

# DECEMBER CAMP MEETING 2011

## SELF PRESERVATION

(Vol 1)

*By Burt ASBILL*

### PROPHECY:

Thus saith the Lord, *I come in severe judgment against them that have worked iniquity. For nothing unholy shall come into my presence, for as many as work in unrighteousness, they have no portion with me, for I give you yet another chance to draw near, that you might behold my glory, that you might know of my forgiveness, for indeed I go down, back to generations past and I desire that I might bring you out of the pit, that I might bring you to the place of light, for so long have you dwelt in darkness, but this is the hour that the light of my glory might shine upon you, therefore do not hesitate for I have come to break every hard heartedness, and I will do justly to him that responds to me in justice. Therefore I encourage you, open up your hearts that I might fill you, come to me, come to me with your whole hearts and I shall visit thee...* (Bro Isaac).

### PROPHECY:

The Lord says: *He is holy and those that worship Him must be holy. He says we should take off our shoes, for the ground we stand upon is holy. (Shoes could mean different things to different people and the Lord is saying take off your shoes... (Sis Tonye)*

### PRAYER:

LORD we bless your name this morning; we turn our hearts to you and ask that you consecrate us. Lord touch us. Do a surgery in our hearts this morning, take away the parts that need to be taken away. You said in your word that, You will not just shake the earth but You will shake both the earth and the heavens; that the things that are shakable, the things that are temporal, might be taken away. We come to you Lord, the way we are. Lord we come confessing this morning that our hearts are hardened. We come willingly to you Lord, we ask for a brokenness of heart. You said your word will come like a hammer to break down the walls. Lord, break down the hardness that is in our hearts and give us that heart of flesh where your laws can be written.

*Lord, bring about a change in us. Lord come in your glory to those whose hearts are made up, those who are ready and willing to work with you. Lord we ask that you do a work in our midst today. Touch and deal with our rebellion, for we are a rebellious people. Let your word not fall on rocky hearts but let our hearts be made fertile, that as your word comes, it might germinate and bring forth fruit, not just thirty or sixty, but a hundred fold. Help us oh Lord and bring us and our children to the realm where we can hear and receive your word. Not just to receive but that we might walk in it.*

*We bless you this morning. Anoint us with that anointing that will break the yolk; deal with the yolk and covering of hell over our minds. Lord we ask for an understanding of your word, let there be a depth, we confess that we see shallowness in our hearts. Lord deal with the confidence that we have that is not of you, deal with the confidence that we have that is from the pit of hell, deal with that confidence in me that says "I know the Lord" meanwhile I do not know the lord, deal with it Lord. Open the doors of heaven unto us this morning. Let the door of my heart be opened to you.*

*Lord we bless you; we bless our brother as he comes with the word. We bind you spirits that have come to resist the word of the Lord. You that have sneaked in and have said "I will resist them". The Lord rebuke you this morning, you will not be able to resist us. We come by the Spirit of the Lord and clear the atmosphere. Thank you father, blessed be your name. We exalt you lord, we pray, in Jesus name ... .. (Bro Cas).*

## WE NEED TO FEAR GOD:

I think that when God starts to reveal himself, we will be fearfully and exceedingly surprised. When John saw the unveiled Christ, he fell, as a man dead. When God came down upon the mountain in the wilderness, it shook and thundered and lightened up in such a grave way that the children of Israel were afraid for their lives. I think sometimes we treat God very presumptuously. The Jews in the beginning would not even mention His name, for the fear that was upon them, concerning the reality of who He is. I think we need to learn the fear God. I believe that one way we can get to know the fear of God is, if we ask God to reveal Himself to us, as long as we are ready and willing to take the consequences of that revelation or that unveiling. The cry and burning desire in the heart of every believer, every one that desires to come into fullness, as a son of God, should be the desire to see God. Moses wanted to see God, and he wanted to see God in the fullness of whom and what God was. God told Moses at that particular time, 'you cannot see Me as you want to see Me, for if you see Me, you shall die'. I do not believe the context of God has changed. The reverence of the holiness of His being, the righteousness of who and what He is, the power that is there to destroy by virtue of its purity has certainly not changed. We are saying that we want the kingdom of God to come. I do not believe that we really know what we are asking for. Have you ever thought of the ability of purity to destroy? Right now we are living under the rule of unrighteousness. This means you can do what you want to do, be what you want to be, think what you want to think, certainly, there is a consequence to it, but the aspect of change or restraint, is basically left up to you. There is no external force that is governing, leading, harnessing, coercing, and pushing you to do that which is right. Does that give you an idea or some understanding of what it would mean to be under the rule of righteousness? It will be a situation where your very thoughts are observed , monitored and the Spirit of correction (the Holy Spirit) will always be working in the arena of your life. It will be a condition where we will be scrutinized totally and absolutely. Halleluiah!

