

A Very Present Help...

Christians are not promised an easy course in this life. In fact, we are told to expect just the opposite. However, what God does give us is a refuge and a hiding place in the center of the storm. In the midst of trials, these Scriptures are like soothing salve on an open wound. The Lord gives peace. He holds us by the hand and keeps us from slipping. He is still on the throne, and He actually shares in our sorrows. Finally, what fruit can suffering yield in a believer? Let us revel in these kinds of Scriptures, for at some point in our lives we are very likely to need them.

Refuge and Hiding Place

“How often the conflict and pressed by the foe,
Have I fled to my refuge and breathed out my woe.
How often the trials, like sea billows roll.
Have I hidden in Thee, O Thou rock of my soul.”

Author unknown

(Psa 46 KJV) "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. {2} Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; {3} *Though* the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.”

(Regardless of how desperate the circumstances, He is the ever-faithful source of help. What better helper can we have but the omnipotent God of the whole universe?)

(Deu 33:26-27 KJV) "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. {27} The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms:”

(Here, God Himself is riding in heaven in thy help. Welch points out in his excellent “Cities of Refuge” message (W-171) that the original word for eternal here, “qedem,” means to anticipate or go before. The eternal (“qedem”) God is never taken by surprise. What a friend we have in Christ, who can always know what trials are about to strike and prepare the help in advance to uphold us!)

(Psa 33:20 KJV) "Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield.”

(Psa 61:1-4 KJV) "To the chief Musician upon Neginah, *A Psalm* of David. Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. {2} From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. {3} For thou hast been a shelter for me, *and* a strong tower from the enemy. {4} I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever; I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah."

Notice the contrast in the previous verses. God is a high rock and a strong tower from the enemy, because He is our source of great stability and strength. Even so, verse four says that just the *shadow* of His wings is enough to protect me.

(Psa 57 KJV) "... Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast. {2} I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth *all things* for me.

(Psa 63 KJV) "A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. O God, thou *art* my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; {2} To see thy power and thy glory, so *as* I have seen thee in the sanctuary. {3} Because thy lovingkindness *is* better than life, my lips shall praise thee. {4} Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. {5} My soul shall be satisfied as *with* marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise *thee* with joyful lips: {6} When I remember thee upon my bed, *and* meditate on thee in the *night* watches. {7} **Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.** {8} My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me. {9} But those *that* seek my soul, to destroy *it*, shall go into the lower parts of the earth. {10} They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes. {11} But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped."

(Psa 36:5-9 KJV) "Thy mercy, O LORD, *is* in the heavens; *and* thy faithfulness *reacheth* unto the clouds. {6} Thy righteousness *is* like the great mountains; thy judgments *are* a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast. {7} How excellent *is* thy lovingkindness, **O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.** {8} They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. {9} For with thee *is* the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."

The same picture is presented in the next verses, but with the added element of a secret dwelling place in the midst of the storm.

(Psa 91:1-2 KJV) "**He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.** {2} I will say of the LORD, *He is* my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust."

He always provides the hiding place, that hidden place of peace even in the midst of fiery persecutions. Just as the high priest, Jehoiada, protected little Joash in the center of the temple (2 Chron. 22:10-23:15), so our life is safely hid in Christ at all times. The following verses enunciate this point further.

(Col 3:1-4 KJV) "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. {2} Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. {3} For ye are dead, and your **life is hid with Christ in God.** {4} When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

(Psa 32:7-8 KJV) "**Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.** Selah. {8} I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: **I will guide thee with mine eye.**"

(There is the added image here of a servant being "guided by the eye of his master." In a king's court, a servant could be guided wordlessly just by the glance in one direction or another by the king. However, this would only be possible if the servant had his eyes fixed at all times on the king. The Lord can guide us this way also, if we keep our eyes fixed on Him. What a beautiful picture for us to follow.)

(Psa 31:19-20 KJV) "*Oh* how great *is* thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; *which* thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! {20} **Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.**"

(Psa 27 KJV) "*A Psalm* of David. **The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?** the LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? {2} When the wicked, *even* mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. {3} Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this *will* I be confident. {4} **One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.** {5} **For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.** {6} And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD. {7} Hear, O LORD, *when* I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. {8} *When thou saidst*, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek. {9} Hide not thy face *far* from me; put not thy servant away in

anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation. {10} When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up. {11} Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies. {12} Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty. {13} I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. {14} Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD."

