

The Prophetic Inquiry and the Present Age (vv.10-12)

Their Diligence (v.10)

VERSE 10 As to this salvation (Περὶ ἧς σωτηρίας [*prep.w/rel.pro.gen.f.s., hos; “As to this”, + gen.f.s., soteria, salvation*]), **the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you** (προφήται [*n.m.p., προφήτης, prophetes, prophet*] οἱ προφητεύσαντες [*def.art. + aor.act.pt.n.m.p., προφητεύω, propheteuo, prophesy; “who prophesied*] περὶ τῆς εἰς ὑμᾶς χάριτος [*prep. + def.art.w/gen.f.s., charis, grace, + prep.w/pro.acc.p., su*]) **made careful search and inquiry** (ἐξεζήτησαν καὶ ἐξεραύνησαν [*aor.act.ind.3.p., ἐκζητέω, ekzeteo, seek out, + conj. + aor.act.ind.3.p., ἐξεραυνάω, exeraunao, make a careful search; 1X*]),

Their Dilemma (v.11)

VERSE 11 seeking to know (ἐραυνῶντες [*pres.act.pt.n.m.p., ἐραυνάω, eraunao, investigate, search; 8X: Jn.5:39; 7:52; 1Cor.2:10; Rev.2:23; “searching to know”*]) **what person or time** (εἰς τίνα ἢ ποῖον καιρὸν [*prep.w/indef.pro.acc.m.s., tis, “what”, + conj., or, + interrog.pro.acc.m.s., poios, what kind of, + acc.m.s., kairos, time; translation: “what or what kind of time”; they knew who the person was but grappled with the question of the age between the two advents*]) **the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating** (τὸ ἐν αὐτοῖς πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ ἐδήλου [*def.art.w/nom.nt.s., pneuma, spirit {HS}, + gen.m.s., Christos, + prep. w/loc.m.p.demon.pro., autos, + imperf.a.ind.3.m.s., δηλόω, deloo, make clear, indicate; cp. 2Pet.1:14*]) **as He predicted the sufferings of Christ** (προμαρτυρόμενον [*pres.mid.pt.nom.nt.s., προμαρτύρομαι, promarturomai, foretell, predict; 1X*] τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα [*def.art.w/acc.nt.p., πάθημα, pathema, suffering, + prep.w/acc.m.s., Christos*]) **and the glories to follow** (καὶ τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας [*conj. + acc.f.p., doxa, glory; “glories”, + prep.{meta-after} w/demon.pro.acc.nt.p., autos; “to follow”, or “after this”*]).

Their Insight (v.12)

VERSE 12 It was revealed to them (οἷς ἀπεκαλύφθη [*rel.pro.dat.m.p., hos; “It”, + aor.pass.ind.3.s., ἀποκαλύπτω, apokalupto, reveal*]) **that they were not serving themselves, but you** (ὅτι οὐχ διηκόνουν ἑαυτοῖς ὑμῖν δὲ [*conj./coord., that, + neg. + impf.act.ind.3.p., διακονέω, diakoneo, serve, + pro./reflec.dat.m.p., ἑαυτοῦ, heautou, themselves, + conj./advers. + pro.acc.m.p., su*]), **in these things which now have been announced to you** (αὐτά, ἃ νῦν ἀνηγγέλη ὑμῖν [*pro.acc.nt.p., autos; “in these things”, + pro./rel.nom.nt.p., hos; “which”, + adv., nun, now, + aor.pass.ind.3.s., ἀναγγέλλω, anangelo,*

announce, + *pro.acc.p., su, you*) **through those who preached the gospel to you** (διὰ τῶν εὐαγγελισαμένων ὑμᾶς [*prep.w/aor.m.pt.gen.m.p., εὐαγγελίζω, euangelizo, proclaim good news; “preached the gospel”, + pro.acc.m.p., su, you*]) **by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven** ([ἐν] πνεύματι ἁγίῳ ἀποσταλέντι ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ [*prep.w/instr.nt.s., pneuma, + adj.instr.nt.s., ἅγιος, hagios, holy, + aor.pass.pt.dat.nt.s., ἀποπέλλω, apostello, send, + prep.w/abl.m.s., ouranos, heaven*]) **-- things into which angels long to look** (εἰς ἃ ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἄγγελοι παρακύψαι [*prep.w/pro./rel.acc.nt.p., hos, “into which”, + nom.m.p., ἄγγελος, angelos, angel, + pres.act.ind.3.p., ἐπιθυμέω, epithumeo, desire, lust, long, + aor.act.infin., παρακύπτω, parakupto, peer; 5X: Lk.24:12; Jn.20:5,11 {careful observation of the empty tomb}; Jam.1:25 {interest and intensity under GAP}*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSES 10-12

