

THIS KING CAME TO DIE

1 Peter 3:18-22

Paint the scene–

People were expecting that their Messiah might come “any day now.”

One has come who seems to present the required evidence.

Many are asking the question: “Is this the one?”

They’re confused. Evidence seems convincing, but their leaders say no.

“Can any good thing come from Nazareth?”

“We all know where He's from!”

“He eats with Publicans and sinners!”

“He doesn't play the game by our rules!”

Yet, His miraculous deeds and great teaching–surely He must be the One!

That day it didn't seem to matter.

As the King enters on a colt, they all seem to sense that He’s the One.

The conviction is so intense the leaders tell Him:

“Get your followers under control or we'll have to do something about it!”

He already knows what they’re going to do.

He’s been telling His followers for weeks what’s about to happen.

It’s no surprise! It’s all going according to the Father's plan.

He said: *“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.”*

He said: “If I be lifted up, I’ll draw all men to me.” (Jn. 12:32)

The just and righteous King came.

The people proclaim Him Messiah

The leaders reject Him and lead their people against their Messiah

The Just One dies for the Unjust BUT THEN– **We receive the benefit**

Through His being lifted up, we're drawn to Him. 1 Pet. 3:18a

"Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God."

This is one of many memories in Peter's mind as he pens the words of this letter.

Main principle:

Our hope makes a difference in our life, even when suffering

Importance of good deeds in general 2:11-12

Importance of submission 2:13-3:7

Suffering for good deeds 3:8-22

Peter identifies good deeds which should characterize lives of God's people

Includes our response to mistreatment; our desire for vengeance 3:9-13

Since we're called to receive blessing, we ought to bless those who mistreat us, rather than curse them.

We shouldn't attempt to repay those who harm us.

We shouldn't seek evil against them, but rather good.

Of major importance for maintaining our testimony in suffering: recognizing its value as **a means of attracting others to Christ** (3:14-22).

**THE UNJUST SUFFERING OF JUST PEOPLE
IS GOD'S FAVORITE WAY
OF BRINGING THE UNJUST TO GOD.**

2:19-24 *"It's commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he's conscious of God. ²⁰But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. ²¹To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps. ²²"He committed no sin; no deceit was found in His mouth. ²³When they hurled insults at Him, He didn't retaliate;*

when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly.²⁴ He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you've been healed.

3:14-18 "Even if you should suffer for what is right, you're blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened."¹⁵ But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.¹⁷ It's better, if it's God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.¹⁸ For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, **to bring you to God....**

GOD USES THE UNJUST SUFFERING OF JUST PEOPLE

TO ATTRACT OTHER PEOPLE TO GOD

Basic elements found in each illustration of this principle:

- 1) The just one suffers because of and in place of the unjust.
- 2) By means of the just one's suffering, the just one attracts unjust people to God.
Spirit uses just our suffering to convince the unjust
3:15-16, 19; 2:12
- 3) Although just one dies, God gives him new life.
2:24; 4:1b-2
He dies physically, but he lives from the more important aspect.
They take away *physical* life; but can't take away *spiritual/eternal* life.
- 4) God allows the unjust to continue in sin because He patiently waits for them to repent.

3:20; 2 Pet. 3:8-9

5) In the end, the just one is exalted.

3:22; 4:13; 2 Pet. 3:10-14

Even when people harm us, it's better to suffer for doing good than for doing harm 3:17

Because of the effect it can have in attracting others.

Christ left us an example to imitate:

HE suffered for doing right. 3:18-22

Look at the benefit we've received from *His* faithful good deed!

When you suffer unjustly and wonder how any good could ever come from such an event, remember how He suffered for our benefit!

Example #1: IT WAS TRUE OF CHRIST. 3:18, 21-22 *"For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, ... 21 ... and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him."*

Jesus died, the Just for the Unjust, to bring us to God.

Jesus' unjust death gives us access to God.

