

The Glory of Christian Suffering (vv.12-19)

Suffering Purifies Believers (v.12)

VERSE 12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you (Ἀγαπητοί [adj.voc.m.p., ἀγαπητός, *agapetos, beloved, dear*] μὴ ξενίζεσθε [neg. + pres.pass.imper.2.p., ξενίζω, *xenizo, entertain as a guest; surprise; cp. 4:4*] τῇ πυρώσει [def.art.w/dat.f.s., πύρωσις, *purosis, burning; fiery ordeal, painful test; 3X: Rev.18:9,18*] ἐν ὑμῖν [prep.w/pro.2.p., *su; “among you”*]), **which comes upon you for your testing** (γινομένη [pres.dep.pt.dat.f.s., *ginomai*] ὑμῖν [pro.dat.m.p., *su*] πρὸς πειρασμὸν [prep.w/acc.m.s., πειρασμός, *peirasmos, testing; temptation*]), **as though some strange thing were happening to you** (ὡς [conj., *as*] ξένου [adj.gen.nt.s., *zenos, strange*] συμβαίνοντος [pres.act.pt.gen.nt.s., συμβαίνω, *sumbaino, happen, come about*] ὑμῖν [pro.dat.p., *su*]);

ANALYSIS: VERSE 12

1. The Greek word translated “Beloved” is, literally, “Beloved ones”.
2. Peter uses the term as a descriptive title of God’s love for His people.
3. Just to know that God the Father loves us is comforting in times of trouble and heartache.
4. The words “do not be surprised” are, literally, “stop being surprised”.
5. The verb occurs here as well as in 4:4, where negative volition is “surprised” at the behavior of believers, but it does not follow that they should be “surprised” at the actions of the cosmos.
6. The verb means to entertain a stranger/guest.
7. Believers are enjoined to not regard suffering brought on by persecution as a strange or alien thing.
8. Among their ranks were those who were taken aback when they encountered the hostility of the cosmos, as if being a Christian made one immune from suffering (cf. 1Jn.3:13)
9. They are encouraged here to think of suffering as a natural and expected thing.
10. Jesus taught His disciples to expect it from the hostile cosmos (Jn.15:18-21).
11. Peter speaks of their sufferings as a “fiery trial”.
12. The noun means a “burning”.
13. It is used by Josephus (*Antiquities* 1.203) of the destruction of Sodom, as well as the prophetic destruction of the U.S. (Rev.18:9,18).
14. Here it is used metaphorically for a severe test of faith and endurance brought on by persecution from family, friends, associates, and strangers.
15. The noun πύρωσις occurs in Prov.27:21 (LXX) in connection with the purification of silver and gold, as the translation of the Hebrew word for “furnace”, or “forge”.
16. Peter characterizes the “fiery ordeal” as being “for testing”.
17. Peter’s language here must be interpreted in relation to chapter 1:6,7, where the “various trials” that believers encounter are a way to refine or purify their faith as fire refines gold.

18. Peter describes their “fiery ordeal” as a “testing” which is presumably as beneficial to their spiritual momentum as the refining process is to gold and silver.
19. So when people do bad things to you in connection with your adherence to BD, it is a good thing, as it accomplishes something that would not otherwise be possible.
20. This is true of all kinds of testing, not just abuse from the source of people.
21. The Christian communities to whom this letter was originally sent share a common test: namely, persecution sponsored by a pagan environment.
22. It was soon to have political backing, as seen in Nero’s assault on the Church in Rome, spreading throughout the empire.
23. The words “for your testing” express purpose, and the purpose of all testing is to accelerate and refine spiritual growth.
24. Once again we see that nothing happens in our lives that God does not work for good if we love Him (Rom.8:28).
25. This reminder helps us to better cope with suffering that is undeserved, as it is working with the BD we have learned for our spiritual betterment.
26. Suffering of this sort is not “strange”, but is to be expected and is commonplace in the lives of the saints through the ages.
27. Peter desires that his readers not react with shock under the social ills brought on by negative volition, but focus on the fact that they are doing them a favor!

