

1 Peter 1

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[0 : 00] We turn again to the same passage that we looked at this morning, but looking this evening at verses 10 to 12.

Verses 10 to 12 of 1 Peter. Peter had been speaking to the people of that inexpressible joy that comes to the believer.

And that joy that comes to him because of his knowledge of Christ and because of his hope of salvation. Now, Peter then wants to remind these people of what it was that had caused this great joy.

He talks to them about the gospel. He talks about the preaching of the gospel that had come to them. And he wants to insist that this gospel, this good news, this message that had come to them was not something new.

It was not something that he had dreamed up. It wasn't something that he and Paul and the other apostles had somehow dreamed up in order to get them away from Judaism.

[1 : 31] It wasn't that somehow this was a new sect or a new doctrine or something that was strange and wonderful.

He wants to show them that the gospel that he was preaching, because remember that most of these people were converted Jews.

Most of them were living in areas where there was a large Jewish community. And so he wanted to stress to them that this gospel, this new thing that they were hearing about, was in reality nothing new.

That it came from the Jewish faith. It came from the past. Not something invented by him or by the other apostles.

And then he goes back to the Old Testament to show that the salvation in which they rejoiced was the same salvation that had been in the plan and purpose of God from the earliest days.

[2 : 41] And it was indeed something that the prophets and the patriarchs and those who had gone before had proclaimed. This is one and the same teaching.

I think sometimes in our modern days we are sometimes in danger of going to the opposite extreme.

That we forget the roots of our faith. We forget that our gospel is rooted very firmly in the Old Testament.

And that what the patriarchs proclaimed, what the prophets preached, is the same gospel that we preach today.

And so the first thing that we see from these verses is the continuity of the gospel. The continuity of the gospel.

[3 : 43] In seeking to give that assurance to the people of God that would enable them to rejoice in adverse circumstances, the apostle Peter reminds them that the gospel that had come to them was the same gospel that had been preached by the prophets.

Look at what he says. Concerning the 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 the circumstances to which the spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

And we notice a couple of things here. We notice, first of all, the diligence of the prophets. The prophets, when they proclaimed, when they preached, when they taught the word of God, they were extremely diligent.

We mustn't think of the prophets as being simply some sort of channel through which this message came and then they proclaimed it and it left them completely untouched.

Not at all. As Peter says, they diligently inquired. They searched intently, trying to find out.
[5 : 14] For example, when Isaiah was proclaiming in Isaiah 53 about the sufferings of the Messiah, he genuinely wanted to know what it was all about.

Who it was referring to. When this was going to happen. Should he be looking for it? What signs would come? And so, the prophets, and included in the prophets, we have to think of the writers of the Psalms as well.

When you look at the Psalm that we read together from Psalm 22. Could the psalmist really have imagined what was going to happen?

When the psalmist wrote those words, and when the people of God sang those words in the Old Testament, could they really have understood what it was all about?

Now, we can look back and we can say, oh yes, this took place when Jesus was crucified. This took place because we have it looking back.

[6 : 25] But then, did they really understand what it was all about? Of course they didn't. But that did not prevent them seeking to find out.

They were very diligent, not only in their proclamation, but also in their investigation. Trying to find out what all this was about. And the prophets really desired to know what was happening.

They wanted to have an understanding of the salvation that was to come. They wanted to know when these things would happen. And it was no idle curiosity.

They wanted to have as clear a view as possible of this revelatory process. But, look at what Peter says.

It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you. I don't know about you, but I find that amazing.

[7 : 33] Here we see the provision of God. Here we see the provision of God for us here in Aberdeen in the year 2005.

God was thinking of us way back, eight centuries before the coming of Jesus Christ, when he gave the message to Isaiah.

And even before, when he gave the message to David. When David wrote Psalm 22. God, in giving the message to him, had you and me in mind.

Isn't that amazing? That God was thinking of us so many years ago. because he wanted us to know about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because he wanted us to know about the sufferings and the death of Christ. And that was revealed to the prophets. No wonder, Peter says, even angels long to look into these things.

[9 : 03] I find that amazing. I find it amazing that I know more than the angels. That's what he says.

If you're a Christian, you know more than the angels. You know about this salvation because you've experienced it. You know about this salvation because you have received it.