1. “As to (or “concerning”; preposition περί) this salvation” stands as a kind of heading to the long sentence ending with v.11.
2. The repetition of the noun “salvation” from v.9 acts as a bridge to the discussion of O.T. prophetic insight with respect to the present age of grace.
3. “Salvation” refers to all phases of Christian experience (the emphasis in v.9 is the final outcome based on the Bema Seat).
4. “The prophets who prophesied” is a reference to O.T. prophets, and not N.T. prophets.
5. They are clearly distinguished from those who first brought the gospel to the Asian Christians in v.12 (cf. “those who preached the gospel to you”).
6. Of the many objects of their prophetic witness, it included “the grace that *would come to*” a distinct category of believers living between the First and Second Advents.
7. This “grace”, as it has turned out, concerns itself with the special status of believers of this dispensation.
8. “Of the grace” is, literally, “concerning the grace” (the preposition is *peri*).
9. Peter uses two compound verbs, similar in meaning (aor.act.ind.3p. of ἐκζητέω, *ekzeteo*, seek out, and ἐξεραυνάω, *exeraunao*, make careful inquiry), to show that this was not a casual pursuit.
10. The focus of their inquiry (though not stated) was the written text of the O.T.
11. They sought out an answer to their doctrinal dilemma, and they did so with the utmost diligence.
12. The verb ἐραυνάω (*eraunao*, examine, investigate; cp. v.11 where it is translated “seeking to know”) is used in Jn.5:39 and 7:52 of inquiry into Scripture (cp. the verb *exeraunao*, an intensive compound of *eraunao*, translated “made careful inquiries” in v.10).
13. One wonders if this research was done independently or was an on-going compilation of research done during the period of the formation of the O.T. canon.
14. Certainly, the more O.T. books at one’s disposal, the better chance of coming to a more complete resolution of the question.
15. This activity began most certainly sometime in the post-Mosaic period.

16. When it began in earnest, we would have to speculate.
17. Now to v.11 and the specific target of the prophetic inquiry.
18. The subject of “seeking to know” is certain unspecified O.T. prophetic students, and the object of the participle (pres.act.pt.nom.m.p. of ἐραυνάω, *eraunao*, try to find out, examine, search) is the phrase translated “what person or time”.
19. The first part of this phrase consists of a preposition (εἰς) and an indefinite pronoun (τίς, *tis*, who, what, which) in the accusative.
20. The problem with the NAS translation is that “what person” is unlikely because Scripture gives no indication of any mystery or doubt about the “person” in whom salvation is centered.
21. Old Testament prophets from Abraham forward knew that the Savior would be a Jew who would be rejected by His own people.
22. As the O.T. canon evolved, there came to be a body of divine revelation that indicated various particulars with respect to the person and times associated with Christ’s (Messiah’s) advents.
23. For instance, the place and unique circumstances of His birth were a part of the prophetic witness.
24. The second part of this phrase is translated “or time”.
25. It consists of the coordinating disjunctive conjunction ἢ (or), followed by the interrogative pronoun ποῖος (*poios*, what sort of), with the noun καιρός (*kairos*, time).
26. This part of the phrase goes with the preposition *eis*, with both the pronoun and the noun taking the accusative of reference.
27. The translation “what” or “what kind of time” best suits the known facts of doctrine, specifically what they knew and what they could not have possibly known.
28. Old Testament prophets understood from their study of the O.T. the doctrines of the birth, life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, session, and coming of Messiah.
29. They even understood that God would set aside temporarily His people, Israel, in favor of another people following the First Advent.
30. Moses, Isaiah, and Hosea all indicated that God would replace Israel with a new nation/people (cf. Deut.32:21; Isa.65:1; Hos.1:10; 2:23; cp. Rom.9:25,26; 10:19,20).
31. All these things were made apparent to them through God the Holy Spirit.
32. God the Holy Spirit made the O.T. prophesies clear, as well as whatever direct revelation was given to a particular prophet.
33. For instance, Daniel revealed the exact time when Christ would appear, as well as the subsequent fall of Jerusalem and the dispersion of national Israel (Dan.9).
34. God the HS indwelt these men and He was the One who made prophetic inquiry possible.
35. “The Spirit of Christ” refers to God the HS (cp. Rom.8:9 for the only other occurrence).
36. The phrase “within them” (ἐν αὐτοῖς) indicates that they were indwelt with the HS as we are in this age (it was not universal).
37. God the Holy Spirit “predicted” specific prophetic facts relative to the First and Second Advents.
38. The phrase “the sufferings of Christ” characterizes the First Advent with special emphasis upon the Cross.
39. The phrase “the glories to follow” summarizes the history of God the Son beginning with His resurrection.

