

CALL to Prayer - Pray for the persecuted church & that we would benefit from our bad times

Daniel 12:1, 7, 10 - Patience in Affliction

Intro Job 14:1 ^{NIV} - respectfully rearrange – “*The life of one born of God is full of trouble for a few days.*” As we near the end of our journey through Daniel we are noticing 3 big topics in chapter 12. Last week we noted PROPHECY...today we will think about SUFFERING. Christians should expect: trials/tribulation/difficulties/afflictions. “*Taking up a cross*” is part of the deal in following Christ. He was the *Man of Sorrows*, and we should expect to suffer. This is not a popular topic but it is a pertinent one. For everybody here is probably going through something. And if not... then buckle up for something is probably coming your way. Many aspects of affliction are just part of living in a sin-stained world...but for Christians...affliction also works to the get sin-stains out of us. Today- *The Pattern & Promise of Affliction*, *The Purpose of Affliction* and *Being Patient in Affliction*.

THE PATTERN & PROMISE OF AFFLICTION

1. Suffering and affliction are embedded into the book of Daniel. It flavors the whole message
 - a. Daniel 1 -carried into captivity...castrated...live entire life away from promised land
 - i. Faith constantly under fire
 - b. Daniel 2 - life threatened Daniel 3 - fiery furnace – faith in the fire
 - c. Daniel 6 – Lion’s den
2. This book patterns persecution & promises persecution/affliction for the people of God
 - a. Daniel 7:21 Daniel 7:25a Daniel 8:24 Daniel 11:33, 35
 - b. Daniel 12:1 – *time of distress* Daniel 12:7c – *shattering the power of the holy people*
3. Voice of the Martyrs - Sept. 2023 - highlights persecution of Christians in Mexico
 - a. It is severe, widespread and persistent in rural Mexico
 - b. Marxism and ideology of atheistic communism - burn Bibles
 - c. Cartels – oppose Christianity because of the standard of righteousness
 - d. Ruth & Aurelio – distribute Bibles and have planted more than 500 churches
 - e. “*Not one church that doesn’t face opposition*” – electricity cut off/~~school/medicine~~
 - f. Family abducted....gun to head ^(misfired)doused with gasoline ^(match not light)
 - g. “this is a battle we had to go thru” “We are going to preach double now” Ruth – “pray for growth in faith”
 - h. Juan & Josefina – came to faith in 2015 - wouldn’t celebrate Christo-pagan festivals
 - i. Lost – house, land, belongings – jailed...but grown in their faith
 - j. Church planters Mateo & Elena – live under threats – won’t leave for they lead 15 believers.
4. John 15:18-19 1 John 3:13

THE PURPOSE OF AFFLICTION

- Daniel 12:10 Daniel 11:35
 - Both of these verses list the same 3 purposes for affliction. Refine/Purge/Purify
 - God sends affliction to Purge... to Purify...and to Refine... His church

- Purge
 - Hard times have a way of sorting out the wheat and tares
 - Matt. 13:20-21 A “fair weather faith” is not a genuine saving faith Matt. 10:22
 - 1 John 2:19
 - “when the going gets tough...the fake fall away Heb. 10:38-39 1 John 5:4
 - Hard times has a way a purging the church of pretend believers.
- Purify -
 - Suffering has a sanctifying effect-
 - 1 Peter 4:1 Heb. 4:12
 - Ps. 119:67, 71, 75 Hosea 5:15
 - Affliction can help curb our affection for sin
- Refined -
 - Suffering builds a faith that endures - James 1:2-4
 - 1 Peter 1:6-7 Zech. 13:9
 - Fiery trials refine our faith no pain no gain
 - Suffering builds Christian character Romans 5:3-5
 - If you want hope, you need character. To get character you need perseverance.
 - To get perseverance you need tribulation....
 - So, God gives us tribulation to produce: perseverance, character & hope

BEING PATIENT IN AFFLICTION

- ❖ After warning about suffering, the angel recommends waiting
 - Daniel 12:12 - “...how blessed is he who keeps waiting.....”
 - The waiting rooms of life can be a testing time of life - a very difficult place to be
 - It is hard to wait when you are hurting
- ❖ Christians are called to be patient in affliction
 - Rom. 12:12^{NIV} “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”
 - Luke 21:17-19^{NKJV} “And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But not a hair of your head will be lost. By your patience possess your souls.”
 - Rev. 13:10^{NIV} “...this calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints.”
 - Lam. 3:25-26
 - Isaiah 40:31
- ❖ Waiting is a trying thing, but it is a momentary thing.
 - Daniel 12:7 *time, times and half a time* Dan. 12:11-12 – 1290/1335 days
 - I may be fuzzy on exact meaning here...but I know it is not forever.
 - For the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. Matt. 24:22
 - 2 Cor. 4:17
 - light and momentary
 - The Christians life, born of God, is full of trouble....for a few days
Rev. 2:10-11