

Part 1 – A Slippery Slope

We've now come to a new 'phase' in the Book of the Psalms. On page 789 of the *Companion Bible* there is a helpful outline of the 'Leviticus Book', which we are now in. And it shows us that chapters 73-83 are concerning *The Sanctuary in Relation to Man*. And chapters 84-89 are related to *The Sanctuary in Relation to Yehovah*. This 73rd chapter therefore has a subject/title of “**Outside the Sanctuary. Effect. Distraction**” – so it will explain *the effect* of being *outside* the Sanctuary *by occupation of heart with others, and the consequent distraction*. As we shall see, along with Psalms 37 [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Psalms/423], it's a very important Psalm to remember, *especially* whenever you feel like the wicked are getting ahead in life. For the Psalmist of this beautiful Psalm felt the same way... when he was *outside* of the Sanctuary! But we'll also see how (and *why*) his heart and mind changed *dramatically* once He 'went into' the Sanctuary...

Psalm 73

1 A Psalm of A'-saph.

Now, this Psalm begins with a 'title' that we've only seen once before in the Psalms. So, this Psalm is the *second*, of twelve, Psalms with this 'title', and the only one that was in the 'Exodus Book' was Psalm 50. This, and all other 'Psalms of A'-saph' (Ps 73-83) will be in the 'Leviticus Book' that we're currently studying. Now, the word **A'-saph** is actually a name of several Israelites, but it means *a collector* and comes from a prime root that means *to gather for any purpose*; hence, *to receive, take away*, i.e. *remove* (destroy, leave behind, put up, restore, etc.) (#623). So, this Psalm was either written *by* A'-saph or *given to him* for public use in worship. But, either way, we should understand who *this* Asaph (i.e. A'-saph) is.

In Gen 46:12, Ex 6:16, Num 3:17 and 1 Chron 6:16 we're told that there were three sons of Levi: **Gershon, Kohath, and Merari**. The descendants of these three men were delegated to take care of God's Tabernacle in the wilderness. Note that sometimes Gershom is spelled as Gershon in the Scriptures, even in the same chapter, as in 1 Chron 6 (vs 1, 16). Num 3:25-26 tells us the duties of the Gershonites (Gershomites), while Israel was wandering around in the wilderness, was to move the *outer* tabernacle itself: the tent, coverings, hangings for the doors and the cords of it. Num 3:29-31 then tells us the Kohathites were to move the items *in* the tabernacle, such as the ark, the table, candlestick, altars, vessels and such. And the Merarites were delegated to move the bars, pillars, socks and such for the Tabernacle, as Num 3:35-38 says. Moses and Aaron were both from the family of Kohath (the son of Levi). Kohath had a son named Amram who was Moses, Aaron and Miriam's father. And it was Aaron's descendants that were chosen to actually serve *in* God's Tabernacle. So, even though there were *many* descendants of Levi who were not chosen to serve *in* the Tabernacle (as Aaron and his sons were), they were still quite privileged to be allowed (delegated) to move the 'mobile' Tabernacle while they were in the wilderness. But,

once David brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem, and his son Solomon was commissioned by God to build a *permanent* Temple for the items of the Sanctuary to be in, the other descendants of Levi were *not* left without duties. Their duties simply *changed* because there was no longer any need for them to carry the Tabernacle, because the Temple Solomon built was a *permanent* building.

Therefore, David organized the new duties of the Levites, who were not of Aaron's lineage, shortly before he died (at the behest of the Holy Spirit) because (again), after they Temple was made permanent, their former duties (of moving the Tabernacle) were nonexistent. So, the Lord (via the Holy Spirit) told David the *new responsibilities* for the Levites, who were not of Aaron. And thus, they were to be porters (guards) and musicians for the Temple of God. **Asaph** (a son of Gershom[n], 1 Chron 6:31-43) *was among them*. And later, we're told Asaph was actually one of the three 'chief' *musicians* who had authority over the others (1 Chron 16:4-8, 37, 1 Chron 25:1,6,) along with Heman (a son of Kohath) and Jeduthun who was also called Ethan at times (1 Chron 15:16-19). The Scriptures tell us that these three men were also *prophets* for the Lord, via the music that the Holy Spirit gave them. That's important to understand because, just as the Psalms David wrote (who was also a prophet of the Lord, as Acts 2:29-30 declares) many of the other Psalms are also prophetic. And while we won't see a lot of prophecies in this beautiful Psalm, we will see the 'timeless truth' of the Bible reiterated very clearly. This 'timeless truth' is, of course, the fact that: while it *seems* like the wicked are 'getting ahead', they are really only digging their own grave! Therefore, it is not wise for us to follow them into the pit...

