



# **WELCOME TO BIBLE HOUSE OF GRACE**

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## **The Spirit of Christ in the Old Testament Prophets.**

**(1 Peter 1:1-20)**

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

# The Spirit of Christ in the Old Testament Prophets.

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**INTRODUCTION:** the words, "The Spirit of Christ in the prophets" have been used to support the theory that Jesus pre-existed with God before time began. This study sets about to discover if these words of Peter can be used in this manner or did Peter have something totally different in mind when he said that the Spirit of Christ was in the Old Testament prophets? To put Peter's words in the context of Peter's letter we will begin our journey of discovery at verse eight.

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## THOUGH YOU HAVE NOT SEEN HIM, YOU LOVE HIM

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- **1 Peter 1:8-9:** Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory,<sup>9</sup> obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

It is faith that gives the mind the mental confidence and the heart absolute conviction that the thing hoped for and unseen will come to pass and is real. Though Christian faith does not need evidence it is not without an overflow of many types of proofs that are supported and testified by the word of God i.e., archaeology, the history of Israel, the prophetic messages (many fulfilled with others still to come) the destructive power of sin and the numerous testimonies of people from all nations, languages and cultures throughout history testifying to it. Though there is a mountain of evidence if one goes hunting for it a Christian does not need evidence to walk with Christ and be saved to eternal life since faith stands alone without the need of proof.

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## CHRISTIAN FAITH

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Faith for the Christian is a firm persuasion, expectation and confidence that God will perform all that he has promised to us in Christ. This persuasion is so strong that it not only gives the heart a kind of possession and present reality of things unseen and hoped for, but also gives spiritual enjoyment of them now in this present time and a subsistence and reality of them in the heart and the mind. Since Christian faith deals with spiritual and invisible things exclusively, faith is the faculty needed by every brother and sister in Christ to grasp hold of these invisible things. The word of God states; God created the universe and by faith we believe what cannot be proven it with this same unquestionable faith in the word of God that we place our eternal future on.

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## FALSE FAITH

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Since faith continues, whether it is true or false, well-founded or not and gives all the force of reality to what is believed. We should always be open to examine what we believe is actually what the word of God is teaching. Muslims believe in Allah and Hindus believe in Buddha with the same faith that Christians believe in Christ. Throughout history so called Christian men have killed others believing they were acting in the name of God. Added to this horror is the reality that there have always been many false teachings of the Bible amongst Christianity. The reason for study is not to support faith since faith does not need proof rather the purpose of study is to make sure our faith is founded on a solid foundation.

For further information on faith see:

Hebrews 11 in, Commentary NT (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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## THE PROPHETS INQUIRED CAREFULLY OF THE GRACE THAT WAS TO COME

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- **1 Peter 1:10-11:** Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, <sup>11</sup> inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.

Since the Jews greatly valued the prophets and treasured the Old Testament Scriptures, Peter to encourage those he is writing to shines a spotlight on how much more blessed we are today than those of the Old Testament. Though we don't see Christ (v8) we have vastly far more light than they did. They greatly desired the coming of their Messiah the Christ and though they prophesied of Christ as the redeemer of God's people and his salvation as spiritual and eternal and spoke of the glorious truths to succeeding generations. They could not fully comprehend them since they saw them only at a distance and then only dimly. They had to search out with care and by the revelations made known to them what they spoke concerning:

- The salvation that was to come.
- God's grace in Christ.
- The sufferings of Christ.
- The glories of Christ.
- The good news of Christ.

After searching these things out they may have understood exactly what was implied in that which they proclaimed concerning the Good News of the Gospel and the salvation which was to be made known through Israel's Messiah, the Christ and Saviour whereas New Testament believers have the full light of the Gospel that all the Old Testament prophets spoke of concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

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## THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST WAS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS

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The words:

- The Spirit of Christ in them (v11).

