

Title: Our Great Salvation

Text: 1 Peter 1:3-12

Introduction

Well – friends – **if there is anything** that I've learnt in life – *especially* in my latter years – **it is this:**

Life in this fallen – broken – and sinful – world is hard. Immensely hard.

And – **perhaps** – **even more so** for **those of us** who **profess** to be **Christians**.

As we saw last week – *by virtue* of our being “chosen” by God to be his own – we are now – *simultaneously* – “exiles” in relation to the world.

A world that is fast becoming – as Elliot Clark puts it “post-Christian – post-truth – and perhaps even post-tolerant”.¹

And as Christians living in such a hostile world:

- It is **easy for us** to **become discouraged** – and **disillusioned**.
- It is **easy for us** to **lose heart** – and **lose hope**.

And **that** – as we saw – **seems** to be **the background** – and **occasion** – of **Peter's writing of this letter** to the **Christians scattered** across **the Roman province of Asia Minor** – now **modern-day Turkey**.

These Christians were **experiencing persecutions** of some sort for **their faith:**

¹ Elliot Clark, *Evangelism as Exiles: Life on Mission as Strangers in Our Own Land* (The Gospel Coalition: 2019), 24.

- They were **discriminated against**.
- They were **mistreated**.
- They were **maligned**.

And they found life as a Christian increasingly difficult.

Thus – the apostle Peter wrote this letter with the specific purpose of encouraging these believers to stand firm in the faith – and to live faithfully in this hostile world.²

Now – *after* his opening greeting – in which – Peter reminded his readers of their identity as “chosen exiles” – notice what Peter does *next* as he transitions into the main body of his letter.

I think this is instructive!

Just think about it: Peter is writing to persecuted Christians – to suffering saints – but:

- *Instead* of beginning by sharing how much he empathises with them.
- *Instead* of immediately addressing the difficult circumstances that his readers were facing.
- *Instead* of giving instructions on how they ought to conduct themselves in such a world.

Notice *how* Peter begins his letter:

- Peter *begins* with a glorious doxology.
- He *begins* by blessing God.
- He *begins* by praising God.

And I think this is deliberate – and strategic – on Peter’s part.

² 1 Pet 5:12

I think what Peter is doing here – at the outset of his letter – is to lift the eyes of his readers:

- **Off from themselves.**
- **Off from their circumstances.**

And to **fix them** – instead:

- **On God.**
- **On the great and glorious hope of salvation that they have in Christ.**

And **this is important** – because **in times of difficulty** – the **tendency is for us to lose sight of God.**

And – the **main point** – I believe – that **Peter wants us to see from today's passage** is this:

**We have hope in the midst of suffering
because of our sure and certain salvation.**

So – *without further ado* – let's dive into **today's passage** – and see why we can have hope even **in the midst** of our present suffering.

And we'll look at **three truths in particular** that **give us hope** – and even joy – *in the midst* of suffering:

- **Our certain salvation** (vv.3-5)
- **Our purposeful trials** (vv.6-9)
- **Our privileged position** (vv.10-12)

Let's take each of these in turn. *First* – *our certain salvation* ...

1. OUR CERTAIN SALVATION (vv.3-5)

Look with me at verses 3-5 – Peter writes:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading – kept in heaven for you. You are being guarded by God’s power through faith for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Peter begins this section of the letter on a high note – emphatically blessing God for the “new birth” that he has given us.

And **this – indeed!** – is something that we *should* rejoice in – and praise God for!

For *just as* we did absolutely nothing to cause – or contribute to – our physical birth – *so too* – did we do absolutely nothing to cause – or contribute to – our spiritual birth.

It is all of grace!

God – in his great mercy – *even while* we were dead in our trespasses and sins – has made us alive in Christ!³

He has caused us to be “born again”!

This – *in itself* – if we think about it – is praiseworthy – and amazing.

But – friends – what I want us to notice is *what* the new birth brings about.

³ Eph 2:4-5

For I think this is what Peter wants us – *especially* those of us who may be suffering – to remember.

Two things *in particular*:

A Living Hope

First – Peter says that we have been born again – verse 3:

“... *into a living hope* ...”

That’s what we have been *born into* – and that’s what we *have* – as believers!

- *Not* a “dead” hope.
- *Not* a “vain” hope.
- *Not* an “empty” hope.

