

Why Do We Go Through Trouble?

“The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned” (Isa. 50.4).

A word in season, Isaiah says, for those in a season of weariness... and there are many these days worn down by all their troubles.

Isaiah says God had given him the tongue “of the learned.” This was not something given to him on a platter, then: it was something he had to learn. He had to learn this kind of tongue that could minister a word of encouragement to someone weary. Actually the passage could read, “the tongue of a disciple.” Isaiah was a disciple of the Lord, one under His tutelage and loving discipline. And the Lord’s purpose in it all was to provision him with a word for others, a word “in season,” the very word that would fit the need, and coming just when it was needed most.

Paul the apostle talked of this also, saying that God comforts us in all our trouble so that we might be able to comfort others who are in any trouble “with the same comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God” (2 Cor. 1.4).

Just think how precious a hope this is—that you and I, if we continue as Jesus’ disciples, will have the very comfort of God to minister to others, so that others who come to us in their troubles will actually find the God of comfort Himself.

And so right here we touch the love of God. Our world is in serious trouble these days, has always been, actually: the inevitable consequence of its disconnect with God. Of course there have always been times of trouble in our world. But God has told us of a coming time of trouble unequalled by anything in the past, nor which shall ever again be (Mt. 24.21).

But the God of love has all along been preparing for this, by bringing you and I through trouble in advance, so that in the hour when everything in the world around us comes unglued, we will be there with the comfort of God for those whose hearts are failing them for fear.

Let’s be encouraged, then, in the midst of our troubles, and cast out fear. There is purpose in what we are going through. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ loves us so deeply, with an everlasting love. And His own hope in pouring His love upon us is that the same love

wherewith He loves us will *dwell* in us, be at home in us, in a way that is fruitful for others He also loves.

“Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood...”

This is how John the Revelator describes the love of God. He loved us? He washed us from our sins in His very own Blood. What love. How we praise and thank Him for this. But it does not stop there, this love. It’s not just to fit us to enjoy Heaven for ourselves that He loved us, and saved us. For He goes on,

“...And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 1. 5,6).

Notice where the “Amen” is. Does He wash us from our sins in His own blood, and then say, Amen, my work in your life is finished now, you’re ready to go to Heaven? No, not till He has made us kings and priests unto God His Father does He say, “Amen,” reminding us in the same breath that the purpose of it all is the glory and dominion of God forever. Not till He has made us these kings and priests is His work in our lives finished.

This, to me, is very inspiring, and strengthening. It girds me up to continue on no matter how difficult or desolate or heart rending things become. For, I see purpose in it all. I know my Lord and Saviour has bought me with a price, and has brought me into this great salvation from sin, washing me in His own blood, not just for my own sake, but for *His*—that we may become partners in His own priestly ministry toward others, ministering the love and salvation of God to others. How great and high, and how precious a calling this is, the love of God toward us. Beloved, we need to know and remember, and cleave very close to this in the painful times we go through—the God of love who called us has purpose in everything we go through, and is working all things together for good in the lives of those He called according to this purpose.

Keep Looking

Notice in the passage we quoted above that it’s all written in the past tense. “...Washed us from our sins in His own blood... made us kings and priests unto God...” Really, Lord? I look within my heart, and... where is that? I don’t see the finished work. What I see in my heart so often gives the lie to these words. And I get discouraged. But I must learn—as a disciple—to keep my eyes off myself, and continue looking steadfastly “with open face” into that *Glass* of the glory of God,

the living Word of God, and be changed by what I see *there*. That's the true me. I look into my heart, and I certainly know what I will see there. But then I look into the Glass, the Mirror of God, and what do I see? Washed from my sins... made a king-priest after the order of Melchizedek...

And from glory to glory I am *changed into that same image!* The new-covenant Glory does the changing! And when the work is finished, what I see in my own heart will not be short of what I see in the Mirror.

And so let us keep looking into this spiritual Mirror! Don't go away and forget what manner of man or woman you are. I know, when I looked into the Mirror, for a few minutes there I saw myself cleansed, washed, pure even as He is pure, and made a priest and king. And it was so wonderful, the cleanness I felt within. But then I went away and somehow forget that, and... what a letdown. I'm just plain old sinful me again, full of guilt and condemnation. Return to the Mirror, then! Keep looking in that Mirror! In Christ you and I are cleansed: made pure, righteous, and holy, even as He is pure and holy.

