The Greatness Of Our Salvation
1 Peter 1:10-12

Introduction

In the opening chapter of Peter we have looked at the source of our salvation (vv.1-2); the guarantee of our salvation (vv.3-5); the joy of our salvation (vv.6-9); and now Peter looks at the greatness of our salvation. Peter will bring our attention to four viewpoints or four perspectives or four agents who were and are involved in the mystery and message of salvation; the Old Testament Prophets who studied it; the Holy Spirit who inspired it; the New Testament Apostles who preached it; and the angels who examined it (see John MacArthur; who I am indebted for this outline; The MacArthur New Testament Commentary; p.51).

The source of our salvation and the guarantee of our salvation and the joy of our salvation and the greatness of our salvation were all meant in part to provide; in part, a firm foundation, a solid basis on which to hold up under trial, suffering and pressure. We can live in hope.

Salvation: The Theme Of The Old Testament Prophets (vv.10-11a)

1 Peter 1:10 (NKJV) Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you,

“Of this salvation” . . .

What does the Bible mean by salvation? “. . .the whole work of God by which he rescues man from the eternal ruin and doom of sin and bestows on him the riches of His grace, including eternal life now and eternal glory in heaven” (see Major Bible Themes; Lewis Sperry Chager and John F. Walvoord; p.181; revised fifth printing 1975).

The whole work includes the progressive unfolding of the blessings of salvation. The Bible has a great deal to say about our salvation.

The Old Testament prophets could only see bits and pieces; types and shadows; concerning the coming of Messiah. Clearly there were prophecies surrounding his identity and birth; his grief (vv.10-11a) and glory (v.11b). The prophecies seemed to fall into two broad categories; things they understood, and things they did not understand! Salvation is always by innocent blood.

Hebrews 9:22 (NKJV) And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

The subject of salvation has been the object of prophetic inquiry; the prophets themselves were interested in the prophecies given to them by God. “have inquired and searched carefully” The prophets wanted to know the time and the circumstances of the coming Messiah (v.11a). Peter suggests the prophecies were in part given for a future generation. The mystery and mission of the Church was concealed in the Old Testament economy.
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(v.11a) “searching what, or what manner of time”. The time and the circumstances are further summarized by Peter in “the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow”. The sufferings and glories are written in Isaiah 53 and and the glories in Isaiah 9 and Isaiah 11. We could list the hundreds of prophecies and the fulfillment of those prophecies. But that would not be the point that Peter is trying to communicate. What is Peter’s point?

Your trial, your suffering, your heart-ache may create sorrow and set-back; yet we need not be discouraged. Your salvation is the fulfillment of the prophets inquiry. The Prophets desired to know the truth about what the believer’s under trial had been told; they wondered when the Messiah would come; what would the Messiah say and do? Clearly there was a foreshadowing of his death.

God has orchestrated your salvation before the foundation of the world; and is therefore prepared to preserve you; equip you; and provide for you; according to his perfect plan and purpose.

The prophets did not simply wonder, they searched the Scriptures (things written before and their own writings). The prophets wanted to understand the meaning and implications of God’s revelation to them and future generations.

Matthew 13:17 (NKJV) for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

The believers in the early church as well as the believers today have an enormous privilege; we have the benefit of the prophets writings; and the ability to understand them; in some ways better than the prophets themselves. Did the prophets prophecy about the life, and the death and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ? The answer is yes!

We are saved from the penalty of sin; we know salvation is the remedy for sin; we know salvation as the finished work of Jesus Christ; we know salvation as the saving work of God; we know that salvation is conditioned upon faith alone; we know that salvation brings freedom from the power of sin; we know that the law is not the rule of our life; but rather that grace is the rule of our life. We as children of grace know that every aspect of the law is now done away with; (see John 1:16; Rom. 6:14; 2 Cor. 3:1-18; Gal.19-25; Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:4).

God saves sinners by grace, and there is no other way of salvation offered to men (Acts 4:12). The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 4:12 (NKJV) Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

“Saving grace is the limitless, unrestrained love of God for the lost acting in compliance with the exact and unchangeable demands of His own righteousness through the sacrificial death of Christ. Grace is more than love; it is love set free and made to be a triumphant victor over the
righteous judgments of God against the sinner” (Major Bible Themes; Chafer and Walvoord; p. 193).

Salvation is always by grace (Eph.2:8-9; Titus 2:11). Salvation is always through faith (Rom. 5:1).

**Salvation: The Reoccurring Theme Of The Holy Spirit (vv.11b-12a)**

(v.11b) NKJV “...the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us”

Peter reiterates the truth “To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us.” We are the beneficiaries of the Prophets rich revelations.

The Spirit of Christ in the prophets of the Old Testament is another name for the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was present in the prophets in the past and the apostolic preaching (v.12). The Holy Spirit of Christ was “in them” “indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ”. What sufferings? His passion and death. Why would Jesus have to suffer? Because of our sin! Human beings are lost because of Adam’s sin. Human beings are lost because of their sin and their refusal to embrace Biblical revelation. Human beings are lost because they disobey God’s own moral governor placed inside each person’s conscience. We are lost because of our relationship to the world. We are lost because of our relationship with Satan. Human beings are ultimately lost because they have no relationship to God.

“The beginning of our salvation is from God the Father, the dispensation is from the Son, and the application from the Holy Ghost” (Thomas Manton).

Alan Redpath used to say; “The Holy Spirit’s great task is to carry on the work for which Jesus sacrificed his throne and his life--the redemption of fallen humanity.” I have said on many occasions; Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us, and the Holy Spirit has been sent to prepare us for that place.

