

Selected Studies from 1 Peter
Part 2:

**The Suffering and Triumphant Christ:
An Exposition of 1 Peter 3:18-22**

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For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you — not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience -- through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him (1 Pet. 3:18-22, NASB).

This paragraph is notoriously obscure and difficult to interpret. Its study readily brings to mind the Petrine comment concerning the Pauline epistles, "in which are some things hard to understand" (2 Pet. 3:16). The difficulties center in the central part of the paragraph. But it is a matter of gratitude that the commencement of the passage, which declares the aim of Christ's vicarious suffering (1 Pet. 3:18), and the conclusion, which depicts the culmination of His suffering in triumph (v. 22) — matters which are essential to the faith — are clear and unambiguous.

The unifying theme of this perplexing paragraph is Christ's undeserved suffering for righteousness. The initial "for" (ὅτι), or "because," indicates Peter's intention to encourage the readers to persevere in their own sufferings and to assure them of coming triumph in Christ as risen and exalted.

The treatment of Christian suffering for righteousness in 3:13-17 prompts Peter to refer to Christ's undeserved sufferings (v. 18a); this elicits an involved treatment of the consequences of His suffering (vv. 18b-21), concluding with a declaration of His triumph (v. 22).

The Character of His Suffering

"For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God" (v. 18a,b). These words are aptly characterized as "one of the shortest and simplest, and yet one of the richest, summaries given in the New Testament of the meaning of the Cross of Jesus."¹ Peter assures the readers that suffering for righteousness brings them into close identity with the experience of their Savior and Lord. It is "clear proof," Macknight observes, "that sufferings are no evidence of the wickedness of the sufferer, nor of the badness of the cause for which he suffers."²

The words "Christ also" imply something of a parallel between Christ and His followers. Peter already touched on this parallel in 2:21-23 where Christ is held up as the believer's example in suffering. But here Christ's suffering "is not presented as an example, but rather as something quite unique, beyond imitation; it does not present so much a standard of behaviour as the objective ground and cause of salvation."³

THE PORTRAYAL OF HIS SUFFERING (3:18a)

The phrase, "Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust,," declares the redemptive nature of His suffering. Manuscript variants raise the problem whether "died" (*ἀπέθανεν*) or "suffered" (*ἔπαθεν*) is here the original reading. The manuscript evidence for "died" is stronger, but due to critical considerations textual editors are divided on their preference.⁴ "Died" is the reading followed in most recent English versions. The thought is not materially affected with either since the reference is clearly to Christ's Passion. Early Christian usage included the fact of Christ's death in speaking of His "suffering."

Peter once strongly objected to the thought of the Messiah suffering (Matt. 16:22), but now he firmly declares that historical fact. Two terms point to the unique nature of His death. "Once for all" (*ἄπαξ*), together with the aorist tense of the verb, marks His atoning work as something which cannot be repeated. This

"once-for-all" offering of Christ stands in contrast to the annual sacrifice of the Jewish high priest on the Day of Atonement and declares the absolute sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice (Heb. 9:24-28; 10:12). "For sins" (περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν), standing second in the original, declares that His suffering unto death was more than exemplary; it centered on the mass of human sins in a way the sufferings of mortal men could never do. This is the regular phrase in the Septuagint for the sin offering (cf. Lev. 5:7; 6:30) and conveys the thought of atonement. The plural "sins" points to the great mass of sins which Christ in His death bore for mankind.