“But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, *and continueth therein*, not being a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his doing” (Jas. 1.25).

Oh, how we need to *continue looking* into His glorious Face... into this New Covenant mirror. There is grace in this glory that empowers us to be doers, not just hearers, and thus are blessed in the doing!

And so, this is God's counsel to us in this hour. Keep looking! Keep looking! His blessing is in it!

I know, our problem is that we sometimes can't even find the Mirror. Even when we read our Bible, just where is that Mirror... the glory of the Lord in the Face of Jesus Christ? Where can I find *Him*? He seems to have hidden His face from me. But when God urged David saying, “Seek ye my face,” David's response was, “Thy face, LORD, will I seek” (Ps. 27.8). I am saying that we need to persevere, to set our faces to seek His Face, turning away from ourselves. Continual introspection, continually looking into our own hearts, will sink us in despair. The answer isn't in our own hearts. We need to look *unto Jesus*. He is that spiritual Mirror: only in Him can we see ourselves as we truly are. If for a season He has hidden His face from us, we need to be patient, and recognize there is loving purpose in what He is doing. He is seeking to draw us deeper into Himself. He is looking for steadfastness, perseverance, singleness of eye... because days of great trouble are at the

door. And He wants to prepare us for that now. Whatever others are doing, we need to know the time is short: we need to be seeking God, seeking His face.

Blessed Are the Chastened

So, we have this great and precious hope of being made one of God's king-priests. This is what He has in mind in all things that He brings our way. In the good things. In the hard things. When He sends the hard things, I tend to get overwhelmed, and I ask, "Why me, Lord?" Like Asaph. He began to envy the prosperity of the wicked round about him. They had it so easy, while his own life was full of troubles. They could care less about God and at the same time were living happily ever after. He loved God and sought to live a clean life, but was going through so many troubles. What was it all about? He started to think, all I'm doing is in vain; I'm just being naïve: I seek to live a holy life, and this is what I get for it?

"For all day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning" (Ps. 73.1).

It was too much for him, too painful to think about.

In the midst of his turmoil Asaph (of the priestly tribe of Levi) went into the Sanctuary of God. Drawing nigh to God, waiting on the Lord there, pouring it all out to Him, he began to see it all from His perspective—in the Light of the Sanctuary.

"Then understood I their end."

How slippery a place these ones he had envied were in. Their desolation would come upon them "in a moment." Whereas he himself, he came to realize, was under God's loving care even in the midst of all the chastenings he was under.

"Nevertheless I am *continually* with Thee."

And God was continually with him, too. And what is more, all the things Asaph was going through were working a great cry in his heart *for God Himself*.

"Whom have I in Heaven but Thee, and there is none (or nothing) upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength (the Rock) of my heart, and my portion forever."

So Asaph saw—in the Sanctuary, in that place of priestly ministry unto God—that in spite of the chastening, in spite of the dealings, in spite of the troubles, “it is good for me to draw near to God. I have put my trust in the Lord GOD that I may declare all Thy works.” That sounds a bit wooden in the King James Version. Asaph is saying drawing near to a chastening God is good for him, not to his detriment. And putting his trust in Him in a day when he didn’t seem to have much to show for that trust but troubles... he will yet see the day when he will be declaring, and making manifest *all His deeds and works*. He that hath an ear let him hear.

“Blessed is the man whom Thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto Thee...” (Ps. 65.4).

This is David the king speaking now, and we are quick to agree. To be one of those God chooses and causes to draw nigh to Him... such a one is blessed.

But wait a minute. What about this man?

“Blessed is the man whom Thou chasteneth, O LORD...”

Are we just as quick to agree? The Lord says this one under the His loving chastening and discipline is blessed.

“*Blessed* is the man whom Thou chasteneth, O LORD, and teachest him out of Thy law, that Thou mayest give him rest from the day of adversity, till the pit be digged for the wicked...” (Ps. 94.12).

Who is digging the pit for the wicked? They themselves are... and the day is at hand when they are going to fall in the pit they have digged. Who will be there, I wonder, to help them out?

...And so I want to remember those words about being chosen to be made a king and a priest unto God. That’s the reason behind all things that come my way: the good things, the hard things. So rather than asking, “Why me,” I want to humbly bow my head, and say instead, “Thank you that it’s me, Lord. Thank you that you chose me. I present myself to you completely surrendered. Have your own way in my life. Bring me into the love of God... and don’t stop anywhere short.”