40. “The glories”, as Peter calls them, include everything pertaining to the Person of Christ from His resurrection forward.
41. Jesus referred to His resurrection, ascension, and session as His glorification (Jn.17:5).
42. Of course, the Second Coming is included in the “glories to follow” along with the Millennium and Eternal State.
43. The prophetic witness as contained in the O.T. writings was so clear and unequivocal that Jesus rebuked believers who doubted the resurrection (Lk.24:25,26).
44. The question that O.T. prophets struggled with had to do with the history between “the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow”.
45. They knew there was going to be a people and a dispensation between the two diverse categories of Messianic experience.
46. They did not know who the new people of God were going to be.
47. Nor could they have ascertained the nature of the present dispensation.
48. God did not reveal to them these things, but revealed it through the N.T. prophets and apostles.
49. Paul was especially used of God to reveal the doctrine of the Body of Christ, made up of believing Jews and Gentiles.
50. Paul labeled this a mystery doctrine, hidden until it was revealed to him and others (Eph.3:3,4,9; 5:32; Col.1:26,27; Rom.16:25; cp. 11:25).
51. Again, it is clear from Peter’s statement in v.12 that O.T. prophets anticipated the new people of God who would temporarily replace Israel as the priest nation to the nations.
52. Jesus prophesied this in the Temple before the religious authorities in connection with His teaching of the parable of the vineyard (Mt.21:43).
53. He also announced the fall of Jerusalem and the dispersion of national Israel which took place in 70AD in the subsequent parable – the parable of the wedding feast (Mt.22:7).
54. His teaching was in complete agreement with Dan.9:26.
55. The O.T. writing prophets gradually came to recognize that believers living between the two advents would benefit from their writings.
56. Anyone who was positive and open-minded could readily ascertain that Jesus fulfilled the O.T. prophetic witness when being taught by competent Church Age communicators.
57. The Hebrew prophets who left behind their writings were cognizant of the fact that they were benefiting a mystery people of a special age.
58. Their diligence was rewarded.
59. Their search for answers went as far as it could.
60. They did not speculate in the absence of Scriptural support.
61. Hence, Peter’s words: “It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you...”.
62. The Asian Christians and all who have followed through the centuries have had the indispensable blessing of the O.T. prophetic writings.
63. Without these books the N.T. witness would be meaningless.
64. The second link in the chain of getting the truth to the believers living between the advents is also specified in v.12.
65. The missionaries who first “preached the gospel” to the recipients of this epistle were enabled to do so “by the Holy Spirit” which had been “sent from heaven” on the day of Pentecost (Acts.2), May 24, 33AD.

66. Peter was not only there on that occasion, but he also evangelized the Jews who had come to Jerusalem from the nations, resulting in the conversion of some 3,000 souls.
67. God the HS enabled him to speak extemporaneously on the first day of the Church Age.
68. Those who first brought the gospel to northern Asia Minor were so empowered.
69. There is in Peter's word a clear indication that he was not one of them!
70. The good news of salvation first presented to the pagans of Asia Minor was a message that had the O.T. as its ancient and authoritative witness.
71. The Christians of the first century at least had recourse to public information that could establish the historicity of the man, Jesus (His trial and mysterious disappearance; cf. Acts.26:26).
72. In its place we have the N.T. canon.
73. God the HS worked in the lives of the O.T. prophets as well as those who spoke face-to-face with the people of northern Asia Minor.
74. Peter's final observation in this section has to do with the keen interest of the angels into the "things" of BD.
75. The verb "long to look" (παρακύπτω) is a very strong word for looking into a matter.
76. Of its five occurrences in the N.T., it is used 3X of stooping and looking into the empty tomb (Lk.24:12; Jn.20:5,11).
77. It is used 2X of intense interest into the realm of BD (Jam.1:25; 1Pet.1:12).
78. Peter informs his readers that angels take great interest in the "things" which are communicated to positive volition.
79. It appears that angels, for all their knowledge, learn as God reveals His plan to man.
80. Devotion to God is evidenced by an intense desire to hear and understand Scripture.
81. For instance, when God first revealed to Paul the doctrine of the Church, the elect angels eagerly gapped the information.
82. We learn from this statement something about the personality and character of angels.
83. Angels are keen and eager observers of the plan of God, and of the accurate communication of Scripture in particular (1Tim.3:16).
84. In this dispensation, with the completed canon of Scripture, the angels receive instruction from the body of Christ (Eph.3:10).
85. They delight in "things new and old" (Mt.13:52).
86. The implications of the gospel for the present dispensation were, and are, a special area of interest for the angels.
87. They, too, had to wait until God made the mystery doctrine of the Church available.
88. They had no prior insight with respect to the special and privileged dispensation now long in progress.