

Do Not Be Surprised at the Fiery Ordeal Among You

An Expository Journey Through **1 Peter** **1 Peter 1:3-12**

10 Peter's Exultation of Sovereign Grace, Part 5 A Salvation that the Prophets Longed For and that Angels Labor to See

November 26, 2017

1 Peter 1:3-12

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,

7 so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

8 and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

10 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you made careful searches and inquiries,

11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.

12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who

preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven — things into which angels long to look.

To the Glory of God

Now I want to share something with you this morning that has deeply troubled me, something that has caused me profound grief and trouble. I can't even begin to tell you how many people, who all lay claim to be saved, have told me over the years that deep, profound theological issues that are hard to teach and hard to learn are a complete waste of time. These people tell me *repeatedly* that powerful and complicated Biblical concepts don't matter as long as you love Jesus.

And what troubles me is what Peter writes in this Passage. Because we need to remember that Peter is not teaching a Theology class at some Seminary. Peter is not trying to get third year Seminary students to understand the finer points of Reformed Doctrine. Peter is writing this Letter, as he was moved along by God the Holy Spirit, to believers who were being horrifically persecuted. So, these Words are *not* being written in a classroom environment with air-conditioning and computers and Greek lexicons. This Epistle was written to people who for the most part were illiterate, uneducated, and who were suffering at the hands of pagans.

And so, right out of the bat, I'm troubled, because my question is this: *Does this Letter encourage me in the 21st Century? What Peter was moved along to pen down here, is this the Source of my own ongoing endurance in the face of hostility and perhaps death? Does Peter's words in this Epistle "do the job" for me so I will "hold on" even if God chooses to allow me to continue to suffer and not deliver me?*

We need to remember that the believers, to whom Peter writes, had already lost their homes and their businesses and all their worldly goods. Many of them had already seen loved ones, like their husbands, wives, and even their children, captured, tortured or killed. They had been driven out of their city and out of their country, and they were now living in caves and makes shift tents out in the woods with the prospect that, at any moment, the authorities could rush in on them and they would be completely annihilated.

And some were beginning to murmur and complain. Others were saying that God had abandoned them, or even worse, that God didn't care. These "scattered aliens" were beginning to lose hope and to turn away from God and to go back to their Jewish roots, thinking that this "Jesus thing" might be okay in Church on Sunday morning, but it sure doesn't do much for you out in the woods when the Government is coming down your head.

And that is the setting in which Peter wrote this Letter. And yet in these first twelve verses, Peter has chosen to get into some of the deepest waters that are in the entire Bible. He has discussed issues like:

- ✓ God's Sovereignty in Salvation (Election, Predestination, Foreknowledge, Sanctification, etc.)
- ✓ The eternality of our Salvation
- ✓ God's ongoing Protection by His Power and through our faith
- ✓ Rejoicing in Sufferings
- ✓ Loving and Enjoying an invisible Savior

And that tells me that deep and profound Biblical issues that are hard to teach and hard to learn, and that involve me struggling to understand, are the very issues that God the Holy Spirit gives to suffering saints to keep them faithful to the end. In other words, it is these issues, the very issues that most people say are not needed, that are what God the Holy Spirit chose to move upon Peter to write to comfort and stabilize the saints who were experiencing terrible persecution and suffering.

And that tells me that those in the modern Church, who think these issues are either fluff that don't matter, or extra curricula stuff that only theologians are interested in are just flat out wrong. The deep and profound issues that Peter gives here at the beginning of this magnificent Epistle are God's Answer on a very basic, practical and fundamental level to help suffering saints hold fast so that no one will take their crown. And that means that I can also take great hope and courage from Peter's words here in whatever "bad thing" God has chosen to allow me to experience in my day.

So, my question is this: *Does Peter talking about these deep and profound issues do to me what they did to those saints 2,000 years ago?*

Or, do I join in with those who say that we really don't need to worry about things like this, or who see no point to any of this?

Now we need to remember that here in verses 3-12, this fisherman, who was personally called by Jesus Himself to be an Apostle, is marveling at the Grace of God in Salvation. And we have been going over Peter's "Exultation" of God's Grace for several weeks now. And here at the end, in verses 10-12, Peter is now exulting in this amazing Salvation, a Salvation that he says that both Prophets and angels longed to see.

