

Seasons of Suffering

Romans 8:18

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

Believers ought to expect to suffer as an inevitable part of their calling.

To believe is not to evade suffering; it is to face it with new confidence and hope.

What is suffering: The endurance of pain or affliction.

Affliction. Anything causing pain or distress; suffering; calamity.

From the biblical viewpoint, affliction began with the entrance of sin into the world. Both mankind and all creation were afflicted with “thorns and thistles,” sin, death, and decay (cf. Gn 3:16–19; Rom 8:18–21).

Because of sin, misery is a common human experience, and our short life is full of trouble (Jb 14:1–6). It is impossible for human beings to avoid natural calamity, physical injury, and interpersonal conflict (2 Chr 20:9).

Yet God uses affliction to instruct and discipline his people. This aspect of affliction is graphically portrayed by the oppression during the Israelites’ sojourn in Egypt (Ex 4:31), by their troubles during the period of the judges (Neh 9:26, 27), and by their exile in Babylon (Is 26:16).

In Israel’s distress they cried out to God, who delivered them and led them into obedience (Jer 10:18; Hos 5:15–6:3).

Rightly approached, suffering does the following:

- **develops the character of believers,**
- **equips them for more effective service,**
- **draws us closer to Christ and**
- **prepares us for eternal glory**

1. Believers must expect suffering

Why?

- **Because Jesus foretold it** in Matthew Chapter 10 when he sends out the twelve. In some translations the Bible even has a segment for the “Persecutions to Come”
- **The apostles foretold it**
- [Acts 14:22 KJV 1900 “Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God.”](#)
- The experience the Old Testament shows it. [Hebrews 11:24-26 “By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaohs daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;”](#)
- The experience of the New Testament shows it : [Galatians 3:4 Have he suffered so many things in vain? If it be yet in vain.](#)

2. Suffering for Jesus is commendable

- [Matthew 5:10-12 NKJV “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in](#)

heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

- “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.”
- I Peter 4:12-14 NKJV

3. Suffering is profitable

1 Peter 5:10 ESV

And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in christ will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you

Psalm 34:19

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all.

2 Corinthians 4:17

For this light momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.

Im reminded of a song we sing that says THERE WILL BE GLORY AFTER THIS!

THERE WILL BE VICTORY AFTER THIS!

These afflictions are not eternal for the life of a believer they are temporary.

When Christ's disciples asked whose sin lay behind a man born blind, Jesus said, **"Neither this man nor his parents sinned" (John 9:3).**

Jesus then redirected his disciples from thinking about the *cause* of the man's disability to considering the *purpose* for it. He said, "This happened so *that* the work of God might be displayed in his life." Eugene Peterson paraphrases Christ's words this way: "You're asking the wrong question."

You're looking for someone to blame. There is no such cause-effect here. Look instead for what God can do" (The Message).

What you're suffering at the moment and all that you've gone through this year and this season wasn't designed to break you but to build you up.

There is purpose for your pain and every calling comes with a cost.