Psalm 73

1... Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.

Now, the word '**truly**' here is a *particle of affirmation* that actually means **surely** or (by limitation) **only** (#389). And it's actually used *three* times in this Psalm, being rendered here as 'truly' but in verse 13 it's rendered 'verily' and in verse 18 it's rendered as 'surely'. The *Companion Bible* notes that, the uniform rendering would be '**only**' or '**after all**'. And then the word '**God**' here is the most commonly used 'title' for our Heavenly Father in the Psalms: it is '**Elohiym**' (#430), which means *the Supreme God*, who is our **Creator**. Indeed, our Creator (who is the *Supreme* God) is 'good' (#2896) to Israel, which is another name for Jacob (Gen 32:28, 35;10) *and* his descendants. But, notice that this verse has a *condition*. God is 'good' to Israel but only to those who are '*of a clean heart*'. And really, our Heavenly Father wanted *all* in Israel to have a clean heart. That's why He gave them His Laws and warned them to utterly destroy the heathen, *and* their idols, when they entered the Promise Land - *so their hearts would not be corrupted by them going a whoring after false gods and idols of the heathen*. That's why He told Moses to tell Israel that He wanted them to obey His Laws, so they could be a *kingdom of priests*, and an *holy nation* for Him (Ex 19:6). After all, He could *not* bless them if they would *not* obey Him, as the cursing and blessings in Lev 26 and Deut 28 state. And that's why this

Psalmist adds the ‘condition’ that God is ‘good’ (which does mean *good*, #2896) to those that have a ‘clean heart’.

Now, the word ‘**clean**’ means anything from *beloved*, *pure* to *empty* (#1249) and is doubtlessly being used as ‘pure’ here. And then the word ‘**heart**’ indeed means *heart* (#3824) but is used like #3820, which also means *the heart* but is also used (figuratively) very widely for *the feelings*, the *will* and even *the intellect*; likewise for *the centre of anything*. So, you could think of your heart being the part of yourself that has *desires*, *emotions* and even where your *intentions* and *motivations* are (i.e. ‘the will’), while our mind is more our *thought process*. And this is important because the Psalmist is starting this Psalm by declaring that having a clean (pure) heart (desires, emotions) is what causes our Heavenly Father to be good to Israel. Said another way, that’s what brings His favor (blessings) to Israel. As we learned back in Ps 66:18: “*If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me*”. The word ‘**regard**’ means *to see* (#7200) and the word ‘**iniquity**’ here means *to pant* (hence, *to exert oneself*, usually *in vain*; to *come to naught*); strictly *nothingness*; also *trouble*, *vanity*, *wickedness*; *specifically an idol* (#205).

In essence, when anything, or anyone, else is *more important* to us than our Heavenly Father, then *it’s an idol*. And it’s not that we can’t enjoy anything or anyone else; certainly, our Heavenly Father gives us good things to enjoy (1 Tim 6:17), and we are to love our family (and even other people, Lev 19:18) **but** *no one is to be more important to us than our Heavenly Father*. And that’s because, if we don’t honor and love Him *the most*, we will eventually break His Laws (James 1:13-15). For one vivid example: if a parent loves their child more than our Heavenly Father... and the child decides to be a homosexual – something that is an *abomination* to God and His Law clearly tells us we are *not to do* – but chooses *not* to chastise them, then they are actually *condoning the sin*. Which is not at all helpful for their child they supposedly love, but also angers our Heavenly Father because we are essentially choosing our child *over Him*. The word of God tells us that *if* we love our children then we *should* chastise them (Deut 8:5, Prov 13:24, Heb 12:5-10); and even if they are ‘of age’ we should still not condone their actions. Gal 6:1 and 2 Thess 3:14-15 give us some sound advice concerning things such as this.