**Salvation: The Theme Of The Apostle’s Preaching (v.12b)**

“but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--

Peter reminds them of the apostolic testimony; the message is the gospel; the messengers are “them that preached”; the method “announced” or preaching; and the might is by the Holy Spirit.

How did Peter view the Old Testament writers?
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Clearly Peter believes the Bible was written with a predictive element; the books were manifestly inspired by the Holy Spirit of God. Peter marks the unity between the Old and the New Testament; one looks forward (vv.10,11); one looks backward (v.12). Both are inspired by the Holy Spirit (vv.10;12).

Contrast that with modern views of the Old Testament. There is strong criticism and scholars who insist that Christians abandon the Apostle’s testimony concerning the inspiration and inerrancy of the Scripture.

I want to draw you attention to the phrase “through those who have preached the gospel to you”. Peter’s reference is to the Apostolic testimony.

The gospel can be summarized in the categories of his sufferings (that is death) and his glories (that is the resurrection from the dead, ascension into heaven and Pentecost; the coming of the Holy Spirit; v.12 “sent down from heaven”; the Holy Spirit). M.R. DeHaan rightly wrote; “Before an individual can be saved, he must first learn that he cannot save himself”.

Martin Lloyd-Jones wrote; “If man could have saved himself there would have been no need for the Son of God to come to earth. Indeed, his coming is proof that people cannot save themselves”.

Luis Palau echos the ancient sermons of the apostles in the past when he says; “Only in Jesus Christ do we have assurance of salvation, forgiveness of sins, entrance into God’s family, and the guarantee of heaven forever when we die”.

The gospel message is ripe with words that point to man’s sin and God’s ability to save. When the apostles would preach the gospel they preached repentance from sin (Matt.9:13; Acts 17:30); but faith in Christ (Acts 20:21; Eph.2:8-9). The writings of Paul and Peter and John focus on repentance, faith, regeneration, justification, adoption, sanctification and prayer.

People in sorrow focus on the pain, focus on the trial, focus on the deprivation; but Peter calls the believer to focus on the Lord; to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Comfort comes not by simply mastering the theological intricacies of salvation essentials. Comfort comes when we embrace and believe Peter’s message in the first chapter; we are being prepared for glory (vv.6-7); trials, persecutions and suffering meet needs; “If need be” (v.6b). We are not kept by our own power; or will power; but by the power of God. Salvation has created a bond; a bond where we are constantly being guarded by God; assuring us that we will safely arrive in heaven. We are kept for glory (v.5); we are prepared for glory (vv.6-7); we are kept in trial (vv.6-7). Peter has made it clear; we will experience trials; those trials aren’t necessarily east; but those trials are controlled by God. Glory is not something we simply anticipate for the future; but we can experience now. Peter tells us to love Jesus (v.8); trust Jesus (v.8); rejoice in Jesus (v.8); and receive from Jesus (v.8).
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1 Peter 1:8 (NKJV) whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

We love Jesus--not because we have seen Him with earthly eyes; but based on a real encounter with the resurrected Jesus; He has saved us from our sins. We have friendship and relationship based on the Word that was taught to us. The Holy Spirit poured God’s love inside our heart (Rom. 5:5).

Peter is in effect reminding the reader that the Holy Spirit entrusted godly men with a supernatural revelation; and a considerable amount of truth. But even then the revelation fell far short of what is available to the most humble and clueless New Testament believer. Peter moves from the disappointment of the prophets; to the dispensation of the church; to the desire of the angels!

Salvation: The Theme of Angelic Curiosity (v.12c)

(v.12c) “...things which angels desire to look into”.

I am sure that the angels are aware of the contemporary happenings on the planet earth. However the focus of their attention is not on current events; scientific breakthroughs; natural disasters; clean energy alternatives; psychiatric medicines; climate change or global wealth distribution. The vast amount of angelic curiosity is focused on the amazing salvation God has provided for human beings.

Our salvation is like a divine object lesson to the angels in heaven. Clearly the angels have always been interested in God’s dealing with the humans on the planet earth. The angels celebrated the creation of the world; they witnessed the fall of Satan; and witnessed the man’s fall in the Garden of Eden. Angels were ordered to guard the gate the tree of life. Angels visited Abraham (Gen.18) and rescued Lot (Gen.19). An angel assisted Hagar in the desert; and revealed themselves to Jacob from a ladder that stretched from earth to Heaven. Angels assisted the Lord in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and were present at the giving of the Law (Acts 7:53; Heb.2:2). Angels delivered Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego from the fiery furnace and perserved Daniel in the lion’s den. They appeared to Mary; angels told Joseph to marry the young virgin; and angels announced Jesus’ birth.

Angels will never have what the lowliest saint possess; forgiveness from God; and the grace of God. Angels aren’t redeemed or forgiven. Angels aren’t saved. The fact that you can be saved must bring a sense of wonder even to the angels.

Our salvation is not simply a doctrine to be learned; or a set of principles believed; our salvation provides the basis of joy, hope, love, gratitude, that gives us the basis to embrace grace; and manifest strength; the ability to love and trust Jesus.
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Conclusion

In the first chapter Peter wants us to consider the source of our salvation (vv.1-2); the guarantee of our salvation (vv.3-5); the joy of our salvation (vv.6-9); the greatness of our salvation (vv.10-12). We can praise God for our present hope and our future hope. Our salvation causes joy to well up inside of us; even in the presence of trials, sufferings, and setbacks. Our salvation is great and glorious; its greatness and glory is seen in the way in which God carefully communicates that salvation over all of human history; our salvation is great in the universal interest that it excites.

Peter will move the theme of his letter from hope to holiness (vv.13-21).