

Which things the angels desire to look into

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Date: 01 January 2000

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[0 : 00] Let us look together in the portion we've been reading, in the first epistle of Peter, in chapter 1. And let us look again in verses 10 to 12, we may read, Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, to prophesy it of the grace that should come unto you, searching forth of what manner of time the Spirit of Christ who has in them could signify, when he testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves but unto us, it administered the things which are now reported unto you by them, that I preach the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost, and go to heaven, which things the angels desire to look into.

These last verses in particular of verse 12, which things the angels desire to look into. Now, those things that the angels desire to look into, you see within the context of these three particular verses, as well as within the width of the context that we have read.

They seek to look into the same things as the Old Testament prophets looked into.

They seek to look into the same things that the apostles of the New Testament looked into. And we read that the prophets of the Old Testament, they testified themselves beforehand of the sufferings of Christ.

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, men like Isaiah and others of the Old Testament spoke of the Christ as the coming one. And we read here that as they, though they were the channels to whom the Holy Spirit gave us these scriptures of the Old Testament, that spoke of the coming one, we read that they themselves were searching, what manner, what or what manner of time, they were searching to know more fully of this one concerning whom they prophesied.

[2 : 30] And they were searching to know more fully when he should come. They spoke of the Christ.

When Isaiah spoke, he spoke of him, he said, unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. And he spoke of the servant, who was to give himself a ransom for men.

He was speaking of the coming one. And the apostles of the New Testament, they also spoke of the Christ, but they spoke of him from a different viewpoint.

They spoke of him from a different view. And the apostles of the New Testament, they spoke of the Lord, but they all spoke concerning the same one. And it's concerning him, and the things concerning the Christ that the angels desire to look into.

In other words, they desire to look into the unfolding drama of redemption, of sinners from their sins.

[3 : 38] And we read that they're looking into that drama, the unfolding drama and the revelation of Scripture, they're looking into it from three particular aspects.

In verse 10, we read, they prophesied, they prophesied of the grace that should come unto them.

Well, that's one aspect of this predemptive drama that they, and all the angels, decide to look into. The free grace of God.

And then we read, in verse 11, searching for what manner of time the Spirit of Christ who was in them to signify, when he testified beforehand, the sufferings of Christ.

That's another aspect that they desire to look into, and that the angels now desire to look into. And that's the third one, the glory that should follow.

[4 : 48] The glory that should redone to the Messiah on the completion of his assigned work. We look then into this drama of redemption as it was unfolding throughout the Old Testament and as it has now unfolded from these three viewpoints.

The free grace of God in Christ. The sufferings of the Messiah and the glory that must redone to him having completed that work.

We shall look, first of all tonight, at that, what they are looking into. And then secondly, we shall look at the manner in which they look into these things.

Because we read that they desire to look into them. And these words, both desire and the looping in, tell us much about the way in which they look into these aspects of redemption.

It's not in a cold, clinical, efficient manner. There is a fervency, there is an earnestness, there is a zeal about the way that they look into them.

[6 : 13] Well, first of all then, what they look into is drama of redemption from the three aspects that I said. And then secondly, the manner in which they look into that. First, from the aspect of free grace.

This is, this grace of God is something that the angels would never have known about, had sinned, not coming to the experience of man and had God not, in order to more fully manifest his own glory, devised, made known away for the salvation of nothing.

things. These angels, sinless creatures, in the presence of a holy God, they know much of the goodness of God.

They know of the goodness of God in creation and in the preservation of creation in being. he ever thought that it was of the goodness of God that he brought creation into being.

There was no obligation upon him to bring creation of creation into being. It was of his goodness that they might enjoy his fullness that he brought it into being. It wasn't because he needed their fellowship.

[7 : 36] He had sufficient fellowship in himself, in the blessed trinity. It was of his goodness that he brought creation into being. and the angels, they have been beholding that creation and the preservation of that creation and the goodness of God that is manifesting it.

To wonder that the power of God and the wisdom of God that is ascended for purposes of good in bringing creation into being the power that is ascended there is that by the word of his power in the space of six days all brought into being and all declared very good.

but it's only in the recreation of sinful man it's only in redemption that the grace of God is made known.