So, this is just one (of many) example about how we can make someone (or something) an idol *because* we put them (or it) *before* our Heavenly Father. And there are *many* things that can be idols. A job, prestige, lusts of all sorts, homes, cars, hobbies, entertainment... the list goes on and on. And all these ‘idols’ are what make our heart *unclean*, because we don’t love our Heavenly Father *the most*. Therefore, we also do not put *obeying* Him as our top priority; and many times, we don’t even pray much to Him (let alone study His Word to see what He wants from us) *unless* we’re having a really hard time. To put it in modern lingo, God’s ‘love language’ is obedience! If you don’t obey Him (sincerely and the best you can) then He does not believe you love Him (John 14:15). Do you blame Him? Would you believe that someone loved you if they were doing

things that really angered, hurt and grieved you? As we say today, ‘actions speak louder than words’.

Moreover, in Ezek 14:1-6 our Heavenly Father tells us that, when we have idols in our heart, we are *estranged* (by our own choice) from Him (vs 5). And again, (as Ps 66:18 also stated) *that* is what causes God **not to hear us**, which means that He won’t *help us*. So, if we won’t hear (and sincerely strive to obey) *Him* then *He’s not going to help* (or bless) *us*. But that is because He doesn’t bless sin or evil, which are results of us having idols in our heart. When something or someone else (even our ‘self’) is more important to us, then we will not obey our Heavenly Father’s Word (Will) with ‘all our heart’. Thus, there will be times we think that it’s ok to sin against God *because we want to*. So, this is a critical stipulation. And, as Jesus Himself said in Mth 5:8, only those who are ‘pure in heart’ **will** be blessed; and that’s because they’ll ‘see’ (know and understand) our Heavenly Father!

And further to that, our Heavenly Father is not only ‘good’ to Israel. He will bless anyone who loves and obeys Him. Peter pointed this out when stating that *God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him* (Acts 10:34-35). And Paul also explained, in Galatians 3 that, *we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus* (vs 26) and, *if we are Christ’s, then we are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise* (vs 29). So, even though Israel was initially the nation God made a covenant with – and they were therefore *supposed* to all be of a ‘clean heart’ – He has made a New Covenant (because Israel broke the first one) with them and with all people of any race who accept (believe in, follow and obey) Jesus Christ. Thus, Israel must also accept Jesus Christ to be accepted by God Himself - they **don’t** have *any* ‘special salvation’ – Jesus Christ is the only way to be ‘saved’ no matter what race you are (John 14:6, Acts 4:12).

And lastly, the *Companion Bible* also points out that, this verse is really a ‘concluding thought’ that the Psalmist came to *after* the experience he will explain to us in this Psalm. So, the Psalmist begins by stating his conclusion, and will now go on to explain *how* (and *why*) he came to that conclusion...

Psalm 73

2 But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

So, the Psalmist is now beginning to explain his own *personal* experience. It was not something he witnessed happening to others; it was something that happened *to him*. The word ‘**feet**’ here does mean *a foot* but, by implication, it can also mean *step*. And the word ‘**almost**’ here is interesting too, because it actually means *a little* or *a few* and has even been translated as *soon* (#4592). The *Companion Bible* renders it as ‘*quickly*’ and defers us to the notes on Prov 5:14, where we’re told that it could even be rendered as “*I soon (quickly) became as an evil man*”.

