

I Peter 4:12-19
5-18-2022

INTRODUCTION:

***What do you do when you are thrown into the hot "oven" of unfair suffering?**

I. **Don't be <u>SURPRISED</u>** (v. 12)

II. **<u>REJOICE</u>!** (v. 13)

--Think of the One you are privileged to suffer for

--Think of the joy coming to you when Christ returns

III. **Consider yourself <u>FORTUNATE</u>** (v. 14)

--Your unjust punishment is an evidence that you are saved

IV. **<u>GLORIFY</u> God** (v. 14b-16)

V. **Keep things in <u>PERSPECTIVE</u>** (v. 17-18)

--Consider the outcome of those who don't come to Christ

VI. **<u>ENTRUST</u> your <u>LIFE</u> to God's faithful hands** (v. 19)

In the Hot Oven

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I. **Don't be <u>SURPRISED</u>** (v. 12)

"Apparently some suffering believers were thinking that something bad had gone astray with the divine plan. Reason itself taught them that the godly shouldn't suffer, especially unjustly, at the hands of God's enemies. Was God ignorant of their plight or impotent to help or calloused to their tears? Not at all, said Peter; trials are not abnormal. In fact, they are part of [God's] blueprint" (Anderson, p. 73).

"Beloved" **-** to face fiery trials in no way means that God does not love you
(SEE: Rom. 8:35-37)

(This same word *"beloved"* is used of Jesus Christ - Eph. 1:6)

"Think it not strange" **-** Don't be shocked or surprised; don't consider fiery trials as something <u>alien</u> or <u>foreign</u> to you. Salvation does not exempt us from trouble; but the Lord odes give us the ability to handle it.

"Fiery trial" **-**The word refers to a burning furnace, a smelting furnace used for refining and purifying.

The LXX uses this same word in Prov. 27:21 - *"As the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so is a man to his praise."*

A *"fiery"* trial is one that is hot and undesirable but necessary.

"Which is to try you" = which (fiery trial) exists for the purpose or goal of testing you.

From Satan's vantage point, the trial is a test to fail you. He wants you to yield to the temptation (brought about by the trial) and sin.

From God's perspective, the trial exists so as to prove you and show you the reality of your faith and of His faithfulness.

"Strange thing" - God is saying: "Don't view the trials you face as something you should be immune to, something totally foreign to you; don't view yourself as being "untouchable" by fiery ordeals."

II. **<u>REJOICE</u>!** (v. 13)

--Think of the One you are privileged to suffer for

"But rejoice" - Don't be offended and face the trial with shock, but rather continually rejoice!

Consider the trial something to "rejoice about." How? You can rejoice to the degree that you are sharing in suffering for Christ.

If you are suffering for righteousness' sake, for the Bible, for the Gospel of Jesus, for Christianity -- then you are literally fellowshipping or partaking of a noble cause! You are not suffering for your own wrong doing but for your Lord, who also suffered (3:18).

Peter and John rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ (Acts 5:40-41).

--Think of the joy coming to you when Christ returns
Moses had the right perspective on unjust treatment (Heb. 11:26 - *"Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."*)

"That" - in order that, for the purpose that.

Here is why you can face the trials with hope. Jesus is coming again!

"When His glory shall be revealed" = At the revelation or appearing of His glory. This undoubtedly is a reference to Christ's *"<u>glorious appearing</u>"* (Ti. 2:13).
God is saying this: "If you rejoice now for what you suffer for Christ's sake, you will exuberantly rejoice when He returns."

Those who endured hardship for Christ will spontaneously erupt or bubble over with exultation when He comes back for us.

It is important to note that it is no accident nor mere coincidence that fiery trials are connected with the Rapture (the Second Coming). The Bible is explicitly clear in its teaching that the Church will face her greatest trial prior to the return of her Bridegroom.

SEE: Matt. 24:21, 29-31
Rev. 3:10-11 - *"Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."*
Cp. Rev. 6:9-17
Dan. 7:21-22 - *"I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came,a nd judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom."*

III. Consider yourself <u>FORTUNATE</u> (v. 14)

--Your unjust punishment is an evidence that you are saved

"Reproached" - mistreated, reviled, insulted

"Happy are ye" - You are <u>blessed</u>! You can consider yourself "<u>fortunate</u>."

How could one consider himself "fortunate" when being persecuted and oppressed simply because he takes his stand for the name (and glory) of Christ? The answer is intriguing.

The very fact that you face the flack because of Christ is proof (evidence that you belong to Christ.

"Happy are ye; because the Spirit (Holy Spirit) of glory and of God resteth upon you" - Those who have God's Holy Spirit have always been oppressed by those who do not (Gal. 4:28-29 - *"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now."*)

IV. <u>GLORIFY</u> God (v. 14b-16)

V. 14b
"On your part he is glorified"
V. 15
"Busybody" - aa meddler whose eyes are always on the affairs of others (when he should be minding his own business).

"Possibly when Christians did experience criticism the critics were justified because those believers were busybodies, seeking to legislate the standards of the unconverted. God is not pleased with self-appointed overseers" (Anderson, p. 75).

V. 16

"Christian" (Acts 11:26, 26:28) = Christ-like-one
Don't ever be ashamed of the ill treatment you sometimes face for being a bonified, authentic Christian.

"Glorify God" **-** When you victoriously suffer for Christ without budging, blowing up or bending, you bring glory to God!

Perhaps nothing brings more glory to God than one of His children having a faith that produces a lifestyle that attracts challenge and opposition, and then facing that conflict with undying courage and character!

How you respond to afflictions says more about your Christianity than any sermon you could give, or by how much you smile when life is smooth.

V. Keep things in PERSPECTIVE (v. 17-18)

"Judgment" **-** This "judgment" is from the hands of men; but allowed by God to fulfill His purpose in us. God uses the trials of the world to purge and purify His household, His place of abode -- the Church in which He dwells.

--Consider the outcome of those who don't come to Christ

If God allows things to get hot for His people, how hot and unbearable will the fate be of those who are unpersuaded to the good news of God.

There is no hope for those who refuse to believe the Gospel of God!

Realizing the end (outcome) of the unsaved is a prime motivating factor in our not caving in under the pressure (Rev. 14:9-12).

"Saved" **-**delivered or spared from hot trials. If God hardly delivers His own righteous ones from facing the heat in this life, what hope is there of the ungodly and sinners?

Prov. 11:31 - *"Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner."*

If God doesn't let us get away without enduring the heat of His crucible, where will the lost appear? (Answer: the Great White Throne - Rev. 20:11-15).

Peter is calling on believers to put their suffering in perspective! Look at the

outcome of the lost! No matter how bad your suffering is, consider the lot of the lost. If Christians rarely escape it, do you think the lost will?

VI. <u>ENTRUST</u> your <u>LIFE</u> to God's faithful hands (v. 19)

"The will of God" - suffering may be the "will (desire) of God" for us at some point in our lives. At that point we need to say with Jesus: *"Not my will, but thine be done."*

No suffering can ever reach your shore unless it is God's will.

"Commit" - A banking term, meaning to <u>deposit</u>, give over, hand over or <u>entrust</u>.

Because God is faithful, when we entrust our souls to Him, we make an "insured deposit"!

As Jesus set the example by saying, *"Into thy hands I commit my spirit,"* we to need to have a sacred trust whereby we entrust our soul (our temporal and eternal life) into the trustworthy hands of our ***"faithful Creator."***

"Creator" - Hand over your life to the One who gave you life!

Paul said: *"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to*

keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (II Tim. 1:12)