This is the goodness of God to the hell deserved. This is the love of God to the hell deserved. In the giving of his own son that whosoever believeth upon him should not perish as they deserve but have everlasting life.

we have seen that unfold in drama of redemption and the grace of God that is unfolded there the word of God by the word of God in the space of six days creation was brought into being but to bring this re-creation into being to bring man from sin amid the world made flesh they have beheld the great wonder of what was involved here.

[9 : 40] They have seen a body being prepared for him. They have seen him taking that body that nature into unity with his divine passion. They have viewed the preservation and the keeping of that body in the womb of the virgin.

They have seen the great wonder of God manifesting the flesh. it wasn't just the word of his power it was the word was made flesh in order to bring about this re-creation in order to display the grace of God to the heraldy servants in us.

Another way that scripture shows the great difference between the goodness of God in creation and the goodness of God in redemption is that it speaks of creation being brought into being by speaking metaphorically of course the finger of God the psalmist looking up into the heavens which thine own finger of but when he comes to speak of salvation it's the arm of God greater power was needed to be asserted to show for this goodness this special goodness this grace of God to hell to serve everything the angels might not have marveled so much when they saw creation being brought into being from nothing by the word of God's power it was there was nothing that was that seemed to be contradictory there to his own righteousness in bringing that into being but when you have the reek when you have the work of redemption it appears it appears to be running contradictory to his own principles of righteousness that he should justify ungodly sinners but he justified them because the demands of righteousness the demands that are made on righteousness there are fully made in his own son the truth of

God and the mercy of God are made together this grace of God couldn't have been exhibited had not man fallen and had not God devised a way of overcoming this and this is what the angels look upon the wonder of this grace of God to help the servant sinner that is unfolded in this world marvelous work of redemption now they look also on the sufferings of Christ and these sufferings they begin they begin with his humiliation and his humiliation begins at the moment of conception he took our nature into unity with his passion they've been viewing as I said already the body created they've been viewing how he took that nature into unity with this person how he supernaturally created their creative miracle in the womb of the virgin and how that human nature how it was superintended by the

Holy Spirit of God in the womb and the spirit with whom he was endowed and how he was born into the world and they've seen the great wonder of God manifest in the flesh they've seen the great wonder of this child who was born God taking our nature that's part of his humiliation and surely we can say that it's part of the humiliation anyway I won't say part of himself but it's part of the humiliation of him but he takes that nature into unity with his own passion and what they've been viewing this great marvel there were angels present at the incarnation to tell the story to the shepherds and to the wise men they were filled with the wonder of it that a child was born in this way they saw the wonder of one who was

[14 : 29] God and man one who was at the same time omnipotent and holding the world in being and giving breath to all and giving breath even to the one who cradled him in his arms in her arms while at the same time a little baby no doubt crying and vulnerable there omnipotent as God and frail as a little baby simultaneously all in the one person they've seen the great wonder of the omniscience the omniscient God the all knowing God taking out nature and growing up as a child as a youngster and man and growing in knowledge as you and I must have done step by step the great mother of God manifest in the flesh and that part of the humiliation part of this humbling of himself to take our nature into unity with his passion and in that nature coming to suffer coming to bring forth the righteousness that God required of his people and in bringing forth that righteousness there was a suffering that ensued there was the humbling of himself to take our nature involved as you know that he meant with the contradictions and oppositions of scribes and pharisees it meant even that the son of

God would be accused of blasphemies it meant as John puts it that he tabernacled in the midst of this sinful world and I think it's one of the American writers who was bringing that graphically to me what was involved there he said something like this if you saw the most holy man that you ever knew or can imagine ever lived in this world I'm sure we've all put someone in mind and you are going past the most evil place you can ever imagine in this world some awful saloon bar of worship and there in the midst of that very place and in the midst of all its debauched populace you saw this man you would say what is that person doing there and you would say how awful it must be for him to put up with that environment and that surrounding it's so out of character and so out of place for him to be but that is only a tiny shadow of what it must have been for the sinless one the divine one to take our nature and inner nature to tabernacle in this world with all the sin that is in it he humbled himself and oh how these sinless angels must have wondered at this great humiliation this humbling of himself the sufferings of the face of those whom he came unto and who cast him out he came unto his own and his own received him not they must have wondered as I said that the holy one being accused of blasphemy they must have wondered that he had not a place to lay his head the lord of all created all things but when he humbled himself to take our nature and to be the surety of his people it is written that he had not a place to lay his head his birds in the air have nests but the son of man had not whereon to lay his head we read nowhere that he had a home of his own we find that there were occasions that he could go into that home in Bethan but there was nowhere that he called his own except that cross oh the humbling of himself that is there in only it goes on from the point of conception onwards it's as if he's climbing a hill all the way and with each step as if the climb becomes more arduous bringing forth the righteousness that is required of his own meeting the suffering that is required in that righteousness but all the time he set his face as a flint towards that goal towards that goal on occasion he said

