

**"The Believer's Suffering"**

**Part 10**

**1 Peter 3:13-5:14**

**Introduction:** Tonight as we return to our study in 1 Peter and look at Peter's words concerning the believer's suffering, we shall see God's provisions for the suffering believer.

Now we know from other passages that believer's are not alone in the midst of suffering.

**Hebrews 13:5-6**

<sup>5</sup> *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

<sup>6</sup> *So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

**Isaiah 43:1-3a**

*But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.*

<sup>2</sup> *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.*

<sup>3</sup> *For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour:*

**Genesis 28:15**

<sup>15</sup> *And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.*

**1 Chronicles 28:20**

<sup>20</sup> *And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.*

**Psalms 37:25-28**

<sup>25</sup> I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

<sup>26</sup> He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.

<sup>27</sup> Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.

<sup>28</sup> For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

These are just a few verses that speak of God's presence with the believer in all that we go through.

### I. God's Provisions for the Suffering Believer

#### Notice 1 Peter 4:13-14

We are to rejoice in the midst of suffering because when we suffer the spirit of glory rests on the believer. This is a strange statement, and we must ask what does it mean? Let us remember that Peter is the Apostle to the Jews. Therefore those whom he was writing to were very familiar with the Old Testament. So Peter most likely has in mind the Shekinah Glory of the Old Testament. Many verses tell us of the glory of God appearing to the people of Israel.

#### Exodus 24:16-18

<sup>16</sup> And the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud.

<sup>17</sup> And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.

<sup>18</sup> And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.

#### Exodus 40:

<sup>32</sup> When they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they came near unto the altar, they washed; as the LORD commanded Moses.

<sup>33</sup> And he reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate. So Moses finished the work.

*34 Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.*

**1 Kings 8:10-11**

*10 And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD,*

*11 So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.*

We can see from these verses that when the Spirit of glory came down it consumed the place it rested. This is the very idea that Peter has. When the believer suffers for the name of Jesus Christ the Spirit of glory and of God consumes that person. God then gives the sufferer the grace that is needed to face the suffering. We see this very supply of grace in the life of Stephen after he preached his sermon.

**Acts 7:54-60**

*54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.*

*55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,*

*56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.*

*57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,*

*58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.*

*59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.*

*60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.*

Let us notice another situation where grace was evident in the believers who were suffering. The believers are Paul and Silas in Philippi.

**Acts 16:23-30**

<sup>23</sup> *And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:*

<sup>24</sup> *Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.*

<sup>25</sup> *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.*

<sup>26</sup> *And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.*

<sup>27</sup> *And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.*

<sup>28</sup> *But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.*

<sup>29</sup> *Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,*

<sup>30</sup> *And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*

In Stephen's life and in the lives of Paul and Silas God's grace sustained them and allowed them to glorify God in the midst of the suffering.

**Notice 1 Peter 4:14 again.**

I want you to notice closely that the Spirit RESTS upon the suffering believer. It is as if he sits in the driver's seat in complete control of what we are going through, and He is in complete control.

**Malachi 3:2-4**

<sup>2</sup> *But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:*

<sup>3</sup> *And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.*

*<sup>4</sup> Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years.*

The Refiner of silver controls the temperature of the furnace. He makes sure it is not too hot and He makes sure it is not too cool. He watches the silver very closely because it is precious to Him. He is purifying the silver and He knows when it is finished for then He can see His own reflection in the silver. This is exactly what takes place in the believer's life who is going through suffering. He or she is being purified.

Let us take special notice that the Holy Spirit has a special ministry of grace for the suffering believer as this verse in 1 Peter tells us. This is God's provision for the believer who is suffering.

#### **Notice 1 Peter 4:15**

Peter reminds his readers that they are not to suffer for any evil doings. It is very interesting to look at this group of sins that Peter mentions here. The "busybody" is placed in the same category as the murderer. This is something that believers need to pay close attention to. A busybody is someone who gets involved in the business of someone else's life. You know the kind of people they are. They hear some gossip about someone, and they begin to call everyone they can because they just cannot stand not knowing the details. Then when they get information, they are very quick to pass it on. If there are gaps in their information, they will use their own imagination to spice up the story. Let us notice a warning in Proverbs concern being a busybody.

#### **Proverbs 26:17**

*<sup>17</sup> He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.*

To take a dog by the ears put a person in a dangerous predicament. He cannot bite you while you hold his ears but when you let go, he will get you. That is the idea here. If you meddle in business that is not yours, you may find yourself in a situation that is difficult to escape without some kind of pain.

Someone pointed out that even Samson did not catch the foxes by the ears.

#### **Judges 15:4**

*<sup>4</sup> And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails.*

Notice the words of **Bridges**:

*"There is a world of difference between suffering as a Christian and suffering as a busybody. Even with Christian intentions, many of us are too fond of meddling in other peoples' affairs."*

Getting back to the verse we are in no way to suffer for doing evil.

**Notice 1 Peter 4:16**

When a believer suffers for the name of Jesus, we are not to be ashamed but instead we are to glorify God in the suffering.

**Acts 5:40-42**

<sup>40</sup> *And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.*

<sup>41</sup> *And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.*

<sup>42</sup> *And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.*

**Conclusion:**

We cannot allow suffering to silence us. It is a privilege to suffer for Jesus Christ and there is a special blessing for the believer who partakes of Jesus Christ's suffering.

**Philippians 3:10**

<sup>10</sup> *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*