

## 1 Peter 4:12-19

### Introduction:

1. The apostle Peter wrote 2 of the 21 New Testament "epistles" [letters addressed to groups of Christians or individual Christians].
2. In his first letter,:
  - a. Peter addressed a number of responsibilities that God has given to His people
  - b. Peter showed how Christians must fulfill these responsibilities, even while suffering persecution from unbelievers
  - c. Peter emphasized how Christ suffered unjustly for doing the Father's will.
3. This lesson is a study of the information presented in 1 Peter 4:12-19.
4. In these verses Peter revealed additional instructions that relate to the persecution that would be faced by the Christians living in Asia Minor (1:1).
  - a. The faith of these Christians was being tried (1:6-7).
  - b. According to 4:7a, they would soon be facing a great calamity.
  - c. In 4:7b-11, Peter listed a variety of responsibilities that would help them.
  - d. While fulfilling these responsibilities, they would have to face persecution correctly.

### Discussion:

- I. (vs.12) THIS *"FIERY TRIAL"* WAS NOT TO BE CONSIDERED *"STRANGE"*
  - A. Persecution of Christians was foretold by:
    1. Christ (John 15:20)
    2. Paul (2 Timothy 3:12).
  - B. Rather than consider this trial to be a strange event, . . .
- II. (vs.13) PETER INSTRUCTED HIS READERS TO *"REJOICE"*
  - A. This instruction is also given in Matthew 5:12; Philippians 4:4; and James 1:2-3.
  - B. To rejoice as Jesus, Paul, James, and Peter teach, persecuted Christians must remember that:
    1. they are *"partakers of Christ's sufferings"*
    2. they will experience *"exceeding joy"* when Jesus returns.
- III. (vs.14) THOSE WHO ARE *"REPROACHED FOR THE NAME OF CHRIST"* ARE *"HAPPY"* [BLESSED]
  - A. Reproach: to speak evil against
  - B. Peter mentioned several times that his readers were being tried in this way (2:12; 3:16).
  - C. Jesus also taught that such people are *"blessed"* (Matthew 5:11).
  - D. To be blessed as Jesus and Peter teach, persecuted Christians must realize that:
    1. God's Spirit abides with His children
    2. the reproach of God's people provides an opportunity for Him to be glorified.
- IV. (vs.15) CHRISTIANS ARE NOT TO SUFFER BECAUSE OF SINFUL ACTIVITIES
  - A. Peter showed earlier that Christians are:
    1. to be holy (1:14-16)
    2. to obey civil laws and that the state is responsible for punishing law breakers (2:13-14).
  - B. God's people are not to suffer in the sense of receiving punishment for murder, stealing, doing evil, and meddling in the affairs of other people.
- V. (vs.16) THOSE WHO SUFFER FOR BEING CHRISTIANS MUST *"NOT BE ASHAMED"*
  - A. Rather than be ashamed, persecuted Christians are to *"glorify God."*
  - B. The apostles provided examples in this regard (Acts 5:40-42; 2 Timothy 1:12).
- VI. (vs.17-18) THE TIME HAD ARRIVED FOR THE CHURCH TO BE TRIED
  - A. This *"judgment"* [trial] would be so severe that even the righteous would find salvation difficult.
  - B. If God allowed His church to be tried, there will be no hope for sinners who do not obey the Gospel.
- VII. (vs.19) THOSE WHO *"SUFFER ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD"* ARE TO *"COMMIT THE KEEPING OF THEIR SOULS TO HIM IN WELL DOING"*