

TITLE: Satisfaction in the Sovereign Joy of Our Salvation (Part 1)

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 1:3a

THEME: Review and Introduction to Verses 3-9

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Disclaimer: I do not endorse the theology of this story . . .

A cat died and went to Heaven. St. Peter met her at the gates and said, "You have been a good cat all these years. Anything you want is yours." The cat thought for a minute and then said, "All my life I lived on a farm and slept on hard wooden floors. I would like a real fluffy pillow to sleep on." St. Peter said, "Say no more." Instantly the cat had a huge fluffy pillow. A few days later, six mice were killed in an accident and they all went to Heaven together. St. Peter met the mice at the gates with the same offer that He made to the cat. The mice said, "Well, we have had to run all of our lives: from cats, dogs and even people with brooms! If we could just have some little roller skates, we would not have to run again." St. Peter answered, "It is done." All the mice had beautiful little roller skates. About a week later, Peter decided to check on the cat. He found her sound asleep on her fluffy pillow. He gently awakened her and asked, "How are you doing?" The cat replied, "Oh, WONDERFUL. I have never been so happy in my life. The pillow is so fluffy . . . and what a bonus! I never expected Meals on Wheels. I never expected to take 14 weeks to finish t/first paragraph of 1 Peter 1! (esp. when that para. only contains two verses)

Another story . . . (you may have heard this)

Colorado's highest court upheld a lower court's decision to throw out the sentence of a man who was given the death penalty after jurors consulted the Bible in reaching a verdict. The court claimed that the Bible constituted an improper outside influence and a reliance on what they called a "higher authority." We are pleased to rely on that higher authority - t/highest authority . . .

Read Passage

Hoping to hit the ground running as we prepare to enter this new section of 1 Peter (vv. 3-9). I have found this sect. esp. challenging. Spent inordinate amt. of time translating this passage & diagraming it & then trying to work out a main idea & outline. Good news is that I'm excited

about all that God would have us learn. Bad news is that we will only touch t/tip of t/iceberg this AM before we dive right in next week.

All that to say these factors have led me to spend a brief time in an overview of t/context of this letter, including t/Authorship; Audience; Atmosphere. Been sev. mos. since we've talked about these things, & I really wanted to refresh my own memory, not to mention yours.

For sake of alliteration we will let the letter “A” guide us this week, as we look at those three things==>

I. Back to the Drawing Board

A. The Author (who wrote 1 Peter?)

B. The Audience (to whom was 1 Peter written?)

C. The Atmosphere (what were circumstances of t/letter?)

This will serve as a brief refresher of what we studied late last year.

A. The Author (who wrote 1 Peter?)

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ . . .

Opening verse claims that the letter was written by “Peter.” Follows t/customary way of writing letters in t/1st c. Spec. Πέτρος ἀπόστολος of Jesus Christ. With this designation he clearly identifies himself as “The Apostle Peter.”

Indicates what we call==>

1. Petrine Authorship

We are talking about The Apostle Peter, the leader among the Apostles of Jesus Christ, specifically while Jesus walked the earth.

a. This Letter comes with some authority behind it

A letter coming to you by hand of TAPeter was weighty indeed! If you were to compose a spurious letter in the 1st or 2nd c. there is no better name to use as a forger than Peter's, and many did just that (Gospel of

Peter; Apocalypse of Peter, and others).

However, there is no doubt (at least in my mind) that this letter has leg. come to us from the pen of Apostle Peter. This was a universally accepted fact by the earliest Xns. NT scholar Guthrie claims that the letter was considered canonical (auth. part of t/Bible) as early as the word had a meaning.

b. There's plenty of early evidence

We know that Clement of Rome used 1 Peter in his Epistle to the Corinthians (AD 96). Polycarp, a disciple of Apostle John, cited 1 Peter as well. Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria (all late 2d c.) quoted from this epistle.

Eusebius says that Papias (who died around AD 130) quoted from 1PET. Eusebius also includes 1PET in his list of NT books that are universally accepted by t/CH (dates to 325 AD).

Earliest reference to 1 Peter is found in 2 Peter==>

2 Peter 3:1 **This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder**

If 2PET is "The Second Letter" then there must have been a 1st letter that predated it!

To quote a well-established scholar in the field ==>

"the epistle has been well known and consistently acknowledged as Petrine from the second century well into modern times." [Michaels, xxxii]

Note the end of that quote "well into modern times" ==>

c. Modern Objections to Petrine Authorship

Might wonder, "With so much evidence, why the doubts?" Large part of it t/fact that we live in an age when some people make a living at raising doubts on the integrity of the Bible. They get great joy in raising t/most minuscule "evidence" that supposedly raises doubt on t/Bible's integrity. Not all bad; In t/wake are 1000s of well-studied, well-

credentialed conservative scholars who can aptly defend truth of Bible.