"The just for the unjust" (δίκαιος ὑπὲρ ἀδίκων) directs attention to the character of the Sufferer as well as those who benefit from His sacrificial death. The two antithetical terms, used without an article, effectively contrast the moral character of the two parties, "a righteous One in place of unrighteous ones." Christ's character as "just" or righteous fully qualifies Him to deal with sin in acting "for" (ὑπὲρ, "instead of"), or as the substitute for those who fail to conform to the divine standard of right. The one Man, whose perfect righteousness meant that He never deserved to die, endured the pains of death on behalf of those who deserved to die."⁵

THE AIM OF HIS SUFFERING (3:18b)

"In order that He might bring us to God" gives a clear, concise statement of the great purpose in Christ's once-for-all death on behalf of sinners. This was "well-doing" in the highest sense. It constitutes the most powerful appeal to induce sinners to accept the redemption He has wrought for them. The statement assumes the fact of mankind's estrangement from God because of sin. But through Christ's atoning death, sin-estranged humans may be restored to fellowship with "God" (τῷ Θεῷ), the true God whom believers now know personally. The dative implies a direct personal relationship with God. Believers are restored to His gracious favor now; hereafter they shall be restored to His blissful presence.

The compound verb "might bring" (προσαγάγη) in the aorist indicates that the purpose was to bring the estranged into an actual intimate relationship with God. For the saved the purpose has been realized. The most natural picture behind the expression is that of the forgiven sinner being brought into the presence of the King by Christ the Redeemer (cf. Rom. 5:2).

The Consequences of His Suffering

The terse statement of Christ's suffering is followed with an involved and difficult elaboration of the consequences of His sufferings. The suffering must be understood in the light of its consequences (3:18c-21).

THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF THE SUFFERER (3:18c)

Two balanced phrases state the result: "having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit." The Greek construction is identical in each phrase, indicating intended balance and correspondence between them.

"Having been put to death in the flesh" declares the violent death of Jesus, terminating His life as a man here on earth. Men took violent action against Him to procure His death. "Flesh" (σὰρκι), used without an article, is qualitative and refers to the humanity He assumed at the Incarnation (John 1:14; 1 Tim. 3:16) and characterizes Him as a man among men here on earth. He was no Docetic phantom who only appeared to have a body.

"But made alive in the spirit" declares a glorious antithesis. God acted to bring Him to life again (cf. Rom. 8:11; 1 Pet. 1:21). Some interpreters hold that the reference here is not to Christ's bodily resurrection but rather pictures the quickening of His spirit, which, set free from the limitations of His body, entered into a new life in the spiritual realm and engaged in spiritual activities in the spiritual world.⁶ Verse 19 is then readily understood as relating to a time between Christ's death and resurrection. But the antithetical structure of these two clauses more naturally suggests His resurrection as over against His death. The verb (ζωοποιηθεῖς), used in ten other places in the New Testament, refers to the resurrection of the dead (John 5:21 [twice]; Rom. 5:17; 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:22, 36, 45) or denotes the giving of spiritual life (John 6:63; 2 Cor. 3:6; Gal. 3:21). It clearly means to give life where before it had ceased to be or where it had never been. In Romans 8:11 it is used synonymously with "raise up" (ἐγείρω) and asserts resurrection. Christ's redemptive victory was not complete until His resurrection. The expression does not refer to a quickening of His disembodied spirit which did not die.

The balanced grammatical structure also implies an antithesis between "flesh" (σὰρκι) and "spirit" (πνεύματι), suggesting that the two nouns should be taken in the same case. The two

terms are best taken as datives of reference, "with regard to flesh ... with regard to spirit." But how are "flesh" and "spirit" to be understood?

Some have understood the two terms as denoting the material and the nonmaterial sides of the man Jesus. But such a view poses the problem of how His nonmaterial "soul" or "spirit" can be said to have been raised to life. Others understand a contrast between the human and divine natures of the incarnate Lord. But such a separation between the human and the divine does not seem to accord with the New Testament teaching of the Incarnation. Perhaps the most probable view is that both terms refer to the whole Christ. Both "flesh" and "spirit," each used without an article, emphasize quality and denote two contrasted modes of the Lord's existence as incarnate, before and after the resurrection. Kelly observes:

By flesh is meant Christ in His human sphere of existence, considered as a man among men. By spirit is meant Christ in His heavenly, spiritual sphere of existence, considered as divine spirit; and this does not exclude His bodily nature, since as risen from the dead it is glorified.⁷

The contrast is between Christ's death as a real man here on earth and His risen life as the glorified Lord. The phrase "made alive in the spirit" does not refer to Christ's *disembodied* spirit but to His quickening in resurrection as the glorified Lord.