And he does this by telling us five amazing things about our Salvation, things that we may have never thought of before:

1. Jesus Predicted It

In verses 10 & 11, Peter points out the amazing fact that Jesus Himself, he calls it "the Spirit of Christ" hundreds of years before His Birth, was predicting His Own Death and Resurrection:

10 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you made careful searches and inquiries,

11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.

And this means that Jesus, the treasured One and Only Son of God in Heaven, has been contemplating His Own Suffering and His Own Death for us since the beginning of time. So, Jesus coming to this earth and dying for our sins was not "Plan B". Jesus is not something that God thought about after He saw that the Law of Moses didn't work. As far back as this Salvation reaches in the Mind of God, Christ been willing and ready to give Himself for our sins.

So, you were not loved for just one bloody moment of Sacrifice in history. You have been loved for endless ages in the eternal Plan of the Father and the Son to save sinners who trust in Jesus.

2. The Prophets Longed to See It

Peter highlights the infinite Worth of our Salvation by telling us how the Old Testament Prophets longed to be a part of it:

The prophets who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow

So, for example, Jesus came to Isaiah seven hundred years *before* the Incarnation, and told him, "Write this:

Isaiah 53:5-6

5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being *fell* upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.

6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

When the Spirit of Christ told Isaiah to write that, Isaiah asked, "*O, Lord, Who? O, Lord, when? How long, O Lord, how long?*" And that searching and that inquiring and that longing is an echo of the tremendous Value and Worth of our Salvation in the hearts of those holy men.

3. The Prophets Served Us in It

And the Lord's answer to that yearning cry of the Old Testament Prophets is given in verse 12:

It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you...

So, the Spirit of Jesus Christ said to Isaiah, "*Isaiah, be patient, you're not serving yourself or even merely your own generation. You are serving saints hundreds of years from now. They will see in your prophecy of Me the proof that I am who I say I am. And its Truth will make My infinite Value unshakable in their lives. And you, faithful Prophet, will not have lived in vain.*"

4. The Angels Love to Look into It

The next thing Peter says to highlight the infinite Value of our Salvation is that angels love to look into it:

... things into which angels long to look.

Now this doesn't mean they want to but are not able. It means they want to, because, in a sense, angels are *outsiders* to the great drama of how God overcomes His Love for His Son to allow evil men to crush Him, which is the only way of Salvation. Angels love to watch the great Works of God's Salvation unfold throughout history and in the lives of His chosen saints.

So, Peter's point is this: if angels get excited about our Salvation, how much more should we? If angels love to look at the Work of God in saving unworthy sinners like us, how much more should we who are the very *beneficiaries* of this Salvation (not just onlookers)? We should marvel at our Salvation, and join in with Peter and exult:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . .

5. The Holy Spirit Brings It to Us

And fifth, Peter highlights the infinite Value of our Salvation by telling us in verse 12 that the Holy Spirit Himself, Who is sent from Heaven to the earth, has brought us the Good News of our Salvation through the Gospel.

... these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven ...

And this is *exactly* what is happening right now. I am preaching to you the Biblical Gospel, the Good News that Jesus came into the world to save sinners, with a Salvation of tremendous Value, far more valuable than anything else you own or know.

But it is not just me that is calling your attention to the Worth of Jesus and the Salvation that is found only in Him, it is the Holy Spirit sent from Heaven speaking through me. And so, my prayer is that you will not resist His Call, and you will believe and experience an ever-growing gratitude for such a great Salvation.

Now a lot of preachers would stop right there and we could all say that we just “had church”, and we could all still get home in time for the kick-off. But I’m not satisfied with what I just said because I see a few serious problems that need to be addressed before we can honestly say we have really understood God’s Word.

And to illustrate what I’m talking about, please try to follow me for a few minutes as I set this up. Now, first of all, there are two different ways that a Biblical verse or passage becomes life altering:

1. There is a moment in your life when God the Holy Spirit takes the verse or passage and sovereignly *inserts* it into your mind and heart and soul so deeply that at that precise moment, a radical change is affected that bears life-long fruit from that moment until you die.