But – a “living” hope!

Friends – no matter what we may be going through in life – no matter how bleak – or hopeless – life may seem to be – Peter is reminding us here that – as believers – we do not lose heart – for we *have* a “living” hope.

Unlike the “hopes” of the world – which are all “wishful thinking” at best – and which are all fraught with uncertainties – the “hope” that we have in Christ – Peter is telling us:

- Is sure.
- It is steadfast.
- It is certain.

And *why* is this the case?

Why is our hope – as believers – a **“living”** hope?

Well – simply this: It is a **“living”** hope – because it is rooted in a **“living”** Saviour.

It is **based upon** – and **grounded in** – as **Peter** puts it:

“... the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ...”

In other words – **our hope is alive** – because **Jesus is alive!**

And **this** – friends – is **no blind leap in the dark** – but it is *based upon* an **objective historical fact**.

The **empty tomb** declares that **Jesus** has *indeed* **defeated** – and **overcome** – **sin** and **death!**

And – *therefore* – we have **hope!** For we shall **indeed rise** – *just as* **Christ** has **risen!**

An Imperishable Inheritance

But *not only* are we **born again** into a **“living hope”** – **Peter** goes on in **verse 4** to **tell us** that we have *also* been **born again**:

“... into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading – kept in heaven for you.”

In fact – **I think this is the “hope”** that we have – and **can look forward** to – as **Christians**:

The **“inheritance”** that is **“kept in heaven”** for us.

Now – **we all know** that an **“inheritance”** is **something** that is **bequeathed** – or **passed on** – in a **family** – from **generation** to **generation**.

But we *also* know that all earthly inheritances – no matter how precious – and valuable – they may be – are all *but* – temporal.

Ultimately – they all waste away – they all perish.

- The **money** we receive can be **spent**.
- The **property** we inherit can be **destroyed**.
- The **treasures** we possess can be **lost**.

But – friends – what Peter is reminding us here is that our heavenly inheritance – *unlike* all earthly inheritances – is eternal – and can never be lost!

Notice *how* Peter describes our heavenly inheritance:

- *First* – it is “**imperishable**”. That is – it can **never wear out** – decay – or be destroyed.
- *Second* – it is “**undefiled**”. That is – it is **pure** – **unstained** – and **unblemished**.
- *Third* – it is “**unfading**”. That is – it **never loses** its **lustre** – **beauty** – or **value**.

I like how one commentator puts it – he writes:

“[T]he inheritance is untouched by death – unstained by evil – [and] unimpaired by time.”⁴

“**Imperishable**”. “**Undefiled**”. “**Unfading**”.

Friends – *that’s* the glorious inheritance that awaits us in heaven!

And Peter says that it is:

“... *kept in heaven for us.*”

⁴ F. W. Beare, *The First Epistle of Peter*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), 83-84.

In other words – we can **rest fully assured** that **this glorious – eternal – inheritance will be ours** – because **God is the one** who is **keeping it in heaven for us**. It is secure!

Now – **some of us** may be **thinking**:

“All of this talk about the glorious inheritance that awaits us in heaven – is all well and good. But what’s the point of all this *if* – for one reason or another – we *don’t* make it there to receive it – and enjoy it?”

Well – **Peter** seems to have **pre-empted this concern** – *thus* – **he writes in verse 5**:

“You are being guarded by God’s power through faith for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.”

This is amazing!

- **Not only** is God “keeping” the inheritance for us.
- **But God** is also “keeping” us for the inheritance.

Or – *more specifically* – God is “guarding us” – he is “protecting” us – he is “shielding” us – for *“a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time”*.

Now – the term “guard” here is a strong word. It is a military term. It is used of the army putting garrisons – or fortifications – in place to protect a city from its enemies.

This image is meant to evoke assurance – and security – in our hearts as believers:

- That God will guard us.
- That God will protect us.
- That God will keep us.

In fact – the verb “guard” is in the present tense – indicating that God’s protection – guarding – and keeping – of his people is ongoing.

- God *is* – and *will* continue – to protect us until the very end.
- When the tempter would prevail – God will hold us fast.
- And he does this – we are told – *through* our God-given faith.

Now – this picture of God “guarding” us “through faith” – conjures in my mind – John Bunyan’s chapter in *Pilgrim’s Progress* about Christian in the Interpreter’s house.