Suffering Maximizes SG3 (v.13)

VERSE 13 **but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ** (*ἀλλὰ [conj.] καθὸ [conj., katho, to the degree that] κοινωνεῖτε [pres.ind.pt.2.p., κοινωνέω, koinoneo, share, participate in; 8X: Rom.12:13; 15:27; Gal.6:6; Phil.4:15; 1Tim.5:22; Heb.2:14; 1Pet.4:13; 2Jn.1:11] τοῖς παθήμασιν [def.art.w/loc.nt.p., πάθημα, pathema, suffering; passion; cf. 1:11; 5:1,9; Phil.3:10; 2Cor.1:5; Rom.8:18] τοῦ Χριστοῦ [def.art.w/gen.m.s., Christos, Christ]) **keep on rejoicing** (*χαίρετε [pres.act.imper.2.p., chairō, rejoice; cf. Mt.5:12]*); **so that also at the revelation of His glory** (*ἵνα [conj./result] καὶ [conj./adjunc., also] ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει [prep.w/def.art.w/dat.f.s., ἀποκάλυψις, apokalupsis, revelation; of the Rapture; cf. 1:7,13; Rom.8:19; 1Cor.1:7] τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ [def.art.w/gen.f.s., doxa, glory, + pro.gen.m.s., autos, his]*) **you may rejoice with exultation** (*χαρῆτε [aor.pass.subj.2.p., chairō, rejoice] ἀγαλλιώμενοι [pres.midd.pt.n.m.p., ἀγαλλιάω, agalliao, be extremely glad; cf. 1:6,8]*).*

ANALYSIS: VERSE 13

1. Rather than being in a state of shock or dismay, they are to “keep on rejoicing” because BD tells them that in the future they will be rewarded by the Lord Himself at His coming for the Church.
2. The words “but to the degree” indicate we will not all be rewarded the same since we do not all suffer the same.

3. Some believers suffer less in this respect due to the circumstances of their lives, while others fail to apply, which brings less heat from others.
4. The point Peter makes has a parallel in Paul's statement in 2Cor.1:5.
5. The promise in 2Cor.1:5 is that God will comfort the suffering believer according to the degree of the test.
6. Here the promise relates to Ph3 when CA believers are at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
7. Those of us who have contributed much to what Peter calls "the sufferings of Christ" will have greater occasion to "whoop it up" than someone who, for whatever reasons, suffered less.
8. The expression "the sufferings of Christ" refers to those things He suffered while on earth.
9. A major part of which included things done to Him by inconsiderate and hostile people.
10. This expression occurs 4X: 2Cor.1:5; 1Pet.1:11; 4:13; 5:1.
11. We "share the sufferings of Christ" when we are persecuted for the same things He was.
12. His "sufferings" arose from His steadfast adherence to the POG for His life.
13. We have experiential solidarity with Him whenever we suffer in the same race/fight.
14. Failure to complete our race/course will take much of the luster off the Bema celebration.
15. We who stand and suffer for the truth as He did have a common fellowship (Phil.3:10).
16. As the Head of the Church suffered His allotment of temporal afflictions, so the Body must suffer its share, and the end of the age will come (Col.1:24).
17. Present sufferings do not even come close to the eternal glory associated with our resurrection (Rom.8:18).
18. Peter's point here and in 1:7 is that present (Ph2) suffering will give way to Ph3 celebration and reward.
19. It is obvious, as it ever will be, that the afflicted have prevailed through the grace and power of God at the Bema celebration.
20. Even now we can rejoice when we are persecuted, knowing that "at the revelation of His glory" we will "rejoice with exultation/exceeding joy".
21. We are commanded to exhibit +H when we are persecuted for adherence to the faith (pres.act.imper. of "to rejoice").
22. This is certainly not the normal reaction to this sort of treatment.
23. "The revelation of His glory" refers to the visible appearing of Christ to the Church at the Rapture.
24. This strong expression for super +H can also be ours in Ph2 (cf. 1Pet.1:6,8; cp. Mt.5:11,12; Lk.1:47; 10:21; Jn.5:35; 8:56).
25. The subjunctive "may rejoice" recognizes that it depends upon our willingness to endure to the end no matter what circumstance and man throw our way.
26. This verse contains a promise to those who are willing to endure whatever to the end of life.

