

**Suffering**

**is**

**God's**

**servant**

Hallowed be His Name

# Hallowed be His Name

Thank You Lord for the blessings of Your goodness according to Your glory that You supply in our daily experience, for they refresh and sustain us in preparation for the trials, tribulation and suffering that come constantly and tenderly from Your hand, for they are Your primary means of our transformation into the image of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank You for our suffering in weakness, for then we can see more clearly the grotesqueness of our sin, and more importantly, they reveal the greatness of Your Mercy and Glory as You work out Your plans for the summing up of all things in us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thank You that we must learn not to rely on our own inadequate understanding as we live in the world, but have to learn by bitter experience and constant obedience to Trust in You with all our heart, as we face Your fire of applied purification that is necessary for the development of our holiness. Thank you that we can rely on Your written word and not be misled by our feelings.

Thank You that You use all things which come from Your hand for our good, because You have called us to be Christ like, and You have enabled us to love and serve You by the power of Your Spirit, so that we can at all times rejoice in all things, knowing that in the Time of Your Fullness, we will stand in Your Presence with Christ, in the awesome knowledge, that You have made us to be like Him as we see Him face to face.

Thank You Lord for all those You have used to build us up in the body of Christ, as they are led by the Spirit in Your Church of the Spirit's Power working in weakness.

Thank You for the church of the Spirit of Christ given for the upward growth of Your chosen children, for it becomes obvious in our constant conflicts, that none of us individually can ever in this world understand as much as we think we do.

And thank You for all the suffering of natural disaster and diseases of the flesh, that comes through the world lost in sin with every degraded imperfection. And thank You for all those who have vexed us, and troubled us, and falsely accused us, and persecuted us in their ignorance, for they are only Your instruments for our benefit in divine holiness.

Thank You, that contrary to our feeble understanding, victory only comes through the seeming defeat of suffering, for in our weakness we are strong by following the way You have prepared by the Spirit through Christ Jesus our Lord, Who died in weakness and was raised in Glory.

Thank You that our greatest steps upward towards Your presence and holiness are made from the depths of hopelessness in unbearable darkness as we are turned to Your Sovereign Majesty and Grace by the leading of Your Holy Spirit; Who is working in us the necessary humility and brokenness in order to see God.

Thank You that the way up is down. Thank You that we have to deny ourselves and take up our cross daily to follow the way the Lord took into His Divine Glory. Thank You that You make all things concerning the kingdom of heaven and Your Divine promises possible through the obedience we have in Christ to Your truth in Christ.

Hallowed be Your Name in all the world. Your will be done in all the World as it is done in us for Your Glory and Majesty, so that we can enjoy and worship You forever. Amen and Amen.

### **Suffering is God's servant**

Divinely appointed suffering hurts, even while we may be trusting God to manage all things well according to His inscrutable wisdom which brings lasting peace. In Christ Jesus, suffering equals glory. Now that's something to be happy about.

On the one hand, if we think God didn't plan for us to suffer, then we have a weak God who is without power and unable to keep us the way

we desire, for suffering is everywhere, so therefore He isn't the God of the Bible and isn't Sovereign over all the world.

On the other hand, the Sovereign God of the Bible knows all things and uses the suffering that comes as the result of sin to punish the sinner, and at the same time to purify those He has chosen to rule one day with His Son in glory. Either way, Saint or sinner, suffering is inevitable because God is Sovereign.

Bible Verses About God's ordained suffering

Romans 1:24 *Therefore God gave them up to vile impurity in the lusts of their hearts, so that their bodies would be dishonoured among them.*

Romans 1:26 *For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged natural relations for that which is contrary to nature,*

Romans 1:28 *And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a depraved mind, to do those things that are not proper.*

1 Peter 3:14 *But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats ; do not be frightened."*

1 Peter 4:1 *Therefore, since Christ suffered in His body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin.*

1 Peter 5:10 *And the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.*

2 Corinthians 4:17 *For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.*

2 Timothy 3:12 *In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,*

Hebrews 2:10 *In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what He suffered.*

James 1:12 *Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

John 16:33 *“I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

Luke 14:27 *And whoever does not carry their cross and follow Me cannot be My disciple.*

Philippians 3:10 *I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of His resurrection and participation in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death,*

Romans 8:18 *I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.*

Romans 8:35 *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?*

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.*

1 Peter 4:12-13 *Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when His glory is revealed.*

1 Peter 1:6-7 *In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

1 Peter 2:19-21 *For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps.*

2 Corinthians 4:8-10 *We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.*

James 1:2-4 *Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

Romans 5:3-5 *Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.*

Matthew 5:10-12 *“Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”*

Acts 14:22 *“It is through many tribulations that we must enter the kingdom of God.”*

Revelation 21:4 *‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.’*

Therefore, the cause of our suffering is not simply the result of the circumstances, but what God in His wisdom has especially predestined just for us before the foundation of the world. Therefore, our circumstances are but the means God uses to reveal the sinful ways we have stored in our hearts and minds through unbelief and disobedience. If we have been blessed with salvation and a new heart, we still need to undergo the painful transformation of our minds through God's selective pruning away that which contains sinful disease. Divinely appointed suffering has the potential to bring us to repentance and forgiveness, and ultimately to complete the purification process leading to glory, or it can harden our hearts and thus secure our eternity in hell and eternal damnation.

