

## SUMMATION OF OUR ETERNAL DESTINY

ROM 8:28] **And we know that God causes all things to work together for good *to those who love God*, to those who are called according to His purpose.** [29] For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first\_born among many brethren; [30] and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

HEB 11:5] **By faith Enoch was taken up** so that he should not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up **he was pleasing to God.** [6] And **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.

One of the basic foundations of the Christian life is “active faith”. Without faith we cannot please God or be accepted by God. It is rather amazing that many sit in church every Sunday that have no active faith and believe very little of the Word of God. This may seem incredible to the average person with active faith.

However, to really believe that ALL THINGS are working together for our good is very difficult for most Christians to believe. It is easier to believe that all blessings are working together for our good than it is to believe that all disasters, all suffering, all pain, all tribulation, all deceit and all conflict is working for our good! The purpose of these last three studies is to help our faith believe that ALL THINGS are working toward our eternal destiny. Both good and bad!

Is it possible that God rewards those who diligently seek Him with disastrous trials and suffering? The book of Job has confused us for centuries because none of this makes sense within “the gospel of salvation” that we are familiar. The feeling that “God would never let something like that happen to one of His children” clouds our understanding. If the scriptures show us anything about Job it is that God is not sentimental and that His ultimate purpose takes precedence over everything, including our happiness. ALL the suffering of Job was necessary in order to prepare Job for God’s eternal purpose. If this is not “fact” then ALL THINGS do not really work together for our good to prepare us for God’s purpose.

Some Christians recoil in disgust at the thought that God would actually drop the hedge around Job and give the devil access to Job’s family, possessions and his health. The sense that God is amused at this whole scene of Job’s suffering have led some to reject this whole story as too strange to be true.

Until we understand something about God’s eternal purpose it will be difficult for us to exercise faith that ALL THINGS really are working toward that end and our eternal good. If we suffered through the same trials as Job, would we still LOVE GOD? Could we still maintain a SWEET SPIRIT and praise God for ALL THINGS? The Book of Job has been designed by God to impart confidence and understanding to us in the time of trial! Since hardly anyone even approaches the sufferings of Job we can find comfort.

JAMES 5:10] As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. [11] Behold, we count those blessed who endured. **You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.**

The suffering of Job is identified “as the Lord’s dealings” with Job. James says that we look not at the sufferings but “at the outcome of the Lord’s dealings”. In other words God was after “an end result.” We understand “the Lord’s compassion and mercy” by the end result.

There is supposed to be an “example of suffering and patience” in this for us. If Job would have fallen apart, cursed God and given up his faith, we wouldn’t have heard about Job. Still, Job is not listed as an example of faith in Hebrews 11 but he IS an example of endurance in suffering.

Since the “gospel of salvation” doesn’t help us understand suffering, let us turn to the “gospel of the Kingdom” for help.

ACTS 14:22] strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, “Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.”

ROM 8:17] and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.

RO 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

PHIL 1:29] For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

2 THES 1:4] therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure. [5] This is a plain indication of God’s righteous judgment **so that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering.**

2 TIM 2:[12] If we endure, **we shall also reign with Him;**

REV 20:[6] Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, **but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.**

The “Gospel of the Kingdom” never hides the necessity for suffering **in order to reign with Him.** However, that still does not explain why suffering IS necessary. In these 4 previous studies we have tried to set forth that “SELF” is crucified through suffering, trials, testings, tribulations, misunderstandings and persecutions. We waste our opportunity to die to our “SELF” and obtain an eternal change if we fall into “self pity” and refuse to acknowledge our defects and repent and ask God to remove them.

Many of these defects are found in the heart. MARK 7:21] “For from within, **out of the heart of men,** proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, [22] deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. [23] “All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.”

MAT 5:8 “Blessed are **the pure in heart, for they shall see God.**

This process of removing all these evil things from our hearts is more than “just believe.” Since all these things are in all of us “as men”, God must have a process to remove them from our hearts if His purpose is for us to dwell in His Presence and see Him. God uses conflicts and confrontations to show us what really is in our hearts. If we humble ourselves, acknowledge them, confess ,

repent and ask God to cut them out, He will do it. Since we cannot do it, God must do it!

The Biblical method of restoration is quite simple but not universally known. Because humility is basic to restoration many fail to avail themselves of correction. Because of this they fail to grow in their repentance and fail to develop into transparency. Since the eternal city of God, the New Jerusalem, is transparent, multitudes of “believers” will not be counted worthy of dwelling there. Since suffering leads to transparency (if we permit it) those who overcome shall inherit the New Jerusalem.