This is the hope that God has in us. Think of the day when those around us are totally undone with the collapse of their world in which they had trusted. Their whole world and way of life... disintegrating right before their eyes! And who do they find there, waiting for them there?

God.

They find the God of love there, waiting for them there, a God who has made great preparation for the hour of their extremity. For they discover in you and me a priesthood of kings who are reigning in the midst of it all, and who have the resources of the throne of God at their disposal: God's spiritual riches, His riches of grace and righteousness, His peace, His mercy, His forgiveness—His Light. Here is a priesthood who have all the riches of a heavenly Kingdom, and nothing in their hearts but a great desire to give as it has been given to them.

This to me is the most wonderful hope—to be dwelling in a kingdom of righteousness when sin's captivity is all around us, and we minister that throne of righteousness to others; to be dwelling in a kingdom of peace when all around us is unrest, and we minister that peace to others. And *joy*. In the midst of despair, we impart our Joy—His joy—to others. We are those who dwell in a kingdom of Light, even in the midst of great darkness, and minister that Light to others. Think of that. Thick darkness all around us, others gnawing their tongues for pain because of it... yet we know a Kingdom of Light, and walk in *the Light*... right in the midst of the darkness. And that Light shines out in the darkness! And we have a song in the night... like the lines of the old hymn: "Sun of my soul, thou Saviour dear, it is not night if Thou be near."

Before The Throne of God

John saw a great multitude standing before the throne of God and of the Lamb with palm branches in their hands, praising and worshipping in abandoned thankfulness, and crying,

"Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb" (Rev. 7.10).

One of the elders before the throne asks John who these are. Knowing the only way to answer a question posed by an elder greater and wiser than he, humble John responds, "Sir, thou knowest." And so this one tells him, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God..."

Brother or sister in trouble, think how precious this is. The troubles we are going through now are doing a purifying work in our lives, and are bringing us to the place where we stand before the throne of God... in such a way that that throne rules in every facet of our lives.

Others may be bowing before Lord Trouble... but we are before the Throne of God and of the Lamb. Others may be in darkness, but we are living in the light of the Throne (that is, in His love). Others may be ruled by many things, by evil, by fear, by sin, by trouble, by torment... but we are before the Throne of God, and that throne of righteousness and peace is holding sway over us, dominion over us. We are in rest when others are in turmoil; we are in the bond of grace and righteousness when others are in the grip of sin and bitterness. We are living in *another Kingdom*, we are before the throne of God, we are abiding under His canopy of love.

“Therefore are they before the throne of God...” These words remind me of the vessels of priestly service that in Hezekiah’s revival had been cleansed and sanctified.

“...And behold, they are before the altar of the LORD” (2 Chr. 29.19).

Cleansed, sanctified... and waiting. In a state of readiness. So also with these before the Throne. For, they are not only kings, but priests.

“Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night *in His temple*...”

And this word here, *serve*, is the Greek word always used in the New Testament for priestly service. So these ones in whom the throne of God is manifested are also priests who serve God in His temple, waiting upon a priestly calling. They stand before the Throne of grace as priests on behalf of others, seeking mercy, and grace to help in time of need. Whose need? Well, their own, actually... because for these ones, the troubles of others are their own.

And they serve Him “day and night” in His temple. Meaning, this is something beyond a career to them. It is their lives. They serve God as priests day and night: at all times, in everything they’re doing. They might be... whatever. A farmer, or a truck driver, or a housewife, or an accountant, or a doctor... or maybe just working some menial job. Or maybe retired, or an invalid, or perhaps unable to find work. But whatever they’re doing they are “before the throne of God,” they are a kingdom of priests. In all they went through, all that great trouble, God’s purpose in it all was to cleanse their robes in the Blood of the Lamb... to cleanse them so pure, “such as no fuller on earth can white them,” and bring them to the place where they are before His throne... for His own sake and interests, and for others.

He sent a man before them...

I think of Joseph... one of the lambs of God.

“He sent a man before them, even Joseph...” (Ps. 105.17).

God saw the hearts of the family of Jacob, and knew their need to turn to Him. He saw their selfishness, their pride, their conceit, their jealousy, their hatred, their worldliness and carnality... and he knew that it would take hard dealings to turn their hearts to Him. He knew where he had to bring them—into great trouble—and so what did He do? Just lay it on them? No, “He sent a man before them...”

