

# KNOW THE WONDER AND GREATNESS OF SALVATION

## 1 PETER 01:10–12

### ***Introduction***

This is a great description of salvation. It describes the wonder and greatness of salvation, the glorious truth that God saves men from death and exalts them into the glories of heaven. Salvation is so glorious a work that even the angels are aroused to look into it and to understand what it means (v. 12).

- I. Salvation required special men, special prophets, to share the message (v. 10).
- II. Salvation was to be the personal experience of God's grace (v. 10).
- III. Salvation was a mystery (v. 11).
- IV. Salvation was to be accomplished by the sufferings and glories of the Messiah (v. 11).
- V. Salvation was destined for future believers (v. 12).
- VI. Salvation is now proclaimed in the gospel (v. 12).
- VII. Salvation is so glorious that it arouses the angels to understand and look into it (v. 12).

### ***I. 1 Peter 01:10 Prophets Called to Proclaim Salvation***

Salvation required special men, special prophets, to proclaim the message. The message of salvation was so important that a whole new order of men was required to proclaim it: that of prophets. The prophets were men who were called and chosen by God to do two things:

=> to *proclaim* God's salvation to man.

=> to *prophesy and predict* how God was going to save man.

Both functions were necessary. The prophet had to proclaim salvation to the people of his own generation and to predict how God was going to save the people of all generations. But note this: the predictions of the future salvation were not the prophet's own predictions. He had not been called to proclaim his own ideas and message; he had been called to proclaim the salvation of God Himself. He was a man given a very special call, a call to the most important task in all the world: the task of proclaiming the glory and wonder of God's salvation. God was making it possible for man to be saved and to live eternally.

***John 1:6-7*** *There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe.*

***Mat 22:2-3*** *"The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come."*

***Num 16:28*** *Then Moses said, "This is how you will know that the LORD has sent me to do all these things and that it was not my idea."*

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**Deu 34:10** *Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face.*

**Isa 6:8** *Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I. Send me!”*

**Isa 48:16** *“Come near me and listen to this: “From the first announcement I have not spoken in secret; at the time it happens, I am there.” And now the Sovereign LORD has sent me, with his Spirit.”*

**Jer 25:4** *And though the LORD has sent all his servants the prophets to you again and again, you have not listened or paid any attention.*

**Jer 35:15** *Again and again I sent all my servants the prophets to you. They said, “Each of you must turn from your wicked ways and reform your actions; do not follow other gods to serve them. Then you will live in the land I have given to you and your fathers.” But you have not paid attention or listened to me.*

## II. **1 Peter 01:10** *Salvation, a Personal Experience of Grace*

Salvation was to be the personal experience of God’s grace. Grace is the favour of God showered upon men — men who do not deserve His favour. Grace is the mercy and love that God gives to men who...

- ignore Him
- disobey Him
- neglect Him
- disbelieve Him
- rebel against Him
- transgress against Him
- curse Him
- reject Him
- fail to love Him

This, of course, includes us all, for we have all *come short of God’s glory*. We are all imperfect; we all have the perishable seed, the seed of corruption within our bodies that causes us to age, deteriorate and move ever so rapidly toward the grave. But this is the grace of God: a way has been provided for us to be counted perfect — a way for the seed of corruption to be removed out of our body and to be replaced with an imperishable seed, a seed of incorruption — a way for us to be delivered from death and to live forever. How? By God’s grace. The grace of God is the message of eternal salvation. We can now be saved from death and judgment — eternally saved — by experiencing God’s grace.

**Acts 15:11** *“No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.”*

**Rom 3:24** *And are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

**Titus 2:11** *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.*

**Titus 3:5-7** *He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,*

*whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*

### **III. 1 Peter 01:11 Salvation, a Mystery**

Salvation was a mystery. The prophets did not understand all that God was telling them to proclaim. Note the verse: in particular, they did not know when the Messiah would be sent to earth. The Greek scholar A.T. Robertson states it well: “The prophets knew what they prophesied, but not at what time the Messianic prophecies would be fulfilled” (A.T. Robertson. *Word Pictures In The New Testament*, Vol. 6, p. 85).

The prophets prayed and asked God time and again, and they diligently sought to understand the age when the Messiah would be sent to save man. They wanted to know what the age would be like, the characteristics and signs of the time.

=> They wanted to know the very same thing that the Lord’s disciples wanted to know when they asked about the Lord’s return: “When will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” (Mt. 24:3).

=> They wanted to know the very same thing that believers want to know today when they discuss the Lord’s return: When is Christ going to return and what are the signs of His return?

The picture is this: they actually hungered and thirsted to understand all they could about God’s promised Messiah and salvation. They prayed and diligently sought, sought just as diligently as miners who dig and dig down through the earth and then drill and drill through the rock until they reach the pure ore (Mathew Henry. *Mathew Henry’s Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1008.).

**Thought 1.** What a challenge to us! If these great men of God had to search and search for the truth of God’s Word and salvation, how much more do we? We are without excuse. We have the prophets as dynamic examples of men who hungered after God’s salvation.

