

The Need for Suffering I By Greg Rangel

There are multiple questions that are brought up when suffering and pain becomes our companion in life. Nobody likes to go through any type of suffering whatsoever. We all would like to live a nice and peaceful life without any type of need, physical or emotional suffering, stress, and definitely without any type of tribulation. But the reality of it all is that, suffering and tribulations do become part of life. We might receive sufferings and tribulations from our own actions, or simply by being at the wrong place at the wrong time. Whatever the reason, suffering and tribulations are so quick to accompany us in this life of ours.

In Scripture we do see that sufferings and tribulations do become part of the believers life, and that for many reasons, which we will be covering throughout this series. First of all, we who believe in Jesus are trying to live in a world that is totally against what we believe in. In other words, we are in enemy territory. It is like trying to walk up a stream that carries a heavy current. Each step becomes a struggle because the stream is there trying to knock you down. And so the difficulty continues.

There are many things that do take place in our life that we don't understand. We begin to ask ourselves things like, why did the Lord allow this to take place? Doesn't God love me? Where is God when I need help?

When the second wave of persecution began, James the brother of John got killed by Herod with the sword (Acts 12:2), but in that same chapter Peter was going to be killed as well but God sent an angel to free him from prison. The obvious question here is, why did James get killed and Peter get freed? Did the Lord love Peter more than James? Of course not. But we do have to remember that the Lord works in many different ways that we will not understand?

We aren't told, but perhaps it was a big discouragement for the Apostles and disciples of the Lord when they heard that Herod killed James. Many times the Lord might work totally different than how we think He is going to work. We might ask for this or that to be done, but something else takes place, like the death of a loved one.

Why God allows heavy blows to take place in our life, only He knows. But we can be sure of a few things. We can be sure that God is in control of the biggest matters to the smallest as well. He is in control of everything. Even of the things that we don't understand. *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts"* (Isaiah 55:8).

We can also be sure that whatever the situation, and since God knows about it, and since He allowed it, that He also has a purpose in it. *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"* (Romans 8:28).

One final thing that we can be sure of, is that, even though we don't like the situation that He has allowed us to be in, He still loves us. "*The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee*" (Jeremiah 31:3).

You might be going through some difficult situation today which might cause you to think that nobody cares. But you can be sure that the Lord cares for you because He loves you. He is there ready to help you. All you need to do is call unto Him.

Secondly, your affliction is but for a moment. "*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal*" 2 Corinthians 4:17-18.

We might not like suffering, but it works for our benefit as we shall see in the upcoming articles.