

Follow Me

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1 Peter 2:19-24 *For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? **but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:** Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*

1 John 2:3-6 *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. **He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.***

Much is being said in our day about our Lord Jesus Christ's words concerning the sword. Disputes and arguments go to and fro expounding about what his words meant when he said, "But now, he that hath a purse, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no **sword**, let him sell his garment, and buy one. (Lk. 22.36). And when the disciples said these words: "Lord, behold, here are two swords," Jesus replied with: "It is enough." None of us are exactly sure what our Lord meant by these two statements.

But there can be no mistake of our Lord's meaning concerning these words from his gracious lips: *And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, **Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.** Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?* (Mt. 26.51-53).

The days are coming swiftly upon the children of God when their faith shall be tested severely – and their patient enduring pushed to the limits. When the man of sin arises to “wear out the saints” for forty and two months – three and one-half years, will not their faith and trust in the Lord be severely tested to the uttermost? Can any of you doubt the fleshly terror of these words – or doubt the limit of human endurance? Brethren, when we have to contend with the swelling of Jordan, how shall we do? When we no longer run with footmen, but have to contend with horses, shall we then take the sword thinking that it shall prevail over what our God has determined? Since our Lord has said that the saints shall be delivered into the hand of the Beast, how can we possibly think that we can withstand with a sword? Shall not we, by faith, overcome him by the blood of the lamb, loving not our lives unto the death? Is that not so of our wives and children? Of our brothers and sisters in Christ?

And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is

*able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to over-come them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: **he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.** (Rev. 13.1-10).*

But, what of our present day? Before the man of sin makes his appearance to best all those who dwell on the face of the earth? Let us – each of us consider His walk and his actions. What did he do? Shall we imitate him? Is he not our supreme example for life?

*Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, **arm yourselves likewise with the same mind:** for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. (1Pe. 4.1-2). See. If there is arming to be done, it is that we arm ourselves with the mind to suffer in the flesh if need be. Our Lord suffered and it was of necessity that he did, else, we should still be in our sins.*

How did our Lord respond to suffering in the flesh? He did no sin. Neither was guile found in his mouth. When he was reviled, reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not – but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. He was despised and rejected of men. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He did no violence. In His humiliation, his judgment was taken away. Then He died the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God. And, brothers and sisters, we are hereunto called that we should follow his steps – and so to walk, walk even as he walked, are we not?

He who commanded us to “turn the other cheek – to walk the second mile – to give up our cloak,” showed us the way to do exactly that. Let us ask ourselves,

“Are we walking like Jesus walked?” “Are we talking like Jesus talked?” “Are we suffering our appointed lot?” Shall we do violence? When we are reviled, do we revile? When we suffer, do we threaten retaliation? Or, do we commit ourselves to Him who judges righteously?

Some want to go back to the Old Covenant to bring up principles which, say they, are demanded of you and I under the New Covenant. No – a thousand times no! God sent his people Israel into cities and places with a sword to kill every living being – old, young, infants and all that breathed. We are not called to anything like that. That was the time for “an eye for an eye, and a tooth for tooth, life for life, and burning for burning.” That is not so for us in the New Covenant. Consider the Lord’s words concerning this very thing:

Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other al-so. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. (Mt. 5.38-48).

May our Lord give us more grace to walk even as he walked – to follow his steps looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame . . . (Heb. 12.2).