

Suffering and Lamenting

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1. In this life, we will suffer. It is Biblical!

- **James 1: 2** *When troubles of any kind come your way...*
- **John 16:33** *Here on earth, you will have many trials and sorrows.*
- **1 Peter 4: 12** ² *Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you.*

At times pain and suffering can feel like it will never end. **Take heart - it will, but we must endure.**

2. Suffering shows no bias.

- Suffering will affect everyone who lives in this world.
- Suffering doesn't ask us if we are ready for it, how much money we have in our bank accounts, it doesn't gauge how mature or dedicated you are as a believer, it just happens.
- We have an active role in how these problems will affect us, but not necessarily the outcome of the circumstances.

3. How will we react when suffering comes our way?

- a. Fight God and Withdraw From Suffering
- b. **Express Frustration (Lament)**
- c. Embrace Suffering

James 1: 2,3 ² *Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, **consider it an opportunity for great joy.*** ³ *For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.*

John 16:33 ³³ *I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth, you will have many trials and sorrows. **But take heart, because I have overcome the world.***"

1 Peter 4:12 ² *Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you.*

³ **Instead, be very glad**—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that **you will have the wonderful joy** of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world.

Read Lamentations 3:1-3, 7-9, 13-20.

4. How can we faithfully endure during our times of suffering?

Lamentations 3:22-26 ²² *The faithful love of the Lord never ends!*^[b] *His mercies never cease.* ²³ *Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning.* ²⁴ *I say to myself, "The Lord is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in him!"* ²⁵ *The Lord is good to those who depend on him, to those who search for him.* ²⁶ **So it is good to wait quietly for salvation from the Lord.**

Jeremiah remembers that during suffering these things never change:

- God is faithful.
- Our God is merciful.
- The Lord is good to those who depend on Him.
- Our Lord gives us relief when we search for Him in the middle of our desperation.

5. There is hope in suffering.

Romans 5: 3-6 ³ *We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance.* ⁴ *And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation.* ⁵ *And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.* ⁶ *When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners.*

Statement on Suffering in God's will: "We may not always understand what He is doing, but we know that He is doing what is best for us. We do not live on explanations; instead, we live on promises."

~Warren Wiersbe

Jeremiah 29:11-14 ¹¹ *For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.* ¹² *In those days when you pray, I will listen.* ¹³ *If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me.* ¹⁴ *I will be found by you," says the Lord. "I will end your captivity and restore your fortunes.*

The real reward for our suffering is what God does in and through us. There is an intimacy with God that happens amidst our suffering.

PRAYER OF SALVATION

Jesus, I thank You that You came and died on the cross for my sins so that I can be forgiven. I am a sinner and need Your grace, mercy, and forgiveness. I turn from my sins and say "No" to a life of living for myself. I turn to You and say "Yes" to Your will for my life. I ask You now to save me from my sins. I open my heart to You and receive You as my Lord and Savior. Thank You for saving me and forgiving me. Amen.