And that happened to Jonathan Edwards, when he was seventeen years old, in the Spring of 1721. And he said:

“The first I remember that ever I found anything of that sort of inward sweet delight in God and ‘Divine Things’ that I have lived in much since then was on reading those Words from **1Timothy 1:17: ‘Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.’** As I read the words, there came into my soul and was as it were diffused through it a sense of the Glory of the Divine Being. A new sense; quite different from anything I had ever experienced before. Never any Words of Scripture seemed to me as these Words did.”¹

2. The second way that a verse or Passage becomes life-altering is when the inerrant Words of Scripture penetrates a human being, *not* in a decisive way at that very moment, but the verse or Passage “lodges” itself into the very core of your being so profoundly and so unfalteringly that it becomes a Source of never-ending, always repeating Power and Stability when you need it.

And that is what Peter’s words here did to the suffering saints of his day. They didn’t relieve their suffering. God didn’t miraculously move on the Government of Rome to stop their persecution of believers. In fact, after Peter wrote this Epistle the persecution got worse, and the Emperor Nero was allowed by God to capture both Peter and Paul and have them martyred, thinking that by killing these two men he could

¹ <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ma05/peltier/conversion/edwards.html>

stamp out Christianity forever. And the fact that we are all here today, and that we believe, tells us how miserably Nero failed in his attempt at stopping Christ's Church.

The words that Peter was moved along to write here lodged into the hearts of God's people, and it *stabilized* them and it *solidified* them and it *kept them*. And God the Holy Spirit has taken *many* verses and Passages of both Peter and Paul and James and Luke and Jude and John and the writer of Hebrews and Matthew and Mark and those verses didn't dramatically change things at that moment, but they *lodged* inside believers all through time and was used by God to keep them.

And that miracle happened to me in the summer of 1981, when I came across one verse, a single verse of sacred Scripture, that *lodged* itself into me that has carried me through to this morning as I stand before you. And that single verse was not from Peter, but from Paul, who echoed what Peter said right here. And this verse wasn't from **1 Peter**, but it was **Romans 8:32** that says:

He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

That is the verse that has kept me through the death of two of my children, the injury to my daughter Beulah that I caused, the destruction of my former Church that I loved and helped to build, and my rejection by people who said they loved Jesus and who said they loved me. This verse is the reason I didn't turn to the world during my darkest moment; it is the reason I didn't throw my hands up and say, "*What's the use?*" when nothing seemed to be working. And it is the reason I stand before you this morning.

God *lodged* this verse deep into my very soul and I memorized it and I woke up saying it and I went to bed saying it, and I said it when everything was against me, and I said it when nothing seemed to be right and when everybody who knew me came to me and told me to quit.

He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

And we have to understand that the Apostle Paul didn't write this verse in isolation. More than almost any other verse, **Romans 8:32** is the best *summary statement* of the single most radical Religion the world has ever known. This one verse is the *best* summary statement of every word that the Apostle was moved along by God the Holy Spirit to pen down through the first eight chapters of the most masterful literary Work in the history of Mankind. And I would suggest to you that it has to do with why Peter says here in **1Peter 1:10-12** that both Prophets and angels long to look into this amazing Salvation.

This one verse illustrates the utter *absurdity* of Christianity, the complete *ridiculousness* of the Biblical Gospel, and the abject *impossibility* of a Salvation that we herald so loudly, that we proclaim so often, and that we sing about so much, a Salvation that the Apostle Peter says that Prophets "longed for" and that angels "long to look". Listen to what Peter says in verses 10-12 of the Passage that Brother Andy just read to us:

10 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you made careful searches and inquiries,
11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.
12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven — things into which angels long to look.

Now, according to all that I know that the Bible relates to us about angels, they are constantly in the very Presence of God. They behold God in His magnificent Glory. They see God in His fullness. And yet, Peter says here that these spiritual beings "long to look", they earnestly "desire to see" the Salvation that the Prophets longed for!