If we have been chosen by God, we can take confidence from the fact that the suffering Lamb of God who has prepared our way of redemption through divinely appointed suffering now reigns as King in heaven, even as He oversees our suffering by His Spirit who is living in us. The answer to our suffering is God Himself who lives in us. We need to look to Christ seated on His throne and trust in Him who Works in us to will and to do according to His good pleasure, as we work out His plan for our holiness if we are to overcome the attractions of the sinful world. We need to thank God that He has chosen us to be ultimately worthy of suffering with His Son, the reigning King of kings, and the Lord of lords.

### **The war of two kingdoms**

Under the Sovereignty of God, all that happens in the universe is according to the pre-ordained will of God.

## **Either we are:**

Chosen for Mercy by God to experience the love of Christ.

Born again according to His divine nature. *‘For His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.*

*‘Through these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world on account of sinful desires.’*  
2 Pet 1:3-4

Enslaved to Christ by faith by believing in the Son who died in my place, even unto death of self. *‘not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.’*

Eph 6:6

Forgiven of all sinfulness and iniquity, so much so, that they are separated from God as far as the East is from the West. *‘As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our wrongdoings from us.’*

Psalms 103:12

Being raised up with Christ *‘and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.’*

Eph 2:6

To live for Him with God. *‘For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that those who live would no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose on their behalf.’*

2 Cor 5:14-15

Adopted by God into the heavenly family. *He predestined us to adoption as sons and daughters through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.’*

Eph 1:5

Sharing in the inheritance of Christ. *‘Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.’*

Col 1:12

Blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. *‘Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.’* Eph 1:3

Honoured to rule with Christ in His kingdom. *‘If we endure, we will also reign with Him.’* 2 Tim 2:12

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.* Heb 11:1

*‘Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.’* Rom 12:1

**Or**

We are still born of the flesh according to the prince of darkness. *‘For those who are in accord with the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh... For the mind set on the flesh is death.’* Rom 8:5-6

Enslaved to the devil by believing in the world under a declaration of independence from God.

Believing that the world and the things of the world are to be worshipped. *Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.* 1 John 2:15-17

Handed over by God to reap the rewards of corruption and wilful disobedience. Rom 1:24, 26, 28

Suffering in the evil world without hope. having no hope and without God in the world.’ Eph 2:12

Without knowledge of the love of God in Christ. *in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might*

*not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.'*  
2 Cor 4:4

As a result of the sin of everyone in the world, the hope of fulfilment in the flesh of the world is but an illusion because darkness can never create light and love. The world has fallen from the perfection of God.

In the world every attempt is made to have people and things give us the pleasure we crave, but the world is fallen from the glory of God.

When we do not find the elusive satisfaction we crave daily, we blame everyone else except ourselves and our sinful fallenness.

Life in the world is condemned by God for eternal destruction. *'These people will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.'* 2 Thess 1:9

### **In the meantime, the battle continues:**

*'Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armour of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armour of God, so that you will be able to resist on the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having belted your waist with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having strapped on your feet the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.'* Eph 6:10-17

The world is a battlefield. Everyone called by God is a soldier of the cross, no battle, no calling. Everyone born of God is born into spiritual warfare, no exception.

It is a battle to live by the leading of the Spirit. *‘For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons and daughters of God.’*

Rom 8:14

Or we succumb to the leading of the mind of the flesh that remains from the world. *"For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live."*

Rom 8:13

The devil is constantly encouraging us to live for the flesh of self and deny the salvation of God. *‘Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.’*

1 Pet 5:8

*‘For the time will come when they will not tolerate sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires, and they will turn their ears away from the truth and will turn aside to myths.’*

2 Tim 4:3-4

At all times this battle will be painful, there is no victory without suffering.

*‘And if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.’*

Rom 8:17

*‘If we endure, we will also reign with Him.’*

2 Tim 2:12

We need to be vigilant because we can momentarily be deceived by the flesh.