Undeserved Suffering Constitutes a State of Blessedness (v.14)

VERSE 14 **If you are reviled for the name of Christ** (εἰ ὀνειδίξεσθε [*part./conditional + pres.pass.ind.2.p.*, ὀνειδίζω, *oneidizo*, *denounce, revile, reproach*; 9X: Mt.5:11; 11:20; 27:44; Mk.15:22; 16:14; Lk.6:22; Rom.15:3; Jam.1:5; 1Pet.4:14] ἐν ὀνόματι Χριστοῦ [*prep.w/loc.nt.s., onoma, name, + gen.m.s., Christos*]), **you are blessed** (μακάριοι [*adj.n.m.p., makairos, blessed, fortunate; this form occurs 26X in the N.T.; cf. 3:14*]), **because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you** (ὅτι [*conj./causal*] τὸ πνεῦμα [*def.art.w/n.nt.s., pneuma*] τῆς δόξης [*def.art.w/gen.f.s., doxza, glory*] καὶ τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ [*conj. + def.art.n.nt.s. {spirit} + def.art.w/gen.m.s., theos, God*] ἀναπαύεται [*pres.midd.ind.3.s., ἀναπαύω, anapauo, rest, relax; rest upon*] ἐφ' ὑμᾶς [*prep., epi, upon, + pro.2.p., su*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 14

1. Verse 14 begins with a first class condition which presumes reality.
2. Christians inevitably face verbal abuse, if nothing more.
3. “Reviled” refers to verbal attacks.
4. This is, and was, the most common form of persecution of Christians.
5. The phrase “the name of Christ” indicates a specific context, and not verbal abuse in general.
6. When we are spoken against because of our stand on spiritual matters, we are “blessed”.
7. The adjective “blessed”, or “bless-ed”, occurs in this form 26X in the N.T.
8. The word indicates “happy/fortunate/blessed”.
9. It is featured in the nine beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount (Mt.5:3-11).
10. It is used of things that people do not normally associate with advantage (as here).
11. Peter has already made this same observation in 1Pet.3:14, “But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, *you are* blessed”, where he employs a condition of contingency (part. with the optative).
12. In 3:14 Peter addresses in a general manner different possible cases or scenarios, some more remote and more drastic than others.
13. Here it deals with a ubiquitous form of suffering common to all who are connected with “the name of Christ”.
14. All manner of verbal abuse that comes against believers puts them in a state of blessedness (cf. Lk.6:22).
15. The specific verb “reviled”, in our vernacular, means “ridiculed”.
16. It is one of a number of terms Peter uses for verbal abuse (2:12; 3:16; 4:4).
17. The mention of “ridicule” suggests that name-calling was involved.
18. Such verbal abuse “for the name of Christ” was simply a specific instance of suffering “for the cause of righteousness” (3:14).
19. As in the sayings of Jesus on which the words of Peter are based, the beatitude of this verse is followed by a ὅτι clause (cf. Lk.6:20,21; Mt.5:3-10).

20. The teaching of Christ in the Gospels contains the promise that the “Holy Spirit” (Mk.13:11; Lk.12:12), or the “Spirit of your Father” (Mt.10:20), will stand by His disciples and prompt them what to say when they are arrested and interrogated by the authorities.
21. Yet here the specific phrase, “the Spirit of God,” and the construction “rests upon” shows marked dependence upon Isa.11:2a (LXX): “and the Spirit of God will rest upon Him”.
22. This was prophetic of the Holy Spirit’s ministry upon the humanity of Christ from His baptism forward.
23. The verb (ἀναπαύω, *anapauo*) means to give relief/refresh in the passive voice and rest/rest upon in the middle voice.
24. The doctrinal point here is that God the HS is, in a very special sense, with those who are the objects of verbal attack.
25. He is called “the Spirit of glory”, which speaks of His heavenly association, and “of God”, which speaks of His deity.
26. Facing an oftentimes hostile world we have an ally who comforts, protects, and guides us when we are in fellowship.
27. God the HS is with those who are under attack for their devotion to the person and teachings of Jesus Christ.
28. This verse constitutes yet another reassurance in the face of undeserved suffering.

