

## **1 Peter 1:10-12 Discussion Guide**

### **Future Orientation**

One of the greatest first-glance characteristics of the Gospel as it is presented in the New Testament is that the Gospel is a *new thing*. Jesus Christ came preaching about new life in his kingdom, brought about by a new covenant, which created a new people.

With all of this talk of the newness of what God was doing, it is easy for Christians to forget that the Gospel was also highly anticipated.

The very first veiled reference to God's plan or salvation comes from Genesis 3:15. God spoke it to the serpent in the presence of the very first humans after they had violated God's commandment and earned separation from God.

**15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."**

From Adam and Eve forward, men and women would await the unveiling of God's plan of salvation. Prophets were among those Old Testament believers who devoted their lives to the anticipation that God's plan for salvation would one day be unfolded. Peter pays honor to these prophets for the way that they labored to know God themselves, but also labored to help future generations to know God and know his salvation.

### **1 Peter 1:10-12**

**10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully,**

**11 inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.**

**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.**

Prophets are unique characters in the Old Testament. Very seldom were prophets given great honor during their own lifetimes. People might sometimes recognize that the prophets did speak for God, but they usually did not give the weight to the prophets' message that they deserved. Prophets often found themselves persecuted and imperiled specifically because of the messages they would proclaim.

Perhaps it's because of the suffering of the prophets that Peter commends them to the exiled Christians who are facing "various trials." Prophets knew what it meant to be tested for what you believed.

While prophets occasionally would bring predictive messages about things that had yet to occur, many of their messages were intended to convict people of sin so that through repentance they would be prepared for what God was intending to do in the future. So no matter what the prophets would proclaim- be it foretelling or forthtelling- they were united by an outlook on life that was singularly oriented toward the *future*.

Peter wants to encourage believers under trial that they must consider every aspect of life in light of what God is promising in the future.

It's important to remember at this point that prophets were not the only Old Testament believers who were stridently living for the future unveiling of salvation in Jesus. We often forget about ordinary men and women who devoted themselves to heeding the words of the prophets and obeying what God had already revealed to them as a demonstration of faith that fulfillment of God's promises are in the future.

It's men and women of the past who lived in faithful obedience to God that we should view as honorable and seek to emulate their example as we live in a current world as exiled believers in Jesus.

### Discussion Questions

- Which Old Testament prophets do you find most relatable? Why?
- How do you know the prophets struggled in their quest to know God and to make him known for future generations?
- Why do you think prophets were generally unpopular?
- How do you know the prophets were thinking about people who didn't live yet? (example: they wrote down their prophecies, they taught students like Elisha)
- What lessons does Peter intend for us to learn from the lives of the prophets?
- What do you think it means to be "oriented toward the future?"
- Why are human beings often inclined toward the past or the present instead of the future?
- Are you more hopeful or more despairing about the future? Why?
- Does your hope for the future extend to the lifetimes of your grandkids, or only for your own lifetime?
- Why is dangerous for a group of people to forget of the future of their children?
- How does your view of the future affect the choices you make now?
- To whom do you owe gratitude who has lived before you?
- How can our church become more oriented toward the future?