I have a baptism to be baptised with and I am straightened till it be accomplished it wasn't as if he was going blindly into this he had come with a purpose he knew his mission no doubt there was a greater clarity of that mission as he went on that he knew that he had come without purpose to do the Father's way and he delighted to do it but the angels viewed him humbling himself and the sufferings that were there and humbling of himself you have the sufferings then from conception onwards certainly from birth onwards could be more accurate but the sufferings although they are there they reach a climax in the cross of Calvary and we mustn't think of the sufferings although there are like a mountain as I said climbing all the way a graph that is rising all the way when you come to this great event of

Calvary it's as if there's a quantum leap from the nature of the sufferings up to land to the sufferings of the cross this is the top of the mountain but oh what a great height there's such a quantum leap here in the sufferings that are involved that is what we particularly desire by the grace of God to look into on the morning to remember the Lord's death the giving of himself a sacrifice an atoning sacrifice the sufferings that were there it wasn't just physical sufferings not just the crown of thorns spiking into his head not just the nails into his hands not just even the spitting upon him not just all of these awful external things it was the bruising of his soul as he was made sin as the vials of God's wrath were poured out upon him in the room and place of sinners and scripture speaks of these great depths of sufferings and humiliation that were there

I don't what in deep minds from some were standing there is none who can pattern the depths of sufferings that were there as he was made sin for his own sin we must remember that as the holiness of God is an infinite height so our sin by which we have transgressed in Adam against God is an infinite deep we so often to our shame don't even don't we have such a superficial view of sin even as creatures if you had a room full of smokers here just now all of them puffing away and then someone else came into the room who was himself a smoker he wouldn't notice much difference so it is with us we have become so familiar with sin in ourselves and others that we treat it in a light manner that's not the way

[22 : 54] God sees it you take a non smoker and he will be abominated and nauseated by the smoke in this room that's only a shadow of the way that God sees sin because as the holiness of God is an infinite height so our sin is an infinite deep and he is to atone he is to atone to bring forth what the transgressed law demands and remember and I want to go further into speaking about these sufferings is no than this if you or I go into a lost eternity and may it be that we shall free from that while there is a way set before us of escape but if you or I go into a lost eternity we shall bear the wrath of God and the sufferings that will ensue throughout all eternity we shall bear the wrath of

God extensively throughout eternity it's as if the wrath of God and the sufferings will be passioned out throughout the endless ages of eternity now let me give the impression that they're going to be light that's an awesome thought to have to bear the wrath and curse of God throughout all eternity and to know that in a million billion years things will not come to an end but will continue forever and ever that is what our sin deserves in the sight of a holy God but look at the Christ in our nature he bore the wrath and curse of God in the Roman place of sinners intensively in his own passion it's as if the vials of wrath were concentrated in a limited time upon one head who can enter into the sufferings that were there on the cross who can enter into that and the angels have viewed them the angels have been looking on the wonder of this grace of

God that was giving his own beloved son in this way and for such worthiness such awe such such such such such undeserving sinners so such relatives are these sinners they look upon the free grace of God a principle that would otherwise not have been known to them but for God's redemptive work here in the dealing with sin in his own son they look upon the sufferings of Christ from his conception from the womb onwards and they look upon the they look upon them particularly in the atonement of the cross but let us not forget that they look upon the sufferings also in this respect the sufferings of Christ as they are seen in his church they make up that which remains as