There was a little demonstration of this, in Jesus' interaction with the Pharisees and the disciples. They would say something and he would perceive what was in their hearts and could read their thoughts. Can you imagine living under that type of governorship? We have difficulty now; how much more then. When God puts his finger on something in our lives, we have difficulty with it and our reactions to whatever it may be, is not always just , righteous or godly. We chafe, we sometimes throw fits, and we bawl and howl because of the minuscule pressure of righteousness that God applies to our soul.

I had an experience recently that got me thinking about this. You know I pray, as I'm sure you do 'thy kingdom come, thy will be done in this earth as it is in heaven'. I have begun to find out that I do not know the implications of what I am praying for. It says in Malachi 3:2 *But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap v 3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness v 4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years.*

The Lord is asking us, who? I repeat, who, shall abide the day of his appearing? The messenger of the covenant referred to in this passage is Jesus Christ. There was the necessity for a message to go out, proceeding the coming of Jesus Christ. It was a fragment or a piece, it was a little part of a whole message. The word that was being brought, was for repentance. And as it was then, so must it also be now. We cannot come into the fullness of Jesus Christ without first realizing the place of the weakness and predominant position of the flesh and the need to repent of it, in all its ramifications.

## REVELATION CHAPTER THREE

It is my personal belief that the message to the churches in the book of Revelation pertains to the various pieces or articles that were found in the tabernacle (*the brazen altar, the brazen lava, the lamp stand, the table of shew bread and the golden altar of incense*). It is also my personal belief that we are presently somewhere between the lamp stand, the table of shewbread and the golden alter of incense.

Yet it seems that much of the work of sanctification that should have been done and completed in the outer court, has not yet come to a place of completeness; thereby creating a dilemma for those of us, who have a revelation and understanding of what it is that God is desiring and where it is that he wants us to be.

**THE DILEMMA IS THAT WE COULD MISS IT.** Israel was looking for the Messiah. Israel did not think they would miss the Messiah. Do you know that with all of their knowledge, wisdom and understanding of the scripture they missed HIM? Brethren Israel missed the Messiah! Jesus stood on the side of the hill and looked over Jerusalem and he wept. Jesus was weeping over the house of Israel because he knew the consequences of their actions, he was weeping over the fact that they missed the opportunity of His visitation.

*John 9:24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner. v 25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. v 26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? v 27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples? v 28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples 29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.*

**Do you think that in this time, we His people who have heard this word, preached this word, prophesied this word, and who sing praise and songs of adoration in the aspect of this word, at this time of the dispensation of 'the fullness of time', when the visitation of God is again coming to the church. Do you not think that we are standing in the same dispensation and have the same potential of missing the reality of that appearing?**

### **GOD'S DISPLEASURE:**

I do not know and do not want to know ,what your personal life is, nor do I know or want to know your position of dedication to the Lord, but what I do know, is that God is not happy with the end time church (*myself inclusive* ). In Revelation 3 God brought a word of rebuke to every one of the churches. None of those churches was measuring up to a position of perfection. Somewhere along the line, from the very beginning something happened in the relationship of the people, which made up the church. Whatever the thing was, whether it was life in general or whether it was the revelation of the business that goes with church, I do not know. Paul said neither 'death' nor 'life' will separate us from the love of God. Have you ever taught about how 'life' has the power to separate you from the love of God? The thing that is supposed to give you life often becomes the thing that kills you. How unfortunate. And if you do not think that that is a spiritual principle THEN YOU ARE MISTAKEN. Romans 7:10 *And the commandment, which was **ordained to life**, I found to be unto death.*

