

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

Learning from Those Who Walked Before Us

WHAT A JEWISH FISHERMAN DISCOVERED

1 Peter 1:10-12, 18-19; 3:18

INTRODUCTION: Today we jump forward to a man from the New Testament who many of you know well. We may jump back into the O.T. in weeks to come, but because in this season we especially want to focus on the cross and the resurrection, I want us to look at Simon Peter.

- Rough and not just around the edges. Lewdness, drunkenness, revelries
- Fisherman
- Prone to foot in mouth disease. Often wrong but never in doubt.
- Jewish
- Neither religious nor especially spiritual
- Not particularly courageous
- Transformed by cross and resurrection

After this glorious transformation, evidenced by his preaching at Pentecost in which the Lord saved more than 3,000 people, Peter wrote two letters to some of his fellow Jews who had moved to an area we know today as the nation of Turkey.

The books he wrote are called 1 and 2 Peter.

In his first book, Peter, several times, reflects back on what he witnessed in the final days of Jesus' sufferings.

We have read several times the text where the Holy Spirit says that the things that happened in the lives of these people mentioned in the Bible offer admonitions, words of instruction and warning, to those of us who live today.

So this morning I want us to walk with Peter on a journey, guided by his own words, a journey that led to Peter's own salvation and his most amazing transformation.

- I cannot know for sure, but I think that things began to gel for Peter on the road to Jerusalem.

- Jesus again told the disciples that when they got to Jerusalem, He would be betrayed, mocked, scourged, and killed. (Mark 10:32-34)
- And then Jesus said, “On the third day, I will rise again.”
- These words of Jesus saturated the minds of his disciples. How could they think of anything else?

Peter later wrote,

1 Peter 1:10–11 NKJV 10 Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, 11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

- Peter had probably heard more Scripture quoted by Jesus during their three years together than he had heard all of his life previously.
- So when Jesus said that his death was imminent, those Scriptures began to surface in mind of how the prophets had spoken of Messiah and of His suffering and even His death.

Isaiah 53:12 NKJV

... He poured out His soul unto death,
And He was numbered with the transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many,
And made intercession for the transgressors.

What Peter realized was that ...

THE FOCUS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT WAS TO POINT US TO JESUS AND SPECIFICALLY HIS DEATH ON THE CROSS.

This is not some minor point about the Bible. Understand this and the O.T. will come alive for you.

When the two men were walking to Emmaus after the resurrection, they were discussing what all had just happened in Jerusalem, but they did not understand. Then the Resurrected Christ appeared to them, and Jesus said,

Luke 24:26-27 NKJV 26 Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” 27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

This is what dawned on Peter!

1 Peter 1:10–11 NKJV 10 Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, 11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

This truth is why I love the O.T. I don't love it more than the N.T., but seeing how God caused His Word to speak of Christ and His sacrificial death on the cross and the consequential glory it would bring to Him and those who trust in Him holds a special fascination for me.

But the foremost thing written in the Scriptures that grabbed Peter like a strong man had taken him by the shoulders and given him a shake would have been Jesus' mentioning that He was going to eat the Passover with them one last time.

The Passover was the first and grandest of Israel's Feasts.

- It was a celebration of deliverance from bondage to Egypt.
- It was also a celebration of deliverance from death.
 - The final plague – death of the firstborn
 - God's deliverance from this judgment came through the blood of the Passover lamb.
 - Each family picked a lamb, a male, a year old without spot or blemish.
 - At twilight, each family would kill its lamb.
 - With hyssop, the Israelites applied the blood of the lamb to their doorposts and the lintel above the door.
 - God told them to roast the lamb, to serve it along with bitter herbs, and unleavened bread.

Exodus 12:11–13 NKJV 11 And thus you shall eat it: It is the LORD's Passover.

12 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD.

13 Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

- The lamb killed and blood spilled brought God's deliverance!