Refer to the Spirit of prophecy concerning Christ that was in the Old Testament prophets. When they spoke or prophesied of Christ, his salvation, his grace, his sufferings, his glories, his gospel and his coming it is referred to as the Spirit of Christ in them' because they were prophesying of things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. It does not mean that Christ was pre-existent with God during the Old Testament ages this would mean Christ existed as some kind of conscious angelic spirit being who then became a foetus in the womb of the Virgin Mary and no one in the Christian faith believes this foolishness, but hopefully it will inspire those who do believe Jesus pre-existed to at least question the theory.

From the very beginning of God's foreordained plan for mankind's eternal salvation that He purposed in His eternal mind Jesus Christ was pre-existent in the sense that He was the central focus of God's timeless mind. God purposed and planned that He would be the Father of a Son, who would appear in a future age in mankind's history and who would come into the world through Mary. God purposed that His Son who existed in His eternal mind as the centre of His eternal plan of salvation would grow as a normal child and ultimately conquer sin and death and becoming the fulfillment of His entire foreordained plan of salvation for mankind.

**The expression, “The Spirit of Christ who was in the Old Testament prophets” can be understood in the following two ways:**

1. God revealed His foreordained plan to the prophets and they proclaimed it (though they didn't fully understand it) it is in the sense of prophecy that Christ was in the Old Testament prophets. When they prophesied about Christ it is biblically correct to say they had the Spirit of Christ in them at that moment.
2. All the faithful (especially the prophets) looked by faith toward the coming promised Messiah the Christ and had the same love, devotion and passion for God as the Lord did. They had compassion toward God's people and deeply desired to guide them in the ways of God as Christ did. Added to this they showed courage, commitment, faithfulness, and a willingness to obey God even to death as the Lord did so in this sense it could be said that they had the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them.

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## **THE PROPHETS WERE SERVING NEW TESTAMENT BELIEVERS**

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- **1 Peter 1:12:** It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

The prophets (and by extension all the faithful) knowing that they were strangers and exiles on the earth seeking a heavenly city that God has prepared for them never received the things they spoke of, but only saw them and greeted them from afar. The words:

- They were serving not themselves.

Mean when the Old Testament prophets were speaking of Christ, his salvation, his grace, his sufferings, his glories, his gospel and his coming they were not serving themselves since they all died in faith not having seen what they had spoken in prophecy off (Heb. 11:13-16) whereas we now understand them in brilliant light.

The words:

- The things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

Refer to the Holy Spirit inspiring the apostles and all who announced and expounded the Old Testament Scriptures that recorded all that the prophets had spoken concerning Christ, the Gospel and his Kingdom.

**NOTE:** the expression, sent from Heaven and sent from God is the same thing; some Jewish writers for fear of blaspheming God's name would use the word heaven rather than the name of the LORD. Matthew in his Gospel refers to the Kingdom of God as the Kingdom of Heaven whereas Mark and Luke refer to it as the Kingdom of God.

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## **THINGS ANGELS LONGED TO LOOK INTO**

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Peter by telling his readers that even the angels desired to look into the things the prophets spoke of is once again shining a floodlight on the glory of light that we have today and the great privilege we have in being made partakers of it since even the greatest prophets on earth and even the angels above the skies did not have:

- The light of the Gospel, the death and resurrection of Christ.
- Full understanding of God's grace that we have today.

- The great truths concerning the sufferings of Christ, the resurrection of Christ and the glory which would follow.
- The Good News of the Gospel and all the events pertaining to the redemption of mankind.

The following shows the Splendour, Majesty and Glory of Bible Shadows and Types. Peter says, "Things the angels longed to look into" (v12) The word look here comes from the Greek word (parakupto) and means to bend beside, with the idea of stooping down (i.e., to lean over so as to peer within).

Perhaps there is an allusion here to:

- The cherubim in the Most Holy Place with their wings overshadowing the mercy seat and their faces toward the mercy seat (Exod. 25:20).

Here on the Ark of the Covenant the cherubim over the mercy-seat are looking down as if to behold what was in the ark, maybe a faint glimpse of the angels gazing upon mercy-seat and their desire to fathom the depths of the great mystery of the glory of Christ and the Gospel of grace.

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