Suffering to Avoid (v.15)

VERSE 15 **By no means let any of you suffer as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler** (μή [*neg.*; “By no means”] γάρ [*part., for*] τις [*pro./indef.n.m.s., tis, anyone*] ὑμῶν [*pro.gen.p., su*] πασχέτω [*pres.act.imper.3.s., pascho, suffer*] ὡς [*conj., as*] φονεὺς ἢ κλέπτης ἢ κακοποιὸς ἢ ὡς ἀλλοτριεπίσκοπος [*n.m.s., φονεὺς, phoneus, murderer, + conj., or, + n.m.s., κλέπτης, kleptes, thief, + conj., or, + adj.n.m.s., κακοποιός, kakopoios, evildoer, + conj., or, + conj., as, + n.m.s., ἀλλοτριεπίσκοπος, allotriepiskopos, busybody, meddler; 1X]*);

ANALYSIS: VERSE 15

1. The point of this verse within the present context is this: If they want to make sure that they are under the blessings of God the HS, they must make sure that they are being spoken ill of for the right reason.
2. Peter assumes that his readers are being “ridiculed for the name of Christ” and makes his assumption the basis for a command.
3. γάρ (*gar, for*) normally introduces an explanation, but here it introduces a command.
4. To make his point, Peter begins with wrong reasons to suffer.
5. The list of vices falls into two parts.
6. The first three items come from a stock catalogue.
7. His object in citing them is to underscore the world of difference between suffering when you suffer for righteousness, and when you suffer a penalty for something you brought on yourself.

8. The mention of murder and thievery were common crimes that were punishable by severe penalties.
9. Their mention is not to be taken as evidence that he believed these crimes were being committed by believers to whom he wrote.
10. The presence of the ISTA, however, does not preclude these sins on the part of believers (cf. Eph.4:28).
11. The third item, translated “evildoer”, is “criminal”, used here and in 2:12,14 in a technical sense.
12. Christians were being maligned as enemies of the state.
13. This was based on their reluctance to engage in state-sponsored activities that involved the practice of idolatry.
14. Their affirmation that Jesus was King and Lord in the culture of emperor worship fostered the slander that they were disloyal.
15. Although suffering as an evildoer does not demand formal criminal charges, the term is used against a background of Christians being slandered as “criminals” (enemies of the state) by some of their fellow citizens.
16. Such name-calling could lead at some point to formal charges, which the local governors would be obliged to follow up on.
17. The second part of the list contains one term, “troublesome meddler”.
18. It is separated from the previous three items with its own conjunction ὡς (as).
19. The term is found only here in the N.T. and is unattested in earlier Greek literature.
20. It is found 3X in later Christian exposition.
21. Epiphanius in the fourth century uses it as part of an exposition of 1Cor.2:10, to the effect that the HS is not probing into alien matters in searching out the “deep things of God”, but into that which is His proper concern.
22. The second reference from Epiphanius makes the point that Jesus, when He broke the Sabbath, was not abrogating the work of another, but was, as God, doing His own proper work.
23. There is one other reference in Dionysius to bishops who encroach on another’s canon/diocese.
24. The common idea in these few uses of ἀλλοτριεπίσκοπος (*allogriepiskopos*, busybody) appears to be that of meddling in things that are none of one’s business.
25. Peter’s terminology suggests that he may have known of Christians who considered themselves guardians of public morality, and warns his readers against assuming such a posture.
26. “Busybodies”, whatever their motivation, were not popular in the Roman world.
27. Peter stands in agreement here with most pagan writers and with the apostle Paul (1Thess.4:11; 2Thess.3:11; 1Tim.5:13).
28. “Troublesome meddler” is set off from “murderer”, “thief”, and “criminal” by the repetition of “as” simply because it does not refer to something potentially criminal, but to an attitude or a social pattern of behavior likely to bring reproach on Christians.

Call to Glorify God under Suffering (v.16)

VERSE 16 **but if anyone suffers as a Christian** (δὲ [conj., but] εἰ [part., if] ὡς Χριστιανός [conj., as + n.m.s., Christianos, Christian; 3X: cf. Acts.11:26; 26:28]), **let him not feel ashamed** (μὴ αἰσχυνέσθω [neg. + pres.midd.imper.3.s., αἰσχύνομαι, aischunomai, be ashamed; feel ashamed; 5X: Lk.16:3; 2Cor.10:8; Phil.1:20; 1Pet.4:16; 1Jn.2:28; in this form only here]), **but in that name let him glorify God** (δὲ [conj., but] ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τούτῳ [prep.w/def.art.w/loc.nt.s., onoma, name, + pro./demonstr., houtos, that, OR possibly the reading: ἐν τῷ μέρει τούτῳ, “in this matter/capacity”, or “on this account”] δοξάζετω [pres.act.imper.3.s., δοξάζω, doxazo, glorify; praise; in this form only here] τὸν θεὸν [def.art.w/acc.m.s., theos]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 16

