

The Gospel Herald

“As the truth is in Jesus” (Ephesians 4:21)

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by

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“For I reckon the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed unto us.”

(Romans 8:18)

I find it a common question among Christian believers, “Why are Christians subject to sufferings in this mortal life,” whether spiritual, physical, emotional, or psychological? Life as a mortal is full of often unexpected trauma which causes great anguish, grief and sadness. These things must be that we would be more conformed to the image of God’s beloved Son.

JOB, a man that loved God , who was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil, yet lost all that he possessed, his livestock, (camels, oxen, asses, and sheep (Job 1:14-16) all his children were killed by a “Great Wind.”

(Job 1:19) In all this, Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.” (Job 1:22) Plus, Job was stricken physically with sore boils from the sole of his foot to his crown. (Job 2:7)

“Then said his wife unto him, Doest thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this, Job sinned not with his lips.” (Job 2:9-10)

You see dear friend, Job’s sufferings and trials were the divine design of the Almighty to prove that God’s sovereign grace and persevering mercy was to prove Job as a vessel of God’s love as a heir of divine favor. As you read the book of Job you see the devastation of his sufferings and great loss.....Yet, through it all, we see the hand of the Almighty blessed the chosen vessel of God with many fold more than he originally possessed. “So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. After this lived

Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his son's sons, even four generations. So, Job died, being old and full of days. (Job 42:12-17)

(One must read the entire book of Job to appreciate the sovereign working of God's grace and divine favor upon those that are given a HOPE in God's persevering love and divine mercies.)

David, the beloved Psalmist, a man the scriptures say, "A man after God's own heart," had written numerous expressions of his sufferings in this mortal realm called "life." David writes "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him from them all." (Psa. 34:19) "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry." (Psa. 34:15) "The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles." (Psa. 34:17)

Who are the "righteous" of God? The scriptures tell us they are those who are granted a "HOPE" in God. "Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we "HOPE" in thee." (Psa. 33:22). HOPE is synonymous with FAITH and inseparable; for the Scriptures record, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

Hope granted the heir of divine grace does not guarantee the child of God freedom from loss, pain and suffering in this mortal life. But, what God given hope does, is cause the heir of grace to persevere in the midst of trials and tribulations, knowing our God shall never leave us or forsake us. David was often vexed with a depressed spirit, yet never forsaken. David called upon the Almighty, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation: and uphold me with thy free spirit." (Psa. 51:12)

The child of God may often be subject to the absence of peace, joy, happiness, as we journey through the perils of mortal life. The loss of loved ones, the families split apart by selfish motives, physical afflictions, can often beset us with pain and suffering.

Listen to the writings of the Psalmist regarding his trials; "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word." (Psa. 119:67) Is it not a true thing that our heavenly Father brings about afflictions for our best interest? "It is good for me that I had been afflicted: that I might learn thy statutes," (Psa. 119: 71). We are taught necessary lessons by afflictions in the school of Christ.

"I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." (Psa. 119:75)

"I am afflicted very much: Quicken me, O Lord, according to thy word." (Psa. 119:107)

We find ourselves often designing and devising our lives to fit our selfish desires and intentions, yet as God's children we are told, "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps" (Proverbs 16:9)

*“A man’s going are of the Lord: how can a man then understand his own way?”
(Proverbs 20:24)*

I conclude by saying, as God’s children, may we be taught that our God is in the heavens and doeth whatsoever he pleaseth, for we are mere clay in the Potter’s hand. He shall mold us and make us as it pleases Him, to fulfill His determined and predestined purpose. Yes, a messenger of Satan can be sent to afflict us, if God so decree, that we might be more conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, God’s beloved Son. For, if Christ be formed in you, you shall be made to reflect His divine character; even by sufferings, tribulations and heartbreaks. For through sufferings faith is made perfect, and hope is manifested as an anchor for the soul.

*Take heed beloved of God, He shall have a witness of His grace, mercy, and so great salvation through the molding and making of his people for His name’s sake. For these make up the Church of the Firstborn, the Church Bride of our Lord Jesus Christ: The called, elect, chosen, appointed, ordained and predestined heirs of divine grace being made the sons and daughters of God by free and sovereign grace and love. “For we are saved by grace (divine favor) through faith, and that (grace and faith), not of yourselves, but the gift of God.” We who have been given HOPE are blessed to believe that what God has promised, He shall also do it”
(Romans 4:21).*

*Respectfully submitted
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