What really set it all off was the publication of a commentary on 1 Peter by F.W. Beare in 1947 in which he contended that TA Peter didn't write t/letter, but rather another author did it using Peter's name.

(1) Several Different Arguments used (sum up 4 of t hem)

(a) First (Biggest)

The quality of the Greek in 1 Peter is said to be too good for the Apostle Peter who was an unlearned fisherman from Galilee.

Key in this regard is use of t/word *αγραμματος* in Acts 4:13. Remember, in Acts 4 we have Peter & John imprisoned for preaching about JC. They are released and brought before t/Jewish leaders, including Annas t/H.P. and after being questioned, as Luke records it: . . . as they observed the confidence of Peter and John, and understood that they were uneducated (*αγραμματος*) and untrained men, they were marveling, and *began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.*

So it's said that Peter couldn't have written this letter bearing his name because t/Greek too good for a man who was *αγραμματος*.

i. Some have countered this charge by quoting 5:12

Through Silvanus, our faithful brother . . . I have written to you . . .

IOW - it's believed by some that Peter didn't actually pen the words, though he gave t/thoughts. Rather he used an amanuensis, namely "Silvanus" or Silas as he was more commonly known.

Nothing wrong w/this. Dictation was a common practice (cf. Rom. 16:22). Secretaries would often aid with style and grammar. In some cases the scribe would be given a bare outline to work with and the author would check over the work when it was completed.

Likely that Silas would have had excellent skills in Greek. In Acts we're told that he was a prophet and a citizen of Rome. He was well acquainted w/Apostle Paul being Paul's chosen associate on his 2d M.J.

(Acts 15:40). Silas is associated with Paul in both of the Thess. epistles being mentioned in t/introductions of both.

So it's possible that Peter used a secretary/amanuensis in writing t/letter. However, it's more likely that Silas "carried" the letter rather than having scribed it.

The phrase used in 5:12 is no where else used of an amanuensis, however it is used of a carrier (someone who carried & delivered a letter) Of course it's entirely possible that Peter used an unnamed amanuensis.

ii. Could Peter have known Greek well enough to write 1 Peter?

Go back to Acts 4:13 where Peter is called uneducated. Word $\alpha\gamma\gamma\alpha\mu\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$ doesn't mean illiterate. In t/context t/word simply means that he was not formally trained in the rabbinic schools. So you can't make a judgement on this basis.

iii. Scholars are discovering that Greek was much more widely used in first century Palestine than originally believed

Aramaic was primary lang. (were reminded of that in Gibson's "Passion of the Christ"). While Aramaic was primary language in Palestine, there is evidence that Greek was widely used, as well, & that most Jews were bilingual w/many knowing Greek as well as they knew Aramaic.

Don't forget the LXX - The Gk. Translation of the OT - which was completed 2d c. BC. Testimony to the fact that Greek was very common, even in & around Israel.

Of course, this all goes back to t/conquests of Alex. the Great who conq. Palestine in 332 BC. With that came the "Hellenization" of t/area (imposition of Greek language & culture). By time Peter wrote there had been nearly 400 years of Hellenization including many Gk. cities in & around Israel (Joppa on E. coast was a center of Gk. influence + The 10 Gk. cities (Decapolis).

* Then there's the testimony of archeology

In & around Jerus. 100s of Jewish ossuaries (stone coffins) have been excavated, dating from the 1st c. AD or earlier. One study of inscriptions on these tombs showed that out of 175, 97 were written in Hebrew or Aramaic (to be expected), but 64 were in Greek & 14 bilingual. Signif. is that you would want the inscription on your tomb to be in a language common to you and those whom you knew.

Even an inscription on a synagogue near t/temple in Jerusalem which contains an inscription written in Gk. (what's so notable about that?). We're talking about a Jewish syn. where you would expect Hebrew or Aramaic. Significant that a memorial plaque on a Jewish synagogue in Jerusalem would be written in Greek. Shows how deeply Greek lang. & culture had permeated Jerusalem by t/first century.

Josephus states that in his day "even slaves who so chose" could acquire fluency in Greek, and it was "common" to ordinary freemen. [Grudem, 29]

As one researcher put it==>

"There is greater readiness now than there was formerly to admit that Jesus and his disciples, all of whom were Galileans (Acts ii.7) were bilingual, speaking Greek as well as Aramaic" [A.W. Argyle, cited in Grudem, 30]

In fact, some scholars believe that Peter's Greek was better than his Aramaic (Moulton and Howard, cited in Guthrie, 767).