- Peter had to think of the first time he heard about Jesus. His brother Andrew had been with John the Baptist, who when he first laid eyes on Jesus, declared Him to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
- Andrew had gone and found Simon his brother, telling him, “We have found the Messiah!” And Andrew brought Simon to Jesus, and Jesus gave Simon the name Peter.
- In Jerusalem, the night to eat the Passover meal arrived, and they all went to the upper room.
 - A number of items would have been on the table prepared for a Passover meal.
 - But Jesus focused upon two.
 - Jesus picked up the bread.
 - Unleavened as God prescribed to Israel for the first Passover.
 - Leaven had often been a symbol of sin among the Jews and in the Scripture.
 - Such a little leaven could spread so quickly, just like sin.
 - Jesus picked up the unleavened bread and said, “This is my body.

JESUS WAS EMPHASIZING HIS SINLESSNESS.

Folks, this is why Jesus is the only way

- **to the Father**
- **to forgiveness**
- **to eternal life**
 - Then He broke the bread in two pieces and said, “...which is broken for you.”
 - Then Jesus took the cup filled with grape juice.
 - I know people often say wine, but the Greek word here is used of both fresh and fermented grape juice.

Let me ask you,

- why would Jesus use unleavened or unfermented bread to represent His sinless body

- and then use fermented juice to represent His blood?
 - Jesus took the cup of grape juice and said,
 - “This is My blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

JESUS WAS EMPHASIZING HIS BLOOD BEING SHED.

Lev. 17:11 NKJV For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it *is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the soul.’

- Jesus ended the meal by saying, “Do this in remembrance of Me.”
- Peter understood. Jesus was about to die.

Everything moved so quickly in the next hours.

- Gethsemane
- Capture
- Denial
- Peter disappeared! The gospels do not mention Peter between his denials that he knew Jesus and when Mary Magdalene comes to him and John to say that Jesus’ body is missing from the tomb.
- However, Peter says in his first letter, “I am a witness to the sufferings of Christ.”
- I think this means that Peter watched from afar or watched from hiding.
- From a distance, Simon Peter saw the Crucifixion, and so he wrote

1 Peter 1:18–19 NKJV ... you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

Peter remembered the two things Jesus emphasized the night before He died when He transformed the Passover meal into the Lord’s Supper.

Jesus was and is the sinless Lamb of God without spot or blemish.

Jesus’ blood was poured out upon the altar of the cross to make atonement for the souls of men and women.

- This, my friend, **Peter never forgot!**

- Forgiveness for all the unspeakable sins of the years of his rough life as a fisherman which Peter describes as lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.
- Forgiveness for his unresponsiveness to God in caring about prayer, or Scripture, obedience or reverence.
- Forgiveness even of his doubts about Jesus
- Forgiveness of his denials, shamefully uttered like a coward, while the Savior began His suffering
- All of it, **every big and little sin, was washed away by the blood of the sinless Lamb of God who poured out His blood, His life upon the cross.**
- That is what I want to do. I want to never forget, but to keep fresh in my mind and heart,
 - The price Jesus paid for my redemption.
 - What the Son of God had to do and was willing to do
 - For me to be forgiven
 - For me to be saved
 - For me to live with Him forever.

Peter understood one other thing of great importance. It too was something Jesus emphasized at the Last Supper.

JESUS SAID, “THIS IS MY BODY WHICH IS BROKEN FOR YOU.”

JESUS SAID, “THIS IS MY BLOOD OF THE NEW COVENANT WHICH IS SHED FOR MANY.”

Jesus was declaring that His death was substitutionary. He did not die for Himself. He died for us! Body broken for you, for me. Blood shed for me, for you!

Listen again to Peter’s reflection.

1 Peter 3:18 NKJV For Christ also suffered once for sins, **the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,**

The Just for the unjust.

- Peter was the unjust.
- I am the unjust.

- You are the unjust.

Christ has given His just standing with the Father to everyone who has trusted in Him as Lord and Savior, in order to bring us to the Father.