***Godly Women Series 2019 Part 8***

**Peter’s Wife: Faithful Companion**

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday August 18th, 2019

Text: Mark 1:29-31; I Corinthians 9:5; I Peter 5:1

### Intro

1. There are examples both good and bad in the Scriptures.
2. Men and women alike can provide us with sources of strength and inspiration.
   1. Eve: “Mother of all living” (Gen. 3:20) and an example of moving past sin!
   2. Sarah: Mother of nations (Gen. 17:16), Mother of saints (Gal. 4:26,31), Mother of godly wives (I Pet. 3:6), and is an example of faith and overcoming one’s weaknesses!
   3. Ruth: An example of faith and virtue (Ruth 1:16-18; 3:11)!
   4. Abigail: An example of faith, respect, wisdom, and concern! (I Sam. 25)
   5. Proverbs 31 Woman: Her relationships, behavior, and character were “excellent” (“virtuous”) and she was a woman of great faith! (Prov. 31:10-31).
   6. The Shunammite Woman: She served God with the abilities she had! She was hospitable, content, & had faith in God! (II Kings 4:8-37)
   7. Queen Esther: A brave queen who trusted in God (Esther 4:14-5:1-4)
3. Godly role models are greatly needed today!
4. Contrary to what the Catholics teach in regards to Peter being celibate and the 1st pope, Peter did indeed have a wife!
   1. Mk. 1:29-31 *(Mt. 8:14-15; Lk. 4:38-39):* While in Capernaum*,* Jesus and a few of His apostles entered into Peter & Andrew’s home and healed Peter’s mother-in-law. **Note:** *Peter’s wife implied (Must be married to have a mother-in-law!)*
   2. I Cor. 9:5: She was a Christian and traveled with Peter!
   3. I Pet. 5:1: She would have been an elder’s wife *(I Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6)*
5. Like the Shunammite Woman *(II Kings 4),* we don’t even know her name!
6. From what is recorded about Peter’s wife, we can see she was a faithful companion!

#### Hospitable

* 1. Mark 1:29-31 *(Mt. 8:14-15; Lk. 4:38-39):*
     1. While in Capernaum (Mk. 1:21) and after teaching in the Synagogue *(Lk. 7:1-5: Built by the Centurion whose servant needed healed),* Jesus and a few of His apostles *(Mk. 1:29: James & John)* entered into Peter & Andrew’s home and healed Peter’s mother-in-law, who had a “high fever” (Luke 4:38).
        1. Once healed she immediately got up and waited on Jesus! (Doesn’t say Peter’s wife, but the one who was sick waited on Jesus!)
        2. Andrew brought Peter to Jesus *(John 1:35-42),* and here Peter and Andrew bring Jesus home to Peter’s mother-in-law!
     2. Bring those you know to Jesus! (Teach the gospel!)
     3. Bring Jesus into your homes and to your family! (Teach the gospel and be the example Jesus calls you to be! – Mt. 5:16)
  2. Hospitable *(I Tim. 3:2: Elders had to be “hospitable”):*
     1. Mark 1:29-31: Peter invited Jesus and some of the other apostles to stay in their home.
     2. Mark 1:32-34: The “whole city” gathered at the door. She would have been host.
     3. Jesus came to Capernaum as “His own city” *(Mt. 9:1-7)* because, that’s where His “home” was *(Mk. 2:1-12),* and perhaps it was Peter’s home that was the setting of the paralytic healed, by the removing of the roof!
     4. Peter and his wife opened their home to his mother-in-law (whether she was visiting or lived there), to Andrew (he lived with his brother), and to Jesus and the apostles, and to the crowds from the city! *(Heb. 13:1-2: All saints to be hospitable)*
  3. Benevolent:
     1. *Mt. 8:14-15; Mk. 1:29-31; Lk. 4:38-39:* In light of their actions here we infer they had been caring for her mother.
     2. They were worried about her high fever and told Jesus about her (Mark 1:30; Luke 4:38).
  4. From a short account we can see she was hospitable and benevolent as was her husband, Peter!

