a Christian.

The appeal of a good conscience and he mentions Jesus Christ as having gone to heaven and is at the right hand of God. It's all related ultimately to Christ, to His resurrection and to His present position.

And of course, this would be precious as it is to ourselves but especially to people who are suffering persecution. It's Jesus Christ who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to Him.

[ 31 : 56 ] And what comfort and what encouragement that is to people who are suffering for what they believe, suffering as Christians, persecuted for their faith, that they know that at the right hand of God the position of power and eminence in the whole universe belongs to Christ for whose sake they are suffering.

And not only that but in that position, angels, authorities, and powers have all already been subjected to Him.

And that goes back to His reference not to be afraid or intimidated by those who are your opponents because they are under the Lordship of Christ.

They are not in charge. They are not in charge of the world. They are not in charge even of their own lives. And certainly not in charge of the church or of the gospel. Jesus is.

That He is in charge of your sufferings, of your difficulties, of your trials because He is at the right hand of God even now. And angels and authorities and powers have been subjected to Him.

[ 33 : 10 ] So in summary, I mentioned some points where the helpfulness of Peter's points can actually be taken on board by us.

And you might say, well, wow, that's a passage. How can you find something helpful in that passage? I hope you've been able by God's help because that's how I have sought to set it before you.

I hope you've been able to understand sufficient of it and that my presentation has been clear enough although it's not my clarity or anything to do with me that makes it effective in your life.

I hope that God will have blessed it to us so that we'll see how even there in these difficult passages there's much for us. And if we can summarize in this way, what is it that we could take from this passage or that Peter's readers or the Christians that he was writing to could take?

Well, one thing, five points if I may conclude briefly. They're just bullet points. Noah and his family were a minority in the world of their day surrounded by hostility.

[ 34 : 14 ] And that's how it was for those that Peter was writing to. That's one of the links with Noah's time and why it's appropriate for him to have referred to Noah's time.

A minority of believers surrounded by hostility and yet kept by God and kept by God according to his promise.

That's how it is for us too. Sadly, we would rather the majority of people in our own communities and in our nation where Christians had come to accept Christ or followers of Christ, but they're not.

And we're surrounded by hostility of various kinds to the gospel and to Jesus and to ourselves as his church in the world.

That may vary in degree and it certainly is nothing like as bad for us as it is for the likes of Patrick Jock and his church in South Sudan we heard of recently.

[ 35 : 14 ] But that's one thing. A minority surrounded by hostility and yet kept by God. Second bullet point, Noah was a righteous man in an evil world.

In other words, it's possible by God's grace and God's help to live a holy life even if it's surrounded by rampant wickedness. And Peter is being, Peter is exhorting those that he's writing to as in verses 13 and 14 of this chapter, chapter 3 and then chapter 4 verses 3 and 4 where he says the time that is past is sufficient for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties and lawless idolatry.

These days are past, he says, for you and although you're surrounded by such debauchery, he's saying, you live as righteous people. God enables you to live a righteous life in an evil world.

Thirdly, related to that, Noah witnessed faithfully to those around him and that's what Peter encourages them to do as well, to live faithfully despite the suffering, despite the opposition.

Verse 14 and verses 16 and 17 there of chapter 3 mentions that as we've seen, how they have to give an account of the hope that is in them but do it with gentleness and with fear or respect for God.



[ 36 : 44 ] And then, fourthly, Noah proclaimed God's judgment to come. And so does Peter. More so in the second letter that he wrote in chapter 3 and verse 10 but it's also there in chapter 4 of this first letter where you find at verse 5 and verse 7 where he says there that they will give an account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

And verse 7, the end of all things is at hand. Therefore, be self-controlled and sober-minded. Above all, keep loving one another earnestly. Peter is saying just in the way that Noah was saying there is a judgment coming.

The people of Noah's day dismissed it. They thought, where's the sign of his coming? Where's the sign of this? We've been here for 120 years. No one. There's no sign of this.

But it came. It came in God's time. It came at exactly the moment that God had himself set from all eternity.

Most people in the world today probably have little thought of the end of the world and of the judgment that arrives with the arrival of Christ. but we know it.

[ 38 : 07 ] We believe it. And we must prepare for it. And we must live now as if that judgment was tonight because it's definite.

And Peter is encouraging us as well as his readers to take due account of the fact that we must all appear as Paul puts it before the judgment seat of Christ.

And finally, fifthly, Noah was saved out of the deluge of the flood. And so will they and so will we because Christ has already triumphed.

He is at God's right hand. Angels, principalities, authorities, powers are subject to him already. He's the master. He's the boss.

He's the governor. He's the Lord. Lord, because he has triumphed. He is one of the great promises in the Bible. Because I have overcome, you will overcome also.

[ 39 : 09 ] Your salvation is certain when you're trusting in Christ. It's not an uncertain thing. I'll speak in a moment about Islam. And one of the things that is characteristic of Islam is that you cannot have assurance of salvation.

A salvation in Islam is by works, by rituals. And however hard you work at it, you can never be sure that that is actually going to be greater than the whole weight of your sins.

Now, in Jesus, there is no such question. He has already overcome. He's paid the price of sin. He's paid our debt.

He's died the death that atoned for sin. And God has fully accepted all of what he has done. That's why he's exalted him to his right hand.

And tonight, as you experience what it is to live for Christ and something of the difficulties of that, be assured of this, that your triumph is also something to be sure of.

[ 40 : 20 ] As Paul put it in Romans 8, we are more than conquerors. We are hyper-conquerors through him who loved us.

And you cannot have a greater triumph than that. May God bless his word to us. Lord, we pray that you would continue to bless your word and that you would bless us further in this evening as we meet together in fellowship.

We pray that you would bless us there and bless what we will receive for our bodily needs as well. We thank you for the food we receive. for the way in which we have such plenty from day to day.

Grant mercy, we pray, as we continue to wait upon you for Jesus' sake. Amen. Well, our final psalm this evening is Psalm 68, a psalm which celebrates the ascension of Christ, his resurrection followed by his ascension to glory and his procuring of great gifts for his people.

And you'll notice that one of the great gifts is the gift that God himself might dwell amongst them. And in New Testament terms, that means the dwelling of the Holy Spirit who has been a feature of our study this evening.

[ 41 : 40 ] Page 303 and at verse 18, thou hast, O Lord, most glorious, ascended up on high and in triumph victorious, led captive captivity.

Thou hast received gifts for men for such as did rebel, yea, even for them that God the Lord in midst of them might dwell. So, Psalm 68, verses 18 to 20 to God's praise.

in Captived with him I was received With requirement For such a state Rebelled In for them That called the Lord In midst of them I dwell

Blessed be the Lord Who is to us Of our salvation gone In any word His benefits As plenteously Doth the Lord He of salvation Is the God Who is our God Most strong And unto God The Lord From death The issues To belong I'll go to the main door again this evening

Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ The love of God the Father And the communion of the Holy Spirit Be with you Now and evermore Amen Amen