The devil will use every resource in this battle to convince us that we are still living under condemnation and our sin remains. The wiles of the devil are those clever schemes used by Satan to ensnare us through temptation, threat, or intimidation. He would have us believe that faith in God is a farce.

He will even use the scripture coming from people we know to attempt to get us to deny obedience and trust in God, in the same way he used

God's word out of contest to attempt to deceive Jesus in His temptation ordained by God.

Sometimes the battle is intense and it seems as if the darkness has victory and God has abandoned us.

The powers of darkness encourage us to believe the lies of the devil that we are alone. And the devil employs everyone to bring accusations of failure so we give up hope.

God allows this battle so that we can learn to put to death that which is earthly in us in order that we can mature in the image of Christ. But we cannot put away what we don't see, and suffering the grief of the Spirit will open our eyes to our flesh that must go to the cross.

But regardless of the appearance of evils victory, the Spirit of God has sealed everyone who lives for Christ so that eternal security is never in doubt.

Because of the power of God, the Spirit will restore the mind of God's children through repentance so they can continue to grow in the knowledge of God their Father.

Growth in the holiness of God can only take place in the battle to overcome the flesh by taking up our cross daily, and continuing to witness to Christ our Lord.

In the battle for our hearts and minds, God's word commands that we don't look intently at the darkness, but to look up to where Christ sits on His throne, thus reminding us of all He has done to deliver us from the darkness and into the light of His kingdom.

### **We can be blindsided**

Not realising I am in a battle; I have a problem of looking too intently at the darkness and allowing my feelings to affect my judgement.

I have again seen the darkness, and tasted the tears of purification, but God has restored me into His light so that I can rejoice in Christ. The way up is down.

The only way upward in the kingdom of God is by ruling all things by the measure of His word. The world says everyone has an opinion, but the children of God have no other option but God's word. Rejecting God's word as the only way to measure our lives is to reject God.

Holding resolutely to the word of God as the measure of God for all things means the risk of been called a Bible basher by those who are struggling with the power of darkness, or have chosen the world.

*"I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth."*

John 17:15-19

Do we believe God's word, or do we go with the temptation to compromise with the world and follow our feelings of frustration in the world?

### **God's answer for all our problems is His presence**

*"I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Matt 28-20

*'He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature.'*

2 Pet 1:4

The only remedy for our problems, fears and anxiety, is trusting in the Lord who is working His plan out in us for our holiness in the image of Christ. *'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to desire and to work for His good pleasure. Do all things without complaining or arguments.'*

Phil 2:12-14

That means He is working all the things that happen to us together to be for our good so that we are transformed into the image of Christ. *‘And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.’* Rom 8:28-29

Our fear and anxiety indicate that our attention is more on the world and our circumstances than it is on our God who rules our circumstance and lives in us by His Spirit.

Our problem isn't with our circumstances, but our attachment to the world. Our treasurer is where the desires of our heart hope to be satisfied. *“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”* Matt 6:21

Our problem is us, and our moment-by-moment need is to look to Christ as we deny our self and take up our cross to follow the example of Christ who was dependent on the Father for all things as He lived in the darkness of the world. *‘Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in the same way.”* John 5:19

We need to see what our Father is doing. God is pruning us away from the world for our future glory. Attachment to the world is fleshliness that leads to death and separation from God. So, suffering God's pruning should be welcomed by us as necessary treatment leading to godliness. *“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.”* John 15:1-2

Pruning is painful, but if we are anxious and fearful, we need to undergo more of the suffering of God's pruning to free us from the world, in order for us to live for the kingdom of God, where He has said through Paul, that we have already received every spiritual blessing in the heavenly

places. Therefore, all our complaining about our circumstances and what displeases us as not acceptable for our life in the world, is actually complaining about God who has not pleased us, for it is He who works all things in heaven and earth.

When we should be looking inwardly to see what God is doing for our transformation, we are often looking outwardly to see what we want in the world and complain bitterly. *“For the mouth speaks from that which fills the heart.”* Matt 12:34

What upsets us most is what we think we have lost or don't have in the world, and that is a world that is passing away.

We get upset when people are unable to give us the love we demand, or are unwilling to do so because of some pre-existing fleshly prejudice.

But we would never get upset when we know that we have received the Lord of the Universe, who Rules His eternal kingdom that will never pass away. Faith trusts in our King to always do what is right. *“Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?”* Gen 18:25

*Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counsellor? Or who has first given to Him, that it would be paid back to him?*

Rom 11:33-35

In our ignorance the Lord is our helper. *“My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.’* 2 Cor 12:9

Hallowed be His Name

# Living Water Resources

## Come to the River

*'So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to desire and to work for His good pleasure. Do all things without complaining or arguments.'* Philippians 2:12-14

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