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## Persecution, Affliction, and Supplication



**Part 53** (071111AM)

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Every day there are more voices around Christ's Throne in Heaven, more saints who kneel raising the fragrant worship of praise to God, and more redeemed lives who bless the Name of their Redeemer. Because

### Worshippers Increase Daily In Heaven

One of the avenues of enlarging the worshippers of Heaven is through the martyrdom of saints. More believers have died for their faith in the last hundred years than have died for Christ in the other 1,900 years since the Cross.

This morning we are setting aside to remember Christ's saints who are suffering and dying around the world today. Persecutions are as old as God's people. Saints were persecuted in the Old Testament as were believers in the New Testament. Even a casual reading of the book of Acts will find no less than 47 different events that involved harm, mistreatment, and persecution of those early believers.

In modern times with the unstoppable flow of news and reports from every corner of the globe via the internet, there is a growing awareness of the worldwide suffering that goes on among literally millions of believers who are persecuted just because they are Christ's.

Persecution takes many forms. Last month I was contacted online by a group of Pakistani believers who wanted to translate chapters from my *Living Hope* book into their language. Although we weren't able to fund another project at this time, I asked them to share more about who they were.

They explained what life is like for followers of Jesus Christ in Pakistan—one of the lands of great persecution against His church. Persecution for Pakistani believers takes many forms; one of the foremost is constant financial oppression. Most believers aren't allowed to own property in Pakistan. Consequently, they must rent from Moslem landlords. These hostile landlords charge believers as much money for rent as they think they can possibly be earning—so the believers are always short on money just to live. This makes hunger, endless labor, and financial insecurities just some of the daily persecutions and afflictions our brothers and sisters face in Pakistan.

Persecution is just one form of what the Bible describes as affliction. Affliction in our lives was designed by God to be much like the fires of Daniel 3 that the three Hebrew boys were made to enter. That fiery furnace only burned away what hindered them from walking with the Lord—the bindings that bound them! So in our lives affliction and persecution are designed by God to only burn away anything that hinders our walk with Him!

What is a Biblical perspective to hold on this annual Remembrance Day, truth to carry all year long? First, the persecutions we see all around the world are just a preview of the horrors to come. Jesus called them...

### The Beginning of Tribulation

Jesus described the end of the world in Matthew 24 as a snapshot of Earth at His Second Coming. Do you remember those first characteristics of "the end of days" that Jesus described?

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Part: 3 Salvation: Redemption

Part: 2 Salvation: Regeneration

Part: 1 Salvation--The Only Gift Everyone Really Needs

1. Jesus described: Global False Teaching (vv. 4–5).
2. Jesus described: Global Warfare (v. 6).
3. Jesus described: Global Famines, Epidemics and earthquakes (v. 7-8).
4. Jesus described: **Global Persecutions** (v. 9). Christians have always been hated by the world, but here we have an acceleration of persecutions and murders. **All nations will be involved**. This certainly was not true in the history of the early church.
5. Jesus described: Global Chaos (vv.10–13).
6. Jesus described: Global Evangelism (v. 14).

So, Jesus has warned us all in advance that...

## Global Persecution Is Coming

As we draw close to what appears to be the end of days, we would begin to see the level of persecution is rising. Now consider what most Church historians have observed, they nearly unanimously observe that, “More Christians have been killed for their faith in the past century than in all the centuries of Christianity combined”. [1] Wow, that is what Jesus would call the beginning of birth pangs for what He saw at the end of days as global persecution.

A recent article in *The New York Times* states that there are : “...eleven countries where Christians are currently enduring great religious persecution are China, Sudan, Pakistan, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Egypt, Nigeria, Cuba, Laos, and Uzbekistan...anti-Christian persecution based on two political ideologies — Communism and militant Islam.” [2] Not mentioned were Indonesia and Iran where just this week a married couple were severely beaten and whipped in their own home by the Religious Police of Iran for their faith in Christ.

Indeed, "Christian persecution" sounds like something from the distant past – conjuring up images of the early followers of Jesus being thrown to the lions, and various apostles being crucified or otherwise martyred for their faith. For most of us in America the “out of sight” plight of our brothers and sisters so far away, keeps them also “out of our mind” so often.

But they are not out of God’s mind. The persecution and martyrdom of believers are a great part of the focus of our God in Heaven. Each day there are more voices in Heaven praising God, and many of them are coming by way of severe persecution. Think about the...

