



Berean Christian Fellowship

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Why Do We Suffer?

“Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good” (1 Peter 4:19 NASB).

Oftentimes man's first response to suffering is to cry, “Why is this happening? I don't deserve this! This isn't the way it should be!” Christians may tack on, “Why won't God do something about this? How can He allow it?”

All mankind suffers as a consequence of our disobedience in Paradise. At the moment of Adam and Eve's sin, the effects of their rebellion swept into the nature of every created thing. As a result, volcanoes, earthquakes, and violent storms ravage the earth, while disease, injury, and death make God's “good” creation suffer sin's curse. At the same time, sin from within man causes him to injure himself and others emotionally, mentally, and physically. This is creation's “*slavery to corruption*” that makes it “*groan*” and “*suffer*” (Romans 8:21-22) because of man's rebellion.

We made a hopeless mess of life! Yet, God did not abandon us. Through His Son Jesus Christ, God the Father showed His love for us by becoming a sinless man to take responsibility for our rebellion. Jesus willingly paid the requirements God's justice demanded with His death, and because He was also God, He rose from death's clutches incorruptible, taking control of sin and its effects. In doing this, God opened a way for those who acknowledge their sin and accept His Son's substitution for them to be forgiven their debt of rebellion and sin. They are “*born again*” (1 Peter 1:23) and are a “*new creature*” (2 Corinthians 5:17), no longer bearing guilt before God.

While the Believer is a new creation on the inside, their outward flesh is still part of the

corrupted world, and the effects of sin still ravage their bodies. How is this any different from a non-believer's situation in the world?

Firstly, a Believer has the future promise that just as their inner man has been changed and “remade” also their outer body will be changed—made “*incorruptible*” (1 Cor 15:52) in the resurrection or the rapture to no longer suffer the effects of sin. This is the blessed hope of our salvation in which Jesus conquered the power of corruption and death over us, to be realized by Believers at the end of this life.

Secondly, God graciously counts the Believer's endurance in faith towards future rewards and crowns in the sinless realms of eternity, for “*without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him*” (Hebrews 11:6), just as Moses considered “*the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward*” (Hebrews 11:26). As Believers, we no longer suffer justly in the world FOR the sin of the world (as unbelievers do), but by enduring, God is storing up treasures for us in Heaven (Matthew 6:20)—If we didn't, there would be no point to the rewards. Thus, the Believer does not suffer in vain, because by enduring the devil's reproach and persecution (directly or at the hands of his inspired men and women) while doing good, we are denying ourselves, taking up our cross (Mark 8:34) and imitating Jesus, Who “*for the suffering of death [is] crowned with glory and honor*” (Hebrews 2:9 NKJV).

When we suffer in life, our first response is to think, “This is pointless.” Satan tried to get Jesus to think this too (Matt 4:8-9), but God's Word says, “*do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward*” (Hebrews 10:35), “*knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord*” (1 Cor 15:28b). Even so, Amen.