

# The Book of First Peter

## "Readiness to Suffer"

1 Peter 4:1-6

### Introduction

1. Chapter divisions in our Bibles are often unhappily made. This is the case between chapters 3 and 4 of 1 Peter.

2. The immediate context of 1 Peter 3:18-22 notes that our blessed Lord suffered in the flesh. In this glorious issue, we are also called upon to suffer.

3. But the apostle Peter goes freshly forward and points out that what he has to write is in fact an appeal: resolve and be unflinchingly ready to suffer and not to sin.

4. What reasons may be advanced for such an appeal? Without hesitation they may be listed:

#### 1. The EXAMPLE of Christ.

Two salient factors are mentioned here:

- a. His suffering--"having suffered." v. 1. Our blessed Lord was subjected to literal and horrible physical suffering.
- b. His satisfaction--"hath ceased from sin." v. 1. His relation to sin pressing upon Him as a burden ended when He died!

#### 2. The EXPERIENCE of Christians.

- a. In following Christ. v. 1. Those who "arm themselves" like Christ are those who show forth sufficient cause that to suffer for obedience to the will of God IS a triumph over sin!
- b. In living the will of God. v. 2. This verse must be connected with the imperative verb of v. 1. "Arm yourself . . . so as not longer . . . ." There is no middle course here. Be ready to bear the hostility of the world--then you may serve the Lord fully.

- c. In considering the past. v. 3. Here is the madness and enormity of leaving off the old life and suffering for Christ!
    - 1) Its debauchery--wantonness and uncleanness.
    - 2) Its dissipation--drinking, merry-making, and excessiveness.
    - 3) Its impiety--unlawful idolatry.
  - d. In marking the dead. v. 6. Those who believe the Gospel and are put to death by objectors who think by so doing they work harm, are in fact introducing the believers to a much more wonderful experience--life in the spiritual realm.
3. The SITUATION of unbelievers. vv. 4, 5.
- a. In their attitude--"strange." v. 4. The world stands in wonderment. Word used suggests strangeness in sense of surprise.
  - b. In their speech--"speak evil." v. 4. Calumnious reproaches come because a true Christian's life is a reproof and reproach to sin.
  - c. In their future--"shall give an account." v. 5. The great Assize for the world will come.

### Conclusion

There is sufficient reason for believers to be ready to suffer. The question is are you ready to stand knowing this is your lot? God help you to say, "Yes, Lord, I am!"