

1 Peter 1v10-12: God's pattern of salvation: joy in suffering now, joy in glory to come

*10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, 11 trying 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. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.*

Peter is encouraging Christians to understand that God has a good design in the trials that he takes us through – he is refining our faith to make us more like his perfect Son, Jesus Christ. Here he helps us understand that if we suffer in this world, this is not something out of the ordinary, quite the reverse, it is in keeping with the pattern of God's eternal plan of salvation which he has revealed through his word.

He starts with the prophets, the writers of the Old Testament. They took great care as they wrote, directed by God's Spirit at work in them, so that what they wrote was exactly what God wanted us to read, centuries later. They spoke of the grace that God has now shown us! They knew only the outline of the life that the Christ (Messiah) would follow: suffering followed by glory – but we who have heard the gospel now see that outline filled in in glorious colour in the life of Jesus.

When Jesus walked on this earth he was despised and rejected by many. He was in the words of Isaiah, 'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief'. And yet after his suffering and death he was raised from the grave and now reigns in glory. He knew joy in serving his Father through suffering, and his joy is now complete in glory.

What Peter wants us to see is that the pattern predicted by the prophets and fulfilled in the life of Jesus is the pattern of God's eternal salvation for us too. We should expect the Christian life to be one of joy in Christ in the midst of suffering now, with the sure and certain hope of a glorious inheritance to come.

This might not be what we'd expect from God's salvation. It is certainly not how we would plan our lives. But this is the pattern that God has made clear through his Spirit over centuries, from his Spirit-inspired prophets before Christ in v10-11 through to the Spirit-filled apostles who followed Christ in v12. The better we understand this pattern, the more willingly we will follow our Lord and Master as he leads us by his Spirit to take up our cross and joyfully, willingly, follow Him.

Prayer: Lord God, forgive me when I think my design for my life is better than yours. Help me to trust that your eternal plan of salvation is what is best for me. Strengthen me by your Spirit's power to follow Jesus in finding my joy in you so that I will gladly live for you whatever the cost this day.

Daily Devotions – 12.05.2020

Amen