

THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE:

THE SUFFERINGS OF JESUS CHRIST:

Earlier we studied the sufferings of Jesus as the apostles Matthew, John, Peter and Paul recorded in the gospels concerning the cross of Jesus Christ. We will now turn our attention to why He suffered and the benefits of His sufferings. First, we will consider the apostle John's teachings in John 10:11 and 12:23-24;

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

Jesus died so that we, His followers may have life. His death was demonstrating that He is the good shepherd. In chapter 10:10b He said that He came so that we may have abundant life. We cannot have that abundant life while we remain in our sinful state. We had to be redeemed or reconciled back to God in order for us to begin to receive the benefits of that abundant life.

Jesus' death by giving His life to redeem us was the price He paid for our redemption. He demonstrated that He is the good shepherd who lays down His life so that His sheep will live the abundant life. That life begins the moment we accept His gift of salvation. At that point our sins are washed away we become a new creature in Christ, with a deposit of the Holy Spirit in us to guide and teach us how to live holy godly lives. As we obey Him, He continues to give us Spiritual Gifts including the gift that was promised by the Father in Joel 2:28-29. We will be empowered by His Spirit to fulfill our purpose and finally receive eternal life when we will be with Jesus our Shepherd for eternity.

2. John 12:23-24; "And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. 24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it dies, it bringeth forth much fruit. "Here are some other reasons why Jesus died (a) His death was proof of His obedience. He was obedient all the way, to His

death on the cross. (Philippians 2:8-9) (b) He died so that He would receive the glory He had before He came to earth. (John 17:1) (c) It was the time appointed by the Father. (Galatians 4:4-7) (d) He died to produce fruits, you and I are examples of the fruits produced through His death. (John 12:24b) (e) His suffering provides healing for us. The prophet Isaiah wrote that He carried our sorrows and pains; He was wounded for our transgressions, He was crushed for our wickedness and by His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:4-5) (f) He suffered and died to give us hope. If He had not died, there would not be a resurrection. Because He rose from the dead on the third day, we have hope in eternal life. (2 Timothy 2:11-13; Romans 6:8-18)

PAUL:

In the previous passage I made references to some of Paul's teachings on the sufferings of Christ and the benefits to us His followers. I will list the Scriptures here, Philippians 2:8-9; Galatians 4:4-7; 2 Timothy 2:11-13 and Romans 6:8-18. I will add Romans 5:6, 14:9; Philippians 3:10-11. In Romans 5:6, he stated that Jesus died for us while we were still in our sins. It was our sins that took Him to the cross. We could not redeem ourselves. It required the sinless blood of man to redeem man. Jesus was and is the only One who met the qualification. He suffered and died for our sins to set us free from the power of sin and death.

In Romans 14:9, Paul wrote that Jesus both died and rose that He might be Lord of both the living and the dead. What the verse is saying, is those who accept His free gift of salvation will be His forever. While we are in this life we belong to Him, when we die, we die in Him awaiting the resurrection when we will be with Him forever. In His account to His Father about His stewardship, He said that He did not lose any that He gave to Him. (John 17:12) Romans 14:9; "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."

This verse contains the foundation of Christ's sovereignty, the fruit and end of His earthly life. It says, "for this end", we may ask to what end; He both died, and rose, and received, that He might be Lord of the dead and the living. He is head over all things to the church. He is Lord of those who are living to rule them, of those who are dead to receive them and raise them up at the resurrection. The verse says He rose and received; after His resurrection, He was received by the Father. The Father received Him because He was faithful in obeying and doing His Father's will. He is at the Father's side being Lord of both the living and the dead.

PETER:

◦ Peter satiated in 1 Peter 3:18, that Jesus the Just, suffered and died for the unjust, so that we who were deserving of death may live. Because of His death believers do not have to face the second death, and death has no power over followers of Jesus Christ. He who suffered and died is now at the right hand of the Father. He was faithful to the end, and has set an example for us, His followers, that we should be prepared to suffer because of our faith and trust in Him. The good news is, though we suffer, we will overcome just as He overcame, and the reward is well worth the suffering. Sufferings will help to keep us from sinning, it will help us to focus on Jesus. It will cause us to have fellowship with other believers and allow us to shun the company of those who will lead us away from God. Some of those who we will avoid could be those with whom we were closely associated before we were born again. (1 Peter 3:19-4:6)

In 1 Peter 1:11, it states that the sufferings were prophesied earlier, and it also told the glory that would follow the sufferings. Jesus' sufferings proved His obedience to the Father, that He put His Father's will a head of His. By doing so He pleased the Father and accomplished His assignment. When He had completed it, He was restored by the Father to the glory He had before He came to earth as a Man, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father as a Son, a title

which places Him above the angels.

1 Peter 3:18- 4:6, 1:11,

1 Peter 2:21-24;

21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”

Jesus Christ suffered for us, showing us an example to follow. It is not popular to tell believers that they have to suffer because of their faith and trust in Jesus; but that is what the Bible teaches. It does not say that we will be rich, healthy and free of problems, but that all who will live godly holy lives will suffer. (2 Timothy 3:12.) Peter wrote in 1 Peter 2: 21 that Christ suffered, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps. This passage is intended to encourage believers that when they suffer unjustly it will please God. Believers are to endure such sufferings patiently and, in the end, God will reward them, just as Jesus was rewarded in the end. He is our example. Jesus said that the servant is not greater than his master, if they persecute Him, they will persecute His followers also. (John 15:20,13:16; Matt.10:24-33)

When He was insulted and mistreated, He did not retaliate, He was threatened but He remained silent. He was teaching us to follow His example. He said that in this world we will have tribulations, but we should take courage, He has overcome the world, which means that if we trust Him and follow His example, we also will overcome. (John 16:33)

In His sufferings, He took our sins upon Himself so that we should live in righteousness. The flogging He received, produced stripes in His body, which produce our healing. The Bible says we were healed by His stripes. His sufferings bring wholeness to us in body, soul and spirit, healings for our bodies, rest for our souls, reconciliation with God and eternal life.

REST:

BODY: Psalm 127:2; Mark 6:31; 1 Thes.5:23

SOUL: Matt. 11:28-30; John 16:33; Exo. 33:14; John 10:28; Lu.1:46-47; 1 Thessalonians 5:23

SPIRIT: Hebrews 4:9-11; Romans 8:4; Luke 1:46-47; 1Thes. 5:23