## Saints in Heaven who Praise God for their Salvation

From Stephen, the first martyr in Christ’s Church onward, these ‘faithful unto death’ servants ascend to Heaven as Jesus stands up to welcome them (*Acts 7:55*). These faithful witnesses then join the saints encircling the Throne, kneeling before Christ and offering Him their worship.

For just a moment, what exactly is the special worship offered by the faithful saints in Heaven when at last they get to see Jesus face-to-face? What do we hear them over and over repeating? What thank offering is the fruit of their lips as they praise Christ?

Look with me for just a moment at [Revelation 5:9](#):

*“And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; for **You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood** out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation”. NKJV*

And again at [Revelation 5:12](#):

*“...saying with a loud voice: “**Worthy is the Lamb who was slain** to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!” NKJV*

And again in [Revelation 7:10](#):

*“...and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “**Salvation belongs to our God** who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” NKJV*

Those in Heaven often thank God for Christ, their Redeemer, Author of their salvation; and they say with their voices that God saved, redeemed, washed and cleansed them.

When is the last time that you actually told someone out loud, with your own voice how God saved you?

We can offer continuous worship offerings that rise to God when with our own voice we praise Him (*Heb. 13:15*). And what is the single greatest gift we should keep praising and thanking God for? Yes, our salvation that—He purchased us, He washed away our sins—that is the theme of our eternal song of gratitude.

For just a moment let me ask you—how many of you at this very moment know: that your sins are forgiven, that Christ died in your place, and that you possess eternal life here, right now, today?

In other words you are a born-again believer, saved by the grace of God, not by any works of righteousness that you could ever do?

If you know that would you just stand with me?

Amen—you may be seated. The simple act of distilling your testimony of salvation down to a

short declaration of what God has done inside of you is a very major part of...

## Learning to Worship Our Redeemer

I have a simple request for each of you who stood testifying by standing just moments ago, that you are redeemed by Christ's blood—take a few minutes today and write down on a small 3x5 card, or slip of paper, your salvation testimony in a 30 second or less form. You don't have to have an exact date, or go into flowery details. The essence is what **GOD** did (**Jonah 2:9** "Salvation is of the Lord") in your heart and life—not what **YOU** did.

I took 5 minutes and whittled mine down this week to 87 words that I can say in 30 seconds. Listen:

*I praise God for saving me from my sin.  
I first heard the Gospel with my heart in 1962.  
Before then I feared the consequences of getting caught for my sins.  
But that November day I first feared God, knowing my sin was against Him.  
At that moment I knelt, confessing my sins and asking for His gracious, promised forgiveness and cleansing.  
From that moment 45 years ago, He took all my sin upon Himself, moved to live within—never to leave me or forsake me forever.*

I would encourage each of you who are born-again and know Christ to make these next few weeks of our Thanksgiving and Advent services, a time of—offering and listening to offerings of praise to the Lamb our Redeemer.

Each time we all do that, we will get a small taste of what Heaven will be like forever as all of us join the redeemed telling Christ our Redeemer thanks over and over for our salvation—forever.

On this day, across the world believers are being reminded that we have a Biblical responsibility to pray for those who are persecuted, to sorrow with them that sorrow, and to sacrifice for them who are suffering for Christ's sake. We need regular reminders because...

## We are Often so Isolated from World Problems

Even though most of the time we in America are unaware of it, there is a growing hostility for Christians around the world. Here is an overview of the situation region-by-region:

### Middle East

A decade ago, Islamic fundamentalists had an uneasy religious "truce" with Western expatriates who came to work for them, particularly in the oil-rich nations like Saudi Arabia. They tried to keep the Westerners, mostly Christians of one degree of commitment or another, restricted from the rest of the populace. The Islamic world is a hostile place for Christians: In Saudi Arabia, for instance, Christianity is illegal, and conversion from Islam is punishable by death. In Pakistan, the death penalty is prescribed for anyone who "blasphemes" Islam — something that occurs automatically during Christian evangelism. In Egypt and elsewhere, Christian girls have acid thrown in their face by Islamic extremists if they refuse to convert to Islam, or are raped, or worse. At best, in the more enlightened Islamic societies, Christians (as well as Jews) are second-class citizens, have a special tax imposed upon them, and do not share the rights of Muslims.