THE PREACHING TO "THE SPIRITS IN PRISON" (3:19-20b)

The difficulties of this paragraph cluster around verse 19: "in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison." The words pose a series of intriguing and baffling questions: Who are "the spirits in prison"? Where is the prison? When did Christ preach to them? What was His message to them? The literature is voluminous, and varied answers are given. But as France remarks, "There is probably no more agreement about its exegesis now than there ever has been."⁸

Peter mentions Christ's preaching to the imprisoned spirits (v. 19) and adds a further characterization of these spirits (v. 20a, b). Peter's purpose clearly was to encourage his afflicted readers, and obviously he expected his words to be understood. But subsequent ages have been much perplexed as to his meaning; each of his terms has been understood differently.

"In whom" (ἐν ᾧ) involves the question of the antecedent on which this pronoun depends. Most interpreters hold that this

neuter pronoun relates directly to "spirit" (πνεύματι) just before it. Some would broaden the antecedent to include the preceding clause, but this seems unwarranted since an antecedent for the relative is immediately available in the noun "spirit." This writer understands the reference to be to Christ in His resurrection life, rather than to a time between His death and resurrection.

"Also" (καί), to be taken with the following words, indicates that a further activity of Christ is being presented. Peter had already mentioned the redemptive activity of Christ in bringing believers to God (v. 18), a truth precious to the hearts of his readers. Now Peter mentions a second activity of the risen Christ, which took place in the sphere of the spirit world.

The recipients of this further ministry are emphatically identified as "the spirits now in prison" (τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύμασιν). The attributive position of the prepositional phrase "in prison" (ἐν φυλακῇ) most naturally implies that it was as imprisoned spirits that Christ preached to them. The word "now" is not represented in the original. On the identity of these "spirits," three major views, with variants, are held.

The most recent identification sees a reference to the men alive after Pentecost to whom the gospel was preached by Christ through the apostles, men in a natural prison house of bondage to sin and Satan.⁹ The men of Noah's day are seen as noted examples of this sinful race. However, such a highly figurative interpretation of "prison" is contrary to the prevailing meaning of the term in the New Testament as a place of confinement for criminals, real or supposed. Nor does "went" (πορευθεῖς), an aorist participle, fit such an extended activity. This view seems quite improbable.

Another view, which goes back at least as far as Augustine,¹⁰ is that these spirits who are now in prison are the disembodied souls of the people who perished in the Flood, and that the preincarnate Christ preached to them through Noah, warning them of the coming disaster and urging them to repent. This view found wide acceptance in the medieval Western church and has strong advocates today.¹¹ It agrees with Peter's later reference to Noah as "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet. 2:5). Such preaching through Noah can be understood on the principle of Ephesians 2:17. This view eliminates any references to the difficult doctrine of Christ's descent into Hades. But this view does face some strong difficulties. That the activity of Christ Himself should suddenly be equated with the preaching of Noah is not

obvious. The verb "made proclamation" (ἐκήρυξεν) in the aorist tense naturally implies a specific event rather than a series of admonitions extending over long years. It empties the participle rendered "He went" (πορευθεῖς) of its personal significance and reduces it to an empty pleonasm. It overlooks the natural implication of Peter's word order that the preaching was to imprisoned spirits.

