



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

Special Study

THE GREAT SALVATION AND THE GLORIOUS CALL TO HOLINESS

1 Peter 1:10-16

The New Testament calls our experience of receiving eternal life, being justified by faith, receiving complete forgiveness for all past sins, becoming sons and daughters of God by faith in Christ, "**so great salvation**". Yes, it is salvation: salvation, freedom, deliverance from sin and all its penalty and power. It is not ordinary salvation, it is "**so great salvation**" (Hebrew 2:3). It is so great that the prophets of the Old Testament "**enquired and searched diligently**," wanting to know the time or period when men will have the privilege of receiving it. Receiving the revelation of the coming Christ, the Messiah, His suffering to pay the full penalty for our sins, the reconciliation with God and abundant grace to live in fellowship with God; seeing the vision of Christ's glory after His suffering and the future state of the glorious Church, the result of His work of redemption. They enquired if they would be partakers of such grace and glory! "**It was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us ...**" (1 Peter 1:12). So great and glorious, so much that even the angels desired to look into it; search and enquire to know the particular time and the people who are privileged to be recipients of such divine favour.

This great salvation comes with great grace that transforms our lives. Those who receive this salvation and this grace are called to holiness of heart and life. With the grace and the call comes the power to be holy in heart, life, words and deeds - "**Be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy**" (1 Peter 1:15,16).

THE PROPHETS' HOPE FOR PRESENT SALVATION IN CHRIST

1 Peter 1:10-12; Matthew 13:16,17; Luke 24:27,44-47; Acts 3:24-26; 10:43; Psalms 22:1,7,8,16,18, 27-31; Isaiah 53:3-12; Hebrews 11:13,40.

Salvation in Christ dated from the beginning, originally promised in Eden, prophesied by the Old Testament prophets, provided at Calvary by Christ, we possess it today by faith. The salvation of the soul is **no modern invention**. It was known to ancient prophets; **no mean conception**, it was the theme of holy, exalted angels, **no obscure dream**, it was proclaimed by well-known apostles; **no earth-born scheme**, but a revelation of the Holy Spirit - (1 Peter 1:10-13).

The work and ministry of the prophets were not limited to their own day and dispensation. There was a deeper meaning in their words and revelation that could not be experienced in their time. It was clear to them that they, centuries beforehand, were seeing and saying things that were meant for the New Testament period. Salvation in Christ did not originate with Paul or the other New Testament Apostles. It dates back through all the Old Testament that the world's redemption should come through the Saviour who will die for our sins and be raised from the dead for our justification and then be glorified and exalted by the Father.

It was revealed to the prophets that the things which they announced before-hand would not be fulfilled in their own day. Picturing the gospel day as well as they could, they looked forward to it with longing desire. Even the angels that have vast privileges seem to envy the love, grace, favour, redemption, adoption, the position as the Bride that Christ granted to us. They have all the blessings of a sinless state in God's presence, but they still "**desire to look into**" the mysteries of grace revealed and granted to us, as though coveting the salvation and its possession. What a great salvation is ours in Christ as we pray, believe and plunge into the fulness of the gospel.

THE PURITY AND HARMLESSNESS OF GOD'S CHILDREN

1 Peter 1:13,14; 4:2,3; Ephesians 4:17-24; Philippians 2:15,16; Ephesians 6:14; Luke 21:34-36; 1 Thessalonians 5:5-8; Hebrews 3:6,14; Romans 12:1,2; Colossians 3:1-17.

It is instructive to know how the old Testament prophets and the angels in heaven have desired to know the time and the recipients of the gospel of God's grace. If the great and the gifted, the high and the holy find a sacred joy in

pondering the provisions of God's love and mercy for us, how urgently the helpless sinner should give heed to the offer of God's gracious pardon and receive spiritual cleansing as well as eternal life.

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end". In using the word **"wherefore"**, Peter sums up all the blessings, privileges and hopes of the believer which he has enumerated and bases his exhortation on them. It is because of the fulness of the gospel that was revealed to us, and the greatness of the salvation granted us that we must **"gird up the loins of our mind and be sober."** The people to whom Peter wrote wore long flowing robes which hindered fast progress or strenuous action. Around the waist, they wore broad belt or girdle. When strenuous action was necessary, they shortened the long robe by putting it up within the belt in order to enable them freedom of movement. This is what Peter is using as a metaphor: the christian's journey is long and laborious; he must therefore gather up his robe because there are many miry places and much pollution in the world, **"blessed are they that have not defiled their garments; they shall walk with Me (the Lord) in white"**. Christians must gird up "the loins of their mind", otherwise they will impede or hinder spiritual progress. We must not allow our minds to wander; we must keep our thoughts fixed on the Lord and on the journey to our final destination.

We must be sober-balanced and temperate. Excess of legitimate things can in fact make the soul to sink into a deadly lethargy. The christian must be temperate in all things: in his thoughts and habits, be calm, quiet, thoughtful and always dependent on the Lord. As a pilgrim, the christian travels on in hope. It is this hope that urges him onward, making him to disregard the discomforts on the way. The joy that is set before him keeps his hope fresh and bright.

"As obedient children" or rather - as **"children of obedience"**, christians live pure and harmless lives, not fashioning themselves to the former lusts in the time of ignorance. Being no more ignorant of the moral law, not being ignorant of the Person and power of Christ, the christian now lives in obedience to God's Word and he enjoys doing so.

THE PATTERN OF HOLINESS FOR CHRISTIANS

1 Peter 1:15,16; Leviticus 11:44,45; 19:2; 20:7,8,26; Matthew 5:48; Luke 1:74,75; 1Thessalonians 4:7,8; Hebrews 12:14; 2 Peter 3:11,14.

"As He which has called you is holy, so be ye holy." Our calling is that we be holy after the pattern of the Holy One who has called us. The christian's desire, prayer and pursuit must be to fashion himself, not according to his former lusts, but after the likeness of God. **"So be ye holy in all manner of conversation"**. In all details of your entire life; as you interact with other people, take the holiness of God as your pattern and **"be not conformed to this world."**

God called the Israelites to be His peculiar people, kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19:5,6). He had also called us christians to be **"a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and a peculiar people"** (1 Peter 2:9). God is holy, therefore we who are His children must pray and have faith to be holy. In order to reflect God's character and radiate His holy nature, we must be fully consecrated to God.

Considering that our God is Holy; indeed the most Holy One, is the reason He has not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He has saved us, cleansed us, set us apart for Himself, sanctified us, that we might be holy to Him. **"Holiness unto the Lord"** should be written in the hearts of christians. God has promised to sanctify us, make us holy and thus make us become **"partakers of His holiness"**. If we earnestly desire Him, having a strong sustained longing, with hunger and thirst, we shall be filled, because we have His unfailing Word of promise. Cleansed and purified by the Blood of God's only begotten Son, we should follow after holiness in all things; circumstances of our lives and in all manner of conversation. **"Holiness unto the Lord"**

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