### North Africa

The worst horrors seem to be in the Sudan., where a civil war has been on-and-off for over 50 years between the Arab, Muslim north and the black (Christian and animist) south. The north has been working toward the Arabization and Islamization of the country by the imposition of Islamic law in the south in 1983, which flared to life the smoldering civil war. Then the Islamic military overthrew a democratic government in 1989 leading to the deaths of over one-and-a-half million people in just the past ten years — most the result of government imposed "famines, warfare, and the displacement of millions of people from their homes." [3]

### Eastern Asia

In China, the continuing persecution of Chinese believers is well documented. Churches have been bulldozed with believers inside. Pastors have been arrested, humiliated and executed. Christians have been threatened and imprisoned. Christians have been beaten to death. They are frequently tortured and imprisoned for many years. Heavy fines and confiscation of property are also frequently employed. Current reports tell us that in "house churches" (those not sanctioned by the totalitarian government) in 20 provinces, 129 people had been killed recently, 23,686 arrested and 4,014 sentenced to "re-education."

### Latin America

Missionaries have been attacked as "soft targets" by the various structures of sin-drug lords and terrorists in particular. Other Christian workers have been kidnapped, and mission agencies have had to adopt a very difficult policy-refusing to pay ransom. Agency executives agree that giving in to these demands would only cause a rash of kidnappings. Missionaries going into insecure situations know they must rely on God's help and grace.

### Africa

Because of their stand for Christian principles of freedom and democracy, and because of their untiring work in the name of Christ on behalf of the poor, oppressed and persecuted, many Christians have been martyred in political and ethnic conflicts. There are many incidents in Rwanda, Burundi and South Africa where missionaries, pastors, priests, churches,

monasteries, and seminaries have been specifically targeted. In Rwanda's genocide alone, half a million Christians were martyred.

## Persecution is as old As Christ's Church

So what is the record of the persecution of Christ's church since the Cross? How has the church fared? All of the apostles were insulted by the enemies of their Master. They were called to seal their doctrines with their blood and nobly did they bear the trial.

In the last decade we in America are sensing more and more that persecution is heading our way. In 1999 there were two amazing martyrdom's in Christ's church that made the news. The first was in late January when an Australian missionary and his two sons were burned to death in India. The newspapers reported this story on: January 25, 1999

Australian missionary Graham Stewart Staines, 58, was burned to death in his car Saturday along with sons Philip, 10, and Timothy, 6, after a crowd doused their car in gas and lit it outside a church in the town of Manoharpur in the eastern Indian state of Orissa.

Information sent from Voice of the Martyrs sources in India say that Staines had been working with leprosy patients in India for 34 years. His sons were visiting on vacation from school.

The attack comes amidst rising persecution of Christians in India. Yesterday, five more missionaries were beaten in Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh. The missionaries were handing out tracts and pamphlets when they were attacked.

Reportedly, the militants attacked the vehicle armed with bows and arrows after warning village residents not to interfere. People from the village who tried to help the missionary and his sons were beaten by the mob. Staines' wife, Gladys, told reporters she was upset by the attack on her husband, but not angry with the men who committed the crime.

Monday at a memorial service for her husband and sons, Gladys and her daughter led the congregation in singing:

Because he lives, I can face tomorrow.  
Because he lives, all fear is gone.  
Because I know He holds the future,  
And life is worth a living just because He lives.

In America at the Columbine massacre on April 20, 1999 a Christian was martyred, her last moments immortalized by Michael W. Smith's song "This is Your Time". The title track was inspired as Cassie Bernall (a student killed in the Columbine massacre) answered "yes" to the question "Do you believe in God?" just after seeing another student killed for answering "yes" to that same question. The lyrics speak vividly of what happened:

*It was a test we could all hope to pass but none of us would want to take;  
Faced with the choice to deny God and live, for her there was one choice to make....  
What if tomorrow, What if today, Faced with the question, oh, what would you say?....  
Fall on the mercy and hear yourself praying "Won't you save me?"*

## What Biblical Response does God Expect us to Make?

1. **We should love and pray for anyone persecuting believers.** *Matthew 5:44-45*  
"But I say to you,  
  
⇒ **love your enemies** (please repeat that aloud with me),  
⇒ **bless those who curse you** (please repeat that aloud with me),  
⇒ **do good to those who hate you** (please repeat that aloud with me), and  
⇒ **pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you** (please repeat that aloud with me)  
,45 "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. NKJV
2. **We are to gather to pray for believers we know that are being persecuted.** *Acts 12:5* Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. NKJV
3. **We need to learn to show as much concern for the persecuted believers in distant places, as for those in our own local church.** *1 Corinthians 12:25-26* that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. NKJV
4. **We must always must remember who our true enemy really is.** *Ephesians 6:12, 18* For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—NKJV
5. **We are can be filled with joy from God as we praise Him for the steadfast love of our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ.** *1 Thessalonians 3:7-9* therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith.8 For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord.9 For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God, NKJV
6. **We should start standing side-by-side with persecuted believers and accepting personal loss in order to encourage and help them.** *Hebrews 10:32-34* But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: 33 partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; 34 for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring

possession for yourselves in heaven. NKJV

7. **We should note that God asks us to remember persecuted believers as if we ourselves were suffering.** [Hebrews 13:3](#) Remember the prisoners as if chained with them—those who are mistreated—since you yourselves are in the body also. NKJV