1. Peter returns to the main subject: undeserved suffering.
2. The phrase “suffers as a Christian” is a hapax.
3. The verb is implied, as the italic suggests.
4. The phrase is elliptical.
5. “But” supplies the contrast with the preceding warning with respect to deserved suffering.
6. “If” introduces a conditional statement expressing reality (incomplete first class condition).
7. Believers are referred to as “Christians” elsewhere in the N.T. only in Acts.11:26 and 26:28.
8. This noun Χριστιανός (*Xristianos*) is a formulation analogous to “Herodian”.
9. It has the meaning of “partisans of Christ.”
10. All three instances appear to reflect the viewpoint of Jewish and pagan outsiders toward those who worshipped and served Jesus.
11. The “ridicule” is still very much in view, as the term “Christian” was originated with the enemies of believers in Jesus Christ and not with Christians themselves.
12. Christian, at the time of the writing of this letter, was a term of contempt (rather like “Christer” on American college campuses in the 1950s).
13. The Cult of Caesar was the state religion of the Roman Empire, in which the emperor was worshipped as a god.
14. It served two purposes.
15. The subjects of Rome gave obedience to the laws of the empire, not only as a political duty, but also as a religious duty.
16. It also constituted the unifying factor which bound the many different peoples of the empire into one, and made the task of holding the empire together easier.
17. The Greek word for Caesar is *Kaisar*.
18. Those who worshipped the *Kaisar* were called *Kaisarianos*.
19. Christianity appeared to offer a rival claimant to world dominion and worship.
20. Those who worshipped the coming Ruler and King of the nations were called *Christianos*, as over against *Kaisarianos*, worshippers of Caesar.
21. Rome reacted to this rival and growing sect with ten bloody persecutions.

22. It meant and cost something to be a *Christianos* in those days.
23. So it is against this growing dark cloud of antagonism that Peter exhorts believers in those provinces (cf. 1:1) of Roman hegemony to “not be ashamed”.
24. Those who suffer for “the name that is above every name” will never be put to shame (cf. 2:6), while those who slander them will (cf. 3:16).
25. So Peter exhorts, by way of a command, as to what the suffering Christian’s attitude should be in the presence of majority opinion.
26. Peter’s desire for them corresponds to Paul’s aspiration for himself in the face of imprisonment and possible martyrdom (Phil.1:20; cf. 2Tim.1:12; as well as Jesus’ warnings in Mk.8:38 and Lk.9:26).
27. The second present imperative in the verse (“but” or “only glorify God”) presents the other alternative to “shame” and its counterpart, denial.
28. For Paul in Phil.1:20 the choices were either “shame” or “magnifying Christ” in his body through life or death.
29. Peter wants to make sure that his readers’ response to threats and recrimination is the glorification of God – precisely the same goal toward which he directed them in their ministries to each other (cf. 4:11).
30. There are clues throughout the letter as to how Christians are to accomplish this imperative “to glorify God”.
31. He wants them to acknowledge their faith openly and without fear, regardless of the consequences.
32. This is the inference of 3:15,16.
33. As in the case of their ministry to one another, glorification of God depends on attitudes and behavior toward outsiders.
34. The words “in that name” suggest that Peter is encouraging believers to embrace, as a badge of honor, the epithet “Christian” coined by their antagonists.
35. First Peter stands as a transition between the use of “Christian” by opponents of the movement (as in Acts and the pagan sources), and its serious use by believers themselves, beginning with Ignatius.
36. Peter is saying, “Even though the name ‘Christian’ is thrown at you by your enemies in derision, wear the name proudly, for that is what you are”.
37. Transcriptional probabilities point to the reading: ἐν τῷ μέρει τούτῳ (“in this matter”).
38. Although it was the reading supported by the KJV/AV, it is not so much as mentioned in either the UBSGNT (ed., K. Aland, et al.) or Metzger’s *Textual Commentary*.
39. Although μέρος occurs nowhere else in First Peter, the phrase “in this matter” forms a kind of sequel to 2:12 and 3:16, where a similarly colorless ἐν ᾧ served as the author’s way of introducing a “case” approach to the prospect of slander and interrogation.
40. In those passages the pronoun ὃς (*hos*) had no antecedent, no actual word for “case” or “situation” in the context, but if it had, μέρος would have been an appropriate word.
41. The vague expression ἐν τῷ μέρει τούτῳ, therefore, functions here in much the same way as the ἐν ᾧ of 2:12 and 3:16.
42. It is easy to see why copyists might have altered the more prosaic μέρος from what Peter wrote to what is reflected in the NAS translation.
43. Copyists would have opted for the more theologically rich term “name”.
44. Either way there is no effect upon the body of truth (even though I lean towards the μέρος reading).