Now, I said that **Romans 8:32** is the *best* summary of the argument that Paul puts forth in **Romans 1-8**, where he describes this "breathtaking Salvation". It is the *best* one, but it isn't the *only* summary statement. There are *other* summary statements that are wonderful and true like **Romans 1:16-17**:

SINCE IT IS TRUE: that the Righteousness of God is revealed in the Gospel,

THEREFORE: The Gospel is **the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.**

Or **Romans 5:8-10:**

SINCE IT IS TRUE: that we have been justified by His Blood,

THEREFORE: we shall be saved by **His life.**

SINCE IT IS TRUE: that while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God,

THEREFORE: we shall be saved by **His life.**

Or **Romans 5:21:**

SINCE IT IS TRUE: that God's Grace reigns through the Righteousness that is by faith in Jesus,

THEREFORE: it will lead us to **eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Or **Romans 8:29:**

SINCE IT IS TRUE: that God foreknew and predestined and called and justified,

THEREFORE: our glorification is as good as done.

Or **Romans 8:31:**

SINCE IT IS TRUE: that God has shown Himself to be for us and not against us,

THEREFORE: no one can successfully oppose us.

Or **Romans 8:33:**

SINCE IT IS TRUE: that it is God alone Who justifies,

THEREFORE: no one can bring a charge against us.

Or **Romans 8:34:**

SINCE IT IS TRUE: that Christ is the One Who died and rose again and intercedes,

THEREFORE: no one can condemn us, not even satan or ourselves.

But **Romans 8:32** is the best summary, the most *sweeping summary*, the single most *focused*, and the most *ultimate* summary of the breathtaking Salvation that is found only in Jesus Christ, and by faith in His Name and in His finished Work, a Salvation that Peter says Prophets and angels long to see, because it says:

SINCE IT IS TRUE: that God did not spare His Own Son but gave Him up for us all,

THEREFORE: God will freely give us all things with Him.

This is what theologians call "The Solid Logic of Heaven". And this is where the Apostle Paul is making a "fortiori argument". Now the word "fortiori" comes from the Latin that means: *from the stronger*. And while most propositional arguments go from the weaker to the stronger, a fortiori argument goes from the *stronger* to the *weaker*, or from the *harder* to the *easier*, or from the *more complex* to the *less complex*, or from the *more profound* to the *less profound*.

An example of a fortiori argument is if I would tell my son, Simeon, when he was five years old, to go next door and ask Mr. Jones if we could borrow his pliers for a few minutes. But Simeon objects by saying, "*But maybe Mr. Jones doesn't want us to borrow his pliers.*" But now I apply my fortiori argument and I tell Simon, "*Yesterday, Mr. Jones was happy to let me borrow his car all day long. He never batted an eye when I kept his Cadillac all day long and ran my errands. If he would loan me a \$60,000 car all day long, he won't mind if I borrow his \$10 pliers for a few minutes.*" That is arguing from the stronger position to the weaker.

A Cadillac is worth more than a pair of pliers, and me using a valuable car all day long is a greater sacrifice for Mr. Jones than me using a pair of pliers for ten minutes. And so, if Mr. Jones was willing to do the *harder* thing, if he was willing to do the *more profound* thing, the thing that involved a *greater* cost and a *greater* sacrifice, then surely he is willing to do the lesser. That is a "fortiori argument".

And the Apostle Paul says:

[God] did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all...

... that is the *harder* thing, the *more profound* thing, the *stronger* thing, the thing that involved a *greater cost* and a *greater sacrifice*. And Paul summarizes the Biblical Gospel by saying that God was *willing* to do that!

THEREFORE: it is perfectly reasonable to assume that, since God was willing to do the *harder* thing, not spare Jesus, that surely He will freely give us all things through Him, which is the *easy* thing, the *small* thing, the *less important* thing, the thing that requires *less cost* and *less sacrifice*.

Now I had read that verse countless times since the summer of 1971, when I was saved. But at age 26, soon after my first son was born, God opened my eyes to this God-inspired logic, this holy, life-changing, heavenly logic. God the Holy Spirit penetrated into me and implanted the logic of this verse in me and it stayed there to this day, where it has been a stabilizing Power working in me ever since to keep me and to move me forward in Jesus Christ. And that is exactly what the Apostle Peter is doing here in the Passage that Brother Andy just read to us.