### **THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERING:**

I do not desire to have too much revelation but I do know one thing. I WANT TO KNOW JESUS and I realize that I have to want to know him, in a certain way. I do not want to know Jesus for the power and the authority it will give me. I do not want to be like the disciples arguing over which throne they were going to sit on, or what crown one or the other would wear. I do not want to make crowns or thrones my business. My business, my responsibility, my position of liability in the accumulation of assets from the Lord, lies in my ability to know him and if I want to know Him, I have to know the fellowship of his suffering. Initially, I never thought of suffering as a fellowship. I thought suffering was something you need to be delivered from or something you had to be healed off. I thought suffering was something you cure with having money in the bank. **Brethren I realize now that if I want to know Jesus, I have to know his suffering. Not only do I have to know his suffering I have to be conformed.** (*Pressed, compacted, and squeezed into something that you would naturally not fit into*). To be conformed to his image, means to be confirmed to his death. The pathway of being conformed is strewn with bones and carcasses of many who have thought that they could approach God in presumption or irreverently (*remember N(ahab and Abihu)*).

God needs sons that are conformed to His image. It is important that if I tell you that God said something to me. Then I must ensure that my life is conformed to the image of Him, whom I say I am speaking for (*suffering inclusive*). There has to be evidence in my life that God is really talking to me. The evidence may not necessarily be something that can be seen physically immediately, but it should be visible at some point in time. Paul said he bore in his body the marks of his conformity to Jesus Christ. Paul could say with confidence that there had been a process of sanctification, a process of justification that was working in his life (*for though he was an apostle he was also once a chief sinner*). Little did Paul know on his way to Damascus that he will spend a major portion of his life in prison. Little did he know that what he had dished out to the church of God will be ministered back to him. Little did he know that at the end of the day, instead of a position of preeminence within the religious, pharisaical system of church, he will have his head chopped off on a block in Rome. He lamented to some degree in one of his books when he said ‘I am a man born out of due season’ what did he mean by that statement? He meant that he had a revelation. He might even have looked down through time and he must have seen us all, he must have seen that which was to come from the fruits of his labor, and he willingly took the decision to allow himself to be conformed in such an agonizing manner. Halleluiah.

### **EXPENDEBILITY:**

**To be expendable means to be spent.** Paul demonstrated the reality of not accepting the hope of a better resurrection. Paul could have easily circumvented his place or position by not going to Rome, but he had a destiny to fulfill, a goal to achieve and that goal was the manifestation of the sons of God in due time. In the position of the operation of that revelation, Paul came to a conclusion and he was willing to be expendable. We must all answer this important question? Are you expendable? You know it is very easy to find out? Ask God to demonstrate your expendability. Let him start by touching your bank account, then your health, then let Him move from your health to your family, then to your reputation. When he gets through with that, he begins to delve into those areas of your life/heart that are hidden.

I tell you the story of a young man which gives us a good example of expendability .This young man of 28 years had a burden for the American Indians (*Brethren we need to pay attention*). Do you know that we are going to be judged by some of the actions of these saints who have gone before us? He had a serious impediment: tuberculosis in the advanced stages. Yet he willingly expended himself for those Indians. History has it, that there was a night he had such a burden for the drunkenness, idolatry, fornication, debauchery and wickedness that went on in their midst. He went to out into the camp of the Indians in the freezing cold (*the snow was up to his chest*) and knelt down and began to pray. He prayed all night. In the morning when he arose from that place, there was a place in the snow that had been melted out from the heat of his body. The man died at 28. Now that is expendability. Church history is full of the record of people who have expended themselves totally and absolutely, even without the compensation of seeing the actuality of the reward or fruits of their labor. **We are a people who are standing on the premises and on the threshold of actually seeing the reality of it (*the fruit*), yet our position or place of commitment is nowhere near theirs.**

### **THERE IS A PRICE TO BE PAID:**

We need to examine ourselves. **We must determine what we really believe, what it is that we desire and what it is that we are willing to expend for it? Is it thirty, sixty or a hundred fold?** If I were to ask, which category do you want to be in? Your answer sure will be hundred fold. In the story of the two disciples that came to Jesus Christ, one wanted to seat on the right and the other on the left. Jesus asked them a very interesting question. ARE YOU WILLING? Their answer and I am sure ours also will be “we are willing to do anything Lord”. The disciples at that time did not yet know what type of cup they would be required to drink. They thought Jesus was going to move into the position of physical preeminence in Israel and they were going to be his henchmen or joint chief of staff. DO YOU KNOW? NOT ONE OF THEM (*APART FROM JOHN*) DIED OF NATURAL CAUSES. SOME WERE BEHEADED, OTHERS BURNT ALIVE, ONE WAS DRAGGED BY A HORSE THROUGH THE STREETS UNTILL HIS BODY BEGAN TO FALL APART PIECE BY PIECE.