Even if Greek wasn't Peter's first language, there's no reason to believe that in course of 30 plus years he couldn't have acquired a mastery of it. The argument that Peter couldn't have written a letter in excellent Greek is really w/o merit.

(b) Another objection has to do with the date of writing

Some argue that Peter is addressing a persecution of Xns under Rom. Emp. Nero that either had not happened yet, or that hadn't had time to spread to the particular areas in Asia Minor that Peter addresses (1:1b):

... aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia ...

Something happened on July 19, year of 64. The great fire of Rome broke out. Here was a city built w/high wooden structures that were engulfed w/flames. The fire burned 3 days and 3 nights, it was checked and then broke out again w/double the intensity. Was pretty much common knowledge who set the fire: Nero. He had a passion for building things (or having them built). The city was full and he wanted to start over. It was said that t/firemen of the day were being deliberately hindered in their work and whenever it looked like the fire was getting under control men were seen sneaking about rekindling it.

After the devastation the people were enraged. Nero had to find a scapegoat. Who better than the Christians (sounding a little like today).

1st c. Christians were distrusted. They were connected w/the Jews who weren't very popular. The Lord's Supper was viewed as a secret rite where people literally ate flesh and drank blood, and Xns spoke of a coming day when t/world would be destroyed in fire. Easy to see how they served as the perfect scapegoat. So, they were and a massive persecution ensued. Nero rolled Xns in pitch & lit them alive, allowing them to burn to ash as they lit his gardens. He had t/skins of wild animals sewed on them and then he set his guard dogs on them.

The Roman historian Tacitus writes==>

"Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed by crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burned, to served as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired. Nero offered his gardens for the spectacle..." [Barclay, 149]

Claimed that t/intensity of these persecutions had not occurred when Peter wrote. There's a false assumption here: F.A. is that Peter is writing about THESE specific persecutions. No solid evidence that he is (or that he needed to for that matter). Peter was in Rome but his audience was dispersed abroad. More likely that persecutions that Peter

is writing about were Xn suffering of a general kind; being mocked & persecuted short of death. Cf. 3:15 [=>]

(c) Others have objected Peter writes too much like Paul

Has to do with the style of writing. Argument is that this is someone trying to copy Paul. If that's true he's brainless because he used Peter's name not Paul's!

Parallels to Paul should be no surprise. Paul was the one who confronted Peter as recorded in Gal. 2. Peter, near the end of his life, was teaching w/Paul in Rome, and Silas, who was with Peter, was Paul's traveling companion & assistant for many years. That Peter should reflect some of Paul is of no concern. Peter also has several parallels to James. All of these writers were led by t/same Spirit & knew much of t/same sort of common idioms that were in use in t/CH.

Fact is, when you read Peter you sense that you're not reading Paul, you are indeed reading Peter.

1 Peter shares many stylistic parallels to Peter's sermons in Acts, such as t/teaching that X is t/stone rejected by the builder has become the chief cornerstone (2:7-8, cf. Acts 4:10-11). That X is no respecter or persons (1:17, cf. Acts 10:34). Peter urges his readers to "gird themselves w/humility" in 5:5 which is a parallel to Jesus girding himself with a towel & washing the disciple's feet

Beyond that, the author claims to have been an eye-witness of the sufferings of Christ (5:1) which fits Peter's life as a witness to Jesus' rejection by men, suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, and His trial

(d) Lastly -

Some point out that 1 Peter is not found in the Muratorian Canon (the earliest list of the NT books which dates to t/end of 2d c.). However, the copy we have of the MT is corrupt (not complete). Copy/ies we do have don't mention James or Hebrews.

There's no reason other than a hunger and thirst for skepticism, to reject that the Apostle Peter was the one who wrote this letter.

2. Date or Time of Writing

We believe that Peter was written during the reign of Nero, probably shortly after the death of the Apostle Paul. This would give us a window of somewhere between 62-65 AD.

Peter had to have written after Paul left Rome in AD 62, since he doesn't mention Paul in his letter (1 Peter 5:12-13). On t/flip side, Paul doesn't mention Peter in any of his 4 prison epistles (during his 1st Roman imprisonment).

We also have to allow time for 2 Peter to be written (around AD 65 or 66). This would give us a date of somewhere between AD 63 and 64, probably just before/after July 64 AD when Nero torched city of Rome.

3. Place of Writing

1 Peter 5:13 *She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark.*

We know that Peter wrote from "Babylon"

a. But what Does "Babylon" mean?

Three locations suggested for "Babylon" - 1) A Roman outpost in N. Egypt (but too obscure and no reason be believe that Peter was ever in that area); 2) Ancient Babylon in Mesopotamia (also a small, distant place and there's no reason to believe that Peter was ever there).