A third view, apparently the oldest, identifies these "spirits in prison" with fallen angels, equated with "the sons of God" in Genesis 6. This view was widely known and generally taken for granted in the apostolic age. It is strongly presented in the Book of Enoch, a composite pre-Christian, Jewish apocryphal writing widely known in the early Christian church. This view fell into disfavor with the fourth-century church.¹² This angelic transgression was always viewed as having taken place just prior to the Flood. Proponents point to 2 Peter 2:4-5 and Jude 6 as evidence that this view was known and accepted in the early Christian church. They also point out that in the Gospels the word "spirits" frequently refers to supernatural beings (Mark 1:23, 26, 27; 3:11; 5:2, 8; etc.). The only clear instance in the New Testament where "spirits" is used of the surviving part of man after death is in Hebrews 12:23, but this is immediately indicated by the addition "of righteous men made perfect."¹³ References to "spirits" as supernatural beings, either good or bad, occur in the intertestamental literature, for example, Tobit 6:6; 2 Maccabees 3:24; Book of Jubilees 15:31; The Testament of Dan (in The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs) 1:7; 5:5. This view seems to be supported by the teaching in 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6¹⁴ and is therefore the most probable.

The participle rendered "He went" (πορευθεῖς) most naturally denotes a change of location on the part of the herald implied in the following verb "made proclamation." Those who see a reference to the preincarnate Christ preaching through Noah hold that no personal movement need be implied. But if the reference is to Christ Himself there seems to be no more justification for eliminating personal movement here than in verse 22 where movement is obvious. But in what direction did He go? The verbal form itself is neutral on the question. Dalton insists that since this participle in verse 22 definitely refers to the Ascension it must also do so here.¹⁵ But in verse 22 the upward movement is indicated by the words "into heaven." If these "spirits in prison" are to be equated with the angels that sinned in 2 Peter 2:4, the

movement was clearly downward, to Tartarus, which in Greek thought and in Jewish apocalyptic literature was viewed as a place of punishment lower than Hades. The time of this descent, not mentioned elsewhere in Scripture, is not certain. May it not have been immediately after His resurrection, before His appearances to His followers in Jerusalem?

"Made proclamation" (ἐκήρυξεν), here used absolutely, is another crucial term for the interpretation. This familiar verb, only here in the Petrine Epistles, means "to announce, to proclaim aloud" as a herald, to make a public proclamation. The content of the proclamation must be indicated by the context. In the majority of its New Testament occurrences it refers to the preaching of the gospel. Understanding the "spirits in prison" to be humans who have died, this meaning has been appealed to in support of the so-called "larger hope," or, more correctly, a second chance. Such an interpretation of the meaning here raises serious theological difficulties.

The New Testament does use this verb in a neutral sense (Luke 12:3; Rev. 5:2). The Septuagint, with which Peter certainly was familiar, uses the verb to refer to bringing bad news as well as good news (Jon. 1:2; 3:2, 4). Such a neutral meaning also fits Peter's purpose to boost the morale of his afflicted readers if the picture is that of Christ's announcing His victory over evil powers rather than of an offer of salvation. France points out that "the statement in verse 22 that all spiritual powers are subject to Christ would cohere better with a proclamation of his victory than with an offer of salvation to them."¹⁶ Thus Peter is not saying that Christ preached the gospel to these imprisoned spirits but rather announced His triumph over evil, which was bad news for them. But for Peter's readers it meant comfort and encouragement.

These spirits are characterized in verse 20 as those "who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark." "Who once were disobedient" (ἀπειθήσασίν ποτε, "unyielding at one time," Rotherham's rendering) characterizes them by their former conduct. The verb involves deliberate disobedience, conscious resistance to authority. "Once" (ποτε, "formerly, at some time in the past") indicates that their disobedience took place prior to their imprisonment and Christ's announcement to them. If the identification of these "spirits" as angels is correct, then the reference is to the angelic transgression of God's command (Jude 6-7; Gen.

6). Peter links the time to the days of Noah before the Flood. The double compound verb "kept waiting" (ἀπεξεδέχετο)¹⁷ indicates eager waiting for something to happen, an attitude of "waiting it out." No indication of what God waited for is added, but apparently it was the voluntary termination of the evil being carried on. The term does not suggest optimism but rather God's patient forbearance with evil before judgment falls.