Let me read it for us – albeit from a children’s version of the book:⁵

I then beheld in my dream – as they opened the next door – a blazing-hot fireplace – which I watched rage and roar. Then a cruel man approached throwing buckets of water. But the more he would pour – the flames grew only hotter!

Christian: “I don’t understand – Interpreter – please explain how the water on the fire doesn’t put out the flames.”

Interpreter: “The heart of each true disciple is like this fireplace – and the blaze of the flames is the work of God’s grace. The devil with water tries to put out the fire – still the fire grows hotter – and the flames grew higher. Now step around the back – and you will find out why – in spite of the water – the flames grow so high.”

On the other side of the wall – a King secretly stood – and from behind He poured oil on the fireplace wood.

Interpreter: “Like oil poured on fire that burst into flames – is the grace of Christ Jesus – which ignites and sustains. But at first you couldn’t see how the flames grew so tall – for the royal King with oil was hidden behind the wall.”

⁵ Rousseaux Brasseur, *The Pilgrim’s Progress: A Poetic Retelling of John Bunyan’s Classic Tale* (Eugene: Harvest House, 2020), 46-47.

Friends – **what an apt summary – and vivid picture – of God’s keeping – and sustaining grace – *even when we don’t see it – or feel it.***

And **what assurance – and comfort – this ought to bring to our hearts – to know that God – *through our God-given faith – will keep us to the very end.***

And **that’s what Peter wants to remind us right at the outset of his letter – that our salvation in Christ is certain – and secure.**

But – friends – Peter *also* knows that the certainty of our future salvation *in no way* diminishes the reality of our present suffering.

And so – he turns next to talk about our present trials – or – *more specifically* – our purposeful trials.

2. OUR PURPOSEFUL TRIALS (vv.6-9)

Look with me at verses 6-7:

“You rejoice in this – even though now for a short time – if necessary – you suffer grief in various trials so that the proven character of your faith – more valuable than gold which – though perishable – is refined by fire – may result in praise, glory, and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Friends – **Peter is upfront – he is honest – about the reality – and even inevitably – of suffering in the Christian life.**

Peter *doesn’t* sugar-coat – or airbrush – the Christian life. He *doesn’t* present the Christian life as a bed of roses – or even as a stroll in the park.

Peter knows full well that in this fallen – broken – and sinful world – suffering is to be expected.

It is the **universal human experience**. *None* are exempt.

And so – **he begins by stating** that – as **Christians** – we suffer grief in “*various trials*”.

Peter’s words here indicate that **the trials** – and **sufferings** – that **we may face in life** – come in **all sorts of shapes and sizes**.

And **I’m sure we are all aware of that**. It could be **in the form of long-term illness** – a **job loss** – **broken relationships** – a **family crisis** – even **pandemics**.

Friends – **the truth is that none of us like** – or **enjoy** – **suffering**. **We try to avoid it at all cost!**

But – try as we may – **suffering is inevitable in life**.

So – **with that in mind** – **I want us to stop for a moment** – and **ask ourselves**:

- *What* is our normal response to **trials** and **difficulties**?
- *How* do we usually respond when **trials** or **difficulties** come our way?

Now – friends – *I’m not sure about you* – but – *for myself* – **I know** that **my response to trials** is *not always* the most ideal.

For example – depending on the nature of the trial – **I could see myself**:

- **Stressing out.**
- **Whining.**
- **Complaining.**
- **Throwing a pity party.**

- **Becoming disillusioned.**
- Or – *perhaps* – even **questioning God.**

And – *perhaps* – **you might do the same.**

Now – *why* do we respond like this?

Well – the **main reason** for such responses – *to put it bluntly* – is **because of sin.**

Human sin. Plain and simple.

But – friends – **I also believe** that it is **because of a lack of divine perspective on the nature** – and **purpose** – of **trials** – that **we respond the way we do.**

And **that** – *I think* – is **what Peter is doing here.**

Having laid out the **sure** – and **certain** – **glory that awaits us in heaven** – **he turns now to talk about our present trials.**

Peter wants to give us a divine perspective on trials.

Perspectives that both sustain – *as well as* – **help us respond more biblically** – to the **trials that we face.**

So – **three things** that – *I believe* – **Peter wants to remind us about trials from these verses:**

- Its **brevity.**
- Its **necessity.**
- Its **purpose.**

Let's take each of this in turn:

Its Brevity

First – its brevity.