History records that Peter because of his transgression of denying the lord at the point of dying, had determined to pay a price to recompense his treasonous action of denying the Lord. It is said of him, that he did not consider himself worthy to be crucified in the same position as the Lord Jesus Christ and he requested his persecutors to crucify him upside down. Isn't to be crucified bad enough? But Peter was determined to go one step further. I can't even begin to imagine such a commitment brethren.

### **THE BODY OF DEATH:**

The Romans invented a horrendous system of destruction for men who were condemned to death by their judicial system. The man who was condemned to death will be taken and a dead body will be strapped on his back. The dead body after a day's few would begin to decay and excrete fluids which begin slowly, to eat up the body of the living man. What a painful and horrible way to die. This is only a small indication of the nature of the one (the devil) who gave the Romans such a horrid the idea. Paul used this to illustrate the principle of the old and the new man as it pertains to us as believers. Paul said it this way "who shall deliver me from this body of death". What was he talking about? He was talking about the carcass of his old (Saul) nature that was strapped to the back of his new (Paul) nature and he cried for deliverance. Our cry should be much louder.

### **GOD'S ANGUISH:**

**There is anguish and grief in the heart of God over the present condition of the Holy place church.** God suffers because we carry His Spirit. Everything you do or action you take, everywhere you go you take God with you. Every thought that is inconsistent with righteousness, every action that is contrary to God's character, you take God in to the midst of it with you and He feels the burden of your sin. Oh how grievous! Remember the expression "crucifying the son of God afresh". **We by our thoughtless and sinful deeds crucify the Lord Jesus Christ again, and again and again. We must repent!**

### **THERE IS A PRICE TO PAY:**

The book of revelation is not a book that is written for the world out there. It is a book that is written to the end time Church. A church that through the ages has been laboring and walking and dyeing. In Hebrews we read about 'those that have gone on before us', not accepting deliverance. Brethren, we have a responsibility! We live in the age where the church has the responsibility to show principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God. The cloud of witnesses is looking at us, depending on us! They are looking at us in our defeats or victories; they are looking at us in our failure and in our abject humanity of sin. And they have paid such a price! They are putting their hopes upon us .The dead saints from the beginning of creation to the crucifixion of Jesus, up until these times are putting their hope upon you brethren. And we take them with us into sin. God have mercy! Do you know that the greater the knowledge you have, the greater awareness of what it is that you possess? The greater the understanding of the revelation that I have, the greater the consequence for me. The greater the consequence and jeopardy I have , the greater the condemnation that is upon me, if I for one moment forget my calling?

### **TAKE HEED TO THYSELF:**

And how do I forget my calling? When I forget that I am not my own, I forget my calling. Brethren you are not your own. I AM BOUGHT WITH A PRICE, I CANNOT GO TO THE BEACH, I CANNOT BUY A CAR, I CANNOT BUY A NEW SET OF CLOTHES UNLESS I HAVE PERMISSION, UNLESS I HAVE A REALEASE. I CANNOT GET ON A PLANE, I CANNOT ATTEND A FUNERAL, I CANNOT ATTEND A WEDDING OR A PARTY.I CANNOT SPEND MY MONEY AS I WANT TO SPEND IT. IT IS NOT MINE, TO SPEND! I AM BOUGHT WITH A PRICE. When I am reviled, I have no right to revile again, when I am accused, I should not defend myself, and I must stand as he stood, as a sheep dumb before his shearers. Halleluiah!