And so, we need to explore this issue, if we are to truly comprehend *why* Peter says that the Old Testament Prophets longed for the Salvation that Paul summarizes in this single verse, and that even the angels themselves long to look at it.

So, here is the gargantuan issue that both Paul and Peter deal with:

What is the greatest Obstacle between humans being in the Presence of God forever? What is it that stops you and me, wicked sinners, from enjoying the Beauty of God in the fullness of Joy as we stand beholding the magnificence of the Glory of God in Heaven? What is the biggest Obstacle between you, as a condemned sinner, and you, as a glorified saint?

And most honest people in Church this morning would answer, "*My own guilt*", or "*Because God's Wrath is against me*". They would

quickly say that these two things are the greatest Obstacle between me and God. Most people would say, *"I am guilty and God is angry with me, and there is nothing I can do about it. I've done everything I can do and all my efforts have made me nothing but a guilty, condemned sinner. I can't stop sinning. And so, I don't deserve His Favor, and there is no religious activity, no moral code I can adopt that would enable me to start deserving His Favor. I'm in a terrible place because if those two Obstacles are to be removed, my guilt and God's Wrath, I can't do it!"*

Yet **Romans 8:32** shows us that our guilt and God's Wrath against us because of our sins are **NOT** the biggest Obstacles between us and enjoying God forever in Heaven. **Romans 8:32** says that God's Love for His Own Son is the single biggest Obstacle between me as a condemned sinner and me as a glorified saint. God's unimaginable, inexhaustible, and infinite Love for His Son is the single biggest Obstacle standing in the way of my Salvation.

And the Salvation that Peter says the Old Testament Prophets saw in symbols and signs and in portions and in dark clouds and mysteries, and the Salvation that angels, who stand in the very Presence of God, long to look at, is the Salvation that requires us to feel the tension between God's Love for His Son and God *giving up* His Son for sinners. And without feeling that tension, you really have no clue what either Paul or Peter are talking about.

Let me show you how great this tension is. The tension between God loving His Son *infinitely* and God not *sparing* His Son is so massive, almost every rabbinical scholar, who labored furiously over the Old Testament every day of his life, *rejected* it out of hand as being the worst form of blasphemy. Those who follow Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and even Judaism categorically deny that God could love His Son infinitely and then not spare His Son on account of sinners.

It is this tension between God loving Jesus perfectly and God *not* sparing Jesus, so that the Glory of His Grace could be displayed through saving unworthy sinners, that is the basis behind what critics of Christianity call "The Scandal of Grace". They call this "impossible". They say that God would never do that in a million years.

Now let me go even deeper. When God calls Jesus His "Own Son", He means to say two things:

1. Jesus is God's ONE AND ONLY Son.
2. God loves His Son infinitely.

Twice during Jesus' earthly Life God verified this. On two different occasions, God spoke sovereignly out of Heaven and said:

Matthew 3:17

"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

... at Jesus' baptism and...

Matthew 17:5

This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"

... at Jesus' transfiguration. And the Apostle Paul confirmed this in **Colossians 1:13**, when he said that Jesus was...

God's beloved Son

... or literally, "the Son of God's Love". So, God has One and an Only Son, and God loves that One and Only Son, *infinitely*.

And the point of **Romans 8:32**, which is the best summary statement of Biblical Salvation, and the *reason* that Peter says in **1Peter 1:10-12** that the Old Testament Prophets *longed* for this Salvation, and the reason that the angels, who stand day and night in the very Presence of God, *long* to look at this Salvation, is that this Love that God has for His One and Only Son is a massive, Mt. Everest Obstacle that stands in the way of our Forgiveness and our everlasting Joy in God. How is this Obstacle going to be overcome so that the Glory of God's Grace can be seen and valued?

Would God, could God overcome His valuing of His Son? Could God overcome His treasuring of His Son, His incomprehensible Love for His Son to rescue unworthy sinners? Could God "set aside" His white-hot Affection for and His perfect Bond with His Son and hand Him over to wicked rebels? Could God find the Strength or the Reason to let Jesus, the very Darling of the Trinity, go and allow evil people to

murder Him? And, if so, why? If it were even possible that God *could* do such a thing, *why* would He do such a thing?