While this may not be too clear we are relating transparency to Agape, the Love which IS God. Since God IS Spirit and He IS Love we are relating Love to transparency. If this is valid then the goal of the Christian life is to grow up in all things into LOVE, AGAPE. Perfection, maturity and completeness is summed up as Agape. Christian character is summed up as Agape.

**Then whatever it requires to develop Agape is working together for our good.**

In my limited study and understanding of the “mystery” of the New Jerusalem I have concluded that “The rank or position or official standing in the hierarchy of the Kingdom” is directly related to our position in the New Jerusalem. Since the Throne of God is in the New Jerusalem, this is the Central Government of the Kingdom. Our increase in Agape means an increase in status in the Kingdom. The New Jerusalem is the location of the Glory of God. To dwell in that Glory, that eternal burning, that unapproachable light, requires that we become transparent.

REV 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, **I shall show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.**” [10] And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, [11] **having the glory of God.** Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of **crystal\_clear jasper.**

REV 21: 21----And the street of the city was pure gold, **like transparent glass.** [22] And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple. [23] And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, **for the glory of God has illumined it,** and its lamp is the Lamb. [24] And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it.

It seems that anything that is not like Christ is NOT transparent and therefore must be removed if we are going to fit into that crystal clear city that is like clear glass. For that reason whatever is required to remove every opaqueness is working together for our eternal good.

If “AGAPE” is accurately interpreted to mean “the sacrificial Love that only comes from God” then all selfishness and self-centeredness must be removed from our lives to dwell in that city. Then whatever is required to remove these things from our life is working together for our eternal good.

If Agape Love is the measure of our status in the eternal Kingdom of God and it is only developed through trials, suffering, hardships, persecution, tribulations and conflicts then all these things are working together for our eternal good.

If we are suffering for the sake of the Kingdom what could that mean except for an advanced position in that Government! If we must be “counted worthy of the Kingdom for which we are

suffering” it must refer to our status or rank in the Kingdom.

2 COR 4;17] For momentary, light affliction is **producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison**, [18] while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Evidently God cannot produce the character and Agape necessary for rulership with Christ unless we share in the sufferings of Christ. We cannot design our own sufferings. God is the only one who knows exactly what we need so we have no control over these things. However, we do have control over how we respond and react to these things. Obviously our reactions will be dependent upon our revelation of the benefits of suffering. If we don’t understand we will surely act very badly and waste our opportunity for eternal gain.

At every trial and suffering we should immediately take the opportunity to identify the arrogance, the impatience, the bad attitude or whatever that God is revealing as unacceptable in His Kingdom. Otherwise we waste the opportunity for correction and yielding to His will.

MAT 7:21] “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. [22] “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ [23] “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’

Participation in the Kingdom is not on the basis of powerful ministry, gifts, charismatic personality, miracles, signs and wonders or the magnitude of our influence but upon “doing the will of God”. If we practice lawlessness we are rejected regardless of our “ministry”. The “refining fires” must remove all lawlessness or we have wasted our opportunity for the Kingdom. If the refining fires are able to make us empty of ourselves and transparent before God, we have been eternally blest. If we have understanding we can rejoice! Since the fire in heaven is of a different type and of a different purpose it must be the fire we experience here on earth that prepares us for the fire of heaven. Once the earthly fire has consumed all that is of earth we will be able to dwell in the everlasting burnings of heaven.

ISA 33:14] Sinners in Zion are terrified; Trembling has seized the godless. **“Who among us can live with the consuming fire? Who among us can live with continual burning?”** [15] He who walks righteously, and speaks with sincerity, He who rejects unjust gain, And shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe; He who stops his ears from hearing about bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from looking upon evil; [16] He will dwell on the heights; His refuge will be the impregnable rock;

PSA 15:1 O LORD, who may abide in Thy tent? Who may dwell on Thy holy hill? [2] He who **walks with integrity, and works righteousness, And speaks truth** in his heart.

Character does count in the Kingdom. Character and Love are not associated in the Old Covenant but we have shown that the summation of character in the New Covenant is Agape, Love. The fallen nature of man and the fallen society in which we dwell is the perfect atmosphere for God to perfect Love in us. If we could practice Love in this disgraceful society the world would have to know that we are His disciples.