Peace

Peace, perfect peace,

In this dark world of sin.

The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.

Peace, perfect peace,

The future all unknown.

Jesus, we know, and He is on the throne.

Author Unknown

The word peace in the Bible carries more to its meaning than simply quietness. There is that element of an account that is settled between two parties. Christ settled our account with God. By sacrificing Himself for our sins, He brought mercy and truth together, and He upheld righteousness while making peace, as these next passages explain. Truly, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Psa 85:9-11 KJV) "Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land. {10} Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. {11} Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven."

(Rom 5:1-5 KJV) "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: {2} By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. {3} And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; {4} And patience, experience; and experience, hope: {5} And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

See the progression in this passage. First, we are redeemed, thereby allowing the cycle to start. Hope in the glory of God allows us to glorify God even in tribulations. Tribulation teaches us patience, and this brings experience. This all leads back to hope, through which the love of God is poured out through the Holy Ghost. It's true that some of the most joyous, mature, vibrant Christians are the ones who have been through unbelievable trials and troubles.

As millions of believers can attest, God will grant amazing peace throughout the most horrendous events if we can wholly lean on Him. The word 'comfort' in English comes from two roots, "com" meaning with or together and "fort" meaning strength. This is true in the Greek also. The word for comfort is "paraklesis" also means "with strength." Therefore, God not only gives us a sense of quiet calmness in the midst of the storm, but He also comes alongside and gives us strength.

(2 Cor 1:3-4 KJV) "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; {4} Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

(Psa 29:11 KJV) "The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace."

(Col 1:20 KJV) "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven."

(Phil 4:7 KJV) "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

(Col 3:14-15 KJV) "And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness. {15} And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."

(John 14:27 KJV) "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

(John 16:33 KJV) "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

(Rom 8:6 KJV) "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

(Rom 15:13 KJV) "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

(Rom 16:20 KJV) "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen."

(How ironic that it is the God of peace who shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly! That is the role of the Kinsman-Redeemer. He saves his nearest of kin, but he is also the avenger of blood.)

(1 Cor 1:3 KJV) "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

(Phil 4:9 KJV) "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."

(2 Th 3:16 KJV) "Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all."

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Deliver my feet from slipping

Lord, be thou near,
The evening shadows fall.
Around my path,
Be thou my stay, my all.
Amid life's maze,
O, guide my helpless feet,
Til in the glory, Lord, Thyself I meet.

Author unknown

(Psa 94:14-19 KJV) "For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance. {15} But

judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it. {16} Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? *or* who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity? {17} Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. {18} When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up. {19} In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul."

(I love verses 17-19. What comfort to think that God Himself will hold me up. He will keep me from being alone. And in all the thousands of thoughts I have through the day, it is His comfort that delights my soul.)

(Psa 56:13 KJV) "For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?"

(Psa 62:1-2 KJV) "To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun, A Psalm of David. Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation. {2} He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved."

(Psa 62:5-8 KJV) "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation *is* from him. {6} He only *is* my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved. {7} In God *is* my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, *and* my refuge, *is* in God. {8} Trust in him at all times; *ye* people, pour out your heart before him: God *is* a refuge for us. Selah."

(1 Cor 15:57-58 KJV) "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. {58} Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

(Psa 73 KJV) "A Psalm of Asaph. Truly God *is* good to Israel, *even* to such as are of a clean heart. {2} But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. {3} For I was envious at the foolish, *when* I saw the prosperity of the wicked. {4} For *there are* no bands in their death: but their strength *is* firm. {5} They *are* not in trouble *as other* men; neither are they plagued like *other* men. {6} Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them *as* a garment. {7} Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. {8} They are corrupt, and speak wickedly *concerning* oppression: they speak loftily. {9} They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth. {10} Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full *cup* are wrung out to them. {11} And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High? {12} Behold, these *are* the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase *in* riches. {13} Verily I have cleansed my heart *in* vain, and washed my hands in innocency. {14} For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. {15} If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend *against* the generation of thy children. {16} When I thought to know this, it *was* too painful for me; {17} Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. {18} Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. {19} How are they *brought* into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors. {20} As a dream when *one* awaketh; *so*, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image. {21} Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins. {22} So foolish *was* I, and ignorant: I was *as* a beast before thee. {23} **Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand.** {24} Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me *to* glory. {25} **Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.** {26} My flesh and my heart faileth: **but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.** {27} For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. {28} But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works."