The Paradox (v.17)

VERSE 17 For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God (ὅτι [conj., for] [ὁ] καιρὸς [def.art.w/n.m.s., kairos, time, season] τὸ κρίμα [def.art.w/acc.nt.s., krima, judgment] τοῦ ἄρξασθαι [def.art.w/aor.midd.infin., ἄρχω, archo, rule, govern; midd., begin; this form occurs here and in Acts.11:15] ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ [prep., apo, from; with w/def.art.w/gen.m.s., oikos, house, household, + def.art.w/gen.m.s., theos]); **and if it begins with us first** (δὲ [conj., and] εἰ [part., if] ἂφ' ἡμῶν [prep.w/pro.gen.m.p., ego, us] πρῶτον [adv., proton, first]), **what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God** (τί [pro.interrog., tis, what] τὸ τέλος [def.art.w/n.nt.s., telos, end] τῶν ἀπειθούντων [def.art.w/pres.act.pt.gen.m.p., ἀπειθέω, apeitheo, disobey; in this form 2X: Rom.15:31; the verb occurs 14X: Jn.3:36; Acts.14:2; 19:9; Rom.2:8; 10:21; 11:30,31; 15:31; Heb.3:18; 11:31; 1Pet.2:8; 3:1,20; 4:17] τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ [def.art.w/dat.m.s., εὐαγγέλιον, euangelion, gospel] τοῦ θεοῦ [def.art.w/gen.m.s., theos, God])?

Scriptural Support (v.18)

VERSE 18 AND IF IT IS WITH DIFFICULTY THAT THE RIGHTEOUS IS SAVED (καὶ εἰ [conj., and, + part., if] μόλις [adv., molis, difficulty; 6X: Acts.14:18; 27:7,8;16; Rom.5:7; 1Pet.4:18] ὁ δίκαιος [def.art.w/adj.n.m.s., dikaios, righteous] σώζεται [pres.pass.ind.3.s., sozo, save]), **WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE GODLESS MAN AND THE SINNER** (ποῦ [adv. pou, where, to what place; “what”; but “where” seems preferable] φανείται [fut.midd.ind.3.s., φαίνω, phaino, manifest; be seen, in midd. and pass.] ὁ ἀσεβῆς [def.art.w/adj.n.m.s., asebes, godless, profane, impious] καὶ ἁμαρτωλὸς [conj. + adj.n.m.s., amartolos, sinner])?

ANALYSIS: VERSES 17,18

1. The conjunction “For” is explanatory presenting a reason why believers should, paradoxically, give glory to God (i.e., remain steadfast in the face of hostilities) in their sufferings.
2. The paradox is this: by enduring their allotted sufferings they are coming under “judgment” which is designed to test them and purify them so that they can escape loss and shame at the Bema Seat (cf. vv.12,13).
3. Καιρὸς (“time”) is to be taken as a predicate (with “it is” understood).
4. The nature of the “time” is defined by the articular infinitive as a time for “beginning”, or “commencement”.
5. The “time” is the intensified stage of the Angelic Conflict, of which the present dispensation is the last days.

