

A Major Lesson of the Passover: We Must Suffer Along With Christ

A Study Outline

- I. One thing is abundantly clear in this life: all of humanity, and all of creation suffer pain and discomfort regularly throughout our existence.

“For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Romans 8:22-23).

- A. From the moment we are born, and even before we are born, we suffer pain or discomfort at times.
- B. Notice our current conditions: scrapes and bruises, internal pains, aching joints, sports injuries, children crying from falls or spankings, rejection by others for being different, sickness, loss of loved ones in death, doing poorly on an examination, etc., etc., are all commonplace for us all.

- II. Definitions (These exclude the use of the word “suffer” to mean “cause” or “allow”, as it is normally used in the Old Testament and throughout much of the New Testament.)

A. ***Suffer, suffering(s), suffered***

Strong 3958 = ***pascho, patho, or pentho***, “to experience a sensation or impression, usually painfully.”

Examples: Matt. 16:21; 17:12; 27:19; Mark 5:26; 8:31; 9:12; Luke 9:22; 13:2; 17:25; 22:15; 24:26, 46; Acts 3:18; 9:16; 26:23; I Cor 12:26; II Cor. 1:6; Gal. 3:4; Philip. 1:29; I Thess. 2:14; II Tim. 1:12; Heb. 2:18; 5:18; 9:26; 13:12; I Peter 2:19-20; 21:23; 3:14, 17-18; 4:1, 15, 16, 19; 5:10; Rev. 2:10.

Strong 4841 = ***sumpascho***, “to experience pain jointly or of the same kind, spec. persecution”.

Examples: Rom 8:17; I Cor. 12:26.

Strong 4778 = ***sugkakoucheo***, “to maltreat in company with, i.e. endure persecution together.”

Example: Heb. 11:25.

Strong 3804 = ***pathema***, “something undergone, i.e. hardship or pain”.

Examples: Rom. 8:18; II Cor. 1:5, 6, 7; Philip. 3:10; Col 1:24; Heb. 2:10; I Peter 1:11; 4:13; 5:1.

- B. Other words are synonyms of *suffering* and include *grief, torment, travail, pain, and sorrow*.

- III. How pain and suffering entered our world.

- A. Pain and suffering were initially not in the world which God had created for mankind in the Garden of Eden, the perfect environment for man and his family and all of the creation.

1. Genesis 2:8-9:

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food: the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.”

2. Flavius Josephus, in *Antiquities of the Jews*, spoke of the innocent, joyful life that mankind had in the Garden of Eden, not polluted by cunning craftiness.
- B. Sin (breaking God's laws: I John 3:4) brought with it pain and suffering into this world.
1. Genesis 3:16-19. Sorrow for the woman in childbearing would be multiplied after taking the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and food would be raised through much sorrow and sweat until aging and death overtook mankind.
 2. Romans 8:18-23. The creation did not desire to be subjected to decay and death, but groans to be delivered from this "bondage of corruption", to be changed to immortal spirit.
 3. Thus, Satan is seen as the deceiver of mankind, coercing people to follow the way of lawlessness; he is the one who thus is the originator of sin and suffering on the earth.
- IV. Jesus Christ came to earth to live a life of suffering, and ultimately to die and be resurrected, in order that we might have eternal life.
- A. I Peter 3:18. Christ suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that we might be brought to God, put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit.
- B. I Peter 2:24. Christ bore our sins in His own body that we, being dead to sins, should live to righteousness.
- C. He is the Passover Lamb that was killed on Nisan 14, and consumed the early morning of Nisan 15, which we take into our bodies, and which body thus becomes a part of us.
1. Exodus 12:3-13. This covers the scenario of the setting aside of the lamb on Nisan 10, its slaughter the evening of Nisan 14, and its consumption on Nisan 15; the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and lintel signified God's protection for the inhabitants (the firstborn) of those of His nation.
 2. John 6:47-58. Christ is the living bread that came down from heaven, and if one eats His flesh and drinks His blood he will have eternal life.
 3. I Corinthians 5:6-8. Christ is our Passover, sacrificed for us.
 4. James 1:18. The saints are the firstfruits of His creatures [spirit Sons of God].
 5. Revelation 14:4-5. The saints are redeemed from among men, the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb, and no fault is found in them before God's throne; Christ is the first of the firstfruits (I Corinthians 15:20-23), each one of us being resurrected in the order He ordains (v. 23; I Thessalonians 4:15-17; Revelation 20:5-6). The first resurrection is termed a "better" [Strong 2909 = *kreitton* "strong, better, i.e. nobler"] resurrection (Hebrews 11:35).
- D. Isaiah 53:1-12. Christ is described as a man of sorrows and grief, rejected of men, despised, and not esteemed. He was smitten of God, afflicted and stricken, wounded, bruised, and finally crucified.
- V. What is the value and purpose of suffering?
- A. I Peter 2:19-24. We are to take on the character of Jesus Christ (I John 2:6), and suffer as He suffered.
- "For even hereunto were you called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps..."* (I Peter 2:21).
- B. Christ suffered as a lamb, being gentle, forgiving, and never returning evil for evil.
1. I Peter 2:23. When He was reviled He did no revile in return.
 2. Isaiah 53:7. Christ did not open His mouth when afflicted, but was as a lamb led to slaugh-

