



The God of all comfort

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God." 2Cor1:3-4.

Suffering can come in many forms, sometimes its emotional pain, sometimes physical or a combination of both of these. It can be caused by a variety of reasons, grief, terminal illness or chronic illness, broken relationships, financial struggles, or believers are sometimes persecuted for their faith in Christ. For some the suffering may last for a lifetime and there seems to be no end to it. Many believers suffer great emotional or physical pain and their dreams are shattered and broken, their spirit feels crushed. As believers it's good to know and remember that we are in the hands of **the God of all Comfort**.

The apostle Paul in his writings mentions many trials, troubles and a great deal of suffering in his life; and all whilst he was serving God. Even in his old age he was beaten with rods, flogged, shipwrecked, he describes himself as being in many perils on his missionary journeys. He also describes his weariness, pain, hunger, thirst and nakedness. In addition to all the physical pain he also suffered great emotional pain too, 2 Corinthians v23-28; yet in 2 Corinthians ch 1 v 3 he says; *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.* Paul praises God because he is able to experience God's comfort in his suffering and trials. When he says; *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort*, He knows that God is with him and will never leave him or forsake him in his hour of need. This experience that Paul writes about is true of all believers in Christ. If we have submitted our life to Christ in repentance and faith and are true followers of Christ, we can be fully assured of this, that the Lord is with us in our times of deepest distress. As God is our comforter we can be assured that the God who put the stars in place, the creator of heaven and earth, hears our cries of pain and distress. In Christ, he identifies with our distress as he himself was known as the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Isaiah ch 53 v 3.

Romans ch 8 v35-39, reminds us that nothing in all of creation can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. v35 *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?* v38 *For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

In other words; **No amount of suffering can separate us from the love of God.**

Our Father God is the father of compassion and the God of *all* comfort. How will we manage on our own when we go through the deep waters of trial and the waves seem to be over our heads? How will we cope when the flames of our affliction are scorching us? If God we're not with us, we would surely sink and drown, we would be consumed in the fire. But if we belong to the father of compassion and the God of all comfort, Christ is at our side to carry us through the waters - and he prevents the fire from burning us. Our Saviour suffered more than any other. He suffered more than we can ever imagine. His anguish of soul and body was truly terrible. He therefore understands our pain and He has promised never to leave us nor forsake us. Hebrews ch13 v 5.

We may not always understand why our suffering is necessary and the reasons can be many, but one reason Paul makes clear in these verses is; *that we can comfort each other with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.* As believers, we who have known the compassion and comfort of Christ, are able to comfort others around us who are suffering. As Christ identifies with us in our suffering, so we who have received Christ's comfort are able to comfort those who are suffering too. We are able to reach out and offer words of hope and support to strengthen our brothers and sisters who are struggling with various trials and infirmities of body mind and spirit. Also, as other believers around us see us standing strong and firm in our faith in times of deep pain and distress, it can be a tremendous encouragement to them to seek that same help and strength from God in their times of suffering.

Therefore, let us embrace **the God of all comfort** as we endure all our trials, afflictions and sufferings, knowing that there is no other source of strength in this world that can be drawn upon that will keep us strong and true, other than that which is found in our Saviour Jesus Christ the Lord.