This disobedience took place "in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark." The reference does not settle the question of the identity of the "spirits in prison," since it can apply either to the people of Noah's day or to the fallen angels whose activity is uniformly related to the era before the Flood. The phrase, "during the construction of the ark" (κατασκευαζομένης κιβωτοῦ), rendering a present tense participle, indicates the prolonged activity extending over an unknown number of years. God's patience with obstinate evil is marvelous, but it does have its limits.

THE SALVATION THROUGH WATER TYPIFYING BAPTISM (3:20c-21)

The mention of the ark enabled Peter to shift his thought from those, on whom judgment fell to those who were saved. He mentioned the few who were saved (v. 20c) and elaborated on the illustrative significance of that event (v. 21).

The events following the construction of the ark are briefly stated: "in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water" (v. 20c). "Few," as contrasted to the many who perished, is an encouragement to Peter's readers who were rejected minorities in their own communities. The water of the Flood, which brought death to the wicked, paradoxically was the very means of deliverance for the saved in that it bouyed up the ark, bringing them safely through to the new world.

Peter views the salvation of Noah and his family through the Flood waters by means of the ark as an illustration of Christian baptism: "And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you" (v. 21). The relationship involves some complexities of grammar as well as perplexities for the interpreter. This is the only direct mention of water baptism in the Epistles.

There is some grammatical uncertainty concerning the antecedent on which the reference of baptism is based.¹⁸ The relative pronoun ὃ in the original seems best understood as including the entire preceding picture of Noah and his family in the ark being saved through water. What corresponds to baptism

is best understood as referring to God's saving act in saving the readers as He saved Noah and his family.

What the Flood scene represents is explicitly identified by Peter as "baptism" (βάπτισμα). Some hold that the reference is to Spirit baptism (1 Cor. 12:13),¹⁹ but most interpreters agree with Wuest that "water baptism is clearly in the apostle's mind."²⁰ The term, which does not occur in pagan or Jewish literature before the time of the New Testament, denotes not the act of baptizing but rather the rite of Christian baptism in its true significance.

The assertion that "baptism now saves you" must not be severed from Peter's identification of this baptism. The material waters of Christian baptism are not the outward instrument producing an inner spiritual regeneration; baptism is rather an act of obedience bearing witness to a personal inner union by faith with Christ in death and resurrection (cf. Rom. 6:3-5; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12). Peter, like Paul, assumed that in true Christian baptism the outward act and the inner reality are kept together. Peter then added two appositional clauses to define the nature of baptism.

Negatively, baptism is "not the removal of dirt from the flesh," that is, it is not a mere rite of physical purification. The word "but" (ἀλλὰ) marks a strong contrast. Positively, baptism is "an appeal to God for a good conscience," another phrase that has been variously understood. Central to the interpretation is the word "appeal" (ἐπερώτημα), which occurs only here in the New Testament. The cognate verb (ἐπερωτάω) is commonly rendered "to ask, to question, to inquire." But such a meaning for the noun here seems questionable. In Matthew 16:1 this verb means "to request." On this basis some suggest "a request for (or, proceeding from) a good conscience." Thus baptism can be viewed as "an appeal to God for a good conscience" (NASB).

The papyri show that the noun ἐπερώτημα was at times used in a technical sense to denote the question-and-answer process in establishing a formal agreement.²¹ In usage this term, which denotes only the asking of a question, also came to include the response. In juristic language it was used to denote a legal contract.²² This usage made the term suitable to the solemnities in connection with Christian baptism, involving the questions asked of the baptismal candidate and his personal response concerning his faith and commitment. Modern interpreters generally view Peter's expression in the light of this usage. Then it may be rendered, "a pledge to God out of a good conscience" (if

"conscience" is a subjective genitive), or "a pledge to maintain a good conscience" (if "conscience" is an objective genitive). Several other terms for this Greek noun appear in modern English versions.²³

In view of this question-and-answer usage of the noun, the rendering in the Authorized Version, "the answer of a good conscience toward God," is quite acceptable. The believer's acceptance of baptism is his answer to the Spirit's questions stirring his conscience and resulting in his conversion. His answer is given out of "a good conscience," a conscience purified by the blood of Christ and assured of personal acceptance with God. His baptism is his answer to the work of God in his heart, bearing witness before the world to what God has done for him. This forms a good contrast to the preceding negative.

