

Sunday, March 7, 2021 pm

STUDIES IN 1 PETER (6)
Prophesying of the Grace to Come
1 Peter 1:10-12

Tonight, we continue our study through the book of 1 Peter. We have been noticing Peter's opening encouragement to these brethren who are clearly paying a price for their faith. He has addressed our living hope through the resurrection of Jesus, our incorruptible inheritance reserved in heaven, and how we are kept (protected) by the power of God for salvation. In our last lesson, we addressed the first section dealing with the trials they were facing, noting how it proved their genuine faith, which will ultimately be revealed when the Lord returns and culminated in the salvation of our souls. Tonight, we note that this was in God's plans all along as we address the prophets.

I. The Prophet's inquiry

- a. **OF this salvation** – this is what our endurance is about. In previous lessons, we have addressed this, and it will be revisited in this letter. But here, Peter notes this is something that was in God's plan all along.
- b. **Who were the prophets?**
Prophets were direct messengers of God. Many foretold events that would come, while others addressed present circumstances (or both).
An interesting observation concerning this passage is whether Peter had in mind, Old Testament prophets, or perhaps more contemporary prophets, or both.
Clearly, we have the books of the prophets in the Old Testament, but we also have prophets in New Testament times (consider Ephesians 4:11 – He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, etc.; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Also consider Agabus, Judas and Silas (Acts 11:27-28, 15:32), even the daughters of Philip (Acts 21:8-9); 1 Corinthians 13:8 indicates prophecies were in use at that time, but had an ending date, etc.).
Examining our text, could have included the first century prophets, who would have prophesied of their sufferings, verified the message of God for both Jew and Gentiles alike (clearly part of the audience of Peter), and ministered to (served) them.
- c. **They had inquired and carefully searched** – both terms used here indicate meticulous effort.
The prophets of old, being righteous men and God's servants, would have wanted to understand the message they were presenting. We do have instances of prophets asking for meaning (Daniel 7:15-16, 8:13-16, Zechariah 1:8-9, etc.).
And it is only natural.
Inquiring minds want to know – and as an aside, consider that if you want to know, what do you need to do? You need to search for answers. How many of us fail to know what we should because we fail to take the time to learn? (cf. 2 Timothy 2:15)
MUCH of their message was not about them or even their times. They were pointing to Christ.
- d. **Concerning the grace of God** – a reference to God's part in our salvation.
This is emphasized in passages such as Ephesians 2:4-8, Titus 2:11 – “*the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men...*”.
- e. **They inquired of the time when these things would be fulfilled** – for many, just like the apostles and disciples of Jesus, they were hoping to witness the fulfillment of God's plan.
But He would tell them it was far off. Their job was then to reveal whatever was intended for their audience.
Lesson: Don't get carried away with speculations, even about the end times. I believe one reason so

many today are obsessed with trying to figure out exactly when the end times will come, is because they want to be part of something big. That is why most date setters find times within their lifetime. It is a fraud! Search the scriptures and learn what they say and leave it there!

- f. Included in this inquiry, ***the sufferings of Christ and the glory to follow*** – many of the prophets spoke of the sufferings of Christ.

Isaiah 53 is clearly a messianic prophecy about Jesus suffering on the cross. So is Psalm 22 by David. I often contrast these 2 chapters with Christ looking down from the cross (Psalm 22) and one looking up at the cross (Isaiah 53). The details therein are so precise, it can be nothing else.

Psalm 16:10 declares, “*You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption*” (Acts 2:31-32)

II. To them it was revealed

- a. ***To them it was revealed that, not to themselves*** - The fulfillment of the grace of God for mankind, was not in their lifetimes. They would prophecy of a future hope.

And that is true of many of the prophets. While preaching doom for that ungodly generation, interspersed were messages of hope. Isaiah is powerful in doing this (cf. Isaiah 11:1-9 speaks of peace with the lion and lamb lying down together, etc. Isa. 49:9-13, etc.

- b. ***But to us*** - Rather it was directed toward the time of the apostles (and Jesus) and these brethren. Bear in mind that those were times of eyewitnesses to the events of Jesus (including Peter), and miracles were still being performed to verify the word.

They WERE living during spectacular times from a spiritual standpoint. They had reason to hope. Recall Galatians 4:4-6 speaks of the fulness of the time.

- c. ***Things which NOW have been reported through those who have preached the gospel*** – as of this writing, most of these prophecies had been fulfilled. Imagine, what it must have been like to live in times of miracles and divine actions.

THE POINT: Their sufferings were not going unnoticed. They were not for theories or legends or myths, but real works of God that verified their faith.

And eyewitnesses, MANY eyewitnesses (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:3-8) who were still around.

- d. ***By the Holy Spirit sent from heaven*** – as noted, The Holy Spirit was still working in revealing the message.

I am reminded of Jesus as He was about to be betrayed promised the Helper who would come – John 14:25-26, 16:12-14.

- e. ***Things which angels desire to look into*** – I do not know the exact meaning of this. All I do know is that angels, are messengers of God who have ministered to man (Hebrews 1:13-14).

From this text, we can glean that in their work, even they did not fully comprehend everything concerning God’s plans. We, on the other hand are blessed to now have His fully revealed message. We can look back and see the whole picture.

III. A brief thought about prophecy

- a. This is one of the premiere passages I would turn to explaining prophecies.

- b. Prophecies are such a powerful tool in establishing God, and Jesus as scripture manifests them. Some of these prophecies were written more than 1000 years before their fulfillment, and not just vague prophecies, but details – names, places, events, nations and empires with such precision that the author (God) had to have a hand in them. See Isaiah 46:9-10, 48:1-3, etc.

- c. As Peter would say in 2 Peter 1:19-21, And so we have the prophetic word confirmed which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place...

- d. And in examining the numerous prophecies about Jesus, we can with confidence say that He is the fulfillment of God’s plan for our redemption. And that is why we ought to turn to Him (Acts 4:12). Hebrews 1:1-2 – God has in these last days spoken to us through Him. Hebrews 2:1-4, *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just*

reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

This text is a continuation of Peter's encouragement to these brethren. In troubling times, they still had reason to hope and endure. God had shown them His power. While we are living in different times, we still have plenty of reason to hope and endure, regardless of what happens. May we never forget who it is that we serve.