

OPEN: “Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed. 14 If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. 16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. 17 For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 And “If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?” 19 Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.”

I. We Cannot Pretend We Were Not Forewarned (12-13)

- ◆ “Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.”
 - “Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble.” - Job 14:1
 - “In this world you will have trouble.” - John 16:33
 - “We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.” - 2 Corinthians 4:8-10

II. We Recognize Suffering as Authentication of our Faith (14-16)

- ◆ “If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.”
 - “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” - Matthew 5:10-12
 - “If the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you...” - John 15:18-20

III. We Must Embrace the Testing & Pass the Exam (17-19)

- ◆ “For it is time for judgment {an evaluation leading to a verdict} to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?”
 - “But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.” - 1 Corinthians 11:32
- ◆ “If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?” – 1 Peter 4:18

God allows suffering in some lives to break rebellious wills so that they will repent from unbelief and ungodliness and be saved. God will often fight hard against individuals so that they may be saved and escape future and final judgment.

- “The Son of Man will send His angels, and they will gather out of His Kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” - Matthew 13:41-42

◆ **“Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.” – 1 Peter 4:19 (Faith + Action)**

- “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. 5 For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.” - 2 Corinthians 1:3-5
- **END:** “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.” - Isaiah 43:2