Tribulation, suffering, trials, persecutions etc. are not judged by whether they are just or unjust but whether they accomplish God's purpose in us. Our first reaction is to see if we deserve the problems. If we determine that we are innocent we cry foul. This is not our fault.

The Book of Job investigates all these philosophies and the reactions of men to the dealings of God. While Job's friends felt that if Job was innocent then these trials were unjust, they felt God was not unjust so Job must have done something to deserve the disasters. The problem was none of those involved knew that God was working toward a higher end for Job. Then the dealings of God are neither just or unjust they just seem that way. God is not devastated by our hurt feelings because He knows the end that He has in mind. The end will prove that all things work for our good if we Love God at the end.

The preparation of the bride is by both suffering and by prayer. The suffering and tribulation reveal our defects and prayer and intimacy with God reveals the solution. Prayer is joining with God's power and sovereignty to establish His Kingdom on earth. However, not at this time universally, but subjectively within us. When "self" is on the throne that is not possible. If we cry out to God for His Kingdom to come, the answer to that prayer is what ever it takes to dethrone "SELF."

This Christian life is the "boot camp" for training us for the eternal Kingdom. Like a military "boot camp" we must learn discipline, obedience, submission and humility. In this "boot camp" we just become one of many with leaders over us. We can't dictate our hours, or exercise our opinions or pout if we don't get our way. You soon learn that this "boot camp" is not about YOU but about training for a higher end. Whether we are happy or not is irrelevant because training is not about happiness. This understanding would help many people who have sought God for training but don't understand the process. The higher the call the more demanding to training.

The selfish and self-centered will rebel against authority and become critical. The spoiled brats are quickly identified in "boot camp" and breaking their will and rebellion will become the first focus of their training. Someone is going to get in their face and start yelling and demanding a response. This is not because the trainer is nasty but because he knows there must be first things first. There is no way to train a spoiled brat. He must either change or be washed out of the military.

This same thing is true in the host of heaven. There must be discipline, obedience, submission, humility and the ability to function together as a unit. The lone ranger is quickly eliminated. When it is time to go out on a march everybody must go and some can't decide to take the day off.

JOEL 2:4] Their appearance is like the appearance of horses; And like war horses, so they run. [5] With a noise as of chariots They leap on the tops of the mountains, Like the crackling of a flame of fire consuming the stubble, Like a mighty people arranged for battle. [6] Before them the people are in anguish; All faces turn pale. [7] **They run like mighty men; They climb the wall like soldiers; And they each march in line, Nor do they deviate from their paths.** [8] **They do not crowd each other; They march everyone in his path. When they burst through the defenses, They do not break ranks.** [9] **They rush on the city, They run on the wall; They climb into the houses,** They enter through the windows like a thief. [10] Before them the earth quakes, The heavens tremble, The sun and the moon grow dark, And the stars lose their brightness. [11] And the LORD utters His voice before His army; Surely His camp is very great, **For strong is he who carries out His word.**

If we understand God's purpose for His army it is clear that rebellion and self-will must be eliminated. The "I can do it myself" mentality must be crushed and a corporate mentality must be restored. This army is no place for "Christian spoiled brats" who throw a tantrum when they don't get their own way. Just put a thousand "spoiled brats" into Joel 2 and then rewrite the chapter to suit them and we see why God's training camp is nothing like the visible church.

When we enter into the Eternal Government of God we must have a diploma that says we have passed all the tests, the suffering and tribulations with a passing grade. We must have credentials that qualifies us for a special assignment. In this Government you don't pass just because you attended 60% of the classes. Those who are the top of the class are the ones who have excelled in Agape. These achieve the highest rank or top positions in the Kingdom Government of God.

We will not be "graded" on how much Love we have received but on how much Love we have distributed to others. When we receive the Love of God but hold it for ourselves and make no effort to distribute it we harden our hearts and soon we are not able to Love. His Love is encapsulated in an earthen vessel of selfishness and self-centeredness.

The reason we are "baptized into people" is to give us the opportunity to immediately express that Love that was shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Since "Agape" is the experiential character of Christ it is not an option of whether we manifest that Love or not. If we are going to be joined to Him to become one with Him we must be of the same character which IS Love. Whatever Christ IS we must become if we are going to be joined to Him for eternity.

The "Christian military Life" is an army of martyrs who are daily sacrificing their self-life to reach the goal and win the battle of Agape, Love! They love not their "self-life" and commit it to death for Christ's sake. By this they are able to manifest Agape and by that overcome.