# A Biblical Perspective On Persecution Of Believers

## First, God's Word tells us that persecution is inevitable for us as believers[4]:

- *1 Thessalonians 3:2-4* and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, 3 that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know **that we are appointed to this.** 4 For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know. NKJV
- *2 Timothy 3:12* Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. NKJV

## Second, we are called to participate in the sufferings of Christ[5]:

- *1 Peter 2:20-23* For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? **But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.** 21 For to this you were called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 22 "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth"; 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; NKJV
- *1 Peter 4:12-16* Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 **but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings,** that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. 14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. 16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. NKJV

## Third, God's Word promises wonderful treasures for those who face persecution:

- **Death brings the ultimate blessing of actually being with Jesus:** *Philippians 1:21, 23* For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 23 For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. NKJV
- **God will finally bring justice to all unjustly harmed when Jesus returns:** *2 Thessalonians 1:5-7* which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer; 6 since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, 7 and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, NKJV
- **Persecution and affliction matures us spiritually.** *James 1:2-4* My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. NKJV
- **Persecution brings us Heavenly rewards.** *James 1:12* Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. NKJV

## Fourth, God always is using persecution for His purposes:

- **Persecution often helps us spread the gospel to other places.** *Acts 8:1, 4* Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 4 Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. NKJV
- **Persecution helps to reveal Christ in us.** *2 Corinthians 4:7-11* But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. 8 We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—10 always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. NKJV
- **Persecution helps to encourage others to be bold in their testimony.** *Philippians 1:12-14* But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, 13 so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; 14 and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. NKJV
- **The persecution of Christ's saints always glorifies Him.** *1 Peter 1:7* These [all kinds of trials] have come so that your faith -- of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire -- may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. (NIV)

## APPENDIX: How Affliction is Used By God in our lives

AFFLICTION[6] is used by God because it –

- ⇒ PUSHES US INTO GOD'S WORD: [Psalm 119:50](#)
- ⇒ PULLS US BACK ONTO THE PATH: [Psalm 119:67](#)
- ⇒ CHISELS GOD'S PLAN INTO OUR LIFE: [Psalm 119:71](#)
- ⇒ TEACHES US THAT GOD IS FAITHFUL: [Psalm 119:75](#)
- ⇒ **KEEPS US FOCUSED ON OUR TEACHER:** [Psalm 119:92](#)
- ⇒ FORCES US TO TEST HIS PROMISES: [Psalm 119:107](#)
- ⇒ BRINGS GOD TO OUR DOORSTEP: [Psalm 119:153](#)

Here are the godly benefits of suffering and enduring persecution and affliction by God's grace. Affliction can be used by God when it–