Verse 6 – Peter writes:

“... even though now for a short time ... you suffer grief in various trials ...”

Peter’s words – “*for a short time*” – is meant to remind us that our trials – while by no means easy – are nonetheless brief.

That is:

- Our trials are temporary.
- They are transient.
- They will come to an end.

Now – just to be clear:

In saying that our trials are “*brief*” – I’m *not* saying that our trials *may not last* for many years – or – *even* for an entire lifetime!

I *don’t* think that’s what Peter has in mind when he says – “*for a short time*”.

But I think what Peter is doing here is that he is providing us with a much-needed perspective from which to view the trials that we face in life – however long or short they may be.

Peter is reminding us that – in light of eternity – a lifetime of suffering on this earth – is but “*for a short while*” – it is “*brief*”.

And the reason why I think Peter has this eternal – rather than temporal – perspective in mind is because of how he begins the sentence. He says:

“You rejoice in this – even though now for a short time ... you suffer grief in various trials ...”

The words – “you rejoice in this” – harks back to all that came before in verses 3-5 – namely – the eschatological hope of salvation that we have in Christ – a salvation that – as we saw – is sure – and certain.

In other words – it is *in view* of this eternal glory that we can rejoice even *in the midst* of our present suffering.

For we know that – as the apostle Paul puts it in 2 Corinthians 4:17:

“... our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable weight of glory.”⁶

So – that’s the brevity of trials. Let’s look now at the necessity of trials ...

Its Necessity

Verse 6:

“You rejoice in this – even though now for a short time – if necessary – you suffer grief in various trials ...”

Underline the words – “*if necessary*”.

These words imply that the trials that we face in life is *not* random – it is *not* an accident – it is *not* blind fate.

⁶ 2 Cor 4:17

No! The words imply that the trials that we face in life come from the sovereign hand – and plan – of God.

As Peter would later put it in 1 Peter 4:19:

*“So then – let those who **suffer according to God’s will** entrust themselves to a faithful Creator while doing what is good.”*

That’s the perspective that Peter wants us to have with regards to our trials:

He wants us to know that – *if* God deems it necessary – he *will* bring about trials into our lives.

And **this** – in itself – while *not* denying – or downplaying – the pain – or discomfort – that we may be experiencing – should *nonetheless* bring great comfort – and assurance – in our hearts.

To know that the trials that we face in life come about *not* by happenstance – *but* are sovereignly – and purposefully – willed – and designed – by a good – wise – and loving God.

But Peter gets even more specific – he goes on to remind us about the purpose of such trials.

Its Purpose

As if in anticipation of – and in answer to – the questions that we may ask when undergoing trials of various kinds – *for example*:

- “*Why* must I go through this?”
- “*Why* must this happen to me?”
- “*Why* is this necessary?”

Peter answers – verse 7:

*“... **so that** the proven character of your faith – more valuable than gold which – though perishable – is refined by fire – may result in praise, glory, and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”*

Peter is reminding us here of the purpose of trials that God may bring into our lives.

He is reminding us that God uses the trials – and suffering – that we experience in life:

- To test us.
- To refine us.
- To grow us.

That’s what Ps. Craig so helpfully reminded us a few weeks ago in his first sermon on the book of James.

James 1:2-4 – here – as in Peter – we see the connection between “joy” – and “suffering” in the Christian life:

“Consider it a great joy – my brothers and sisters – whenever you experience various trials – [same word as in 1 Peter 1:6] – because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its full effect – [why?] – so that you may be mature and complete – lacking nothing.”

Or – in a parallel passage – this time by Paul – in Romans 5:3-4:

“And not only that – but we also boast in our afflictions – because we know that affliction produces endurance – endurance produces proven character – and proven character produces hope.”

That’s the purpose of trials that God may bring into our lives.

It is to **grow us** – and **conform us** – into **the image of his Son**.⁷

Or – as **Peter** puts it:

It is to **prove the genuineness of our faith**.

And **the analogy** that **Peter** gives here is that of **gold** being **refined by fire**.

We all know how it works:

To be **purified** – to be **refined** – **gold** has to be **put into** a **crucible** of **extremely-high heat** – the **purpose of which** is to **separate** the **gold** from the **dross**.

