

**Date:** 24.05.2020

**Time:** 6pm

**Service taken by:** Rev Gavino Fioretti

**Psalm:** Psalm 106:1-5 (Scottish Psalter)

**Scripture:** 1 Peter 1

**Outline:** 1 Peter 1:10-12

a) Introduction

1. The grace of God

2. The witnesses of God

3. The angels of God

## **1 Peter 1:10-12**

- **Introduction**

**A balanced approach:** Peter has a balanced approach in his interpretation of the Old Testament and the links between the Old Testament in New. We have to remember that the coming of Christ brought a radical change. The role of the Holy Spirit extended to the whole of God's people. We are the Israel of God, but not the Israel of the Old Testament. Our worship is no longer based on ritual and sacrifice, but upon what Jesus has done. We cannot apply the Old Testament without Jesus.

**A Christ-centred interpretation:** Some try to interpret the Old Testament without the New Testament. Peter sees Jesus in the Old Testament. Jesus is the centre and aim of the Old Testament proclamation. He is the theme of the Old Testament, affirmed by Jesus as He taught those He was with on the road to Emmaus.

**A soul-saving vision:** The focus of Peter is the salvation of souls. We need our sins forgiven. Being kind is useless without the grace of God in our hearts. Our aim must be not just to show good to others, but more than this, the salvation of souls. Our never-dying soul is our most precious possession – what we do with it on earth has eternal consequences.

### **1) The grace of God**

Peter repeats again and again that God is merciful, gracious and doesn't deal with us as we deserve.

**The salvation of our souls:** The grace of God is behind the salvation of our souls. The only way to be right with God, at peace with God is not with long prayers, Bible reading going to church or good

works – it's God's grace that saves us. Salvation is a gift, freely given, grounded in the grace of God. We're not better than those who are going to Hell. Any repentance, forgiveness in us is not of us; it's grace.

**Propheesied in the Old Testament:** The grace of God is the Old Testament's theme. It was prophesied by the prophets. There is judgement in the Old and New Testaments, there is the law in the Old and New Testaments and there's plenty grace in the Old and New Testaments. The prophets prophesied the grace of God that was to be ours. We can maybe dread parts of the Old Testament in our personal devotions, but the Old Testament looks ahead to the coming of Christ, the perfect prophet, priest and king that was to come. They prophesied the grace to come.

**Announced in the New Testament:** The Old Testament looks ahead to a future event, the coming of a Saviour. The New Testament looks back at a past event, when the grace of God was manifest in Jesus. The Grace of God is proclaimed in the New Testament. The Grace of God is the theme of the Old and New Testaments and of the whole Bible.

**To be ours:** God provided a Saviour and that is good news. If He were only righteous and not also gracious, there would be no hope for us. But God is good. In the Old Testament, grace was mediated – a prophet or priest was required to approach God in an appropriate way, or people had to go to Jerusalem to make sacrifices. In the New Testament, there is a new freedom. There is a new covenant, more glorious due to the extent of grace in the life of believers. The Spirit works in a powerful, direct way. We are shown more of the character and promises of God, with each new revelation being like a window bringing light into a dark room, the greatest light coming when Jesus came. The grace of God is the theme of the Bible.

## **2) The witnesses of God**

**The prophets:** The prophets had to study God's Word and consider what God had revealed in the Old Testament. Now we have Christ to interpret what was prophesied. Prophets had to enquire of God what was meant and to study what was meant – how much more need do we have to study God's Word! We must study to understand His Word. The Old Testament prophets were ministering to us – Isaiah recording prophecies could be seen as an act of service to the New Testament saints.

**The evangelists:** The New Testament proclaims what God has done in Jesus. Salvation by a gracious God to a sinful people remains the good news preached. The gospel, the good news of Jesus is announced.

**The Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit is at work in the Old Testament prophets to allow them to proclaim Jesus. Behind every faithful, gospel preacher or sermon is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is Jesus' advocate who shows Jesus to sinners – men can be used in this, but it's the Spirit's work. The Spirit is not a big force, but a divine Person revealing God's grace to sinners. What we need as individuals, as a church, as a world is the Spirit of God – then the Word will be preached and sinners will be saved.

### **3) The angels of God**

**Their lack of understanding:** We are reminded that there is a lack of understanding from the angels about the saving of souls. This lack of understanding is not due to intellect – they don't know the grace of God because they are holy beings without our experience of sin, or deliverance from sin.

**Their desire to understand:** The angels are amazed that the righteous God would show grace and they desire to understand, to grasp God's grace toward sinners. There's something in our experience as sinners that the angels don't have. And so our experience of God is different from theirs. The angels have not been saved from Hell, we have been – and so we rejoice even more than angels when a sinner is saved by God's grace.