1. **PUSHES US INTO GOD'S WORD:** Only God's Word can really help us in afflictions – cards, visits, gifts, activities all can only offer temporary relief through distraction or amusement. [Psalm 119:50](#) This is my comfort in my affliction (6040 emotional), for YOUR WORD (Reading Divine Word to find and follow God's Will for my life 565) has given me life.
  - *Life often dulls or deadens us to spiritual things, so when God sends afflictions our way God's Word quickens us or "has given life".*
2. **PULLS US BACK ONTO THE PATH:** A consistent life is built by afflictions. God uses afflictions to pull us back and keep us on His path for our lives. Often we only call when we need something – so He gives us reason to call. [Psalm 119:67](#) Before I was afflicted (6031 physical) I went astray, But now I keep YOUR WORD (Reading Divine Word to find and follow God's Will for my life 565).
  - *Affliction can stop us from straying away from God, so "now I keep".*
  - *Have you ever been driving late at night and slowly drifted to the side of the road? Remember when you hit those rumble strips and the way you jerked the wheel - - so that you got back on the road quickly? Afflictions are the rumble strips God uses to make us jerk our wheel of life to get us back on the road and to keep us from heading into the ditch!*
3. **CHISELS GOD'S PLAN INTO OUR LIFE:** There are truths and lessons we only can learn in the furnace of trouble. And remember in the fiery furnace of Daniel 3, only the things that kept them from walking properly were burned away! So affliction scrapes away what is not part of God's plans for our lives – people, possessions, positions, and securities... [Psalm 119:71](#) It is good for me that I have been afflicted (6031 physical), That I may learn YOUR STATUTES (Following the Divine Plans to build Life the way God intends it to be).
  - *Afflictions can remind us in a life long way of God's Hand, His plans for us. Some of our greatest moments we will always remember were forged in the furnaces of affliction.*
4. **TEACHES US THAT GOD IS FAITHFUL:** God's unchanging faithfulness is learned best in affliction. Afflictions remind us that everything the Lord does is good, right, and the best thing there could be for us. [Psalm 119:75](#) I know, O Lord, that Your judgments (Building Life upon God's Unchanging Decisions) are right, And that in faithfulness You have afflicted (6031 physical) me.
  - *Afflictions are very personal "me".*
5. **KEEPS US FOCUSED ON OUR TEACHER:** The onset of troubles marks the beginning of a personal tutorial with our Divine Teacher. Affliction is an opportunity to "delight" ( ) in Him or for us to "perish ( ) in our troubles. [Psalm 119:92](#) Unless YOUR LAW (Receiving Divine Instruction from the Divine Teacher that is perfect). had been my delight; I would then have perished in my affliction (6040 emotional).
  - *Affliction "perishes" us or squishes our lives under its weight.*
6. **FORCES US TO TEST HIS PROMISES:** Affliction usually increases, as we get older. But God's Word will always renew, refresh, and revive. [Psalm 119:107](#) I am afflicted (6031 physical) very much: Revive me, O Lord, according to YOUR WORD (Hearing the Divine Voice walking us through life 1697).
  - *Often we know so much more than we experience. Affliction is a reality check.*
  - *Afflictions seem to grow through life to be more and more.*
  - *After disasters people often listen better.*
  - *Psalm 71 & 92*
  - *The word for "very much" is the same Hebrew word used of the waters of the Flood covering the earth (Genesis 7,18-19) and of the plagues covering Egypt (Exodus 9.3 on cattle; Exodus 9.18 the hail; Exodus 10.14 the locusts).*
  - *The word for "revive" is actually save my life and is the same Hebrew word as used for the rescue of Rahab from Jericho as the walls crumbled and everyone else was destroyed and she and her family alone were rescued (Joshua 2.13; 6.17, 25).*
  - *Afflictions allow us to experientially test God's promises.*
7. **BRINGS GOD TO OUR DOORSTEP:** When Ezra said deliver me – he was asking the Lord to come to him with what he needed. Isn't that what a deliveryman does? He brings exactly what we need? And that is the final blessing of affliction. Affliction comes with a promise from God for a special delivery. He comes right to us –

with everything we need. **Psalm 119:153** Consider my affliction (6040 emotional), and deliver me, For I do not forget **YOUR LAW (Receiving Divine Instruction from the Divine Teacher that is perfect)**.

- *Afflictions continue, "consider" as You watch me.*

Pairs	Verse	Verse
1/7	<b>Psalm 119:50</b> This is my comfort in my affliction; For Your word has given me life.	<b>Psalm 119:153</b> Consider my affliction and deliver me, For I do not forget Your law.
2/6	<b>Psalm 119:67</b> Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word.	<b>Psalm 119:107</b> I am afflicted very much; Revive me, O Lord, according to Your word.
3/5	<b>Psalm 119:71</b> It is good for me that I have been afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes.	<b>Psalm 119:92</b> Unless Your law had been my delight; I would then have perished in my affliction.
4	<b>Psalm 119:75</b> I know, O Lord, that Your judgments are right, And that in faithfulness You have afflicted me.	

[1] A brief overview of some of the worst offenders and what you can do about it. by Reader Daniel Lieuwen <http://incommunion.org/articles/essays/persecution-of-christians-worldwide>

[2] A. M. Rosenthal, "Persecuting the Christians, New York Times, Editorial Page, February 14, 1997.

[3] International Christian Concern. Top Ten Offenders.

[4] See also **Mat. 5:11-12; Mark 10:29-30; I Peter 4:12.**

[5] See also Phil. 1:29; 3:10-11.

[6] AFFLICTION: is described in Psalm 119 by two words; the first *onee* (6040) seems to portray an emotional state of misery as an affliction; the second word *anah* (6031) seems to portray a physical affliction of being bowed down of squished beneath a physical load.

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