

Walking Through the Fire

1 Peter 4:12, 5:6-11

Peter is writing to believers in Asia minor about what to do in fiery trials. In Ephesians we read about the shield of faith able to “*quench the fiery darts of the wicked one*”.

How do you deal with the devil? What do you do when a fiery assault comes and your metal is tested? Here’s some points that we need to consider while contending for victory:

1. Always start with the basics

V.6 – “*humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God*”.

- a) We come to Him. That is where our victory starts. We take refuge under His wings. He is our strong tower. We declare our allegiance to Him as Lord of our lives.
- b) We come humbly to Him - *God gives grace to the humble* (and how we need that grace!)
- c) We submit to Him

James 4:6-7: *⁶ But He gives more grace. Therefore, He says: “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”⁷ Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*

When your allegiance is with God and you submit to Him, then the enemy will flee from you. The enemy will flee from those who live “*under the mighty hand of God*”.

Peter had great faith in the mighty hand of God: ²⁹ **Acts 4:29-30** - *Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, ³⁰ by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.”*

2. Victory may be a process

V. 6b - “*that he may exalt you in due time*”

- a) Victory is certain but may be a process. What you need to know is that your ‘due time’ is coming!

Galatians 6:9 NASB - *Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.*

There is a due time for your miracle to flourish.

- b) **v.10b** says, “*after you have suffered a while*”, God will “*perfect, establish, strengthen and settle*”.

“a while” : this is not forever. It will pass.

- c) Also, we need to keep an eternal perspective of things.

V.10a speaks of God “*who called us to His eternal glory*”.

2 Corinthians 4:17: *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,*

So, suffering may endure for a while but “due time” is coming! Weeping may last for the night but joy comes in the morning! (Psalms 30:5)

While waiting, declare:

I humble myself under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt me in due time. Exaltation is coming, my ‘due time’ is coming!

Job 22:29 - *When they cast you down, and you say, ‘Exaltation will come!’ Then He will save the humble person.*

3. To win the battle you need to win the devil’s mind games

V.7-8a ⁷ *casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.* ⁸ *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

a) The word for “cares” in the Greek is *merimna* and literally means “a divided mind” – by anxieties, worries and fears.

In the day of the fiery trial, the greatest battle is sometimes the one that happens inside our minds. Our thoughts are assaulted with fiery darts of fear, worry, panic, irrational scenarios.

2 Corinthians 2:11b - *for we are not ignorant of his devices.* “Devices” – in the Greek is the word *noemata* which refers to the mind. The devil plays mind games – he attacks our minds with anxiety, fear, etc.

That is why we are to “*cast all our cares upon Him*”.

This so crucial. That is why **Philippians 4:6** KJV says: *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

b) Be sober, be vigilant (v.8a)

A scholar said that the Greek word means “to think straight, not like a silly drunk”

When you are drunk, you are in a blurred state of mind, confused, not thinking straight and feelings become exaggerated. You get tunnel vision and unable to see the periphery.

Anxiety can have in us the same inebriating effects as alcohol. Let’s look at 3 interesting examples:

1 Samuel 1:13-15 - ¹³ *Now Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk.* ¹⁴ *So Eli said to her, “How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you!”* ¹⁵ *But Hannah answered and*

said, “No, my lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord.

Jeremiah 23:9 - My heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake. I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine has overcome, because of the Lord, and because of His holy words.

In both passages, brokenness of heart, anxiety and worry had made both Hannah and Jeremiah to act as inebriated people, unable to think straight.

Psalms 107:27-28 - They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, And are at their wits' end. Then they cry out to the Lord in their trouble, and He brings them out of their distresses.

The English word ‘wits’ was translated from the Hebrew word ‘*chokmah*’ which refers to wisdom and good sense. The commentary in the margin of one source reads: “all their wisdom is swallowed up”.

If we want to win the battle, we need to start by conquering our emotions, taking control of our minds by faith.

1 Peter 1:13 – Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

Gird up the loins of your mind – pull yourself together! Be sober – think straight.

Conclusion

V.9 - Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

Resist! Take an assertive stance against the devil. Submit to God, wait for due time and take care of your mind!