And then the word ‘gone’ means *to stretch* or *spread out*; by implication, *to bend away* (including *moral deflection*) and is used in a great variety of application (#5186). The word ‘steps’ does mean a *step* and the word ‘nigh’ means *to be nothing* or *not exist*; a *non-entity* (#369) while the word ‘slipped’ means *to spill forth* (blood, a libation, liquid metal; or even a solid, i.e. to mound up); also (figuratively) *to expend* (life, soul, complaint, money, etc.); intensively, *to sprawl out* (#8210). So, the Psalmist is using an analogy here, to explain how his heart and mind almost (or quickly) slipped (stumbled), and fell, *into sinning*, just as someone would slip on mud and fall. And *the reason why* (which he will continue on to tell us about), is therefore, an important thing to understand *if we don’t want the same thing to happen to us...*

Psalm 73

3 For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

The word ‘envious’ here means *to be* (causatively, *make*) *zealous*, i.e. (*in a bad sense*) *jealous* or *envious* (#7065) and the word ‘foolish’ means (in the context of this verse) *to make a show*, *to boast*; and thus *to be* (clamorously) *foolish*; *to rave* (#1984). And the word ‘prosperity’ means *safe*, i.e. (figuratively) *well, happy, friendly*; also (abstractly) *welfare*, i.e. *health, prosperity, peace* (#7965) while the word ‘wicked’ means *morally wrong*; concretely, *an* (actively) *bad person* (#7563). So, the Psalmist admits that he was quite envious (even zealously so) at the wicked people (morally degenerates) when he saw them prospering. And this is something that happens so very often to people. And it’s especially tempting to feel envious when you are really trying to do right, yet still have problems in life - but the wicked ones (who don’t care about obeying God) *seem* to be prospering greatly, even though they totally disregard God’s Laws. And, *when you are weak in faith in God*, it’s easy to think that there’s no reward for obeying God, and use the wicked one’s *seeming* prosperity to justify that feeling. But, as the Psalmist pointed out in the prior verse (2), this way of thinking is like slipping on a muddy path *downhill...* if you continue down that ‘slippery slope downhill’ then *you are going to fall*. So, if you really think that the wicked don’t get punished by God, and that anyone can do as they please (sin habitually in rebellion to God) – without getting punished by God – *then you are very close to falling away to sin*. In other words, the Psalmist is telling us that his discontentment with how the wicked seemed to get ahead was actually *very tempting to him*; he was having strong thoughts of actually joining the wicked, and sinning *willfully*, which is a dangerous place to be! And this is why Psalms 37 tells us...

1 Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

9 For evildoers **shall** be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they **shall** inherit the earth.

10 For yet a little while, and the wicked **shall not be**: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it **shall not be**.

11 But the meek **shall** inherit the earth; and **shall** delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

Ps 37:1-11

The word ‘fret’ here means **to glow** or **grow warm**; figuratively (usually) **to blaze up, of anger, zeal, jealousy** (#2734). Now, it’s not bad to be angry when we see evil things going on, nor even at the wicked ones for the evil they are doing. What is bad, is when we let that emotion (of anger) *control us*. We should not let anger boil up so much inside of us that it could cause us to act in misguided zeal, or worse, to join in with the wicked, as this Psalmist admits he was thinking of doing. As Psalm 37 tells us, we should *not* be envious at the wicked *because they will be ‘cut down’ just as the grass*. This is an analogy that means we all die in the flesh and the wicked are no different. And none of us can take our earthly riches (or power or prestige) with us, so selling our soul to the devil (deciding to willingly sin and not care about obeying our Heavenly Father anymore) is truly very foolish. Because, *we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad* (2 Cor 5:10).

So, when you die, or when Jesus Christ returns (whichever comes first) you will be held accountable for your sins. So, even if the wicked ones never have to face justice for their sins on earth, they most definitely will have to when they die. And again, they cannot take any of their riches, power or prestige with them when they die (Ecc 5:15, 1 Tim 6:7) – so sinning willfully is not worth being stuck in hell (prison in the other dimension where all morally degenerates are forced to stay until judgement day) when you die. And if you are wicked, or a worker of iniquity, you’ll still lose your riches, power and prestige when Jesus Christ returns. For, when He returns, He will depose all the wicked ones from power (even putting them in prison, Isa 24:22, Rev 20:1-3) and put His faithful servants in power, under His guidance, as the parable in Mth 21:33-44 explains. So, *the Psalmist is explaining the thoughts of his heart that caused him to slip spiritually*. In other words, he’s explaining what *tempted him* to sin. And seeing others sin - and not only seem to get away with it - but even *prosper* from doing wickedly, is what was *so very* tempting to him...

