

## **Suffering and Our Deepest Desire**

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Suffering is a word not spoken in many Christian circles today. It is dismissed as an after effect of disobedience or sin. However scripture is replete with examples of suffering apart from any kind of transgression we may have committed.

Before we can examine why suffering occurs we must define how suffering is normally seen. Suffering is manifested on several levels. It can be physical in nature, which might manifest itself in ways like sickness, disease, persecution, and or various trials. Suffering can also manifest it self mentally like depression, oppression, confusion, and doubt.

Now all aspects of suffering both physical and mental are only a small part of what it truly means to suffer. Although they get all the headlines these two are not the only game in town. So what kind of suffering can bring us to the brink and not involve something physical or mental? The answer is spiritual.

Inside each of us is a longing that tugs at us everyday. From the moment we awake we are longing for something and that something is Yahweh our Father. When we were born again, we were changed and that which was dead has come to life. But, we were only half complete. Suffering teaches us our desire for Yahweh and we spend the rest of our lives exploring His desire for us. This flies in the face of the better life of blessing, but it makes more sense when suffering is understood in the light of the better hope which we have spoken of before.

Yeshua is our primary example of the man of suffering. Isaiah 53:3 states: "that He was a man of sorrows acquainted with grief". Yeshua wept, was angry, and he groaned in the spirit, but nowhere in the scripture is it record where He pursued a happy go lucky life filled with blessing. We do know this however "He learned obedience by the things He suffered" according to Hebrews 5:8.

We know that he suffered both physically and mentally, but He also suffered like no other spiritually. Whether in the garden praying that the Father's will be done, or on the cross where His humanity was separated from the Father, Yeshua knew suffering as a way of life.

We must see suffering in the same way, not as something strange or unusual, but as a part of a life given in obedience to Yahweh Father. There is a price to be paid for deep fellowship with our Creator. For you see, we are not alone in our spiritual longing to be made whole. Roman 8:22 tells us that all of creation "groans and labors" because it suffers. Why, because it wishes to be restored to its former state. Now we experience the same thing according to Roman 8:23, that says that we "eagerly wait for adoption and redemption with groaning" We suffer daily according to I Peter 4:19. Our suffering is not only physical, but is spiritual. We groan inside longing for the new body and to be closer to Him.

When everything else is stripped away there is only Yahweh and it's at this place you come to the crossroads of the ancient path.

When our loved ones are struck down with pain and suffering we are not only brought to our knees, but driven into the arms of Yeshua. We are encouraged to cast all our cares on Him, giving Him all our thoughts and feelings. John 16:33 says "that in the world we have trials, tribulations, distress, and frustration; but be of good cheer, take courage and be confident that Yeshua has overcome the world". He is our first love and our one true desire, provided we surrender to Him.

So now we have a picture of a people longing to be made complete in every way, but this longing is felt more deeply in the spirit. This is the great hope we have in Yeshua. Knowing this, He has made a provision for us in the form of His Holy Spirit. Scripture tells us the Holy Spirit was sent as our Comforter according to Acts 9:31. The Comforter groans for us as he makes intercession with words we cannot utter.

We all suffer more deeply than we realize, but we mask it with things, ideas, and games. I challenge you to sit alone in silence for more than five minute and let your true state sink in. Let your first love be manifest.