The phrase "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (v. 21c) may be a direct continuation of the preceding words or may be connected with the word "saves." The former connection mars the balance between the two preceding clauses, while the latter connection makes clear the true source of the believer's salvation. Without His resurrection, the guarantee of His victory, baptism would be an empty form.

With this reference to Christ's resurrection the thought returns to the triumph of the suffering Christ in verses 18-19. It forms a natural transition to the picture of the culmination of His suffering.

The Culmination of His Suffering

The picture of the suffering Christ culminates in His triumph: "who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him" (v. 22). Now the picture is crystal clear, and in the center stands the Savior's throne!

His presence "at the right hand of God," in fulfillment of Psalm 110:1, declares His present position as enthroned in power and glory. It is the position of honor and authority next to God. He is associated with the Almighty in the governing of the universe.

Peter added two participial clauses pointing to events prior to Christ's heavenly enthronement. "Having gone into heaven" (*πορευθεῖς εἰς οὐρανόν*) marks an event which culminated in the enthronement of the risen Christ. Few passages in the New

Testament depict this historical event (Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51; Acts 1:6-11). These words constitute a passing reminiscence of an eyewitness to that unforgettable event.

The second clause, "after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him," underlines the universality of Christ's dominion. This clause, in the genitive absolute construction, portrays the fact of the angelic subjection as the background for Christ's present sovereignty. Masterman remarks, "The thought of subjection, that has been in the mind of the Apostle throughout these chapters, reaches its climax here."²⁴

"Angels and authorities and powers" apparently indicates different groups or ranks of angelic beings. Some, like Lenski,²⁵ hold that the reference is to good angels; this would be obvious if the expression is to be closely linked with the word "heaven" just before. But the genitive absolute construction connects the picture with Christ's all-inclusive domination. The inclusion of evil angels seems clear (Col. 2:14-15). Christ's sovereignty over all spiritual forces is a precious assurance to afflicted believers. Peter's readers, who were facing a very real onslaught from evil powers through their enemies, would find real encouragement in this remark.

Notes

1 J. M. E. Ross, "The First Epistle of Peter," in *A Devotional Commentary* (London: The Religious Tract Society, n.d.), pp. 151-52.

2 James Macknight, *A New Literal Translation from the Original Greek of All the Apostolic Epistles, with a Commentary, and Notes*, 6 vols. (1821; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1969), 5:478.

3 William Joseph Dalton, *Christ's Proclamation to the Spirits: A Study of 1 Peter 3:18 4:6* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1965), p. 104.

4 In support of ἑπαθεν see F. H. Scrivener, *He Kaine Diatheke. Novum Testamentum. Text us Stephanici A.D. 1550* (London: Whittaker Et Soc: Bell Et Daldy: 1867); Alexander Souter, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962); Nestle-Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 26th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Biblestiftung, 1979); Kurt Aland et al., *The Greek New Testament*, 3d ed. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1975). In support of ἀπέθανεν see Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek* (New York: American Bible Society, 1966); Kurt Aland et al., *The Greek New Testament*, 2d ed. (New York: American Bible Society, 1966) Erwin Nestle and Kurt Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 24th ed. (New York: American Bible Society, n.d.); R. V. G. Tasker, *The Greek New Testament, Being the Text Translated in the New English Bible 1961* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964).

5 David H. Wheaton, "1 Peter," in *The New Bible Commentary*, Revised, eds. D. Guthrie and J. A. Moyter (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1970), p. 1244.