And in the **heating process** – **what happens** is that **the gold melts** – and **the dross** rises to **the top** – and is **scraped off**.

This painstaking – and **heat-intensive** – **process** is then **repeated** – *again* – and *again* – until there is **no dross left**.

Until **what is left** is **nothing** but **pure** – and **unadulterated** – **gold**.

And – *in like manner* – **Peter** is saying that **God** sends **trials** into **our lives** to **purify** – and to **refine** – **our faith**.

In fact – **often** it is through **such trials** – *painful though they may be!* – that **we come to an end of ourselves** – and **we throw ourselves fully** into **the everlasting arms of God**.

And – **there:**

- **We find *in him* all that we need.**
- **We find that *he* is all that we need.**
- **We find that our faith is strengthened – and refined.**

⁷ Rom 8:28-29

Baptist pastor – John Rippon – captures this idea well in the hymn – “*How Firm a Foundation*”:

*“When through fiery trials – thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all sufficient – shall be thy supply:
The flame shall not hurt thee – I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.”*

Friends – that’s the perspective Peter wants us to have whenever we face trials of various kinds.

He wants us to know – and rest in the fact:

- That we are **being refined by the Master Refiner** – who is **at work in and through our fiery trials** – so that **our faith may be proved pure – and true.**
- That **the divine Potter is doing his good work** – in the lives of his clay – **shaping and moulding us into his likeness.**

And that’s why Peter would later tell us in 1 Peter 4:12-13:

“Dear friends – don’t be surprised when the fiery ordeal comes among you to test you – as if something unusual were happening to you. Instead – rejoice as you share in the sufferings of Christ – so that you may also rejoice with great joy when his glory is revealed.”

So – friends – in the moments in which we are tempted in our trials – and sufferings – to question God’s wisdom – or to doubt God’s love for us – let’s remind ourselves of the purpose of trials – the refinement of our faith.

And – friends – knowing this – I believe – will help us better endure when trials come our way.

Just as a bodybuilder endures the pain of physical workout because of the end in sight – i.e., a ‘glorious’ body – so too will we endure when we know – and understand – the end in sight in our sufferings – the refinement of faith – and conformity to Christ.

And **this will result** – verse 7 tells us:

“... in praise, glory, and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

In other words – **God gets the glory** when **our faith** has been **made perfect**.

Verses 8-9:

“Though you have not seen him – you love him – though not seeing him now – you believe in him – and you rejoice with inexpressible and glorious joy – because you are receiving the goal of your faith – the salvation of your souls.”

What is Peter doing here? This seems **quite random** – and **somewhat out of place**.

Well – I believe **Peter** is **encouraging** – and **commending** – **his readers**.

He is reminding – and **commending** – **them for their faith**.

Unlike Peter – who **had seen Jesus** with **his own eyes** – and **touched him** with **his own hands** – **Peter’s readers** – and **us!** – have **not seen** – or **touched** – **Jesus**.

And – **yet!** – **these readers** – although **they have not seen Jesus** – **they love Jesus** – and **they believe in Jesus**.

And **this is a sure sign of their faith** – **yes!** – even **in the midst of their suffering!**

Jesus’ words to Thomas in John 20:29 immediately comes to mind.

In response to doubting Thomas' confession – Jesus tells Thomas:

“Because you have seen me – you have believed. – [And then he adds these words] – Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.”

Jesus clearly has in mind people like Peter's readers – as well as – us:

- **Those who – though having not seen Jesus – have believed in him.**
- **Those who walk by faith – and not by sight.⁸**

And **Jesus calls us “blessed” – for this is an evidence of faith – saving faith.**

So – friends – if in the midst of trials – we see in ourselves a continued love for Jesus – and a continued trust in Jesus – I think Peter is saying here that – we can take heart – press on – and be encouraged.

For – as Peter puts it in verse 9:

“... [we] are receiving the goal of [our] faith – the salvation of [our] souls.”

So – friends – let me ask:

- **What are some trials that you are currently facing in life?**
- **And how are you viewing them – how are you responding to them?**

Friends – if Peter were here – I think he would give us two pieces of advice for our trials:

- **First – learn to see our present trials – and sufferings – in the light of our living hope – the sure and certain salvation that we have in Christ.**

⁸ 2 Cor 5:7

- **Second** – learn to see the Father’s hand – and trust his heart – as we go through the fiery trials.