**I know this point will be hard for you to take in, for you Nigerians have a very aggressive nature. You get very defensive and agitated and you get very aggressive in your defense and agitations.**

Your women are strong, it is almost as if they are walking around with a placard with the inscription “don’t tread on me” written on it. Brethren you must put this your assertive nature on the plumb line of the nature of Christ. (1Pe 3:4 *But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*)

**Another thing you need to consider brethren is your drive for more and more education.** You are also very proud of your intellect. You are probably one of the most educated people in the world. For you guys, one degree hardly seems enough. You are always going back to school to get more and more education. Doctor so and so. Doctor, Professor so and so. What could the motive be? Is it so you can get a better salary, better house better clothes or position or is it to get more prestige? Most of you have already have set ideas about where your children will school (if the Lord tarries). Jer 45:5 *And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.*

Brethren it is out of my love for you that I point out these things. I have spent the last 25 years of my life coming here? That is proof of my love so I must tell you. **YOU ARE ON THE VERGE OF MISSING IT. YOU ARE ON THE VERGE OF MISSING OUT OF GODS PURPOSE FOR SENDING YOU HIS WORD OF SONSHIP.** LET ME REMIND YOU INCASE YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN. GOD IS GOING TO HAVE ONE CHURCH AND THAT CHURCH IS GOING TO BE A BODY OF BELIEVERS, UNDER SUBJECTION TO THE HEAD; JESUS CHRIST.

### THE SOLUTION:

WE MUST LEARN TO PUT OURSELVES ASIDE. The Lord came to me last year and told me categorically ‘if you do not come up higher you are a dead man’. The solution brethren, is to get up higher in God. **AND HOW CAN YOU CLIMB HIGHER? BY DYING TO SELF. YOU CAN CLIMB HIGHER BY USING YOUR DEAD BODY (death to self) AS A LADDER TO WALK UP INTO GOD.**

I don’t want angels descending to me but I want to ascend up into mount Zion. Halleluia! I can only achieve this brother, if I am making sure that my body is being brought into a place of subjection to the Holy Ghost and to the blood of Jesus Christ. I must bury self and when my body (self) is buried I must make sure he stays buried. It is not my responsibility to bury any other. It is my responsibility to bury myself. (1Co 9:27 *But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway*). It is NOT my business to make sure you are dead; it is my business to make sure I am dead.

**Dying to self is not something I can do in my own strength** .(The scriptures say works without faith is dead) **It is by knowing the Lord, seeking His face, in fasting, prayer and in the study of the word. As we do, this by the work and direction of His Spirit, He begins to walk out “selflessness” in us and we become vessels meet for the master’s use. AMEN.**

### Scriptural references:

A) Ps 34:10 *The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing* B) Pr 28:5 *Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things.*C) Am 5:4 *For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live:.* D) Ho 10:12 *Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.*E) Dan 9:3 *And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:* F) 2Ti 2:21 *If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.* G) Ac 6:4 *But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.* H) 2Ti 2:11 *It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: v 12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:* I) "I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ... for his body's sake which is the church.....to be continued

## IT PAYS TO REMEMBER

### THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERING:

The phrase - "the sufferings of Christ" is a comprehensive one, and goes far beyond anything of which we know. It embraces a whole realm of suffering in which we have no share. **We are not called to be partners in the atoning suffering of Christ. This we should recognise and settle once for all.** So often the adversary seeks to relate in our minds our sufferings and our sins, and thereby to undermine the work of Christ in our hearts. In a very dangerous and evil book which is being circulated in various languages the writer makes the statement with emphasis that we must all atone for our sin, even after we have become Christians. This is a lie of Satan. There is all the difference between the chastening (child-training) of the Father in love, and judgment under condemnation for sin. Let it be realised that "a full atonement He(Jesus) hath made", and we have no place or share in the sufferings which were endured in that work.

**BUT THERE IS ANOTHER REALM OF HIS SUFFERINGS IN WHICH WE MAY PARTICIPATE, NOT FOR OUR SALVATION, BUT IN OUR VOCATION.** These sufferings have numerous forms and aspects, and we can only touch upon a very few here. We will divide them into two, the inward and the outward.

**The Inward and Hidden Sufferings of Christ:** In Heb. 2:18 we are told that - "he himself... suffered being tempted." So that we are given to understand that being tempted was one line along which Christ suffered. Some of those temptations are patent, but the suffering was deeper than we can know because there was so much more involved for Him than can ever be for us. And yet we may know something of this.