#### A “Believing Wife”

* 1. I Corinthians 9:5
     1. At the time of Paul’s writing of I Corinthians, Peter had “a believing wife” and she was known to travel with him.
     2. Paul’s words show that the other apostles were also married.
     3. This is a direct mention of Peter’s wife but no name is dropped!
  2. She had Jesus as a guest in her house *(Mt. 8:14).*
     1. At least on the day her mother was healed *(Mk. 1:29-31).*
  3. We cannot be surprised at her faith in light of what we know took place in Capernaum!
     1. Jesus spent a great deal of time in Capernaum and performed many miracles there *(including the healing of the centurion's paralyzed servant – Mt. 8:5-13; a paralytic carried by four friends – Mk. 2:1-12; Peter's mother-in-law – Mt. 8:14-15; Mk. 1:29-31; Lk. 4:38-39; and the nobleman's son – Jn. 4:46-54).*
     2. He spent so much time there that when the people on the whole did not believe in Him, He pronounced judgment on them *(Mt. 11:23-24; Lk. 10:15).*
  4. I Cor. 9:5 tells us so much of her faithfulness when we consider what Peter went through!
     1. Faithfulness in hardship *(Mk. 1:16-18; Mt. 19:27: Peter was called, left his job, “everything”)* – they had a house in Capernaum large enough to house his brother Andrew, her mother and possibly Jesus! *Possible he lost it all!*
     2. Persecution and imprisonment (Acts 4:1-3; 5:17-19: Put in a “public jail”), Flogged (Acts 5:40-41), Imprisoned with intent to be executed (Acts 12:1-5).
        1. We can only speculate as to whether she was there praying for him in Mary’s house, the mother of John Mark (Acts 12:5, 12). Peter had a close relationship with John Mark (I Peter 5:13: “My son, Mark”).
     3. Peter’s life had its share of ups and downs! *(Lk. 22:55-62: Denied Jesus 3 times and wept bitterly; Gal. 2:11-14: Called out for his hypocritical behavior)*
     4. Not always a happy life being an apostle’s wife!
  5. She knew Jesus, and like her husband, chose to dedicate her life to following Him!
  6. She was a “believing wife” and a faithful companion!

#### Elder’s Wife

* 1. I Peter 5:1
     1. I Pet. 5:1: Peter was an elder, so his wife was an elder’s wife!
     2. I Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6: Elders had to be married. Peter was married.
     3. I Tim. 3:3-4: To be an elder one had to have children…so Peter and his wife had children, so she was also a mother!
     4. Titus 1:5-6: An elder’s children are to be “believing” so their children were Christians!
  2. Raising faithful children:
     1. *I Pet. 5:1; Titus 1:5-6;* Prov. 22:6: She likely played a major role in her children’s physical and spiritual development.
  3. Where was he as an elder?
     1. There’s only one passage in Scripture that gives us a clue where they were in their later years, and it is cryptic!
     2. I Pet. 5:13: “She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark.” (Mark; likely John Mark: *G5207 uihos [hwee-os]:* Fig. kinship) – *KJV: “The church that is at Babylon...”*
     3. It is impossible to state with certainty who or what is meant by “She who is in Babylon.”
        1. Some of the main interpretations are: (1) The “brotherhood” *(I Pet. 1:1-2; 2:17; 5:9)* – this fits the KJV’s translation of “the church*”* and the phrase “chosen together with you *(KJV: “elected”)* (2) Peter's wife. In the Greek this abstract noun happens to be feminine. (3) Some locally prominent lady.
     4. It is also impossible to know which Babylon is meant.
        1. It could be: (1) The city on the Euphrates, where there were many Jews; (2) The military station by the same name on the Nile (in Egypt); (3) Rome (Most likely).
        2. In Revelation, Babylon is generally understood as referring to Rome, called “Babylon the Great (or, “Mighty”)” (Rev. 17:1-9; 18:10, 21).
        3. However, Peter’s epistles were written before Revelation, so if referring to Rome, this name “Babylon” predated John’s use of it.
     5. Whether the ancient city of Babylon or Rome, it meant a long trip for Peter’s wife from Capernaum! *(Secular writers say he went to Rome and died there, see below)*
  4. From all this we conclude that Peter’s wife was his faithful companion during his eventful life of preaching the gospel of Christ!

## Conclusion

1. Though unnamed, Peter’s wife can be seen through the Scriptures going from a fisherman’s wife, to a saint, a godly mother, an apostle’s and elder’s wife!
2. From the texts we can see her being a helper to the man of faith who was her husband.
3. Secular History records that eventually the couple reached Rome.
   1. The year and circumstances are subject to conjecture, though traditions and early writings offer some possibilities: Ignatius of Antioch (A.D. 50-108) (1), Irenaeus of Lyons (130-202) (2), Clement of Alexandria (150-215) (3), and Jerome (327-420) (4) all state that Peter spent his last years in Rome with Jerome saying it was 25 years!
   2. What is known is that they were present during the persecution of Christians in Rome, A.D. 64–67, by the Emperor Nero.
4. Secular history records they both were martyred in Rome!
5. The story of the martyrdom of Peter and his wife is found in the pages of *The History of the Church (Book 3.30.2),* written by Eusebius, a historian of the early A.D. 300s.
   1. In it he quotes from a much earlier source, *The Stromata (Book VII, ch.11),* written by Clement of Alexandria (c. A.D. 150–215). Peter’s wife suffered martyrdom just before him:
   2. *“They say that when blessed Peter saw his wife led away to death, he was glad that her call had come and that she was returning home, and spoke to her in the most encouraging and comforting way, addressing her by name: ‘Remember the Lord.’”*
   3. *Eusebius:* <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/250103.htm>
   4. *Clement of Alexandria:* <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/02107.htm>
   5. Then, after her death, many early histories record that Peter asked to be crucified upside down. Clement of Rome (A.D. 35-99) (5), 2nd c. apocryphal book, Acts of Peter (6), Origen (184-253) (7), and Jerome (327-420) (4 & 8) all say he was crucified by Nero. Their dates differ, A.D. 65 or 68, but all agree that Peter and his wife died in Rome.
   6. *Could be the type of death Jesus prophesied of – John 21:18-19; II Peter 1:13-15*
6. From the small record of her that we have we can see a picture of a hospitable, godly wife & mother, and a faithful companion.
7. She was faithful both to her husband and to the Lord, and if the histories are correct, she was faithful to the end! *(She did not denounce Jesus to live but went to her death for Jesus).*
8. We may not know her name but we can see her godly example and learn from it!
9. If you are not a Christian, repent and be baptized today!
10. If a Christian in sin, don’t continue in it! Repent!
11. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!

