



The Living God Ministries, Inc.

Montgomery & Spanish Fort, Alabama

August 23, 2019

Warm hellos to you dear brethren, and spiritual family here on the Coast of the Gulf of Mexico, and scattered children of God.

My wife and I pray and hope this finds you all doing well, and that again your week has been blessed!

This Time of Testing and Trials, Why?

Often before God's Holy Days many of us as the Children of God experience difficult tests and/or trials.

This year, as we come up to the Feast of Trumpets, Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day it appears this is again the case.

Some have had serious injuries. Some have had serious illness and diseases. Some have been the victim of unjust and false accusations. Some have lost loved ones who died way too young. Some have lost employment because of their commitment to honoring God's Sabbath. The list goes on...

Let's ponder, muse, think, reflect and reexamine again, why do you and I experience trials, troubles, and painful experiences? And why does it seem to intensify at times?

These painful events come our way in spite of trying to exercise wisdom, caution and common sense in how we conduct ourselves. We are imperfect. We can sometimes inadvertently make mistakes and errors. Some of them can cause harm and pain and trouble. Life is imperfect. Our adversary has his part, yet all too often we blame him for everything, without seeking God's greater purpose for us all.

We can at times be a victim of someone else's bad judgment and mistakes. Many become victims of inattentive driving by others. We see in this world how violence is perpetrated on innocent victims on almost a daily basis.

God allows free moral agency and permits humans to make decisions that bring painful and hurtful consequences upon themselves and others. The fact is, God does not shield us from all of this.

My wife and I seek God's protection and guidance in our life and activities, and I believe you do too. Our international pastoral visits bring stress and strain we have little control over. There are still accidents, disease, and losses which affect us all.

If we're not careful, we can soon find ourselves in a pretty negative, perhaps even despondent way. We can begin to see mostly negative in our world, and it takes us down a path God never intended. Our lives, if we're not careful and we don't stay connected to God, can begin to reflect one crisis after another with little hope at all.

We may claim and insist that life is too often unfair! In a way that is often true. Bad things happen to good people. The best laid plans can go astray.

Let's notice this comment from Solomon: *"I returned and saw under the sun that-The race is not to the swift, Nor the battle to the strong, Nor bread to the wise, Nor riches to men of understanding, Nor favor to men of skill; But time and chance happen to them all. For man also does not know his time: Like fish taken in a cruel net, Like birds caught in a snare, So the sons of men are snared in an evil time, When it falls suddenly upon them."* (Eccl 9:11-12)

God is not orchestrating every exact detail of our lives. He intervenes when He decides, and in the way He decides. He is God, not us. For those of us called to be disciples, we live by faith and trust in God's working in our lives. He is working out a purpose that has a long range impact. He is able to bring good out of our tests and trials. (Rom 8:28)

Why at times can't we see what God sees? Because we are not spirit yet, we see things through our lens and we don't see clearly as we should.

The apostle Peter wrote to the members who were part of the scattered tribes of Israel. *"who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials."* (1 Pet 1:5-6)

We don't know for sure what the trials were to which Peter is referring. He addresses the "diaspora", (the scattered Jews and other Israelites in the areas far from Jerusalem). They may have faced harassment by the military and local leaders appointed by the Roman Empire. There may have been societal unrest and upheaval that created instability and other challenges. The true disciples living in a society influenced by the god of this world and corrupted by carnal human beings, experience trials and tests related to these imperfections.

As time marches on, you and I are facing these things too, and life is definitely not getting any simpler is it? Christ admonished His disciples, that indeed this would be the case.

The apostle James makes similar comments and instructions. *"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing."* (James 1:2-4)

We've got to stay focused on what God's ultimate will is. Our human perspective has to change.

Usually the joy, cheerfulness, or calm delight comes later, after one has endured and persevered through the test or trial. By holding on to faith and trust and obedience in our loving God through tests and trials we demonstrate and strengthen our faith. Yes, ultimately, that faith comes from Jesus Christ living in us, but we too have our part, and it is very real. (Gal 2:20).

God will bless us as we do. God gives His Spirit to those who obey and trust Him. (Act 5:32) This abiding faith will enhance trust and confidence as well as peace of mind as we accept and persevere through trials and tests. Allowing His Spirit to live in us is huge! Again, it changes our perspective.

Continuing with Peter's comments, *"that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ."* (1 Pet 1:7)

Our focus is to be prepared and then achieve entrance into the Kingdom of God at Christ's return. The value of that is beyond gold, silver or anything else we can physically acquire or wish for. God wants us to solidify and cement our trust, confidence, and loyalty in and to Him.

