

The Proclamation of Victory – 1 Peter 3:18-22

Feb. 28th, 2021

As Christians, it's critically important that we focus on Jesus Christ, on who He is, and what He did for us and the entire world. The vs. we'll look at today tell us that Jesus proclaimed His victory over His enemies, in particular, over evil and demonic spirits. - 1 Pet. 3:17-18. Vs. 17 talks about how we're to suffer for the Lord, for doing what is right. But vs. 18 talks about how Christ suffered for us, and died for us, and in so doing, paid for our sins, paid the penalty we should have paid. We learn that Christ was put to death in the flesh, that is, He physically died on the cross; but He was made alive which means that when He finished paying for our sins, His spirit was reunited with His Father in heaven.

1 Pet. 3:19. Now Jesus, in His spirit, went straight to heaven after He physically died, and He wasn't there long, and then He left heaven and went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, which happened before He was raised from the dead. This means that Jesus went to a spiritual prison where all these evil spirits, all these demonic spirits were being held, and Jesus didn't proclaim a gospel message to them, but rather, a victory message over sin and His victory over them. These spirits weren't free, they were bound. Now last time I talked about these unbound spirits and how they lived in Jesus' day and how they were possessing people, literally taking control of a person, and doing strange things, harmful things, evil things. But Jesus, as a sign of His power over demons, was casting demons out of a lot of people.

Eph. 6:10-13. This is one of the clearest passages about how we're in a spiritual battle. As you know, the Christian life is not easy, it is a struggle, and it's a spiritual struggle, not against things or people we can see, but against forces we cannot see. And these forces are devilish and demonic. Now what else do we learn?

- These forces are spiritual forces, ones that are spirits, ones that are invisible to us.
- These forces are rulers, and they have territories, and other spirits they rule over. That is, these forces are an evil spiritual army, and they are very organized.
- These forces are powerful, and they have lots of power, much more than any of us.
- These forces are world forces for they influence the entire world, they are actively and wickedly working in this world. 1 Jn. 5:19
- They are dark, wicked, and sinful forces, and they are intent on doing evil, are determined to carry out the devil's work on this earth. But we're not to be afraid of them, for greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world. Luke 10:17-20

God has called us not just to be servants or workers, but to be soldiers. And we must know that we're fighting in this spiritual battle; we're struggling against a spiritual enemy we can't see, that's evil, that's very strong and organized, and all over the world. We need to put our armor on, that is, truth, faith, and hope. And we need to know we are righteous, and that we have peace with God, and that we're to serve Him.

Rev. 12:3-4. We read about the dragon, and this is the devil, Satan, one called Lucifer. Isaiah 14 speaks about him, and he was the chief angel, a powerful angel, and one who became proud, and so God expelled him from heaven. And this dragon, this devil, affected one third of the other angels, and they all became evil, and God cast them out of heaven to the earth, meaning they had access to the earth. And these angels were and now are in a permanent state of sin and evil.

And so of all the evil spirits, the evil angels, the demons who exist, some are unbound and are working in all parts of the world, but others, as we see in 1 Pet. 3, are bound, and are in a spiritual prison. 1 Pet. 3:20. These evil spirits that are in prison relate to Noah's time, and it says they were disobedient, but let's go to Jude to learn more. - Jude 6. These angels here are the evil spirits we are talking about in 1 Pet. 3:18. It says they "*abandoned their own domain,*" which means God had boundaries for them, not necessarily physical or geographical. But they abandoned them in that they did things they were not supposed to do, and therefore, God put them in eternal bonds, and in a place that was completely dark, and they've been imprisoned there, waiting until that great judgment day at the end of the millennial kingdom.

Genesis 6:1-4. Now the end of Gen. 5 talks about Noah and his three sons, and here in Gen. 6, we learn that the earth was being populated with people, and greatly so. And we read about the "*sons of God.*" And this is a phrase that's not referring to men, but to fallen angels, to demons, to ones who were part of that original group of angels, who, with Satan, rebelled against God. Then we read about the "*daughters of men,*" and this is referring to women who were born on earth, and who were living on the earth at that time.

And these "*sons of God*" took wives for themselves. But how could this happen, evil angels marrying women on earth? Well, the only answer is that these sons of God had to possess men on earth, and then take these wives. And so these "*sons of God*" left their spirit world, they left their proper abode, their domain, as Jude 6 tells us, and entered the physical world of men and women. It says they saw that the women were beautiful and so they took wives for themselves. And so there were a great number of fallen angels, not all of them, but a large number who possessed mortal man and cohabitated with women. That is, these fallen angels left the angelic domain and were sexually involved with humans, these women on earth.

The result of these marriages of demon possessed men and these women were children who were wickedly influenced by these evil spirits, and who were very sinful and perverted. And Satan's goal in all this was to corrupt an entire human race, but in all this we must remember that God is sovereign, and He was using this for His eternal purposes.