During Civil War, a farmer named Blake was drafted. Because his wife had died, he was concerned about leaving his family. There was no one to care for his children. The day before he was to leave, his neighbor came over. "Blake, you're needed here. I'm going in your place." Blake praised God for Charlie's willingness to go as his substitute. Charlie went to the frontlines; he was shot and killed in the 1st battle. When the farmer heard the news, he saddled his horse and rode out to the battlefield. He found the

body of his friend. He arranged to have it buried in the churchyard. On a piece of marble he carved an inscription. With every blow of the hammer on the chisel tears fell from his eyes. He placed the marker on the grave. Many wept as they read the inscription: *“HE DIED FOR ME.”*

Jesus sacrificed *His* life so we might escape *eternal* death. 3:18

Christ, the righteous One, suffered and died for unrighteous people, so we might come to God.

God restored Him to life by His Spirit and exalted Him (3:22)

Christ's suffering is source of blessing—results in access to God for us.

Example #2: IT WAS TRUE OF NOAH 19-20 *“... through Whom [Spirit] also He went and preached to the spirits in prison²⁰ who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water.”*

He suffered at the hands of the scoffers.

God saved him from physical death—at that time.

The water, an instrument of judgment that buried sinful people, was used by God to lift the ark which saved eight.

Through Noah's faithfulness in suffering unjustly, eight people were saved from God's judgment.

Example #3: IT MAY BE TRUE OF US ALSO 21 *“...this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God.”*

The early believers' baptism set them apart from the generation destined for judgment.

Identification with Christ saved them from God's judgment.

Identification with Christ resulted in a clear conscience.

Penalties early Christians suffered were terrible. Christians were flung to the lions or burned at the stake, Nero wrapped them in pitch and used them as living torches to light his gardens. He sewed them in skins of wild animals and set his hunting dogs on them to tear them to death. They were tortured on the rack; they were scraped with pincers; molten lead was poured hissing on them; red hot brass plates were affixed to tender parts of their bodies; eyes were torn out; parts of their bodies were cut off and roasted before their eyes; their hands and feet were burned while cold water was poured over them to strengthen the agony. Not pleasant! They had to be prepared for that, if they took a stand with Christ.

Adoniram Judson endured hardship to reach the lost of Burma. 7 years he suffered hunger and privation. He was thrown in prison for 17 months. Rest of his life he carried ugly scars of chains and shackles. On release, he asked to enter another province to resume preaching the Gospel. A godless ruler denied request, saying "My people aren't foolish enough to listen to what you SAY; I fear they might be impressed by your SCARS and turn to your religion!"

Jack Anderson described how Christianity survived persecution in the **U.S.S.R.** "The Christian 'problem' was serious enough to warrant a crackdown... Amazing thing: Christianity survived 60 yr of repression. Regime's fury is a tribute to courage of people practicing their faith before hostile rulers.

Nothing can stamp out Christianity. In times of persecution, the ballad of martyrs becomes the seed of the church. Even when we're targets of animosity and abuse, we face the future with confidence. The ultimate triumph will be ours.

2 COMMENTS CAUSING CONFUSION:

- 1) Christ's preaching in the Spirit to the disobedient of Noah's time 3:19-20**
To whom did He preach?

When did He preach? Why?

NOT a 2nd chance for salvation after death.

That idea contradicts clear teaching of **Hebrews 9:27**
that man has only one chance; after that judgment follows.
If it wasn't for that purpose, then *why did He go preach to them?*

1 Pet 1:10-11 Same expression describes prophets' OT message:

"The prophets ... searched intently... ¹¹trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow."

The Spirit announced Christ's death through the prophets.

1 Pet 3:19-20

"through Whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison ²⁰who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water,

"Disobeyed" may refer to people who don't believe– "disobedient in faith"

Why single out those of Noah's day? Were they worse than others?

Why make a proclamation before them? To rub it in?

The critical question is *when* He preached to them.

Clause about God's patience *could* describe time of disobedience,

It could modify main verb => refer to act of preaching itself.

God waits patiently while the Spirit of Christ preached to the disobedient in Noah's day.

1 Pet. 4:6 Same time sequence emphasized

"The gospel was preached even to those who are now dead."

2 Pet. 3:3-10 Peter presents the same concept.

God *still* waits patiently while the Spirit speaks through His servants so people might repent (3:7-9).

Peter uses example of flood (basic concept in his thinking).