**John 13:7** *Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.”*

**John 16:12** *“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.”*

**Rom 1:1-2** *Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God – the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures.*

**Rom 16:25** *Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past.*

**1 Cor 13:12** *Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.*

*Ph 3:5 Which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.*

*2 Tim 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*

*1 Pet 2:2-3 Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.*

*1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*

#### **IV. 1 Peter 01:11 Salvation through the Death of Jesus Christ**

Salvation was to be accomplished by the sufferings and glories of the Messiah. The Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, told the prophets that God was going to save man by doing two things.

1. God would send the Messiah into the world to die for man's transgressions; the Messiah would take the guilt of man's transgressions upon Himself and bear the judgment and punishment of man's guilt.

*Isa 53:4-6 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (cp. Psa. 22; Isa. 52:13-15; 53:1-12.)*

*Acts 3:18 But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer.*

2. God would raise up the Messiah from the dead and exalt Him to the throne of God Himself.

*Isa 25:8. He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. (Fulfilled in 1 Cor. 15:54)*

*1 Cor 15:54 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."*

*Isa 54:3 For you will spread out to the right and to the left; your descendants will dispossess nations and settle in their desolate cities. (Fulfilled in Acts 13:34)*

*Acts 13:34 The fact that God raised him from the dead, never to decay, is stated in these words: 'I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David.'*

**Psa 16:10** *Because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. (Fulfilled in Acts 2:25-28, 31.)*

**Acts 2:25-28, 31** *David said about him: “I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.’ Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.*

**Acts 26:22-23** *But I have had God’s help to this very day, and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen — that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles.*

**Luke 24:25-27** *He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.*

## **V. 1 Peter 01:12 The Fullness of Time**

Salvation was destined for future believers, for all who have lived since Christ came. The prophets proclaimed salvation through the coming Messiah. They even proclaimed that He was to suffer and die and be raised and exalted to God’s right hand. But they never had the privilege to see Christ nor to know exactly how He would suffer and be raised from the dead and exalted. The fullness of time — zero B.C. and A.D. — had not yet happened. But now it has: the fullness of time has come and God has sent forth His Son, made of a woman, to redeem all mankind. Salvation and the full picture of how the Messiah would die for the sins of the world are now known. All men are, therefore, without excuse if they refuse the wonder and greatness of God’s eternal salvation.

**Gal 4:4-6** *But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”*

**James 5:7** *Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord’s coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains.*

**2 Pet 3:9** *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

**Isa 25:9** *“I look for your deliverance, O LORD.”*

*Isa 25:9* In that day they will say, “Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.”

*Isa 26:8* Yes, LORD, walking in the way of your laws, we wait for you; your name and renown are the desire of our hearts.

*Isa 33:2* O LORD, be gracious to us; we long for you. Be our strength every morning, our salvation in time of distress.

## **VI. 1 Peter 01:12 The Gospel of Salvation**

Salvation is now proclaimed in the gospel. The word *gospel* means good news and good tidings. It is the glorious message of God’s salvation, of the death of Jesus Christ who died for our sins and was raised again for our justification. It is the glorious news that if we truly believe in Jesus Christ, then...

- God counts our faith as the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we are able to stand before God as righteous, as acceptable to Him.
- God counts us as having already died in the death of Jesus Christ. Therefore, having died in Christ, we never have to die. We shall never taste or experience death. When we are ready to depart this world, in the blink of an eye God will transfer us into heaven and into His very presence.

This is the gospel, the good news of God’s eternal salvation. The duty of man is clear: he must believe the gospel and commit his total being to Christ Jesus the Lord and begin to follow and live for Him. Note a significant fact: salvation is the good news of God. It is not the ideas, opinions and thoughts of a man. Men may have their own ideas about how man can be saved, but their ideas are just that — ideas. Their thoughts are not the thoughts of God; their good news is not the good news of God. The end result of their ideas and opinions is the grave. No man can save men — not beyond the grave. At most, all man can do is delay and extend life a little while longer. No man can give life to any other man. The messages of men about life and the salvation of life are meaningless and empty. The only gospel that is true is God’s gospel. His gospel and His gospel alone is the gospel of salvation. The *wonder and greatness of salvation* is just this: God has loved us and spoken to us. He has loved us so much that He has sent His Son into the world to die for us and to save us. God has saved us; He has spoken to us in His Son — spoken the glorious gospel of eternal salvation.

*John 3:15-16* That everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

*John 5:24* “I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”

**John 20:31** *But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

**Rom 5:1** *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Rom 10:9-10** *That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*

**Gal 3:6** *Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."*

**Mat 24:14** *"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."*

**Mark 16:15** *He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."*

**1 Cor 15:1-4** *Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance : that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.*

## **VII. 1 Peter 01:12 Angels and the Glorious Salvation**

Salvation is so glorious that it arouses the angels to understand and look into it. The angels are not able to experience salvation, for they are of the spiritual world. But what God is doing in salvation is so astounding and glorious that they stand in stark amazement at God's workings (see Eph. 3:10-12).

**Thought 1.** No believer, layman or minister, should ever treat the gospel of salvation lightly. It is so glorious and so astounding that it demands the utmost diligence and effort...

- in studying
- in witnessing
- in praying
- in living
- in teaching and preaching
- in ministering and serving

**Rom 11:33** *Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!*

**Rom 14:11** *It is written: "As surely as I live," says the Lord, "every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God."*

**Phil 2:9-11** *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**Rev 5:9-13** *And they sang a new song: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.” Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang: “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise!” Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honour and glory and power, for ever and ever!” ■*