Gen. 6:5-6. These evil demons produced a whole generation of extremely corrupt and sinful people whom God wanted destroyed, and wiped off the face of the earth.

- Gen. 6:3 – Because of man's sin, God determined to shorten man's life span from what it had been, from about 800-900 years to 120 years.

- Gen. 6:4 – This word Nephilim refers to another group of unrighteous and powerful people, who also drowned in the flood at that time, along with these evil demonized people.

1 Pet. 3:19-20. What do we learn here? That these angels, these evil spirits were disobedient, and, in fact, they were continually disobedient – their whole nature had been corrupted and they were continually sinful. There's a reference to the time when Noah was constructing the ark, which was a period of about 70 years. And during that time, God was very patient. He could've judged the people at any time during those 70 years, but he was patient, was long-suffering with them. Of course, God was very patient with Israel - they sinned a lot from 1400 to 600BC, and then he exiled them. And we should be very thankful to God for His patience with us before we were saved. And now that we are saved, He is still very patient with us.

One of the main reasons God was patient during the days of Noah was that He wanted this ark constructed - He wanted to save Noah and His family, which was a total of only 8 people compared to the millions if not billions of people who lived on the earth at that time. God had a plan for this world, and one aspect of it related to Noah's son Shem who was an ancestor of Abraham, from which the Jewish nation would start, and from which Jesus, the Savior of the world would come. And this was God's plan since eternity past.

2 Peter 2:5. Here are more vss. that confirm and elaborate on what we've been talking about in Gen. 6, Jude 6, and 1 Pet. 3. And the fact that there are four passages on this subject means that God really wants us to understand it. And what do we learn?

1. These angels refer to these evil angels, these evil spirits who lived during the time of Noah. And they had been sinning, but during the time of Noah they sinned in a most wicked and perverted way when they possessed men and cohabited with women on earth.

2. Noah was a righteous man, and a preacher of righteousness. Gen. 6:9

- Noah and his family were building this ark, and Noah was preaching to the people who came up and wondered what was going on. He was telling them about their sin, and that they were guilty and that judgment was coming, which they didn't believe, for their hearts were hardened, and they perished in the flood. Enoch – Jude 14-16

3. God did not spare the ancient world. He brought this flood upon an extremely sinful and ungodly world, the worst condition this world has ever been in, one I don't believe we'll ever see again. It was a world of human sinners, a world of demon-possessed men, a world of evil women, and countless numbers of evil, wicked, and perverted children.

4. God did not spare the evil, wicked angels who sinned greatly in leaving their domain and possessing men, who were the chief instruments of Satan in corrupting this world. We read that God cast them into hell, into pits of darkness, awaiting that final judgment day, which, I believe, is referring to the great white throne judgment. Rev. 20:11-15 This phrase “*cast into hell*” is from one verb. John M says this - “*the verb, used only here in the NT is derived from Tartarus, which in Greek mythology identified a subterranean abyss that was even lower than hell. Tartarus came to refer to the abode of the most wicked spirits, where the worse rebels and criminals received the severest divine punishment.*” - This hell, these pits of darkness, is referring to the prison we talked about in 1 Pet. 3:18. And it was after Jesus died on the cross, that He, in his spirit, went to this prison of evil spirits and proclaimed his great victory over sin and over them. Matt. 8:29, Luke 8:31

1 Peter 3:18-21. Now God saved Noah and his family. And we learn that the ark is a picture of our salvation. Now this word baptism literally means immersion, and as the ark saved Noah, so baptism, that is, spiritually being immersed into Christ, being placed into Christ, is what saves us from eternal judgment. Rom. 6:3-4. Now it's not a physical baptism into water that we are saved. But many religions believe this, that we need to be physically baptized to be saved, but that would mean that our salvation relates to our works, but it doesn't. Rom. 3:27-28, Eph. 2:8-9

Now we read about this appeal to God for a good conscience, which is another way of saying that a person wanted to get saved, for he had a bad conscience, a conscience marred and blackened by sin, and he felt guilty. And the sinner with the guilty conscience goes and appeals to God, and repents of his sin and believes that Jesus paid for his sin. Once he is saved, then his conscience is clear - it is cleared of guilt and sin, and he has a good conscience. Heb. 9:14. And it's all through the resurrection of Christ, which relates to what we read in vs. 18, in that Christ died for us, and then He rose again. 1 Cor. 15:3-5

1 Peter 3:18. The conclusion is this glorious statement, that Christ, after He died, and was raised from the dead, ascended into heaven, and this was 40 days after His resurrection, and then He sat at God's right hand, and He has been sitting there for close to 2000 yrs. now. And being at the right hand of God is the preeminent place of power and authority, the most important place anyone can be, and it is reserved for Christ alone. - Acts 7:55-56, Col. 3:1, Heb. 1:3, Matt. 26:64, Col. 2:9-15, Eph. 1:18-22