How precious that is. What love He had for them.

“He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a bondslave...”

A bondslave? What about those dreams of being like a king, with others bowing down before him? Joseph went through severe testings and dealings. He was sold as a slave. That was hard. He was framed. That was even harder.

But the hardest thing of all—the most grievous thing that Joseph went through—was the cold hard iron he felt in his own soul.

“...Whose feet they hurt with fetters; his soul came into iron” (Ps. 105.18).

Oh the pain of that iron deep in his own soul! How could he endure that? That was his prison in the midst of the prison. But in due time—in God’s time—the faithful God brought Joseph out of the iron and into a beautiful brokenness and release... and he began to see that, whatever his brethren had meant for evil, His God had meant for good. His being in the king’s prison house was actually the doorway to a liberty he could never have manufactured on his own. And one day he stood “before the throne.” It was with a broken and a contrite heart, a priestly forgiving heart toward his brethren, that he stood there. And in due time God “arranged” things so that Joseph was able to minister this forgiveness to them, God first bringing them into deep trouble... and deep repentance for the hardness of their heart.

Keep Your Cool

I still didn’t complete that verse about the ones who come out of tribulation and stand before the Throne. There’s more yet.

“Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple, and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them...”

This, to me, is so beautiful. It actually says in the Greek, “He that sitteth on the throne shall *tabernacle* over them...” In other words, God Himself is their dwelling place, their tent, their *tabernacle*. These ones come out of such great trouble, and now God Himself spreads Himself like a tent over them and becomes their shade: their dwelling place and shelter and protection in a day of great trouble and great storm and great heat.

“They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light upon them, nor any heat...”

How beautiful. These ones who have been through such trouble find a *Tabernacle* over them in a day when the heat of the sun has grown fierce, “and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof” (Ps. 19.6).

This is beginning to happen. They talk of global warming... and they’re right.

“The day cometh that shall burn as an oven...” (Mal. 4.1).

All around us things will be in a state of melt-down, with the earth and the Heavens on fire; all around us is fear and panic, anger and wrath, malice and hatred... the fire causing the waters of humanity to boil over with anger and runaway violence. It’s going to be very hot out there. Yet these ones dwell in a *Tabernacle* where they’re able to “keep their cool,” because it is God’s own cool ruling over them, and keeping them. “He that sitteth *upon the throne* shall *tabernacle* over them.” The emphasis is that His Throne rules over them, and so keeps them in the midst of it all, protects them in the midst of it all, with a continual and abiding sense of the Presence of the Lord overshadowing them.

“And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain” (Isa. 4.6).

It’s a wonderful hope, then, this hope of coming before the throne of God, and living our lives out from the rule of the throne of God. This is where God is bringing us, leading us. We find this throne of God all through The Revelation, but particularly in this one little passage we have been quoting from (Rev. 7. 9-17).

“A great multitude...stood before the throne...” “Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne...” “And all the angels... fell before the throne...” “Therefore are they before the throne of God...” “He that sitteth upon the throne shall ‘*tabernacle*’ over them...” And then the last verse.

“For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed (shepherd) them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

This passage, sadly, has traditionally been relegated to a distant Heaven someday down the future. May the Lord open our eyes to see. This is for us here. Now. Today. In the midst of our troubles. For He that sitteth upon the Throne of Heaven leads us and guides us and shepherds us *by the Holy Spirit in our hearts*. Do we not realize that the Holy Spirit here in the earth, and in our hearts, is one with the Lamb upon the Throne? That same Throne and Shepherd in Heaven is in the Holy Spirit here in the earth. He is with us: here, and now, saying “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.”

So let us be encouraged in our troubles... and encourage one another. Great purpose is unfolding in our lives. God is faithful. His love toward us is genuine. We are going to come to know and experience in our lives the domain of the throne of God over all things. These ones who came through great trouble and washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, what was the outcome of it all for them?

“Therefore are they before the throne of God...”

The trouble brought them there, as they sought, in their troubles, to draw nigh to the Lamb of God and be cleansed of all defilement by His Blood.

