Forged In Fire

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday September 20th, 2020

Text: I Peter 4:12-13

### Intro

1. I Peter 4:12-13
   1. Peter says don’t be surprised at fiery ordeals, don’t be surprised that we will be tested by fiery ordeals that cause us to share in the sufferings of Jesus, and that when it happens we are to “keep on rejoicing.”
2. James 1:2-3, 12: Sounds like what James said as well, that saints are to consider trials with joy knowing that it will produce endurance, and if we persevere, we will receive the crown of life.
   1. Rejoice when under-going trials and fiery ordeals!??
      1. Sounds like Peter and James are drinking from the same Kool-Aid!
   2. A lot is said about overcoming the trials of life: We will inherit Heaven! (I Peter 4:13; James 1:12; Revelation 21:7)
   3. If we suffer as a Christian, not just a storm or trial of life but targeted persecution, we are to rejoice and glorify God in that name! (I Peter 4:14-19)
3. Fiery Ordeals Produce Endurance
   1. Fiery trials in life make us stronger and better prepared and equipped to serve God, and to be examples for others who are going through the fire (I Peter 5:8-9)!
   2. Like metals tested in fire (the fire purges away the impurities, and the metals come out purer and stronger for it), so the saint comes out stronger and more resilient.
   3. The hard part is enduring the trials.
   4. The hard part is rejoicing – we can rejoice afterwards when we see the result!
4. Christians forged in fire become stronger and better equipped to serve God and others!

#### Forged in Fire: Moses

* 1. *Exodus 2:11-3:22; Acts 7:20-44; Hebrews 11:24-29*
     1. Moses was plucked from the Nile River as a baby and raised in the household of Pharaoh as son to Pharaoh’s daughter! (Exodus 2:1-10; Acts 7:20-21)
     2. He was educated as an Egyptian according to their learning (Acts 7:22)
     3. When he was 40 years old he saw the mistreatment of a Hebrew and thought himself as their deliverer and killed the Egyptian and hid the body (Ex. 2:11-12; Acts 7:23-25)
     4. The next day when he tried to make peace between two fighting Hebrew men they recalled his killing of the Egyptian and asked him who made him ruler over them, which made him run! They didn’t understand that he wanted to deliver them! (Ex. 2:13-15; Acts 7:25-29)
     5. Pharaoh wanted him dead so Moses fled to Midian, no longer wanting to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and giving up the luxury he was raised into, recognizing it as temporary! (Ex. 2:15; Heb. 11:24-27)
     6. He lived there in the wilderness for 40 years as a shepherd (Ex. 3:1)
  2. Forged in the fire! (I Peter 4:12-13)
     1. For 40 years God groomed him to be a leader
     2. He learned patience as a shepherd
     3. No longer prideful (thinking he would deliver his people his way – Acts 7:25) he became the most humble man on earth (Num. 12:3)
     4. His patience and leadership skills that he learned in the wilderness would be needed to deliver and lead God’s people in God’s way through the wilderness for another 40 years! (They were rebellious and stubborn)
     5. God made him judge and ruler over them in His own time and way (Acts 7:35).
     6. For 40 years in the wilderness he thought he was forgotten.
     7. God knew who he was and where he was and called him when it was time! (Ex. 3:1-4)
  3. Moses was forged in fire to be the leader God needed him to be!