That’s the perspective – I believe – Peter wants us to have as we go through trials of various kinds.

Well – so far – Peter – in bid to encourage us in our trials – has reminded us of:

- Our certain salvation.
- Our purposeful trials.

And now – *thirdly* – and *finally* – Peter encourages us by reminding us of – our privileged position ...

3. OUR PRIVILEGED POSITION (vv.10-12)

Look with me at verses 10-12:

“Concerning this salvation – the prophets who prophesied about the grace that would come to you – searched and carefully investigated. They inquired into what time or what circumstances the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating when he testified in advance to the sufferings of Christ and the glory that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you. These things have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven – angels long to catch a glimpse of these things.”

What Peter is doing here is *contrast* New Testament believers with that of the Old Testament prophets.

And **he is saying** that – *in comparison* to them:

- **We have an advantage.**
- **We are in a tremendously privileged position.**

And **the reason** for this is **simple** – and **straightforward**.

It is because **Jesus** – the **long-awaited** for – and **much-prophesied** about – **Messiah *has come!***

Unlike the prophets of old – we live in an age of **fulfillment**.

This is what the prophets were longing for – and **looking forward to** – but **didn't get to see**.

They were God's mouthpieces – they were **God's spokespersons**.

And *while* they had **inklings** of the **Messiah to come** – and *while* – according to **verse 10** – they **prophesied** about the **grace** that was **to come** – *in spite of all these* – they did **not know** what we – living this side of the cross – *do* know about **Jesus**.

Verse 11 tells us that they did **not know the time** – or the **circumstance** – in which **all of these** – that is – the **sufferings** and **glories of Christ** – would **take place**.

They looked forward in anticipation – but did **not get to see** the **fulfillment of all these**.

Verse 12 tells us that they were “*not serving themselves – but [us]*”.

And we – who live **this side of the cross** – have **seen what they had longed to see** – and have **known what they had longed to know**:

The Son of God – coming as a **man** – living a **perfect life** – dying on the **cross** for our **sins** – and **rising again** for our **justification**.

We – who live this side of the cross – are – *indeed!* – privileged! *Tremendously* privileged!

For we have **seen – and experienced – the fulfillment of God’s eternal – and salvific – plan.**

Things into which – *we are told* – even “*angels*” – “*long to catch a glimpse*” of!

But – friends – *as great as that is* – I *don’t* think Peter’s main purpose is to remind us of our privileged position – as *compared* to the prophets – and angels.

I think Peter has an **underlying purpose – and it is this:**

- **He wants to remind us of the continuity of God’s grand plan of salvation – and *thus* – fortify our faith.**
- **He wants us to find rest – and confidence – in the salvation that we have in Christ – *in spite of* what life may throw at us.**

For **this plan of salvation is *not* a mere afterthought – it is *not* a Plan B.**

It is ***not* something that God came up with along the way after having his original plan fail because of human sin.**

No! This is God’s eternal – and fixed – plan!

- **A plan that was made known to the prophets of old through the revelation of the Spirit.**
- **A plan that was worked out in time – climaxing in the person and work of Christ on the cross.**
- **A plan that will be brought to completion at the consummation of the ages – in the new heaven and new earth.**

Therefore – Peter’s point – I believe – is that – as believers – we can rest assured that our salvation is absolutely sure – certain – and secure:

- Because we have seen the fulfillment of God’s promises to the prophets.
- And because no one – and nothing – can ever thwart God’s salvific plan.

Not trials. Not hardships. Not persecutions.

Nothing – and no one – can snatch us out of the Father’s hand.⁹

Nothing – and no one – can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.¹⁰

Conclusion

And – friends – that’s the confidence – and hope – that Peter wants to leave with us right at the outset of his letter.

That’s what Peter wants to instil in us as he breaks forth in this glorious doxology.

A doxology that looks forward to the distant future – reminding us of the glorious – and certain – inheritance that awaits us in heaven.

A doxology that reaches back to the distant past – reminding us of the continuity – and thus – certainty – of God’s salvific plan.

And – a doxology that – because of these past and future realities – reminds us that – as Christians:

⁹ John 10:29

¹⁰ Rom 8:38-39

We can rejoice – and have hope – in our present trials – because the salvation that we have in Christ is sure – certain – and steadfast – and God will keep us to the end.

Let us pray.