ter.

C. We likewise must respond as He did.

1. Romans 8:31-37. No charge is laid against God's elect, and "...for His sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter" (Psalm 44:22).
2. I Corinthians 15:31. We "die daily."
3. II Cor. 4:11. We are always delivered unto death for Christ's sake, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our fleshly bodies.
4. Galatians 2:20. "I am crucified with Christ"
5. Hebrews 10:30. Vengeance belongs to God; He will repay (from Deuteronomy 32:35-36 and Psalm 135:14).
6. Matthew 5:38-48. We are not to resist evil, but "turn the other cheek", and

"... Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that spitefully use and persecute you" (verse 44).

7. I Corinthians 4:12. When reviled we bless, when persecuted we endure it, and when defamed we intreat.

D. Suffering builds the character within us that God desires so we can indeed be Sons of God.

1. I Peter 1:7.

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

2. James 1:2-4. Trials and sufferings build patience.
3. Romans 8:17-23, 26. Suffering in this world of decay and death helps us to be patiently pointed towards the coming age in which death no longer holds sway, and also helps us to pray effectively for that Kingdom to come.
4. Romans 5:3-5. Tribulations lead to patience, patience to *experience* [Greek *dokime* = trustiness] and experience to *hope* [Greek *elpis* = "to anticipate, usually with pleasure"].
5. We seldom change until put under some painful stress; pain brings change in our lives.
6. Philippians 3:10. When we participate in Christ's sufferings we will be made like Him.
7. II Timothy 2:12. If we suffer, we will also reign [in the Kingdom] with Him.
8. I Peter 4:12-19. We must be partakers of Christ's sufferings so that when we see Him in the resurrection we will have tremendous joy.

E. We cannot be God's Sons if we do not suffer with Him. If we do, we will be made spirit with Him (Romans 8:16-17).

VI. How should we respond to suffering?

A. We must patiently endure trials and sufferings.

1. James 1:12.

"Blessed is the man that endures temptation for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love Him."

temptation (Strong 3986) = *pierasmos*, "a putting to proof, experience of evil, by implication adversity."

2. II Timothy 4:5. Endure afflictions
3. I Peter 2:19-20. Endure grief, especially if persecuted wrongfully.

4. Hebrews 6:15. After enduring patiently we will obtain the promise of salvation.
5. Hebrews 12:2. Be like Jesus Christ, who for the joy set before Him endured the sufferings of the crucifixion, so he could sit on the Father's throne.

B. Realize that God will not have you suffer more than you are able to bear.

“There has no temptation takes you but such as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (I Corinthians 10:13).

C. Recall that God always has your best interests in mind when you go through suffering, and that the suffering is probably His own design for you at that moment. Note that Job suffered at God's allowance in order that he might learn invaluable lessons (Job 2:11-13; 42:5-6). Job finally saw the awesome wonder of God's reality.

D. Accept God's correction as a loving son does for the chastisement of his loving father (Hebrews 12:5-11).

VII. Suffering in this physical dwelling of ours is inevitable — due to the creations's decay, our own sins, and persecutions — since we are following in Christ's footsteps, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. We must accept it but not fear it, knowing that our heavenly Father is building us up in His character through them all, changing us as a loving father chastises his children. We will never be allowed to suffer more than we can endure. The Passover reminds us of how Jesus Christ, our Passover, suffered, died, and was resurrected (pictured by the Wave Sheaf Offering) so that we might have eternal Sonship with Him at the Father's throne ... after we too have suffered for a little while.