

## **The Wonder of Your Salvation**

1 Peter 1:10-12 (06/12/16)

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*1 Peter 1:10-12, 10 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, 11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things into which angels long to look.*

George Beverly Shea was the well-known soloist with the Billy Graham Crusades. He wrote and sang the beautiful song, "The Wonder of It All," speaking of the amazing love God has for sinners. That amazing love provided a way of salvation for sinners and God wants you to be filled with the wonder of that salvation. Peter's been talking about handling trials and difficulties with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and all of that in view of our great salvation.

Paul gives us the right perspective when we compare our trials and our salvation.

*Romans 8:18, For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

*2 Corinthians 4:17, For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,*

We need to stop and pinch ourselves this morning, and think about our salvation afresh. Let's imagine a divine being had the power to create an entire universe. On one spinning planet he places people to reflect his divine glory, but those people immediately rebel against him. The just response is for this divine and holy being to punish them. Instead he himself visits them on the planet by becoming one of them. Then while he lives among them, they murder him. But to everyone's amazement, this very evil deed of murder proved to be this divine being's means to bring them salvation. By becoming one of them and then dying and rising again, he became their mediator, their representative, their head. He went up to the highest position in the universe, above even the angels, and brings all those who believe in him along with him to live side by side with him as his bride to rule and reign with him, to enjoy all the pleasures of his presence forever and ever! What a story! And it's true! Ladies and gentlemen, we have a salvation full of wonder, so wonderful even the angels marvel at it. Let's think together about God's wonder-filled plan of salvation for you – four wonders revealed right in this passage.

### **First, the wonder of its DIVINE ORIGIN**

*10 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, 11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.*

This salvation message comes straight from God Almighty. No man thought it up. It's not another human theory that comes and goes like the flash of a lightning bug. Other philosophies, religions, so-called faiths were dreamed up by human beings. Here the Spirit of Christ revealed this message from the very beginning! Before there was anything there was God. Suddenly God spoke and all that is came out of the creative, omnipotent Word of God. Nothing exists in itself. Everything depends absolutely on God. And into the creation came this good news revealed through the Spirit of God to men.

Pinch yourself to the wonder of your Bible. This book is God's message to you. Of all books, philosophies, religions – only the Bible is God's truth. If you doubt it, go to the empty tomb. Only Jesus Christ rose from the dead. No other man even claimed to do that. These facts are your ultimate proof of the truth of your Bible. If you don't see that, you are either spiritually blind or refusing to see. Sadly, people will believe anything but the Bible. Al Mohler reported on an article this week from the Washington Post which stated that reasonably intelligent people have come up with a theory of how over millions of years the cuteness factor of babies evolved! Why do we think these little guys are so cute? Turns out "cute" could actually be a complex, multi-sensory attack that babies evolved into so they could hijack your brain causing you put up with their stinky diapers and throw-up and temper tantrums without throwing them away. You can't just toss them – they are SO CUTE!

The scientific world spouts off about the “overwhelming evidence for evolution.” Have they looked at a hummingbird? Or the eye of a fly with its 4000 lenses in each eye, 8000 altogether, each seeing your fly swatter from a different angle; no wonder you can't catch those buggers. Listen, the fly declares the glory of God as much as the heavens do, but the gospel is infinitely more wonderful than all creation. It comes to us from out there through the Holy Spirit revealed to men, straight from the heart of our infinite loving God who is really there. That's why George Beverly Shea sang, “The wonder of it all!”

### **Second, the wonder of its PROPHETIC REVELATION**

*10b the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, 11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.*

Behind all sixty-six books of your Bible there is one mind. God in bits and pieces revealed His message of salvation over 15 centuries, in three languages, through over 40 different authors in different locations. Like a huge puzzle, pieces were brought together over a period of 1500 years from different countries by people who never saw or corresponded with one another, and finally all the pieces were in – it all pieced together perfectly to form an incredible picture of Jesus Christ. The message came in the Old Testament through three key channels.

The first channel was through the unfolding of the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 12. Through Abraham's seed all the earth would be blessed. This promise was repeated and narrowed down to Judah, then Jesse, then David, and finally fulfilled in Christ, who fulfilled the New Covenant by His blood that brings us the great promises of salvation, new hearts, forgiveness, and eternal life.

The second was through the Mosaic legal and sacrificial system, all of which spoke of Christ and our need for Him. Every transgression and every sin demanded death and sent the Israelite to the tabernacle or temple for a full-color, bloody lesson on his or her need of redemption – pointing forward to Christ, the final Lamb of God who came to pay the price for your sins!

And the third channel was through the prophets who prophesied of the first and second comings, of the sufferings and the glory. These messages about the coming Messiah and Redeemer in Isaiah and Ezekiel and all the rest were not human ideas. God was speaking through them! They were not religious gurus getting messages from spirits or demons. No, God was clearly and objectively speaking through them. These prophets preached and wrote down God's message under the inspiration of the Spirit of Christ. Think about this. They wrote about Christ and it was Christ speaking through them! Then they studied their own writings. “Wait a minute, what did I just write? Let me look at that again!” They made careful searches and inquiries, trying to figure it all out.