You know about this because you have the Holy Spirit living within you. The angels could only look on.

They could only look on and see and marvel at what God has done for you. They could only look on and be amazed that the almighty sovereign God would do that for people like us.

And we look back over thousands and thousands of years and here was God putting every single thing in place until it led to Monocord, Aberdeen, 2006.

[10 : 27] Isn't that amazing? But you see, that's what Peter says. He says, they were not serving themselves but you. The continuity of the gospel.

It's the same gospel. It's the same gospel that was first announced in the book of Genesis. It's the same gospel that Adam and Eve heard when God said that the seed of the woman will bruise the head of the serpent and the serpent will bruise the heel of the seed of the woman.

You see, it's the same gospel. There's not one gospel for the Old Testament and one for the New. there's not one gospel for Scotland and one gospel for Peru.

There's not one gospel for here and another gospel for Pakistan. It's one gospel. it's one gospel planned by God continued by God from the very beginning until the very end of time.

And that would give great assurance especially to these Jews because they might have felt that they were abandoning their religion. They were abandoning their faith.

[11 : 56] They were abandoning their heritage. Peter says, oh no. No. No. What you are doing is continuing to believe and to hear and to trust the same gospel.

The gospel that came to Adam, to Noah, to Abraham. The same gospel that was preached by the prophets. It's all the same. The second thing we want to look at is the character of this gospel. The apostle was reminding the believers that the salvation that enabled them to rejoice in adversity came to them through the gospel, through the preaching of the gospel.

And it was a gospel that proclaims a salvation that is of God. A salvation that is of God.

The context speaks of the work of the Spirit of God. not only in the proclamation of this gospel, but the salvation itself.

[13 : 04] It's one that had been planned in the purposes of the eternal God. We'll come back to this in a moment. It's a salvation that is gracious.

That is to say, it is not merited by man, neither does it have its origin in man, it is all of grace.

We'll come back to that. But then, it is a salvation that is revealed. Now, this is amazing.

Whenever you go in the world, no matter how far away, no matter how remote the place, you find the same thing.

Many years ago, when I first went to Peru, before a lot of you were born, when I first went to Peru in 1968, I did a trip with a colleague from another mission to the Amazon River.

[14 : 24] We crossed the Amazon River in a dugout canoe and we went to the far side of the Amazon and we were looking for a particular tribe.

It was a group of people called the Yagua. Now, there were some Yagua people living close to Iquitos, the city, but we were looking for a particular village.

And we traveled for two days up a tributary of the Amazon in this dugout canoe until we reached this village of the Yagua.

Yagua. They couldn't speak Spanish, I couldn't speak Yagua, but we wanted to go to see if there was any possibility of establishing work in that particular area.

Now, these people were remote. They were isolated. They couldn't read, they couldn't write, they had none of the things that we take for granted in our lives.

[15 : 42] But you know what they did have? They had faith. Oh, not faith in the living God.

They worshipped, just like us, but not the living and the true God. No, they worshipped their ancestors.

They worshipped the spirit of the boa constrictor. They worshipped the spirits of the forests. But they worshipped.

They had a religion. They had a faith. And wherever you go in the world, men and women believe in something.

Men and women are reaching up after God. Now, they may be reaching up for a God of their own imagining.

[16 : 51] They may be reaching up for a God that they have made themselves. After all, doesn't the prophet give us an illustration of that? He says, you get these people and they cut down a tree.

And here you have a lovely tree trunk. So you cut it in half. And half of it you throw on the fire.

And it keeps you warm. and you can say, oh, that's great, that's lovely. From the other half, you carve an idol.

And you put this idol in place, and you bow down to this idol, and you worship it, and you say, oh my God, save me. How stupid is that?

Half of this log you put on the fire, and from half of the log you make an idol, and you treat it as your God?

[18 : 04] The point is that everywhere people are reaching up for a God. But you see, the salvation, the salvation that is spoken of here, is not a salvation that man reaches up and finds God.

No, it's God reaching down to man. It's God looking upon man and reaching down to man, saying, look, here it is.

You don't have to strive, you don't have to work, you don't have to imagine, it's here. It is a salvation that is revealed.

And right the way through the pages of the word of God, we have it revealed. You remember back in Genesis, Adam and Eve walked before God they were naked and they were not ashamed and then they fell into sin and what's the first thing they did?