I love this psalm of Asaph, because it helps keep my perspective clear. At first, Asaph said his feet had *almost* slipped, because he was envious of the wicked who seemed to be without trouble and prospering. Later, he realizes that it is God who has actually held him by the hand all along. Also, in the long run, he sees the destruction of the unredeemed contrasted with his own hope. At that point, everything he has gone through is all worthwhile. This idea is further reinforced with the next passage. Remember the patience of Job and the end of the Lord who is the Great Restorer.

(James 5:10-11 KJV) "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. {11} Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have **seen the end of the Lord;** that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

(Isa 40:28-31 NIV) "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. {29} He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. {30} Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; {31} but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

The LORD is on the throne

When peace like a river attendeth my soul,

When sorrows like sea billows roll;

Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to say,

“It is well, it is well with my soul.”

Horatio Spafford

(Psa 11:3-4 KJV) "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? {4} The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men."

(Psa 46 KJV) " God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. {2} Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; {3} Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

{4} There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. {5} God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. {6} The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.

{7} The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

{8} Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. {9} He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. {10} Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. {11} The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah."

Verses 1-3 speak of the most horrible circumstances, but as Welch points out, the word “Selah” often means, “Look at that; now turn around and look at this.” Though the world is falling apart, at the throne of God there is perfect peace and control. That is why we are told, “Be still, and know that I am God.”

I love these next two passages from Job, because they contain all that we really need to get through whatever trials may come. “I know that my redeemer liveth, and He knoweth the way that I take.”

(Job 19:23-27 KJV) "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! {24} That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! {25} For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: {26} And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: {27} Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

(Job 23:8-10 KJV) "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: {9} On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: {10} But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

The God who shares in our sorrow

“Can we find a friend so faithful?
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
Take it to the Lord in prayer.”

Joseph Scriven

(Psa 103:13-14 KJV) "**Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.** {14} For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."

(John 11:33-36 KJV) "When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, {34} And said, **Where have ye laid him?** They said unto him, Lord, come and see. {35} **Jesus wept.** {36} Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!"

(Psa 116:15 KJV) "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints."

(Job 14:14-15 KJV) "If a man die, shall he live *again*? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. {15} Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

Just as in the case of Lazarus, the dead are raised by the voice of Christ calling their individual names. Also, as Welch points out, there is an even more fantastic aspect to this last verse, which casts a beautiful glimpse of the compassionate, loving nature of our God. When verse 15 says that God will have a ‘desire’ to the work of His hands, the original Hebrew word used is “kasaph” from the word “keseph” meaning silver or to turn pale. The idea is that God Himself, the Omnipotent, Holy Creator of the entire Universe is turning pale with an intense desire for the restoration of his suffering follower. Welch’s words in his booklet “Job” are well worth quoting in their entirety here:

“What Job said was to the effect that so intense was the desire of God for the restoration of the work of His hands, that He “turns pale with the intensity of His feelings” a figure-of-speech truly, but what a figure! Other translations of this same word are “to long sore” for something (Gen.31: 30) as the exile longed for his father’s home, or “to long” even unto fainting, as the believer did for the courts of God’s house (Psa. 84:2). When we think of Job stricken down in body and mind, an awful spectacle to behold, a wreck of a man, bewildered and perplexed, wondering most of all why it should be that God Himself seemed against him, can we not rejoice at such a glimpse of the heart of God, longing more intently than Job’s heart could ever yearn to pour out upon the stricken man His pent-up love and to raise that broken body to more than its original dignity.”

