

## PERSECUTED FOR CHRIST

Persecuted for Him? The Apostle Peter, a Jew, suffered for Christ's sake. From his own experience, and used of the Holy Spirit, he wrote 1 Peter 1:1-8, etc., to the scattered ones (because of persecution for Christian testimony), and to you too.

It is impossible to understand some happenings of life. Many circumstances grieve and disturb us. Complexities of today's life bear down upon us, and leave us fearful. We are told to look unto our Lord and to cast all our "care upon Him, for He careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7). When we cast our burden upon the Lord, the promise is given that He will sustain or help us (Psalms 55:22). This means He will give us grace and ability to endure and to rise above, and possibly see the problems corrected. You are urged to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, to obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

The actions and failures of other people can cause difficulty in many ways. Still the Christian is told to "be kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32). We are to remember that Christ died for the sins of everyone, and we are to be an epistle (letter) known and read of all men (2 Cor. 3:2). Thru our lives we are to show the love of God in action (James 1:22). It isn't easy, but it is pleasing to God (1 Cor. 10:33). The lesson of Acts 4:13 is very pertinent.

There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother (Prov. 18:24). "God showed His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners (unlovely and unlikeable), Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). The Messianic Psalm 22 gives us some understanding of what the Lord Jesus endured for us. "Forsaken and far from help" (v. 1), "despised" (v. 6) "none to help" (v. 11), "compassed and enclosed" (v. 16). In Isaiah 53:3 His aloneness is described very vividly. Because He was so tried, He is able to succor, comfort and help all who come unto Him through faith. See Hebrews 2:18; 4:15, 16. The Apostle Paul also experienced aloneness. See 2 Tim. 4:16. Yet he reminds us of the One who will never leave, nor forsake - Who never changes (Heb. 13:5, 8). The loneliest person in the world (who knows Christ as Savior) has a blessed promise - "I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). Ours is indeed a most glorious hope.