

## THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION



David Wilkerson March 31, 2016

“If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. 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” (Romans 8:17–18). The apostle Paul is saying that in light of the glory that awaits him, what is his trial in comparison?

Likewise, he wants us to turn our eyes from our present sufferings and focus on what is coming, which will change everything. One minute into our new home in eternity, Paul says, we won’t remember what came before. His point is to start praising now, rejoicing over the joy that awaits us. “By him [Jesus] therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name” (Hebrews 13:15).

God has chosen those “refined . . . not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction” (Isaiah 48:10). The people to whom Isaiah offered this vision of a new world had just endured the fury of a raging enemy. Now they were reeling from their tribulation, bound by fear and weariness. They felt that God had forsaken them, and they were afraid of what the future held.

So what word did God send them? It’s the same word he gives his people today: “Wake up! You are not undone, as you think. The Lord, your strength, is still with you. So, get up out of the dust of discouragement, and sit down in the heavenly place I have promised you. You have not lost your righteousness, so put on your robe. Shake yourself, talk to yourself, give yourself a lecture. And tell the flesh and the devil, ‘I am more than a conqueror through him who saved me’” (Isaiah 52:1–3, paraphrased).

“And I will . . . refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God” (Zechariah 13:9).

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