(C.H. Welch, Job p.37)

(Rom 8:26-39 KJV) "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we

ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. {27} And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. {28} And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. {29} For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. {30} Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. {31} What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? {32} He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? {33} Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. {34} Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. {35} Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? {36} As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. {37} Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. {38} For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, {39} Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

There are several wonderful things about this passage. First, notice that the Holy Spirit is groaning with us in our pain, and making intercession *according to God's will* on our behalf. When the children of Israel wandered through their wilderness experience and all its accompanying trials, where was God? He lived in a tent right with them in the very center of the camp. That is where He still is in the believer's tribulations, if we but allow Him that place. If we cling to Him in both our woes and triumphs, then as verse 28 says, good will come out of the circumstances. Notice too, that our sufferings can come to the extreme of being killed all day long as sheep to the slaughter, and of being put through the most horrendous list of sufferings. God's people are not in any wise promised an easy course or a lack of suffering in this life. In fact, we are promised just the opposite. Still, we can always cling to the glorious assurance of His love in Christ and the full hope of complete restoration by the One who hides our life in Christ.

(Heb 4:15-16 KJV) "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin. {16} Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

(Heb 13:5-6 KJV) "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. {6} So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

(1 Pet 5:7 KJV) "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

Why does God allow His People to suffer?

The Flame shall not hurt thee.

My only design,

Thy dross to consume,

And thy gold to refine.

Author Unknown

(1 Pet 4:12-14 KJV) "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange

thing happened unto you: {13} But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. {14} If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified."

Notice that there is nothing strange about being put through fiery trials. We should expect it. But in the end we will be exceedingly glad, for in suffering we can glorify Christ in this life and be glorified with Him in resurrection.

(Rom 8:16-17 KJV) "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: {17} And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

(Psa 17:15 KJV) "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

(1 Cor 10:13 KJV) "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

The word for tempted and temptation in all these passages are variants of the Greek word "peirasmos" which can mean tempted to do evil, but in most of its contexts it means "to try or to test." We know that God never tempts a man to sin as James 1:13 clearly states, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:" But it is a common Scriptural theme that God does allow his people to suffer at times. There are two important essentials of this testing that He allows. First, He promises that He will not test above that which you can bear.

Secondly, does He promise to "make a way to escape" as the KJV puts it? How can you bear it and escape it at the same time? No, the original word for escape here is "ekbasis." This word is used elsewhere in Heb.13:7, and the true meaning is "goal, issue, or to shape the end." (Heb 13:7-8 KJV) "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end (ekbasis: goal) of their conversation. {8} Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

Therefore, a truer paraphrase would be that He will not test you above that which you are able, but in so doing He will show you the reason or goal of such trials. Then, by seeing the reason for the suffering, you would be able to bear it. This point is covered in depth in the audio W-510, "Why did this happen to me?" by C.H. Welch, available on this web site.

(James 1:12-13 KJV) "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

(1 Pet 1:6-7 KJV) "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: {7} That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:"

(Welch points out that the phrase "if need be" means "for a reason." Therefore, all different kinds of trials occur for a season and for a reason. What is that reason? Verse seven says it is so that our faith may be refined like gold, and we may bring praise, honor, and glory to God at Christ's appearing.)

(Job 23:10 KJV) "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

(Rev 2:10 KJV) "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

(Rev 7:14-17 KJV) "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. {15} Therefore are they before

the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. {16} They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. {17} For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Conclusion

God is my Father,
Christ is my Savior,
Heaven is my home.

Trouble will come in this life,

(John 16:33 KJV) "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

But He will never forsake you.

(Psa 121:1-5 NIV) " I lift up my eyes to the hills-- where does my help come from? {2} My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. {3} He will not let your foot slip-- he who watches over you will not slumber; {4} indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. {5} The LORD watches over you-- the LORD is your shade at your right hand;"

(Psa 9:10 NIV) "Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you."

He'll provide peace in the midst of the storm,

(Isa 26:3-4 KJV) "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. {4} Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:"

And we always have the hope that the best is yet to be.

(Rom 8:18 KJV) "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

(Psa 30:5 KJV) "For his anger *endureth but* a moment; in his favour *is* life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

(Psa 16:11 NIV) "**You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.**"

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