They ran away and they hid from God and God's response is very significant. He calls for Adam and Eve in the garden.

[19 : 27] Adam, where are you? Do you think God didn't know where Adam was? Adam, where are you? And Adam says, I heard your voice in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked.

It had never bothered him before. When he walked with God in the garden, his nakedness had never bothered him before because he was pure and clean in the sight of God.

But when he sins, he becomes aware of his own uncleanness and his own wickedness and so he hides from God. And what does God do? God provides a covering for him.

We read in that chapter in Genesis that God prepared a covering of skins for Adam and Eve.

Now how did he do that? How did he provide a covering of skins? Were there some old skins lying about that suddenly God took?

[20 : 49] Of course not. You see, before Adam sinned, there was no death. There was no death.

But then, when Adam and Eve sinned, death became not only a certainty, but a necessity.

Because you see, when God provided a covering of skins for Adam, he got those skins from an animal whose blood had been shed.

And so you have, in this early chapter of Genesis, you have the very first animal sacrifice, the very first blood sacrifice.

And the reason for that blood sacrifice was so that Adam and Eve could be covered from the sight of God. God provided salvation for his people.

[21 : 57] And you can go all the way through the Old Testament. Look at the Ark of Noah. God provided salvation for his people. And so right through the Old Testament, through the promises, through the law, through the prophecies, and finally to the Lord Jesus Christ.

this is a salvation revealed. You see, God didn't reveal it all at once because man couldn't take it in. But bit by bit, little by little, he reveals his way of salvation from that first blood sacrifice to the acceptance of the sacrifice of Abel and the rejection of Cain's sacrifice because Cain did not offer a blood sacrifice.

all the way through the giving of the law, the sacrificial law which pointed forward to Christ. Here we have a salvation that was revealed.

Not man reaching up to God, but God reaching down to man. Isn't that truly amazing?

[23 : 20] that the sovereign God, the almighty ruler of the universe would reach down to us.

And then we also have here the content of the gospel. Concerning the salvation, the prophets who spoke of the grace that was to come to you searched intently and so on 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.

There is two things here and this is the gospel. the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

This glorious salvation predicted in the Old Testament, proclaimed in the New Testament, preached in the gospel today, is brought about through the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ.

the sufferings were planned before they happened. The prophets saw them and taught them, even although they did not always understand the implications of what they were preaching.

[25 : 08] You see, if the prophets, and look at Psalm 22 that we read together, when you read Psalm 22, what do you have? You have the fact of the crucifixion.

You have the fact of the garments of Christ being divided by lot. God, how could they have known that unless it had been planned from beforehand?

How could they possibly know that? How could they possibly know that God's Messiah would be crucified? because God had planned the time of his coming and the manner of his death.

Every single part of the life, the ministry, the death, and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ had been planned beforehand.

And the prophets proclaimed it. they didn't understand the implications of what they were proclaiming.

[26 : 34] How could Isaiah, when he spoke of the servant of God, when he spoke of the suffering servant, how could Isaiah possibly have understood that the almighty God would take his only beloved son and cause him to be born into a world that would reject him?

How could they possibly understand that this spotless son of God would take upon himself the sins of God's people?

How could he possibly have understood that? The simple answer is that he didn't. And yet he proclaimed it.

And yet he taught it. For us. For our benefit. For our understanding. For our enlightenment. so that we would know the character and the content of this wonderful gospel that we proclaim. But he talks about something else.

[28 : 02] He says they proclaimed the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. And the two things are inextricably linked.

you cannot separate the sufferings from the glory. The glory was as certain as the suffering. If that had not been the case then the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ would have been for nothing. But you see this salvation that we proclaim is a salvation that from beginning to end is of God. Planned by God prophesied through the word of God brought about by the faithfulness of the Lord Jesus Christ from beginning to end.

The birth the life the teaching the sufferings the death and the resurrection were part of God's eternal plan for us.

For us. All the thousands of years that went before the coming of Christ were for us.

[29 : 36] Isn't it an amazing thought that all this progress and progression of history was for us.

So that we in 2006 might be able to know of the suffering and the glories of Christ.

So that we might be saved. that is the gospel. That is the gospel. No new thing.