Same conditions: scoffers, etc. 3-4

They're *deliberately* ignorant of what God did. 5-6

God waits while the Spirit speaks so people might repent
7-9

His judgment will come soon, as at the time of the flood.

What's Peter's message in 1 Pet. 3?

As in Noah's day – There are still scoffers.

Noah was a preacher of righteousness in a difficult time.

He knew what it was to be opposed and ridiculed.

Scoffers cause the faithful few to suffer.

God spoke to people in Noah's day by the Spirit.

Christ spoke to people who disobeyed long ago.

God waited patiently for them to repent.

God still uses the faithful few to convince people who don't believe.

God doesn't judge immediately;

He waits patiently to give them another chance to repent.

Suffering of His people is part of His plan to bring the unsaved to Christ.

2) Significance of Peter's reference to baptism:

"Baptism that now saves you also" (3:21).

In what sense does baptism save us?

Is baptism requirement to be saved?

Over 200 verses affirm *trusting Christ, rather than self*, is the only prerequisite for salvation.

If baptism is a requirement for salvation, Acts 16:31 is a deceptive answer to the question asked. They haven't told the whole truth.

Key is the *type* of salvation the eight receive.

*** Eternal salvation from sin?**

*** Salvation from immediate judgment of flood?**

If immediate physical judgment is about to fall, which could affect them, this would provide a better explanation.

Less than 10 years until destruction of Jerusalem (a.d. 63 => a.d. 70)

God's about to judge generation which rejected Christ.

Peter already preached: those who identify with Christ by baptism will be delivered from judgment on that generation. Acts 2:36-40

"Save yourselves from this perverse generation!"

What is baptism? Why is that a solution?

Baptism is act that has symbolic meaning: identification.

By baptism we make public statement: We identify with Christ.

It's a public testimony of our faith in Christ.

Jews, when baptized are making a statement:

They're identified as generation that rejects Messiah

Matt. 12:38-45

Now, by baptism, they identify with Christ.

They disassociate selves from rejection of generation which crucified Christ. They're separating selves from condemned generation.

They suffer at hands of their own people, the Jews [UNJUSTLY!]

Cp. Acts 2:36-40 They're no longer considered Jews.

They won't come under judgment against that perverse generation.

Result is also significant.

Peter doesn't say baptism removes their sin.

Identifying with Christ leads to a clear conscience

Remember shadow that was hanging over *Peter's* conscience?

He's determined not to let *THAT* happen again!

Noah's an example of people who suffer for a good conscience (3:16).

He's criticized and laughed at, yet believes God and remains faithful.

As a result, he's saved from effects of approaching judgment and is used by God to save 7!

We can experience a similar condition.

***If we identify with Christ and remain faithful,
we may suffer from scoffers,
but we'll be delivered from judgment
and we'll take others with us!***

IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR LIFE

Our identification with Him

We identify with Him, suffering unjustly and maintaining a clean conscience.

We identify with Him, disassociate from condemned generation and judgment

By identifying with Him we participate in His suffering,
but we also participate in His resurrection and His exaltation.

God's people can expect opposition.

We can expect to suffer unjustly for doing what's right.

The Just One did; how can we expect better treatment?

Be sure our suffering is for righteousness' sake.

***God uses our unjust suffering to draw others to Him
Jesus' suffering drew us to God 2:25; 3:18***

Noah's suffering brought seven others to God 3:19-20

Our suffering will bring others – some: result is up to God.

We should be ready to explain our hope to people who ask.

3:15-16

Our identification with Christ by baptism may produce temporary suffering; it separates us from condemnation to come on the unbelieving world

It identifies us with the resurrected, glorified One, Who is seated at the right hand of God and Who has been given authority over all.

He came and presented Himself as King so He might die and rise again—

His purpose: to draw us to God

On day we call "**Palm Sunday**", Jesus presents Himself for world to see and inspect—God in flesh—God's Son come to establish Himself as King.

He came, knowing He'd be rejected, suffer, and die—the Just for the unjust.

That HE might bring others to God.

Have you trusted Him and come to God?

Are we willing to suffer unjustly, so other unjust people might be attracted to God through us?

Are we willing to give up our life, for purpose of drawing others to God?