Here are a few of these predictions the Spirit made through the prophets:

Isaiah 11:1 said the Christ would be born of the line of Jesse – He did.

Micah 5:2 said He'd be born in Bethlehem – He was.

Isaiah 40:3 said a man would go before Him to prepare His way – He did.

Daniel 9:24-26 told us when He'd come, in 483 years, right on schedule – He came.

Isaiah 7:14 said He'd be born of a virgin – He was.

Zechariah 9:9 said He would enter Jerusalem on a colt – He did.

In 24 hours 24 prophecies written centuries earlier were fulfilled:

Zechariah 11:12 – He was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.

Psalm 55:12-14 – He was betrayed by one of His inner circle.

Zechariah 11:13 – Money was thrown to the Potter and used to buy a field.

Zechariah 13:7 – His disciples forsook Him.

Psalm 35:11 – He was accused by false witnesses.

Isaiah 50:4-6 – He was hit and spit in the face.

Isaiah 53:7 – He was silent before His accusers.

Isaiah 53:5 – He was wounded and bruised.

Psalm 22:6 – His hands and feet were pierced.

Isaiah 53:12 – He was crucified with thieves.

Isaiah 53:12 – He prayed for his persecutors

Psalm 109:25 – People shook their heads at Him.

Psalm 22:7 – People ridiculed Him.

Psalm 22:17 – People were astonished at Him.

Psalm 22:18 – His garments were divided and they cast lots for his clothes.

Psalm 22:1 – He cried out "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Psalm 69:21 – They gave Him gall and vinegar.

Psalm 31:5 – He committed His spirit to God.

Psalm 38:11 – His friends stood afar off.

Psalm 34:20 – His bones were not broken.

Zechariah 12:10 – His side was pierced.

Psalm 22:14 – His heart was broken.

Amos 8:9 – Darkness covered the land.

Isaiah 53:9 – He was buried in a rich man's tomb!

Fulfilled prophecies are one of the undeniable proofs of the truth of the Bible. The only way to deny it is to close your ears and eyes to the facts and refuse to learn. One young scholar was doing fine in all his subjects except grammar. He had just one problem. He kept saying, "I have went." After endless efforts to correct him, his teacher kept him after school to write 100 times, "I have gone." He got busy diligently writing his sentence, counting backward to be sure he didn't write one too many. Finally, after the 100<sup>th</sup> "I have gone," he wrote a note for his teacher: "I have written this one hundred times, and I have went home." You can show some people the wonder of the prophetic word and they leave the same as they came. Only God can change their hearts. What about you? Do you get it? Does God's Word fill you with wonder?

**Third, the wonder of its PRESENT PROCLAMATION**

*12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.*

Isaiah and Jeremiah and Daniel were serving us, you and me! Between the sufferings and the coming glory is the time to preach the gospel to the nations. We're not here to save the planet – God can take care of that. We're here to preach this message of salvation. That's our calling until He comes back. You and I are responsible to get out the Word, but it is God's work through the Spirit to bring His people to Himself.

For over 2000 years God has been faithfully bringing this wonder-filled message to people near and far. Read your church history. Trace the progress of the gospel from that little band of 12 men in the upper room to the entire Roman world, then over to India and China, down to Arabia and Africa, up to Europe and England, over to America and South America. God keeps sending missionaries, people like Eric Liddell, John Paton, Adoniram Judson, David Brainerd, Judy Wampler, the Davis family...going, going, going, proclaiming this message. God's grand enterprise goes on, a message for all the nations and peoples of this world, a message of salvation from sin and judgment, a message of forgiveness and new life, of new power over sin, of eternal life, of true love from God Almighty! "The wonder of it all, the wonder of it all, just to think that God loves me!"

#### **Fourth, the wonder of the ANGELIC FASCINATION**

*12b things into which angels long to look.*

Two words describe the angels' fascination. They "long," which means they strongly desire. And they look. "To look" is the Greek word *parakupsai*, to bend down or forward to look at something more closely, trying to understand it. "Wow! What is going on here? Let's take a closer look!" The angels are amazed at God's plan of salvation.

If you ever get bored with this incredible story of God Almighty coming to earth to save His enemies, remember, the angels never do. They long to look into these things. It blows their angelic minds to think of the holy God in grace coming down and identifying with these rebels and allowing them to murder Him and then extending forgiveness and eternal life. They don't totally grasp it, but God is teaching them through you.

#### **SO WHAT?**

Gypsy Smith was born in England in 1860 and died in 1947. He grew up among a family of gypsies. He came to Christ through the ministry of D. L. Moody, became an evangelist, and was used by God to preach the gospel in Europe and America. He was known for his joy-filled disposition. On one of his trips across the Atlantic an admirer asked him, "*How do you do it, Mr. Smith? How do you stay so fresh in the things of the Lord?*"

**His answer itself was fresh and insightful, "*Because, dear friend, I've never lost the wonder of it all.*"**

Do you have the wonder of it all filling your heart? God wants your heart so filled with the wonder of it all that you'll never even dream of anything other than living completely for Him, who designed the whole thing for you – "they (the prophets) were not serving themselves but you!"