The thing that began in Genesis was proclaimed through all the Old Testament scriptures that was brought to fruition in the life and the death and the resurrection of Jesus.

Proclaimed by the apostles. Proclaimed in the early years of the church through the dark ages, the middle ages and through to us.

[30 : 44] One gospel, one message, one Christ, one salvation. and so Peter says to them, this wonderful gospel, this glorious gospel that has come to you, will enable you to rejoice no matter what the circumstances are that you face.

When you know this Christ, when you have received this gospel, no matter what the circumstances are that you face, disappointment, persecution, suffering, illness, and ultimately death, this gospel enables you to rejoice.

Because all these things are passing. All these things are transitory. They're passing. but the one thing that remains is God's salvation.

Because salvation is to everlasting eternal life. And that's why Peter writes to these people. He says, look, you've got this wonderful salvation.

This wonderful salvation that came to you through the prophets, through all the Old Testament scriptures, and now you have it.

[32 : 23] It's a gospel we preach here. It's a gospel that you, as individual Christians, must preach. church. When you go to university tomorrow, you go with this gospel.

You go with this gospel. When you go to work tomorrow, you go with this gospel. When you talk to your neighbors tomorrow, you go with this gospel.

this glorious gospel, entrusted to us by God.

You see, the prophets announced it, but they didn't know it. The prophets announced it, but they didn't understand the full implications of it. But we do.

It's come to us in all its fullness, glory, in all its saving power. And we have it.

[33 : 32] And the question for us is, what are we going to do with it? What are we going to do with this gospel? Are we going to keep it for ourselves?

Or are we going to go to other men and women with this gospel? You remember the story in the Old Testament. When a city was being besieged and the people inside were dying, they had nothing to eat.

And there were a group of beggars, lepers, who were outside the city. They were between the besieging army and the starving city.

they had nothing to eat either. But God worked miraculously so that the besieging army departed, leaving everything in their camp.

And the lepers decided, they said, well, we're going to die. If we go into the city, we're going to die. If we stay here, we're going to die. So let's go to the enemy camp and perhaps, perhaps, they will save us.

[34 : 57] And so they go into the camp and they hear nothing. And they look around and they see nothing. There are no soldiers.

And they see everything abandoned. The tents are there. The weapons are there. food. And so they fall upon this food and they gorge themselves.

And then one says, you know, we're not doing a good thing here. Today is a day of good tidings. And we're keeping quiet about it. are we like those lepers, gorging ourselves on the good news of the gospel, which has come to us in the mercy and the grace of God.

And outside this building, there are men and women, young people, who are dying.

[36 : 36] There are men and women and young people who are starving to death because they don't have the word of God, because they don't know of the salvation that God has prepared.

And yet we have it. And yet we have it. How often have you been moved when you've seen on your television pictures of starving children in Africa?

But day by day, we walk past people who are starving to death. we walk past people every day who are but one breath from hell.

And we say nothing. And yet we have the gospel. The gospel that is able to save men and women. We have the good news. What are we doing with it? Let's pray. Gracious God, we thank you for the gospel.

[37 : 59] We thank you that it's no new thing, no invention of man. We thank you that from the very earliest days after the first sin, after the fall of man, you provided that salvation.

Salvation that was demonstrated in the types of the Old Testament, that was demonstrated in the sacrifices of the people of Israel.

A salvation that was predicted and prophesied by the Old Testament prophets. A salvation that was purchased by the Lord Jesus Christ.

a salvation that was finally accomplished in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. A salvation that has come to us through the gospel.

A salvation that has been presented to us freely, graciously, savingly, powerfully.

[39 : 12] O Lord God, while we praise you for that full and free salvation, while we praise you that the gospel has come to us, forgive us that we have kept this gospel so often to ourselves and that we have not shed it abroad as we should, that we haven't sought to rescue men and women perishing in their sins.

O Lord, forgive us and we pray that you would make us aware of the tremendous privilege that we have in having this gospel and Lord, give us grace, give us courage, that we might seek to share this gospel, to promote this gospel, to show men and women that there is life everlasting in Jesus Christ.

We pray that you would work upon us and in us by your Holy Spirit Rashid, that we might be found worthy and faithful servants.

In Jesus name we pray. Amen. Amen.