#### Forged in Fire: David

* 1. *I Samuel 16:5-23; 17-18:30*
     1. David became God’s Anointed while Saul, also God’s anointed, was still king.
     2. David went from shepherd to the king’s armor bearer to Israelite Champion, and friend of Jonathan, the king’s son, to a captain of the king’s army, to the king’s son-in-law when he married Michal, Saul’s daughter! (He got the girl!)
     3. All that he did he prospered in; his enemies feared him, and his men loved him (I Sam. 18:30)
  2. *I Samuel 19-II Samuel 2; 5*
     1. The fire came when out of Saul’s jealousy of David’s popularity, the loyalty of his own daughter to her husband, and the love and loyalty of his men, Saul ordered the death of David!
     2. From that time on, David was on the run for his life! He even had to leave behind his wife, Michal, and Jonathan, his friend!
     3. During his time on the run he gained other wives and 600 loyal men who came from his family, from the Philistines as well as Israelite scoundrels! (I Sam. 22:1-5; 30:9)
     4. He had to live in caves with his men (I Sam. 22; 24).
     5. He had the opportunity to kill Saul twice (I Sam. 24; 26) but spared him.
     6. He heard about the terrible things Saul did to the priests at Nob, ran and lived with the Philistines, & couldn’t be there to fight beside Jonathan when King Saul went to fight against the Philistines one last time (I Sam. 22:6-23; 27; 31).
     7. David, already anointed king by Samuel, was crowned king over Judah in Hebron and 7 years later was made king over all Israel (II Sam. 2; 5)
  3. Forged in the fire! (I Peter 4:12-13)
     1. The lessons David learned as a shepherd would be valuable to him as a king, leading God’s people who were known to be stubborn and rebellious!
     2. The relationships he built with his men would last his lifetime – you can read of his men still loyal to him while he is on his deathbed (I Kings 1)
     3. The lessons on the run from Saul would strengthen David’s trust in God (Psalm 57; 142) – Indeed, he wrote many Psalms during this period!
     4. He trusted in God even in suffering the punishment for his sins with Bathsheba, when his own son Absalom rose up against him and caused a civil war, we can see King David as an example of trusting in God (II Sam. 12:10-11; 15-18; Psalm 3)
  4. David was forged in the fire to become the king and leader God needed him to be!

#### Forged in Fire: Saints Today

* 1. *Mark 4:14-19; Hebrews 10:32-39:* The need for endurance!
     1. The Rocky Soil Christian: When trials in the form of persecution for being a Christian arise, they have no firm root so they bail! They fall away!
     2. The Thorny Soil Christian: When trials and temptations arise from “the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things” they become so distracted and wrapped up in those things that are unfruitful!
     3. Temptations come from targeted persecution and the storms of life – saints need endurance because “we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul!”
  2. The recent fiery ordeal: The Coronavirus Pandemic
     1. There was a lockdown of individuals, businesses and churches, and still a great many, who for health and other reasons, are still in lockdown!
     2. For 6 months all of us had to deal with government overreach in the name of health and safety.
     3. Division: We had to deal with a divide in citizens applauding the government’s steps and others who decried the mandates.
     4. Division: The divide was furthered from several inconsistent and contradicting reporting, which caused some to question the validity of the threat of the virus and others to take it very seriously.
     5. Division: Some question the origin of the virus, giving way to conspiracy theories, while others use personal anecdotes to validify the claims (both sides).
     6. Division: Some divide over whether to wear masks or no masks.
     7. Meanwhile, many are suffering either from the virus itself (they or a family member), and/or from economical trouble because of the lengthy shutdowns.
     8. The result has been many have questioned their faith or abandoned it entirely!
  3. Forged in the fire! (I Peter 4:12-13)
     1. Those who have trusted in God have seen several positives come from this fiery ordeal, which strengthened their faith in God.
     2. Those who were locked down with their families spent more time together.
     3. Spouses who work all the time were reacquainted with one another and their children.
     4. More opportunities to study the Bible, either privately or together with their families!
     5. Individuals considered “essential” and still had to work saw a greater appreciation for their job as people praised them privately and in public.
     6. Preachers and teachers used technology in new ways to keep members and students engaged and active so no one felt abandoned or forgotten.
     7. More and more members who are still in lockdown for a host of reasons are remembered and contacted with more frequency *(based on conversations with them).*
     8. A greater appreciation for the things we easily take for granted was gained, such as eating out, going to the store, and assembling with the saints!
  4. Saints are forged in the fire to become conformed to the image of the Son of God!

## Conclusion

1. The strongest steel is forged in the hottest fire.
2. When the fiery ordeals arise we need to remember:
   1. It could be Satan testing God’s commendation of us (Job 1:6-12)
   2. It could be the testing we need to better serve God and others (Acts 9:15-16)
   3. Some people get burned up and lost in their fires, others are forged in the fire! (Mark 4:14-20)
3. Great Christians (servants of God) aren’t born that way – they are FORGED!
4. Will you be able to stand the heat? (Hebrews 10:35-39)
5. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized into His name!
6. If a Christian, are you faithfully abiding in Christ? Repent and be renewed!
7. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!

