

# Suffering

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experiencing pain, distress, and hardship; feeling miserable; exhausted by difficult times that never end

## **Deepest Grief**

He was despised and rejected, a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. (Isaiah 53:3 NLT)

## **From Another World (Hebrews 11:13-16)**

Jesus' Holy Spirit invites us to share in Jesus Messiah's suffering. Suffering is the greatest test of the true believer. Jesus instated cross-bearing as the way of life for his followers. Suffering is painful and devastating; suffering poisons your joy and makes everything terrible; suffering makes you question whether God can be trusted; suffering leads you to give up and try something else. In this passage, we see the perspective and culture of suffering disciples: they embrace the Truth that they are from another world, this age is not their destination, this cursed and broken world is not their home. Hope overflows through faith in where we are going and what we will become. Suffering is not a curse; it is a refiner's fire.

## **Discipleship & Prayer**

- Why does suffering cause someone to doubt God?
- Is it impossible to have peace and joy in suffering?
- Holy Spirit, you're my loyal friend in all my battles.

**Bitter Soul** > Job cursed his life, “Oh, why give light to those in misery, and life to those who are bitter? They long for death, and it won’t come. They search for death more eagerly than for hidden treasure. They’re filled with joy when they finally die, and rejoice when they find the grave. Why is life given to those with no future, those God has surrounded with difficulties? I cannot eat for sighing; my groans pour out like water. What I always feared has happened to me. What I dreaded has come true. I have no peace, no quietness. I have no rest; only trouble comes.”  
(Job 3:20-26 NLT)

**Comfort & Empathy** > We share in the many sufferings of Christ. In the same way, much comfort comes to us through Christ. If we have troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation, and if we have comfort, you also have comfort. This helps you to accept patiently the same sufferings we have. Our hope for you is strong, knowing that you share in our sufferings and also in the comfort we receive.  
(2 Corinthians 1:5-7 NCV)

**Daily Reset** > I’ll never forget the trouble, the utter lostness, the taste of ashes, the poison I’ve swallowed. I remember it all. Oh! How well I remember the feeling of hitting the bottom. But there’s one other thing I remember, and I hold my grip on hope: God’s loyal love couldn’t have run out, his merciful love couldn’t have dried up. They’re created new every morning. How great your faithfulness! I’m sticking with God (I say it over and over). He’s all I’ve got left.  
(Lamentations 3:19-24 MSG)

**Death Longing** > When Elijah heard Jezebel's threats, he was afraid. So he ran away to save his life. He took his servant with him, and they went to Beersheba in Judah. Then Elijah left his servant and walked for a whole day into the desert. Then he sat down under a bush and asked to die. He said, "I have had enough, LORD! Take my life. I am no better than my ancestors." Then Elijah lay down under the bush and went to sleep. An angel came to him and touched him. The angel said, "Get up and eat!" (1 Kings 19:3-5 ERV)

**Genuine Faith** > Be glad about this, even though it may now be necessary for you to be sad for a while because of the many kinds of trials you suffer. Their purpose is to prove that your faith is genuine. Even gold, which can be destroyed, is tested by fire; and so your faith, which is much more precious than gold, must also be tested, so that it may endure. Then you will receive praise and glory and honor on the Day when Jesus Christ is revealed. (1 Peter 1:6-7 GNT)

**Glory Pathway** > The Spirit Himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children, and if children, also heirs: heirs of God and coheirs with Christ, seeing that we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him." (Romans 8:16-17 HCSB)

**Perfect Security** > Can anything separate us from the love of Christ? Can trouble, suffering, and hard times, or hunger and nakedness, or danger and death? It is exactly as the Scriptures say, "For you we face death all day long. We are like sheep on their way to be butchered." In everything we have won more than a victory because of Christ who loves us. (Romans 8:35-37 CEV)

**Powerful Weakness** > To keep me from becoming conceited, I must endure a recurring problem. Satan's messenger torments me to keep me from being self-centered. I begged the Lord three times to take it away from me. But he told me: "My kindness is all you need. My power is strongest when you are weak." So I will brag even more about my weaknesses in order that Christ's power will live in me. Therefore, I accept weakness, mistreatment, hardship, persecution, and difficulties suffered for Christ. It's clear that when I'm weak, I'm strong. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10 GWT)

**Promised Persecution** > You have followed what I teach, the way I live, my goal, faith, patience, and love. You know I never give up, and how I have been hurt and suffered in many places. I have suffered, but the Lord saved me from all those troubles. Everyone who wants to live as God desires, in Christ Jesus, will be persecuted. (2 Timothy 3:10-12 NCV)

**Surrender Prayer** > Jesus told Peter, James, and John, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." Jesus went on a little farther and bowed his face to the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." (Matthew 26:38-39 NLT)

**Tearful Agony** > I am worn out from my groaning. All night long, I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears. My eyes grow weak with sorrow; they fail because of all my foes. Away from me, all you who do evil, for the LORD has heard my weeping. The LORD has heard my cry for mercy; the LORD accepts my prayer. (Psalm 6:6-9 NIV)