6. "Judgment" is the totality of divine testing put upon the church, called here "the household (or 'house') of God".
7. The reference here is to the church universal, portrayed in 2:5 as a temple made up of "living stones".
8. "The household of God" refers to the community of born-again believers.
9. Peter includes himself in this category, as seen in the pronoun "us".
10. "Judgment" is used as a synonym for all adverse circumstances that come upon mankind.
11. For believers, it includes the "testing" mentioned in v.12.
12. All sufferings that Christians experience, whether punitive or undeserved, are designed to build patience and character as a part of the maturity adjustment.
13. So when we are persecuted, we experience divine judgment.
14. This is a paradox.
15. So all the hatred, slander, and brutality that the church of Jesus Christ has undergone down through the centuries is divine judgment, falling under the category of undeserved suffering.
16. All our undeserved and deserved suffering is designed to bring positive volition to the place where we can escape unacceptable loss and shame at the Bema.
17. Suffering, even if it is undeserved, constitutes "judgment".
18. This "judgment" is painful and unpleasant, producing positive results in those who are positive.
19. To those who are negative to the Ph2 good news, the end is the SUD and loss at the Bema, yet the objects are "saved as through fire".
20. The phrase "and if *it begins* with us" is a conditional clause denoting reality.
21. The adverb "first" does not mean first as in a sequence, but first as in most important.
22. God's dealings with believers can be viewed as a matter of highest concern, since we are His children (cf. Heb.12:7-11).
23. If God's judgment upon His people is so important and manifests itself in extreme measures, the rhetorical question that inexorably follows is: "what *will be* the outcome" for unbelievers?
24. We have seen the draconian measures God sometimes takes to advance believers spiritually (Job, David, the prodigal son, examples from the Psalms, etc.).
25. Furthermore, we know of Biblical and extra-Biblical examples of believers suffering the SUD.
26. So the thought follows, what about those who are unbelievers?
27. The definition of a negative unbeliever is: "those who do not obey the gospel of God".
28. Peter does not specify what that "outcome/end" is, but leaves it to his readers to supply the answer.
29. Eternal wrath in the Lake Of Fire is the "outcome".
30. It consists of unimaginable suffering forever in total separation from God (cp. 2Thess.1:8).
31. To drive the point home, he cites Prov.11:31 (LXX).
32. The subject of the proverb is the welfare of two classes of humanity.
33. The two classes are the positive believer and the negative unbeliever.
34. The word translated "with difficulty" is used in Acts14:18 where Paul experienced difficulty in restraining the people of Lystra from sacrificing to him as a god.
35. The context in First Peter speaks to the persecutions which were allowed to come upon these Christians as a refining judgment.
36. They were being "saved" in the Ph2, or experiential, sanctification sense.

37. Drastic means are employed to bring positive volition to maturity so “the righteous” can be “saved” from loss and shame at the Bema (the case of CA believers).
38. The verb “saved” is used of both Ph1 and Ph2 salvation.
39. Ph2 salvation is seen in Mt.10:22, 1Cor.5:5, and 15:2.
40. The noun “salvation” is used in a Ph2 sense as well (Phil.2:12; 1Tim.4:16; 1Pet.1:9).
41. The word group is used in Scripture of Ph1 salvation, temporal deliverance, eschatological deliverance, and deliverance from loss of reward.
42. “The righteous” refers to a believer who is facing the prospect of the maturity adjustment.
43. “The godless (or ‘profane’) man and the sinner” is a reference to the negative unbeliever.
44. The structure of the proverb is *a fortiori* (the lesser to the greater).
45. The rhetorical question underscores the severity with which God deals with both classes, but especially of those who reject the good news.
46. The “godless man” is someone who has no interest in spiritual matters, while the “sinner” describes his life in conformity to the ISTA.
47. Believers need to remember that God will deal with those who disregard the gospel and who oftentimes persecute the righteous (cf. 2Thess.1:4-10).
48. Until such time as God makes a public and universal statement vindicating the faith of believers, we are to acclimate to our allotment of sufferings that work for our good (cf. 1Thess.3:1-8).