Psalm 73

4 For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm.

This translation is a bit difficult to understand here, but dissecting some of the words helps a lot (2 Tim 2:15). First off, the word ‘**bands**’ can mean *fetters* (bands, shackles, chains) but it can also mean *pain* (#2784) and that is truly the better rendering here. And then the word ‘**death**’ can mean *death* (natural or violent) or *the dead* but it can also mean, figuratively, *pestilence* or *ruin* (#4194). And the word their ‘**strength**’ means *to be strong*, the *body* or *powerful* (#193) and the word ‘**firm**’ means *fatted* or *plump* (#1277). So, the Psalmist is simply saying that he thought the wicked were not being punished for their sins, because they didn’t *appear* to be experiencing *any kind* of pain (or imprisonments) for the evil things they did. Nor was there any pestilence (or any other kind of ruin) coming upon them. Instead, they seemed to be in pretty good health and prospering quite abundantly. So, the Psalmist said it *appeared* like they were getting away with their sins. And, if you understand the promised cursings (in Lev 26 and Deut 28) for disobeying God’s Laws, then you’ll understand *why* the Psalmist said this. For terrible health and financial downfall are just a few of the cursings God promised to give Israel when they disobeyed Him, and this applies to individuals as much as the nation itself.

Psalms 73

5 They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men.

The Psalmist continues to explain why he was envious of the wicked. The word ‘**trouble**’ means *to toil*, i.e. *wearing effort*; hence, *worry*, wheth. *of body or mind* (#5999). And it comes from a prime root that means *to toil*, i.e. *work severely and with irksomeness* (#5998). And then the word ‘**plagued**’ means (in the context of this verse) *violently, to strike* (*punish, defeat, destroy*, etc. (#5060). And the word ‘**like**’ could also be rendered as ‘*with*’ (#5973). And then the first word ‘**man**’ is the Hebrew word ‘*enowsh*’ (#582), which means *a mortal* (and thus differing from the more dignified #120); hence, *a man in general* (singly or collectively). And then the second word ‘**men**’ is ‘*adam*’ (#120, *without* the article) which means *ruddy* i.e. *a human being* (an individual or the species, *mankind*, etc.). The main difference between these two words (both rendered as ‘man’ here in this verse 5) is that is that ‘*enowsh*’ (#582) denotes ‘men of name’ (i.e. *mighty men*) and is *always used in a bad sense* (i.e. Isa 5:22, 45:14, Jud 18:25). So, it also implies *morally depraved men* or *physically frail and weak men*, as the word it comes from points out - which is ‘*anash*’ (#605) which means *to be sick, wretched, weak* and *denotes inability, for strength, physically; and for good, morally* (Apx 14 II). Meanwhile, the word ‘*adam*’ (#120, without the article) denotes *man, or mankind, in general* (Apx 14 I).

So, the Psalmist felt as though the wicked don’t have troubles, toils or worries like other morally degenerates were. Nor did he feel like they were punished for their crimes like others were. So, likely he’s referring to the rich and powerful wicked men, who he felt like their wickedness really ‘paid well’. It got them rich and kept them rich and kept them out of trouble... so it seemed. And today many people feel this way too, as they look around at the world and see the wicked *seemingly* getting ahead. One glaring example of why people feel this way is regarding

people who are in the government. They (who are supposed to be ‘public servants’ but really only serve themselves most of the time) sell themselves to the ‘special interests’ groups who pay them nicely for making laws, and/or judging, *in their favor*. They also pass laws funding ‘things’ so that they can then filter the money back to themselves (i.e. money laundering) and some even use their knowledge to make a lot of money in the stock market (insider trading). And it appears that many get away with it! They also don’t seem to have many problems, aside from the usual political rhetoric. Because, both ‘parties’ (speaking of in the US) are corrupted (nearly most all of them anyhow) they *all* use these dirty tricks to make themselves filthy rich. Again, it *seems* like they get away with it. And we could also look at the corruption of corporations, entertainment industry, even the schools, health care industry or (worse yet) even many of the organized Churches. They have nearly all become corrupted, for one reason or another and yet, *appear* to be getting away with it, simply because no one has stopped them, and they don’t *seem* to be having bad health or troubles in their life. But, as we will learn by the end of this great chapter, *that’s not true at all...*

Psalms 73

6 Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment.

