



Suffering Succotash Part 2 Persecution

In *Suffering Succotash Part 1*, I taught that God was neither the causer of pain nor the dispenser of suffering. God has not called us to embrace suffering or much less called us into a life of suffering. Rather, believers in Christ have been called into an overcoming life of victory.

-What about persecution?

No doubt that persecution will rise for being a believer in Christ. The Word of God doesn't promise that weapons won't rise against us. In fact, it states quite the opposite.

2 Timothy 3:12

In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

This persecution involves other people coming against us. But let's be clear that it doesn't involve terminal illnesses, tragic accidents, or premature death. The good news is the Word of God promises that persecution won't prosper against us. This is where I believe the Church has missed it. None of the persecution warnings in God's Word negates the fact that we will be protected and delivered should it rise against us. Persecution will never prosper in ambushing, hurting, or killing those who accept God's deliverance.

As a young believer in Christ, I was taught that the only thing Christ did not redeem us from was persecution. But when I study the Book of Revelations, I find that Christ did in fact redeem the believer in Christ from persecution by breaking the fifth seal of the martyrs.

Again, this doesn't mean that persecution will never rise against us. This means that should it rise against us, God will protect and deliver us to safety. God will throw us a lifeline. But it has one catch to it – we must believe and accept God's deliverance.

There are some believers in Christ that want to die out of love for Christ in the battlefield. We can see this in the New Testament where there were many martyrs that did not accept God's deliverance, including the Apostle Paul and Jesus' original 12 Apostles (except for Judas Iscariot who committed suicide and the Apostle John who died peacefully of old age at the end of the First Century). I believe the Apostle John accepted God's deliverance, overcame persecution, and lived long.

To the rest of the apostles, God granted their desire to be martyrs out of love for the Lord and wanting to be with Him quicker. They will receive an eternal reward for their faith and sacrifice.

It's important to know that all the martyrs had a say and they chose their destiny through their desire. This is contrary to what is being taught about persecution.

2 Peter 2:9

This shows that the Lord knows how to rescue godly people from their sufferings and to punish evil people while they wait for the day of judgment.

The garbage being taught today is that we must all prepare to suffer, we will all suffer, and we must all suffer. It's not a coincidence that the whole context of 2 Peter Chapter 2 is about Peter warning us of destructive heresies that bring us premature death. Embracing this destructive belief will cause you to die as a martyr whether you want to or not. This belief is a self-destruct button for the believer in Christ.

For the rest of us that don't want to die by the hands of a Jesus-hater, God honors our request to be rescued from suffering. In fact, God will guide us to avoid it, protect us in the midst of Jesus-haters, and cause Jesus-haters to flee from us seven ways if they dare to turn on us. He has even given His angels charge over us to guard us in all our ways. We are in the Secret Place of the Most High. The base for this belief comes from the fact that God the Father rescued Jesus from the torment of Death at His resurrection so He can also rescue us from it in Christ Jesus.

A man of God says it in this manner:

- “The fact that the Christian church was able to endure centuries of persecution and survived centuries of neglect and opposition is difficult to explain apart from the system of theology stemming from belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God who actually died, rose, and ascended into heaven.” - **John F Walvoord**

It is true that during the Tribulation (after the Rapture of the Church takes place) there will be non-believers that will believe in Christ, which will cause a genocide of believers in Christ to rise. These will be persecuted and even given to choose whether to die for their belief in Christ or worship the Antichrist. The Bible says that for this particular group, they must endure persecution patiently until Christ and His Church return.

For those that persecute believers in Christ, there is a day reserved just for them if they don't repent and turn to God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wanting to suffer persecution and die as a martyr should be a choice each believer in Christ should freely make. Your choice to be a martyr will be honored as those we read about in the New Testament. But know that you don't have to suffer as they did if you don't want to. The Lord will also honor your choice to live long as well. The whole purpose the martyrs are mentioned in the New Testament is so you can see what brought about the freedom you enjoy today. These things are written for your learning but never to make a doctrine and impose it on every believer in Christ. Instead, God encourages all to live a prosperous life for the sake of blessing the Church and preaching the Gospel of Grace either by word or deed. He needs you here as an overcomer because there is still a lot of work to be done before His coming.

By: Joyner Briceño