

**When You Are Suffering, See Your Savior**

1. **See Your Savior Suffering For You**
2. **See Your Savior Forgiving Your Guilt**
3. **See Your Savior Shepherding You, His Sheep**

*What are You Suffering Right Now?*

- What suffering right now? What going through, bringing you down, making you hurt on inside? Maybe nothing; maybe fabulous start to winter season; everything's going well. Maybe not. Maybe stoically bearing burden that's slowly, silently crushing you, leaving you in anger, pain, depression, or all 3. Radio says: "*most wonderful time of year; hap-happiest season of all.*" But I know you well enough to know: many you suffering. Maybe death of loved one weighing heavily on mind; maybe someone in fam whose health seriously concerned about; maybe some personal situation, setback you're dealing with (hate job; marriage broken; divorce is bitter, never ending saga; trouble with kids; house falling apart; bills aren't paid; debt through roof). Maybe have guilty conscience because ashamed something done. Or maybe just that dark days Dec leaving you with an empty melancholy in heart. What suffering?
- And why would God allow it? That's big question. How could loving God let happen to you what happened; let you go through what going through? We all ask that question: God, why?
- Peter writing to Xians asking same question: God, why? They suffering; whole book re suf. **Vs. 17.** These suffering for faith: persecuted, mocked, discriminated vs, even killed for faith. Asked: God, why? So Peter addresses that question, for them and us, not by answering, but by saying: when suffering, you need to look at Jesus, see Savior: suffering, forgiving, shepherding (SFS).

*See Your Savior Suffering For You*

- Suffering for you. **Vs. 18a.** My painting (abstract, blurry; dark, morbid; but my Jesus, suffering for me; this want see every day). "...**once for sins;**" historical event of Christ's crucfx is fact that happened: because of our sins, wickedness. But suffered "**once for sins,**" bec (this) enough to cover all. "...**R4U;**" means one who always did right thing died for ones always did wrong. Jesus suf for us. Substitute; took our place; did what we could not on our behalf; endured what didn't deserve in place of people who did; "**R4U**". Here's result: "**to bring...God.**" Without (this), can't be with God. But because of (this), you can be with God, can go to heaven. Jesus did this "**to bring...God.**"
- So when you're suffering, need see Savior suffering for you – because (this) is love! If he loves you (this) much, you can be sure loves you through your time of suffering, as well. Jesus knows what like to suffer; he can relate to what you're going through. He's been through worse; promises will be with you, no matter what you're going through. When sufferings make you doubt God's love, look at (this love)! When suffering, see Savior suffering for you.

*See Your Savior Forgiving Your Guilt*

- Also forgiving guilt. When you go through diff, challng times in life, guilt often right there with you, haunting you. Two reasons for that:
- 1) Many people think that when go through diff, challng times in life, that's result of some specific sin; think God angry them, punishing, getting back at them for sin. See, we have long mems; we remem what we've done. I'm sure right now all you can think something you've done, very ashamed of. Even though you're Xian, know forgiven, when tragedy strikes, tend to think God's getting back at you for what you've done. You remember sin; guilt resurfaces. 1 reason guilt & suf go together.
- 2) Here's 2<sup>nd</sup>: many people, when go through diff, challng times in life, instead thinking God angry at them, turning back on them, they angry at God, turn back on him. Resent God for their suf; there ensues spiritual showdown. Say, "God, fight? Let's fight. Want dump this on me? Watch what I'll do. I'll never step foot house again; never listen you. You'll never hear from me; see my kids again. I

don't have to take this from you, God; I'm through with you." They know it's horrible to think that way; so feel guilty (at least at first, until anger petrifies heart into hardened unbelief). But at first, haunted by guilt of being angry with God. 2 reasons suffering & guilt often go hand in hand.

- So when you're suffering, need see Savior forgiving guilt. When Pt, in reading for today, talks re Jesus forgiving guilt, he emphasizes baptism. Says that **"in the days of Noah...vs. 21a**. IOW: flood (last week: preview end of world; today,) is symbol of baptism. Just as flood washed away sins, drowned them in water, so also baptism washes away our sins, drowns them in water. Or: floodwater destroyed sin, but saved Noah's family; in same way, water of baptism destroys our sin, but saves us! **Vs. 21**. Opp of clear consc guilty. So when your consc is feeling guilty (bec of past sins resurfacing, or your anger at God), you need to see Savior forgiving your guilt, making you a baptismal pledge, promise that your guilt gone, your consc clear. When suffering, need remember: you're baptized, forgiven, beloved child of God; and need see your Savior drowning your sins in bap, forgiving guilt.

### *See Your Savior Shepherding You, His Sheep*

- Finally, shepherding you, sheep. How? Think creed: Jesus – (CrDiBu). Next? Desc hell; 3<sup>rd</sup> day rose. Here, Pt talks re Jesus rising & desc hell. **Vs. 19**. Who they? Satan & demons, imprisoned in hell. Means risen Christ marched into hell, not to suffer, but to make proclamation to everyone there, incl **vs. 20a**, so all unbelievers in hell. What was this proclamation? Of his victory; Jesus proclaimed victory over death, right in face of enemies! Think like this: fav NLF team (GB/C); playing in Super Bowl vs archrival; win; victory parade in opponent's hometown. How think go over? That's what Jesus did! Victory parade in hell, proclaimed victory over Satan forever.
- Now think that power/auth: Jesus rises from dead, stomps into hell; now **vs. 22**. So here you see KoK, LoL, ruling universe. Isa: **"See, the Sovereign Lord...rules with a mighty arm" (40:10)**. But what that mean for you? To borrow picture from Isa, **"He tends his flock like a shepherd. He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart" (40:11)**. The Almighty Jesus, who storms through gates of hell, holds you in his embrace. There's no safer place to be. **"I am the Good Shepherd... My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me... No one will snatch them out of my hand" (Jn 10)**, says Man who let hand be crucified for you, who holds you in his hand, and who now with hand governing univ. He's our shepherd; we're his sheep; he **"carries [us] close to his heart."** Don't think for one minute that Jesus lacks power, desire, love to care for you, especially when suffering. *"He's got whole world in hands;"* got you in his embrace, because you're his sheep. Need see Savior shepherding you, sheep.

### *Why? We Don't Know Why.*

- When troubles come (will come), we ask: God, why? Honest: I don't know why; you're suffering; why God would allow tragedy, heartache to intrude into your life. I don't have answer. Wish I did; wish God would tell us why allows what allows; but doesn't; we're left wondering why. Even Pt here doesn't answer why; I don't know why either.
- But I do know that when you're suffering, you need look at Jesus. See your almighty, sovereign, loving Savior SFS; because when do that, not saying suffering all go away; but when you see your Savior, God's Spirit will give you strength, comfort.

### **1 Peter 3:17-22**

<sup>17</sup> For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. <sup>18</sup> For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. <sup>19</sup> After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits — <sup>20</sup> to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, <sup>21</sup> and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also — not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup> who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand — with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.