

Why God's Children Suffer

by Pastor Cornelius R. Stam

Contrary to common belief, the Bible does not teach that all men are the children of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ said to the religious leaders of His day: "Ye are of your father the devil"

John 8:44 KJV *"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."*

but to the Christian believers at Galatia the Apostle Paul wrote: "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus"

Galatians 3:26 KJV *"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."*

As the children of Adam, it is not strange that we should have to bear suffering; for sorrow, sickness and death entered the world through sin.

Romans 5:12 KJV *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"*

But some people wonder why God's children, whose greatest desire is to please Him, should have to suffer along with others.

There are several reasons for this. In the case of Job, God allowed His servant to suffer to prove to Satan that Job did not live a godly life for personal gain — but Job was richly rewarded later for all he had borne. As every believer who trusts in Christ will be also.

Further, God's people could not be of much spiritual help to others if they were exempt from the sufferings which others have to bear. In such a case the unsaved would say: "Yes, you can talk! You don't know what it is to suffer disappointments, sickness and pain, as we do."

Then too, it must be remembered that even the godliest saint is not perfect and sins.

Finally, suffering and adversity tend to make God's children pray more and lean harder on Him, and herein lies their spiritual strength and blessing. The Apostle Paul said: "I take pleasure in infirmities... for when I am weak, then am I strong"

2nd Corinthians 12:10 KJV "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

But there is a great twofold advantage which the suffering Christian has over others. First, his sufferings are only temporary and, second, they earn eternal glory for him.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2nd Cor. 4:17).