

1 Peter 4:12-19 - Study Notes and Comments

11/01/2024

¹² Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; ¹³ but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.

While Peter is addressing the believers in Asia Minor (Turkey/Türkiye) who are facing harm, the threat yet to come for the greater Church under Rome will be even more severe. The Ten great Roman Persecutions of the Church beginning in AD 6 through AD 310 sought to eliminate believers through most grotesque measures.

At the time of his writing, perhaps AD 64-65, the greatest religious/rebellion turmoil continued in Israel. The nation was a hotbed of revolt against the Roman occupation with a succession of replacement Procurators charged with keeping the uprisings of religious and political fanatics at bay. Self-proclaimed prophets would rise and gather followers who hoped for the coming of the Kingdom that would violently throw the occupiers out. The Romans would bring crushing force upon the groups often killing by the thousands and crucifying the leaders. Political treachery, bribery and assassination were employed by both the Procurator and appointed leaders. One faction of fanatical patriots called the Sicarii tasked themselves with the removal of political opponents by sly and unobserved public assassination with a dagger. The Sicarii murders were so frequent that no one felt safe as they even killed Jonathan the High Priest with the quiet approval of Felix (AD 52-60).

The Romans almost seemed to encourage rebellion so as to give excuse to kill the troublesome Jews.

“The first rebellion against which Ventidius Cumanus, A.D. 48-52, had to contend

was occasioned by the coarse insolence of a Roman soldier. This man had the presumption at the feast of the Passover, when to maintain order and preserve the peace a detachment of soldiers was always situated in the court of the temple, to insult the festive gathering by assuming an indecent posture. The enraged multitude demanded satisfaction from the procurator. As Cumanus, however, attempted first of all to hush up the matter, he too was assailed with reproachful speeches, until at length he called for the intervention of the armed forces. The excited crowds were utterly routed; and their overthrow was so complete that, according to Josephus' estimate, in the crush which took place in the streets in consequence of their flight, 20,000 (!) men lost their lives."

Schürer, Emil. A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ (p. 314).

Add to this climate of tyrants, zealots and rebels the appearance of the sect of Jesus. Amidst a parade of new prophets and patriots, Jesus had clearly demonstrated His legitimacy in miracles and teaching as the others could not. But to the leaders of Israel He was still yet another threat to the fragile power balance between Rome and Israel. It is no surprise that Saul was given rights to hunt down the followers of Jesus.

By the time of the writing of 1 Peter, Nero had burned down Rome and laid blame on the Christians, seeing many Christians executed in various gruesome manner.

^{13b}...so that also at the revelation of His glory (1 Corinthians 15:51-53, 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18) you may rejoice with exultation. (2 Corinthians 5:10 , 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, Hebrews 11:35)

The Lord will meet us midway in the clouds at the First Resurrection, beginning the Tribulation. The Bema Seat Judgement of Christ will follow for the raptured Church Saints, where our works will be tested and rewards granted.

1 Corinthians 15:51-53 ⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but

we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

2 Corinthians 5:10 ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 ¹⁰ According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. ¹¹ For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. ¹⁴ If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

Hebrews 11:35 ³⁵ Women received their dead — they were raised to life again. Some men were tortured, not accepting release, so that they might gain a better resurrection,

¹⁴ If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

Luke 6:22-23 ²² Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. ²³ Be glad in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven. For in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets.

¹⁵ Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; ¹⁶ but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.

In the tumultuous environment of Procurators, soldiers, assassins, patriots, rebels and zealots - do not be involved. But suffering as a servant of the Lord in this - for all that might mean - you will glorify God. (**2 Corinthians 12:8-10**)

2 Corinthians 12:8-10 ⁸ Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. ⁹ But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

¹⁷ For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God;

and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

With Israel's rejection of the Messiah, Jesus had prophesized that God would soon judge the nation and Jerusalem. (**Mark 13:1-2**) The city, the surrounding strongholds, and the Temple would be destroyed by the Roman Titus who would breach the last walls of Jerusalem on August 10 70AD. During the siege, three Jewish rebel factions inside the city fought each other ferociously while killing innocents in their path, even shortsightedly burning the common grain stores that the others wouldn't have it. Before this happened, the Christian community had fled Jerusalem "in consequence of a divine admonition" to the pagan city of Pella in Perea.

For about six months Titus' army used battering rams to push through the successive walls surrounding the city. By August 8 the final siege had begun; by the 10th the Temple was destroyed. Though Titus wanted to preserve at least the inner court of the Temple for Roman use, it was inadvertently set ablaze by his soldiers and was a total loss. The Roman slaughtered without discrimination, and the rest of the city was set ablaze. Two of the three Jewish rebel tyrants still holed up in the upper city continued to murder and rob. By September 8, the whole city was under Rome's control. The entire city was leveled to the ground except three gates and the wall on the West. The rest of Israel's strongholds would be subdued by AD 73.

With this began the dispersion of the Jews to the world until Israel would again become a recognized nation in 1948.

***Mark 13:1-2** ¹ As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples *said to Him, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" ² And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down."*

¹⁸ And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner?

The difficulty does not refer to perils faced in achieving Salvation, for this is secure in Christ. Instead, the difficulties are the trials that believers face that Sanctify or even threaten to destroy. All of these are under the administration of our Sovereign God (**Romans 8:26-28**), also see **Proverbs 11:31**. Conversely, those who would be damned, living without God and His corrective staff, may have ease now but will suffer immeasurably more in their punishment. (**Luke 16:24-25**)

***Romans 8:26-28** ²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. ²⁸ And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*

***Proverbs 11:31** - ³¹ If the righteous will be rewarded in the earth,*

How much more the wicked and the sinner!

***Luke 16:24-25** ²⁴ And he called out, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.' ²⁵ But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish.*

¹⁹ Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God

shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

Jesus showed us how to suffer righteously under a Sovereign and loving God as He prepared to face His death.

***Luke 22:41-44** ⁴¹ And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, ⁴² saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." ⁴³ And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. ⁴⁴ And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*