

Women's Bible Study
1Peter 3:19-22, February 1st, 2023
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1Peter 3:17-18 For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong. 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; **v. 19-20 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.**

We have come upon a section of scripture that is likely impossible to completely understand. Most commentaries I have read propose difficulty in the interpretation, so it may be well for us to only touch the surface and then leave the rest to that which we do not know.

Following is the application from the *NET Bible*. *"These verses encourage Christians to stand for righteousness and try to influence their contemporaries for the gospel in spite of the suffering that may come to them. All who identify with them and their Savior will be saved from the coming judgment, just as in Noah's day"*.

If we consider the account of Noah and the flood, we get some insight, specifically about God's patience, which is what we will concentrate on since it seems to be the subject of the sentence.

It took approximately 120 years for Noah to build the ark, yet only Noah's family believed. Imagine, Noah preached about the coming judgment, and no one listened. Peter is using this example of Noah to encourage those who were being ridiculed and persecuted for their faith. For over 100 years, God waited and Noah constructed. All the while, Noah was surrounded by those who probably mocked his message. Once the waters began to flood, it was too late for those who had hesitated.

Genesis 6:3 Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

Genesis 6:5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Genesis 6:13 Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth.

Genesis 7:7 Then Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him entered the ark because of the water of the flood.

Heb 11:7 By faith Noah, being warned [by God] about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

"The allusion to their being saved here seems to be to encourage those whom Peter addressed to perseverance and fidelity, in the midst of all the opposition which they might experience. Noah was not disheartened. Sustained by the Spirit of Christ – the presence of the Son of God – he continued to preach. He did not abandon his purpose, and the result was that he was saved", Albert Barnes' NT Commentary.

Think about God's patience with humanity right now. Someday He will return, and it will then be too late for those who have chosen to deny Him.

Acts 1:9-11 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; and they also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

Matthew 24:36-42 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. "For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. "Then there shall be two men in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. "Two women [will be] grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left. "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.

1Thessalonians 5:1-3 Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

1Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

Revelation 3:3 'Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep [it,] and repent. If therefore you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you.

Mark 8:38 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

How does the truth in these verses:

- Increase the urgency of sharing the gospel to those around you?
- Remind you of the necessity to take your own faith seriously?

God is patient with us; yet His return is imminent. I am thankful for God's patience – I can be a slow learner! I am also thankful that God is teaching me to have patience with myself and others. If we consider the over 100 years of God's patience while Noah was building the ark, certainly, we should never 'lose patience' with anyone! I am reminded of the need to show lovingkindness and compassion, to be long-suffering and to be an encouragement towards others just as God grants to me.

Romans 15:5 Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus;

Romans 5:3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;

James 1:2-3 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

This section of scripture continues with the last two verses of this chapter. Again, these verses may prove a bit difficult but we will do our best.

1Peter 3:21-22 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.

The word used here for corresponding means a representation. Looking back to the account of the flood, sin was swallowed by water and only the righteous were saved. Baptism is a picture of the cleansing of our soul through Jesus' death and resurrection.

"What is the first question that a newly made believer asks? Paul asked, What shall I do, Lord? (Ac 22:10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do). The answer to this question is, Surrender yourself to Christ; become dead to the world and the old life. Baptism is a symbol of this surrender; it is an act of obedience. Peter emphasizes this by showing the difference between Christian baptism and the Jewish washings. The latter were for the removal of outward impurities; Christian baptism is a means ordained of God through which we testify to our faith in the resurrection", Teacher's Commentary.

Romans 10:9-10 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus [as] Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

Hebrews 10:22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled [clean] from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Acts 8:36-38 And as they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch *said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" [And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."] And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch; and he baptized him.

Noah believed in God, he trusted in God, he obeyed God, and his heart was right before God. Noah was saved from the deluge of waters by remaining in the ark. **However, it was not the ark or water that saved Noah, it was his absolute trust in God.** Baptism is the outward sign, yet it is the inward devotion and resolve to believe, trust in, and follow Jesus, which saves.

“who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven” Note – Jesus ascended into heaven, and is at the right hand of God, with all angels, authorities, and powers, subject to Him. We worship Christ, not on the cross, but crowned with glory.

1Corinthians 15:17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.

Acts 1:9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

John 17:5 "And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.

Mark 16:19 So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 1:3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high;

“after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him” Note – Christ has power over all. Nothing is too difficult for Him. There is no fear if our trust is in Him; only hope for our future. This truth was an reminder to the believers Peter wrote to who were being persecuted; they were encouraged to persevere. This encouragement is also for us today to continue through all difficulties looking to the blessed hope of heaven.

Romans 8:33-34 Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Hebrews 7:25 Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

In the last four verses of 1Peter 3, we are given a picture of God’s continued patience with us, and we are encouraged with the eternal hope we have because of Christ. We are also reminded of the urgency to share the Gospel with those around us.

How can you use these truths to encourage a brother or sister in Christ who is struggling through difficulty?

How do these truths encourage you?

What applications to your life will you pursue?

Throughout scripture, we read that God changes us. When we study, read, and pray, desiring to understand His ways for us, we will be changed.

Is the desire of your heart to grow in His likeness?

For additional study, look up each scripture below and think upon its meaning for your life as you read it.

2Corinthians 5:17

Galatians 2:20

Ezekiel 36:26-27

Romans 12:2

1John 1:9

Philippians 1:6

Psalms 51:10-13

Romans 12:1-21

Colossians 1:13