Paul puts it in the epistle to the Colossians of his sufferings they are the body of Christ and maybe it's just put across to us when Paul was persecuting the church and when Paul was arrested spiritually on the way to Damascus you remember the words of Jesus to him why he persecuted down the church it was that Paul was persecuting but Christ looks upon the church as his own body as his own sufferings by persecuting to spurn him and the angels it's in it's it's to the believer it's not only been given to believe upon him but also to suffer for him and the angels are seeing something of the drama of redemption that sinners can be redeemed and can be brought from the power of darkness into the kingdom of light and the great marvel of grace that can work this in them that they can love that the one whom they had carnal enmity against towards that they know love him and that they give themselves that they see by his grace to to live for him that he puts this love into their hearts what shall they render for him for all that he has done for them the sufferings then and then the glory that must redone to him the glory that must redone to him they look upon that also and the glory of course has already redoned it he has the glory that has redoned it to the son of

God in our nature when he has risen in his exaltation he has ascended up on high taking captivity captive they've watched it that he has risen in his death he destroyed death in his rising again he brought life and immortality to light in the life and immortality that he brought to life the power of an endless life it's in our nature this is what the angels are looking on at because he lives a people for whom he died are living also are to live also this is the great wonder that they see the ones in whose place he has given himself risen triumphant in that glorious exhortation they see that he is there at God's right hand in our nature the God man making intercession for his own and they know they see that intercession these glorious words no doubt of the intercessory prayer on earth will still whether verbalised or not they are there in prayer father

[29 : 25] I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory that thou hast given me thou loved me before the foundation of the world and they know that that is a prayer that is made to a father who is predisposed to love it was because he loved that he gave his own son it was the love preceded the giving and he is predisposed to love and to give what he decides he is not asking for anything that is God the father and God the son are of the same mind in this great work they see the wonder that this is a prayer that will certainly be heard him the father always here they see the wonder of the security that belongs to hell deserving sinners in Christ those who deserve this night to be in the flames of a lost eternity the security that belongs to them there in the finished work at

God's right hand they see the glory that redounds to him in his exaltation the great wonder of the salvation of sinners that is there and all of that is brought out and also they see something of the glory that must redound to him in the extension of his kingdom on earth with each sinner who sends his own spirit to accompany the gospel the preached gospel so that the gospel comes with power and sinners are effectively called through the gospel and brought from death to life they see the glory that is rejoicing to him there and we read that there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels and not out by the angels themselves over one sinner who repents because they see the efficacy of the mediation of

Christ there in each one who is brought from death to life they see it in every thought of love that there is in the heart of his believing people because it's all of grace it's all of the work of his spirit working in them to will and to do of his good pleasures they see that it's all of Christ it's not of man and then secondly we can look tonight at how do these angels look at all of this how do they look on to the free grace of God that is there in this redemptive work of Christ how do they look on to the sufferings of Christ how do they look on to the glory that redoubles to them in the gospel first of all with great earnestness that's the first thing we can say about it they desire to look into these things and the word desire is a strong word they crave to look into them you can think of the craving it's a sinful craving of course in this case of a smoker an addicted smoker for his cigarettes the strength that sort of strength of desire they crave sinlessly of course to look into these things there's that earnestness it's not just a spasmodic interest now and again it's an ongoing yearning to look into these things and then we read the very words to look into it tells us of the nature of the way they look into them because that word look into it's the same word that is used of

Peter in two gospels when he and John came to the tomb and found the tomb empty we read that stooping that he stooped down he stooped down into the grave to peer into the grave it's that stooping down that is involved in looking into stooping down peering in if you can think if you can if we can use that sort of expression of angels as if they were craning their necks as if they were craning their necks to look into this glorious work of redemption this one the free grace of God to sinners the sufferings of God in all nature to the curse death of the cross and the raising of one in our nature to the very pinnacle the very highest throne of heaven as rabbi duncan put it dust of the earth at the helm of the universe because that's what he is this night ruling over all principalities and powers in our nature making all things work towards the grand consummation that has been designed from before the very beginning in the councils of eternity they look into these things with great earnestness with great earnestness they look with great adoration and that we can see from other parts of scripture because we find for example from revelation 5 of the mention made of the elders about the throne and of the cherubim about the throne and especially the cherubim there that are regarded by many as being the beasts about the throne the grand order of angels and the son that is there of the angels worthy is the lamb that was slain well this is the way we have it anyway it's the redeemed who are saying worthy is the lamb that is slain but in verse 13 of chapter 5 we read and every creature and that must include the angels which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and in sea and all that are in them heard