Evil, rebellious clay pots took the single most valuable Being in the Universe and they lied about Him, they spread false rumors about Him, they insulted Him, they rejected Him, they hit Him, they whipped Him, they spit on Him, they slapped Him, they yanked His beard out, they beat Him to within an inch of His Life, they nailed Him to a Cross, and they mocked Him while He died. And God let them do that. God withheld His Righteous Fury. God allowed human beings to do that. But it's even more profound than that. Listen to the Prophet Isaiah:

Isaiah 53:10

... the Lord was pleased To crush Him...

Now this doesn't say God "did it". This doesn't even say that God "allowed it". This says that crushing Jesus **PLEASED** God! The infallible Word of God says that God found *Pleasure* in the crushing of His Son! God found both Joy and Delight when Jesus was crushed! God was *pleased* to crush the Son that He loved the most? This is incomprehensible! This simply cannot be! This cannot possibly be true! But *that* is the Biblical Gospel and *that* is the Salvation that the Peter says the Prophets *longed* to see and that angels *long* to look at.

And in **Romans 8:32**, Paul says, "Yes! *That's exactly what God did!*" Paul says:

[God] did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all...

And since that is true:

THEREFORE: shall God not freely give us all things in Him?

... and this is why Peter says that both Prophets and angels marvel. Now the Bible says in one place that Judas did this. It says in another place that Herod did it. And it also says that the Jewish rulers did it. And it says that the crowds did it. And it says that we did it. And Jesus Himself says He did it. But Paul says in **Romans 8:32** that *in* Judas and *in* Herod and *in* the Jewish rulers and *in* the crowds and *in*

us and *in* Jesus doing this, that God Almighty was the One Who actually did it.

So, our sin and our guilt is *not* the ultimate Obstacle between us and Heaven. And the reason that is true is that what makes my sin to be infinitely *sinful*, which is why God is infinitely angry with my sin, is that my sin *de-values* the ultimate Treasure of the Universe, which is God. And it *de-values* God's white hot infinitely Delight that He has in His One and Only Son.

So, the thing that stands in the way of my Redemption the most is God's Love for His Son. Because the only way I can be saved, is that God has to let what He loves the most be tortured and brutally murdered! And Peter was moved to say that this Reality deeply mystified the Old Testament Prophets and angels marvel at that. And that means that it should mystify us and we should marvel at it, too.

But that also means that neither is God's Wrath against my sins the ultimate Obstacle in my Salvation. Because God's Wrath is really nothing more than the perfect and holy *Reflex* of God's Righteousness. And God's Righteousness is that God always does what is "Right". Which means that God always *loves* what is ultimately the *most lovely*, and God always *values* what is ultimately the *most valuable*, and God always *delights* in what is ultimately the *most delightful*, and God *always* honors that which is *ultimately* the *most honorable*. That is what makes God to be Righteous. And the one single thing in the Universe that is ultimately the *most lovely* and the *most valuable* and the *most delightful* and the *most honorable*, is Jesus, God's One and Only Son!

No, the ultimate Obstacle between me and Eternal Life is *not* my sin and *not* my guilt, and it is *not* God's Wrath against my sin and guilt. The ultimate Obstacle that stands in the way of my Salvation, is God's infinite Love for and His perfect Delight in and His absolute Union with His One and Only Son! And this Obstacle had to be *overcome* when God did not spare His Son.

So:

SINCE IT IS TRUE: that God did not spare His One and Only Son,
And **SINCE IT IS TRUE:** that God did give Him up for us all,

THEREFORE: He most certainly WILL freely give us all things in Him,
And **THEREFORE:** He will work all things together for the greater
GOOD of His Own Glory and ultimately for the fullness of my Joy in
Him,

And **THEREFORE:** We can become *convinced* that the Salvation that
the Old Testament Prophets longed to see and the Salvation that the
angels longed to look into will afford all of God's elect the rock-solid,
unshakable Promise that **neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor
principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height,
nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the
love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

... and *that* is why Peter says that both the Prophets and angels longed
to see this Salvation!

Amen. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the
Glory of God alone.