The apostle James also points us to our incredible future. *"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."* (Jas 1:12)

The ancient Israelites experienced some of the plagues that were sent upon the Egyptians. But God used these plagues and trials to work out their deliverance from Pharaoh and Egypt. I can only imagine living during that time what a trial or test that must have been.

Remember, God worked out good in the end! God wants us to put our trust in Him and positively look to the future and the final outcome. These reminders are brought out in Deuteronomy chapters 4, 7, and 29, etc.

Continuing with Peter's encouragement, ". . . *Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.*" (1 Pet 1:7-9)

If everything always went our way, we had no difficulties that God did not immediately "fix" what part of His character that we so sorely need would be amiss?

A new creation or creature means just that, new, or change.

This subject could use a sermon message, but we'll end our discussion for now. May our gracious God encourage us all in whatever circumstances this finds us experiencing.

May we look forward with a thankful and joyful heart to these upcoming Feasts of the Lord, and trust Him to be with us through these weeks ahead!

...as I close this letter, as I do every Friday evening...as we enter His Sabbath...reflect on this with me, will you?

And again, may God continue to richly bless you. Our prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Please do pray for us as well.

-Scott Hoefker (Pastor and wife (Gayle) The Living God Ministries Gulf Coast)

The schedule for this week's **Sabbath** is:

August 23rd / Friday: Gifts for the Lord/ Praises/Gifts and Prayers to welcome God's Sabbath
7:00 pm (via Teleconference live connect with Stephen Glover and Friends.)

August 24th / Saturday: Spirit and Truth Worship Services 10:15 am, with local services held in Montgomery with the message by Stephen Glover. (All others are welcomed and encouraged to connect live to Worship Services via our normal phone conference). There will be no local services in Spanish Fort this Sabbath as the Hoefkers will be in Pearl, Mississippi visiting the *Christian Church of God*.

August 24th / Saturday: Sabbath Fellowship Study (Interactive Bible Discussion) **4:00 pm** from Montgomery with Whit Moorner. (connecting live with all others via telephone conference).

Next Sabbath's Schedule for TLGM Gulf Coast:

August 30th / Friday: Gifts for the Lord/ Praises/Gifts and Prayers to welcome God's Sabbath
7:00 pm (via Teleconference live connect) with Stephen Glover and friends.

August 31th / Saturday: Spirit and Truth Worship Services 10:15 am, with local services held in Montgomery with the message by Stephen Glover (All are welcome and encouraged to connect live to Worship Services via our normal phone conference). There will be no local services in Spanish Fort as the Hoefkers will be in Mexico on their visit with brethren there.

August 31st / Saturday: Sabbath Fellowship (interactive Bible Discussion) 4:00 pm *from* Montgomery with Whit Moorer (connect live to all others via telephone conference).

Telephone Ministry (English): Call **1-712-770-4700**; then, when asked, enter Code **112165 #** to join.
(Note: All callers are muted and must press *6 to comment and *6 to resume mute.)
All times are listed in Central Standard Time zone.

Our Daily Bread Recordings

Sunday through Saturday / Our Daily Bread [listen anytime 24/7 to a recorded 15 minute message] Call 1-712-770-4709 (note this call in number is different and ends in "9"), then when asked, enter code 112165# [reference code numbers are on "Spiritual Fellowship Opportunities" on this website <http://www.tlgministriesgc.org> or at "Resources/Archives" on <http://www.haggai114.net>]

Daily Fellowship Opportunities

Sunday – Friday / **Morning Sacrifice** (Prayers & Scripture Reading) at 6:00 a.m.
Sundays / **History & Background of the Gospels** (Interactive) at 6:30 p.m. [Scott & Friends]
Mondays / Africa Discipleship at 7:00 a.m. [Glovers & Moses]
Almond Branch Fellowship at 6:30 p.m. (Interactive) (Stephen & Friends)
Tuesdays / **Haggai Fellowship** (Interactive) at 6:30 p.m. (Interactive) [Stephen & Friends]
Wednesdays / Africa Discipleship at 7:00 a.m. [Glovers & Moses]
1st & 3rd Wednesday / **Sons of God Fellowship** (Young men training) at 6:30 p.m. [Stephen & Friends]
2nd & 4th Wednesday / **Lydian's Fellowship** (Ladies) at 6:30 p.m. [Esther/Gayle & Friends]
Thursdays / **Mt. Carmel Fellowship** (Interactive) at 6:30 p.m. [Hoefkers & Friends]

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