I saying blessing and honour and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the lamb say that there is that adoration as they look into the wonderful things that are involved in the redemption of sinful man and then we can also say that they look into these things with unceasing interest we can say that simply from this one fact they desire to look into them it's not a case of they desired or they will desire but they desire it's an ongoing present they continue to desire and that means that there is no boredom there never comes a point where they say we've had enough of this we know this to exhaustion already and we're bored with it and we can leave it behind they never ever can reach that it's impossible for them they continue to see new things they continue to see new things all the time of the great love of

[37 : 27] God that stooped down to give his own son in the Roman place of hell deserving sinners how can they ever come to know this to exhaustion because the love that is involved here is as far as east is from the west infinitely great exhaustion no doubt the angels they know the scriptures they are they are holy creatures they are intelligent creatures they will know the scriptures inside out much better than you or

I know them but they don't say we have come to an end of this it's an unceasing interest it's an earnest interest it's a yearning desire to have more and more of the wonder of this and the more they have it the more there is the spirit of worship among those who are sinless and to veil their faces before the glory of God now can we come to apply that to ourselves with just two questions if these sinless ones who know the scriptures undoubtedly so thoroughly and who have such a deep understanding who have been viewing this wonder of redemption from the time that Adam fell and the promise was given of the one who has come to bruise the head of the serpent of the one who has come the one who has risen and they've been viewing all this with an intelligent and an adoring interest and the ones who have such a wonderful understanding of these things if they are still wanting to know more oh how much ought you and I at best we are ankle deep and I think if we flatter ourselves even at that we are ankle deep in this great ocean of the redemptive grace of

God in Jesus Christ can we ever reach the point where we can say I know this shouldn't this be the song shouldn't this be the talk shouldn't this fill our horizons oh the awesomeness that things like football or anything else in this world should be taking the place in our thoughts and desires and goals that this great thing this great thing should have how it ought to be filling our horizons and our talk and oh that we would be as a church living as ones who are redeemed ones who are indeed participating in this look look at this also this is a second thing the angels have no vital stake in this great drama of redemption they don't need to be redeemed they have not sinned these are the sinless angels who are speaking about they have not sinned they have not fallen they do not need to be redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus

Christ and yet they look on with adoration with earnestness with unceasing interest they cannot but go on looking into these things craning their necks if we can speak like that of them peering into them and and all and all that we would as earnest seekers that we would have interest ones who are out of Christ may be by your own profession still under the wrath and curse of God of God and that justly that justly that's what we must be out of

Christ because we are our sin is uncovered and the sin is all it's cancerous and evil nature is seen by God as it is and we must with our sin uncovered be under the wrath and curse of God and if that's where we are and if there's a way of salvation set before us shouldn't there be an earnest interest on our part that there would be an application of that healing blood to our souls before we pass from this world and into the eternity where we would have passed beyond the sphere of measure the night comes when no man can work this is the day of mercy to seek and if we are here tonight and our profession is that that grace of God has touched our souls what a solemn profession it is a solemn solemn profession it is mustn't be just a matter of that profession in order that we can have the benefits of salvation and yet at the same time live as world drinks you can't have your cake and eat it as it were you must be in one camp or the other you must be in

[44 : 23] Christ or out of Christ and our profession and our lives must be in correspondence must be in correspondence there must be a seeking to live to his glory there must be a seeking that we might have a greater vision of what he has done for us because that's the only way that our lives can be in a proper alignment that we would have a greater vision of the holiness and the grace of God and the provision of God for us in Christ the more we have of that the more we see ourselves in perspective the more we see our sin and its deserving and the more we see how indebted we are in Christ and that we would say with the language of our hearts rather than just the language of our lips for me to live as Christ and to die again how far short we fall how far short we fall

I start with myself oh blessed be his holy name that he is written if you confess your sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness what a what a salvation is set before us may he give us grace to be eagerly stooping and looking into it who here can't you have no Thank you.