

We continue our study today in 1 Peter. We have seen quite a bit in the first nine verses, where Peter tells his readers and us, some very important truths about the Christian faith.

We remember that he is writing to those who had been persecuted for their faith and that in spite of their persecution, they were to rejoice. They had to flee their homes, that is why he calls them “*the pilgrims of the dispersion*” – and then he lists where they had to flee to. Basically he is telling them that they are just passing through this earth, as we are also, so it really doesn’t matter where you live.

Because he then tells them that in spite of their having to flee their homes because of their faith in Christ, they needed to remember some very important facts. First, that they had been chosen by the foreknowledge of God and that the whole Trinity was at work in their salvation.

This causes him to praise God and to then tell them AND us that we have a “*living hope through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead*”. And this living hope involves have a place reserved in heaven for us – a place that Peter describes as absolutely perfect – “*incorruptible, undefiled and that does not fade away.*” This inheritance is guarded by God Himself.

And as we saw last week, this inheritance is guaranteed, even though we might be going through some trials and tribulations. The purpose of these trials is to prove the genuineness of our faith and in doing so, we can rejoice, because we know the end of the story – we have the salvation of our souls.

As he continue in this 1<sup>st</sup> chapter, he then tells us about this salvation. Turn with me to 1 Peter 1:10-12 (READ).

What Peter is telling them, and us, is that the salvation that we have through faith in Christ is a fulfillment of ancient prophecy — prophecies that had been revealed throughout the Old Testament.

We remember, that when Adam sinned, immediately God promised a Savior. In Genesis 3, immediately after the fall of man and the entrance of sin into the world we read in verse 15: “*And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.*”

This is the first promise of Savior. And these words were fulfilled on the cross. Now, throughout the Old Testament, over a period of about 1500 years we read a multitude of prophecies concerning the coming Messiah or Christ.

One of my professors called it God’s unfolding plan of redemption. As the years went on in Israel’s history, and especially through Israel’s captivity, God told them more and more about the coming Messiah.

Just a few examples of these Old Testament prophecies will have to suffice. For example, we read that Jesus would be born of a virgin. Isaiah 7:14 says: “*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*”

We read about the place that he would be born in Micah 5:2: “*But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are*

*little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”*

We read about the suffering servant in Isaiah 53:3-7: *“He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.”* This is exactly what happened to our Savior.

Psalm 22, as I have pointed out in the past, describes exactly what happened at the crucifixion, including some of the words uttered by our Savior. Listen to few words from Psalm 22: *“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning? ... All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him! ... Many bulls have surrounded Me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion. I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me.”*

All this was fulfilled at the cross – written over a thousand years before Christ!!

Psalm 16:10 tells us about the resurrection: *“For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.”*

There are many others that we could cite, but you get the idea. As we turn back to 1<sup>st</sup> Peter, we see that he describes what the prophets did. We see that they *“inquired and searched carefully”*. We must remember that the prophets did not have all the information that those 1<sup>st</sup> Century Christians had ... they did not have the information that we as 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christians have.

As such, one commentator says that they saw the prophecies of the coming Messiah only dimly and at a distance. That is why Peter says in 1 Peter 1:10,11: *“Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.”*

The prophets knew certain things – but they did not know when, they did not know the extent of his suffering and they did not know the glories that would follow with the resurrection and the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ.

However, with the fulfillment of the prophecies, in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus, we see all that they never did. We know that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, we know that he was born of a virgin. We know that at about 30 years of age he began his public ministry ... we know that after 3 short years he was betrayed by

one of his own ... he was tried, if you want to call it that ... he was beaten, as Isaiah prophesied ... he was crucified, as Psalm 22 describes, he was pronounced dead and buried.

But, it didn't end there. After three days he was resurrected from the dead. I am reminded of the words of the angel to those who came to the tomb in Luke 24:4-7: *“And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, saying, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’”*

And then, of course, there was the glorious ascension of our Savior into heaven after 40 days.

Now, remember, when the prophets wrote the prophecies concerning the coming Messiah or the Christ, they didn't do it just to get something off their chest, or because they imagined something. As Peter himself tells us in his 2<sup>nd</sup> letter 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, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”*

The Apostle Paul, in his second letter to Timothy put it this way – 2 Timothy 3:16,17: *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

The prophets wrote and spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit – but they still didn't know as much as those 1<sup>st</sup> Century Christians did or as much as we do. And that is why they had to inquire and search diligently.

As Peter continues he tells us that the things that had been partially revealed to them, were now fulfilled and revealed to those who have trusted in Christ as Savior and Lord – 1 Peter 1:12: *“To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, 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; things which angels desire to look into.”*

The prophets wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and even though what they wrote had application to their readers, such as Isaiah and Jeremiah, and the other prophets, they were also writing for future generations ... they were writing to the readers of Peter's letter, and they were writing to us – and these truths were revealed to them and us by the same Holy Spirit that inspired the original prophets.

So again, remember, that as we go through the various trials in our lives remember that we indeed have a great salvation. We have a salvation that the prophets wrote about and that was fulfilled in the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. These truths will comfort us as we live our lives as pilgrims on this earth on our way to heaven.

As Peter said: *“knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”*