**Sources:**

**In Rome**

* + 1. The writings of the 1st century church writer Ignatius of Antioch (c. A.D. 50-108) refer to Peter and Paul giving admonitions to the Romans, indicating Peter's presence in Rome. *Ignatius of Antioch. “The Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans”* [*http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0107.htm*](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0107.htm)
    2. Irenaeus of Lyons (c.130–c.202) wrote in the 2nd century that Peter and Paul had been the founders of the Church in Rome and had appointed Linus as succeeding bishop. *“The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus”* <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.ix.iv.iv.html>
    3. Clement of Alexandria (c.150–c.215) states that “Peter had preached the Word publicly at Rome. (A.D. 190)” – “The Gospels containing the genealogies, he says, were written first. The Gospel according to Mark had this occasion. As Peter had preached the Word publicly at Rome, and declared the Gospel by the Spirit, many who were present requested that Mark, who had followed him for a long time and remembered his sayings, should write them out. And having composed the Gospel he gave it to those who had requested it.” Eusebius of Caesarea. “*Church History Book VI*, Chapter 14:6” <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/250106.htm>
    4. According to Jerome (c.327–420) “Peter went to Rome in the second year of Claudius to overthrow Simon Magus, and held the sacerdotal chair there for twenty-five years until the last, that is the fourteenth year of Nero (A.D. 68).” Also, “At his hands he received the crown of martyrdom being nailed to the cross with his head towards the ground and his feet raised on high, asserting that he was unworthy to be crucified in the same manner as his Lord.” Jerome. “*De Viris Illustribus (On Illustrious Men) Chapter 1*”. <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2708.htm>

**Martyred**

* + 1. Clement of Rome (Clement I) (c. A.D. 35-99), in his Letter to the Corinthians (Chapter 5), written c. 80–98, speaks of Peter's martyrdom in the following terms: “Let us take the noble examples of our own generation. Through jealousy and envy the greatest and most just pillars of the Church were persecuted, and came even unto death. … Peter, through unjust envy, endured not one or two but many labours, and at last, having delivered his testimony, departed unto the place of glory due to him.” Clement of Rome’s *“The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians”* <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/1clement-hoole.html>
    2. The apocryphal Acts of Peter (A.D. 2nd cent.) (Vercelli Acts XXXV, is the source for the tradition about the Latin famous phrase “Quo vadis, Domine?” (in Greek: Κύριε, ποῦ ὑπάγεις “Kyrie, pou hypageis?”), which means “Where are you going, Lord?” According to the story, Peter, fleeing Rome to avoid execution meets the risen Jesus. In the Latin translation, Peter asks Jesus, “Quo vadis?” He replies, “Romam eo iterum crucifigi (“I am going to Rome to be crucified again”). Peter then gains the courage to continue his ministry and returns to the city, where he is martyred. *The Acts of Peter*, by M. R. James, <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/actspeter.html>
    3. Origen (184–253) in his Commentary on the Book of Genesis III, quoted by Eusebius of Caesaria in his Ecclesiastical History (III, 1), said: “Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downwards, as he himself had desired to suffer.” The cross of Peter inverts the Latin cross based on this refusal, and his claim of being unworthy to die the same way as his Saviour. Granger Ryan & Helmut Ripperger, *The Golden Legend Of Jacobus De Voragine Part One*, 1941.
    4. Jerome (327-420) wrote that “At his (Nero's) hands Peter received the crown of martyrdom being nailed to the cross with his head towards the ground and his feet raised on high, asserting that he was unworthy to be crucified in the same manner as his Lord.” Jerome: “*De Viris Illustribus (On Illustrious Men) Chapter 1*” <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2708.htm>