**For example, how persistently was our Lord tempted to order His conduct in self-interest.** From the ordeal in the wilderness to the last moments on the Cross it was "save thyself". The quick road, the easy road, the popular road; this was the way into which He was ever being pressed. The way of the Father's will was other than this. It was the way of patience, of difficulty, of loneliness. The very nature of the purpose which governed Him ran entirely counter to Adam's quick and cheap-success way with its snare of a lost Divine destiny. He had come to reverse in man that way and that propensity. There was a terrific atmosphere against that Divine way, and the antagonism, loneliness, and universal insensibility to the heavenly nature of things pressed in upon Him so terribly that no merely passive attitude was possible. He had to fight through the pressure of suggestion and coercion. "He suffered... being tempted."

**He was tempted to avoid personal inconvenience; to disarm misunderstanding and offence; to compromise so that unnecessary (?) alienation of sympathy would be eliminated.** It was no moral suffering to Him to meet this kind of temptation, but the temptation so often came through channels that made it very painful for Him. One of the inner company, a most intimate disciple and friend, would in these things misunderstand Him so utterly and "mind the things which be of men, and not the things which are of God", thus serving Satan to turn Him subtly and "lovingly" from the path of suffering set before Him. It is suffering when the nearest on earth, failing to understand the demands of devotion to the Father, uses the persuasion of human love and solicitude to effect an alternative course!

**He was tempted to further His cause by world means and methods.** A descent from a high eminence into the midst of the crowd would make a great impression. It would draw attention. It would be a sensation. It would be like coming out of heaven. The people would be captured and His position would be established. That such suggestions - which doubtless returned at other times of possible success - should have been made to one who was here for God's pleasure was in itself pain. There was no need for there to be anything in Him which responded to such suggestions. The suggestions themselves were things of moral and spiritual pain, and to be in an atmosphere where they abounded was to Him horrible.

**He was tempted to make policy a governing factor;** what the religious world would think and say. What was the accepted thing; the thing that was done? This was impressed upon Him by His own brethren (see John 7). Well, He came into our temptations; "tempted in all points like as we", and in some way which we do not understand, it was suffering to Him.

There are sufferings which are peculiarly and most deeply the lot of those who have paid a great price in their abandonment to a divinely given vision and purpose. The pain of this kind of trial was, and is, suffered most in secret.

**The Outward Sufferings of Christ:** As God's Son and the heavenly seed, Christ was a marked man. There was, therefore, an antagonism to Him in the very air, where the "prince of the power of the air" has his seat. Men became involved and were influenced in spite of themselves. So far as they were concerned it was so often unreasonable and undeserved. As someone has put it, they were just the Devil's catapults. He just could not be right, whatever He said or did. At one time He was too humble, only the carpenter's son. At another time He was too great and superior. His good was misunderstood and distorted. It would seem that He was not going to be given a chance of being right. If at any time one who had taken on the popular prejudice did really make some honest inquiry the whole thing was exploded and revealed to be fake. "**He was reviled**", "**He suffered**". Many more ways are recognizable as parts of this hostility.

**Let us remember that all who are Christ's will suffer in this way. They are marked people because they are of "the seed royal" and back of all reason and human good sense there is that which makes the best amongst men almost irresponsible for their words and deeds. It is "the fellowship of his sufferings".**

**But let us remember that "he was made perfect through sufferings." He was perfect in nature, but that nature was brought out to perfect fullness through sufferings. We, through suffering with Him, will be perfected into His likeness, conformed to His image.**

#### **Scriptural references :**

*A) "That I may know him and... the fellowship of his sufferings" (Phil. 3:10). B. (Col. 1:24)."...to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings." C) (Heb. 2:10)."...he himself hath suffered being tempted." D) (Heb. 2:18).d)"...if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye shall take it patiently, this is acceptable (grace) with God." E)"For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered... leaving you an example..." F) "When he suffered he threatened not."(1 Pet. 2:20,21,23). G)"Forasmuch then as Christ suffered in the flesh, arm ye yourselves also with the same mind." "...insomuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings..." (1 Pet. 4:1,12,13).*

**....Austin T Sparks**