6 John Albert Bengel, *New Testament Word Studies* (reprinted., Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1971) 2:746; B. C. Caffin, "1 Peter," in *The Pulpit*

- Commentary* (reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1950), p. 133; A. J. Mason, "The First Epistle General of Peter," in *Ellicott's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 8 vols. (reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), 8:420; J. W. C. Wand, *The General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, Westminster Commentaries (London: Methuen & Co., 1934), p. 100.
- 7 J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and of Jude*, Harper's New Testament Commentaries (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 151.
- 8 R. T. France, "Exegesis in Practice: Two Samples," in *New Testament: Interpretation, Essays on Principles and Methods*, ed. I. Howard Marshall (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977), p. 264.
- 9 John Brown, *Expository Discourses on the First Epistle of the Apostle Peter* (reprint ed. [3 vols. in 2], Marshallton, DE: National Foundation for Christian Education, n.d.), 2:463-75; W. H. Griffith Thomas, *The Apostle Peter: Outline Studies in His Life, Character, and Writings* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1946), pp. 214, 216-17.
- 10 In the letter of Augustine (A.D. 354-430) to Euodius. For the history of this view see Bo Reicke, *The Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude*, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1964), pp. 37-47.
- 11 Arno C. Gaebelin, *The Annotated Bible* (reprint ed., Chicago: Moody Press, 1970), 9:78-80; William Kelly, *Preaching to the Spirits in Prison*, 1 Peter III. 18-20 (reprint ed., Denver: Wilson Foundation, 1970); C. E. B. Cranfield, *I & II Peter and Jude: Introduction and Commentary*, Torch Bible Commentaries (London: SCM Press, 1960), p. 102; Ray Summers, "1 Peter," in *The Broadman Bible Commentary*, ed. Clifton J. Allen, 12 vols. (Nashville: Broadman Press), 12:164.
- 12 *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, s.v. "Enoch, Books of," by H. G. Andersen, 2:310-11.
- 13 In Luke 24:37, 39 the word "spirit" means a ghost or man's angelic counterpart. In Luke 23:46 and Acts 7:59 "my spirit" is probably a substitute for the personal pronoun.
- 14 For a full presentation of this view see Dalton, *Christ's Proclamation to the Spirits*, pp. 135-201.
- 15 *Ibid.*, pp. 159-61.
- 16 France, "Exegesis in Practice," p. 271.
- 17 The Textus Receptus here does not have the double compound, reading ἐξεδέχεται.
- 18 The antecedent to the neuter relative ο cannot be the ark, since ark is a feminine noun. The antecedent is either "water" just before it, or more probably it is the entire preceding picture of Noah and his family in the ark being saved through the Flood waters.
- 19 Merrill F. Unger, *The Baptism and Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), pp. 129-31.
- 20 Kenneth S. Wuest, *First Peter in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1942), p. 108.
- 21 James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources* I reprint ed., London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1952), pp. 231-32; Reicke, *The Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude*, pp. 184-85.
- 22 Hermann Cremer, *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek*, trans. William Urwick (reprint ed., Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1954), p. 717.
- 23 Some examples are "craving," "search," "earnest seeking," "prayer," "promise," "pledge."
- 24 J. Howard B. Masterman, *The First Epistle of S. Peter* (Greek Text) (London: Macmillan & Co., 1900), pp. 136-37.

25 R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude* (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1938), p. 177.

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Expository study of 1 Peter: Since Christ bore witness through His suffering and was vindicated, we, too, can bear witness through suffering and trust God to vindicate us. Peter implies that we bear witness through suffering in two ways: through baptism and holy living (as seen in the example of Noah). A. We bear witness through baptism. The reason that many of Peter's readers were suffering was that they had borne witness to their faith in Christ through baptism. Perhaps some had confessed Christ verbally, but were hesitant to confess Him through baptism because they had seen what had happened to others. So Peter here is urging these persecuted Christians to make public confession of their faith through baptism.