Call to Trust God (v.19)

VERSE 19 **Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God** (ὥστε [conj./result, hoste, that, so that, with the result that; in order that] καὶ [conj./adjunc.] οἱ πάσχοντες [def.art.w/pres.act.pt.n.m.p., pascho, suffer] κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ [prep.w/def.art. w/acc.nt.s., thelema, will, + def.art.w/gen.m.s., theos]) **entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right** (παρατιθέσθωσαν [pres.midd.imper.3.p., παρατίθημι, paratithemi, entrust {midd.}] τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν [def.art.w/acc.f.p., psuche, soul, + pro.gen.m.p., autos] πιστῷ κτίστῃ [adj.dat.m.s., pistos, faithful, + dat.m.s., ktiste, Creator; IX] ἐν ἀγαθοποιῶν [prep.w/dat.f.s., ἀγαθοποιῶν, agathopoiia, doing good/right; IX]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 19

1. Having eloquently sketched the blessedness of righteous suffering and the awful fate that awaits those who in their state of unbelief inflict it, Peter draws his conclusion.
2. Peter uses yet another expression to describe undeserved suffering: “suffer according to the will of God”.
3. When we suffer persecution for our stand for truth, we open ourselves up to this category of suffering.
4. God allows each one of us who are so committed to suffer, which suffering advances our maturity adjustment.
5. Paradoxically, it isn’t God’s will for people to abuse us in this fashion, yet He uses it for our purification/sanctification.

6. God wills that we are tested, otherwise no one would be so purified.
7. Gold and silver need to be refined by fire to be useful to the user.
8. So God permits evil men to persecute us within limits, for the purpose specified.
9. God uses evil to advance His plan.
10. God does not sponsor evil, but He is free to use it for His purposes.
11. This is a main factor that God employs to correct our unrighteous habits on the glory road.
12. Evil in us (STA tendencies) is tamed by suffering, and then He brings those who perpetrated the evil under judgment.
13. Again, it isn't God's will for people to persecute believers, but it is God's will for us to suffer, considering the STA factor that works against our spiritual momentum.
14. Suffering is the perfect Rx for bringing us into Ph2 sanctification.
15. The imperative introduces a fresh injunction.
16. The conjunction *καί*, translated "also", does not make sense, since as it stands, it would suggest in addition to others who suffer.
17. The problem is, who could these others conceivably be?
18. It is best to take it with the opening conjunction *ὥστε* ("so"), which would read: "And so then".
19. "So then" introduces not a new thought, but (as in 1Cor.7:38) a conclusion drawn from what has gone before.
20. The suffering Peter has in mind is clearly undeserved suffering.
21. Undeserved suffering is not normally perceived as God's will, while deserved suffering is.
22. The phrase "let [them] entrust their souls/lives" defines the mental attitude that makes glorification of God in a time of suffering possible (cf. v.16).
23. Peter wants them to entrust themselves continually (present imperative) to God's watch and care, whatever the circumstances (cf. Paul's confidence in 2Tim.1:12, as well as his ministry to various Asian churches in Acts.14:22,23; 20:32).
24. The verb "entrust" is a graphic term connoting entrusting something valuable to someone for safekeeping.
25. The well-being of our "souls" is of paramount importance.
26. God preserves the soul so it can arrive at its destination – Ph3 glory in a resurrection body.
27. Hence, Jesus' statement: "And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Mt.10:28).
28. In light of this verb "entrust", we perceive the proper nuance of "faithful": God is a reliable depository.
29. God's faithfulness is an expression of His perfect character.
30. God, who is Immutable, cannot but do what He has promised.
31. God's faithfulness is the basis for Christian hope (cf. 2Tim.1:12; Heb.10:23).
32. The description of Him as Creator (this is the sole reference in the N.T.) is noteworthy.
33. The title has been chosen here because it draws our attention to the divine attribute of Omnipotence.
34. God's power is sufficient to preserve His creatures' vital interests.
35. Believers have nothing to fear, as the One who is the "faithful Creator" will make good on His promises to preserve and vindicate their faith and trust in Him.
36. The critical issue that is in our power is the expression "in doing what is right" (*ἐν ἀγαθοποιίᾳ*).
37. This word/expression occurs only here in the N.T.

38. Evidence that a believer is indeed trusting God are the words “doing good”.
39. It includes the proper response to all forms of persecution as specified in this letter.
40. God’s verdict on behalf of His people will supersede every human verdict of repudiation.
41. In this section Peter attributes all judgment to God, who without favoritism strikes first his own house and then the rest of the world.
42. From these verses we learn that suffering is a necessity, and we should never be surprised at it (v.12), for Christ Himself was not spared from it (2:4).

END: 1 Peter Chapter Four

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