Best suggestion is that this is Rome which t/Xns began to call "Babylon" as a sort of encryptic name. (cf. Rev. chapters 16-18). Rome was called "Babylon" for security reasons & because t/term "Babylon" was a cryptogram for any center of worldly power that was in opposition to God and his saints. That was Rome, esp. under Nero.

It has traditionally been held that Peter set up residence in Rome and also died there, as did Paul. So we have the Apostle Peter, writing from Rome around AD 64.

What about ==>

B. The Audience (to whom was 1 Peter written?)

Largely seem to be Gentiles (non Jews). There's no mention of the Law (something that always came up in the Jewish churches).

Descriptions used in 1:14, 4:3-4 implies Gentiles, not Jews.

1:14 - former lusts which were theirs in their ignorance.

4:3-4 - sensuality, lusts, drunkenness and idolatry.

2:9-10 where the readers were told that they were once o/o of t/Covenant - that would indicate that they weren't Jewish.

The areas addressed were predominantly Gentile ==>

... Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia ...

These were all Roman provinces in Asia Minor. That doesn't mean that there weren't Jews there (no doubt there were) but it was largely Gent.

C. The Atmosphere (the circumstances of the letter?)

Background is that these were Xns who were suffering persecution for their faith. God by way of Peter encourages them to live well in the midst of t/hostility w/o losing hope or becoming bitter.

Peter is one letter in which there is no theological controversy. That's rare! Philippians had the Judaizers; Colossians t/Colossian Heresy; Galatians t/Issue of t/Law and Grace; 1 Corinthians (well, we don't have enough time!). No such controversy in 1 Peter.

What we have are hurting people in need of hope. That's the theme: "Hope for the Hurting." Twin themes of Hurting and Hope.

| | |
|--|--|
| Hope is in our salvation (1:1c-6a) | Hurting is only for a little while (1:6b, 5:10) |
| Hope results in joy (1:6a, 8-9) | Hurting was experienced by Jesus on our behalf (1:11, 2:21, 4:1) |
| Hope is why Jesus came for us (1:20-21) | Hurting believers are cared for by God (5:7) |
| Hope results in Holiness and Obedience (1:14-15) | Hurting is to be Expected (4:12) |
| Hope results in Love (1:22) | Hurting as a Christian is Noble (3:14, 4:14-15) |

II. Connection to 1:3-9

This section, of course, follows from where we left off in v. 2 - a section we called "Satisfaction in the Sovereign Source of Our Salvation."

Our Hope is Found in the Electing Grace of the Father, the Sanctifying Grace of the Spirit and the saving grace of the Son.

A. Hope in The Sovereign Source of Our Salvation

3-fold source as we've seen that t/Triune God (F/S/HS) was at work in planning and securing our salvation.

1. Selected by the Father (1:2a)

[chosen] according to the foreknowledge of God the Father

We have been (past-tense) chosen (idea comes from v. 1 where t/word chosen actually is) according to the foreknowledge (foreordination) of God, the Father. Implication is that we have been chosen for salvation.

2. Sanctified by the Spirit (1:2b)

It was t/work of t/H.S. to regenerate our dead hearts. As Titus 3:5 says:

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,

Thirdly==>

3. Saved by the Son (1:2c)

[chosen] according to the foreknowledge of God the Father with the sanctification of the Spirit FOR OBEDIENCE TO JESUS CHRIST AND SPRINKLING WITH HIS BLOOD.

Wonderful Progression: Father Elects; Spirit Sanctifies; Son Saves.

We've called this "Satisfaction in the Sovereign Source of Our Salvation." Now, as we turn to vv. 3-9 we're going to look at "Satisfaction in the Sovereign Joy of Our Salvation." Sov. Joy can only come from a Sov. source: That is, a Sov. God who loves us.

We will look at some==>

1. The Elements of the Sovereign Joy of Our Salvation (3-4)

The outline may change, but t/content will remain t/same. Fascinating content and truth in this passage==>

A. It was Prompted by God's Great Mercy (3a)

B. It is Accomplished Through Our New Birth (3b)

1. A New Birth that Gives us Hope for the Present (3c)

2. A New Birth that Gives us an Inheritance for the Future (4)

C. It is Guarded by God's Power (5a)

1. Through Present Faith (5b)

2. For Future and Final Salvation (5c)

D. It will be Evidenced by Persevering Faith (6-9)

1. A Persevering Faith That:

a. Results in Joy (6a)

b. Stands the Test of Trials (6b-7)

c. Loves The Lord (whom we have not seen) (8a)

d. Believes in The Lord (whom we don't see) (8b)

e. Is the Means to Final Salvation (9)

My diagram of the passage . . .

Sort of go through what I wrestled w/last night . . .