The word ‘**pride**’ here means **arrogance** (#1346) and the words ‘**compasseth them about as a chain**’ actually mean (in the context of this verse) **to adorn with a necklace** (#6059). And then the word ‘**violence**’ means more than just **violence**; by implication it can also mean **wrong** or **unjust gain** (#2555) and the word ‘**covereth**’ means to shroud, or **clothe** (#5848). So, the Psalmist is now saying that, *because* the wicked *seem* to get away with their evil deeds (to get rich and stay in power - and out of trouble, even paying for the best healthcare) they become very prideful *and don’t fear to do even worse things*. As Prov 3:7 says, it’s only *by fear the LORD* that people will *depart from evil*. And if they don’t immediately feel the consequences for their sins, they will think they ‘got away with it’. And others (as this Psalmist) who see them sin so unabashedly – and *don’t* see them *publicly* get in trouble for it – will also think they ‘got away with it’. And that’s why the wicked wear their pride around them as a necklace; they get very full of themselves when they think their evil devices are working out for them. But, what they do not realize, is that they are truly only digging own grave. As another Psalm says...

6 A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.

7 When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever:

8 But thou, LORD, art most high for evermore.

*9 For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, **thine enemies shall perish**; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.*

Ps 92:6-9

So, the ultimate ‘end’ of the wicked is not good (it’s quite horrible actually). But, they are too foolish and stupid (brutish) to understand this. They think that, because they are not *immediately* punished for their sins, they never will be. And this is very deceiving because...

*4 The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven: **his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.***

*5 The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence **his soul hateth.***

*6 **Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: **this** shall be the portion of their cup.***

Ps 11:4-6

The word ‘try’ in verse 4 means to *investigate* as well as to *test* (#974). So, what the proud and arrogant fools (idiots) don’t realize is that – even if they are not punished by mankind, our Heavenly Father is still on His throne in heaven (He IS real) and He hates what they are doing. And thus, He will punish them for it, eventually. What we must understand is that our Heavenly Father *is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance* (2 Pt 3:9). And that’s why He allows wicked things to go on. He is testing people’s hearts and minds to see **if** they will repent or continue to rebel against Him. And, in the end, they will be punished for all unrepentant sins, as 2 Pt 3:10 also tells us. And that’s why we, who are wise (and do believe in God’s Word), work *hard* to clean (and *keep clean*) our heart and mind, while striving to do what’s right, *regardless* of whether or not we are punished, or blessed, for obeying God (2 Pt 3:11). In fact, if we do serve Jesus Christ, then we should *expect* to have some troubles in life. As 2 Tim 3:12 says, *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*. And while those who are still carnally minded (controlled by their fleshly mind, the heart – Rom 8:5-8) don’t see how this is fair, they simply don’t understand God’s plan of Salvation. For, when we suffer for doing what’s right, *we prove to our Heavenly Father that we are loyal to Him...* and that means **a lot** to Him! But, we are in a spiritual war. And if we faithfully serve Jesus Christ, Satan is thus going to attack us in any way he can (1 Pt 5:8). But, if we learn to endure it faithfully, our Heavenly Father will *always* help us through and He *won’t* let us be tempted, or tested, above what we can handle (1 Cor 10:11). So long as we don’t forsake Him, He’ll never forsake us!

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

*13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, **when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.***

14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

*16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but **let him glorify God on this behalf.***

*17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and **if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?***

*18 And **if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?***

*19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God **commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.***

1 Peter 4:12-19

We'll pick this up in part 2...

AMEN.