And I just want to add here... “the blood of the Lamb.” It’s such a familiar phrase to us. Let us beware of familiarity. I believe God is going to awaken those words to us in this hour, and we are going to see in the Blood of the Lamb a mighty power of the Spirit like we have never known, and discover the Blood is abundantly able to cleanse us utterly and completely... and leave our raiment—our character—glistening with Light, emanating Light. (And what is Light, but love?) We will discover and experience this actually taking place: the power of the Blood to cleanse us in the troubles we go through with a cleansing that will fill us with awe.

So, let us not be afraid of the troubles. In fact, let us anticipate the cleansing of the Blood becoming more and more effectual in the midst of it all.

A Kingdom in the Midst of Trouble

And let us anticipate coming to know that great unshakeable Kingdom in the midst of it all. God has promised that yet once He will shake all things—not only the earth, but the heavens also. But in the midst of it all He says there is a kingdom that cannot be shaken. *Cannot* be shaken, He says.

And—don't miss His emphasis here—we are *receiving that Kingdom* (Heb. 12.28). “Wherefore we, *receiving* a kingdom that cannot be shaken...” This is right in the midst of all the shakings. Paul in his missionary travels sought to establish the disciples by assuring them that in the midst of their troubles they would discover the reality of the Kingdom of God. He went about “...confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14.22).

Let us not be afraid of our troubles, then, beloved family of God. I believe more and more we are going to understand what Paul saw when he said, “And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also...” (Rom. 5.3). Glory in them? Really, Paul? We're a bit skeptical about that one. But Paul foresaw the outcome of it all, and was determined that nothing, *nothing*, would separate him from it: the love of God being poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit that is given to us. That is God's end, beloved, in His giving us the Holy Spirit. Yes, we experience that love right from the start. But when God has wrought His full work in our lives, His very own love will pour forth from our hearts into a world famishing for the love of God.

Let us gird up our loins, then, as those who are being readied for the day that is at hand. The day of the Lord is dawning, there's no doubt about it. And why are we here on earth at this time? Just to enjoy life, and pursue success and happiness, and hopefully keep out of harm's way till we get to go to Heaven? But didn't we lay all that on the altar when we turned to Jesus? We are bought with a price; we are not our own. We are here at this time because—and let us gird up our loins for this—because God is going to deal with all evil once and for all, and bring it to nought in His universe. All of it! Let us gird up the loins of our mind, and be prepared, then. Things are going to get worse. Far worse. They are going to get far more difficult. But in the midst of it all, God is going to make manifest a kingdom that *cannot* be shaken, a kingdom

that can abide the fires of the day of the Lord—*nothing else will*—a kingdom of righteousness and peace in a priesthood who are reigning in the midst of total upheaval and anarchy and great darkness... for the sake of others. For the sake of others.

“Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us unto our God a kingdom of priests...”

Again, where is this kingdom to be found? Right where we have been saying it is to be found. In the midst of trouble.

“I John, who also am your brother, and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ...” (Rev. 1.9).

That’s how it reads in the original. Notice. Where is the kingdom? Thank you for opening our eyes, Lord. Right in the middle there, between tribulation and patience (endurance). Let that be our experience in the middle of our trouble and endurance, then: the kingdom reigning *there*.

And in trouble let us be as John to one another. Companions to one another in trouble. We are headed into difficult times. Let us be brethren to one another, brothers and sisters who are companions to one another in the tribulation, and in the kingdom, and in the patience of Jesus Christ.

There’s an increasing call for this. For patience. Endurance. We find this repeated through The Revelation.

“Here is the patience and the faith of the saints” (Rev. 13.10).

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14.12).

Note well the context of these exhortations. They’re given in extremely trying situations—a beast making war with the saints, and a great temptation to just get involved in its ways... and so this calls for every ounce of patience, faith, endurance, obedience... that we can lay hold of.

And that’s why we’re going through the things we’re going through *now*, things that call for patience and endurance and faith. Maybe we feel we’re being stretched to the max in *this* present hour. It’s so we won’t be scrambling in *that* hour, trying to access some reserve of

patience and endurance in our own little pocket, and discovering too late that we have so little. Let's acknowledge now that our own resources are falling far short of our need, and discover a blessing in our poverty—the blessing of the poor in Spirit, for theirs are all the resources of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the patience of Jesus Christ Himself.

The Lord told the church of Smyrna—and the name Smyrna comes from the word *myrrh*, which in Scripture is the fragrance that is always associated with the sufferings of Christ—He told them:

“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the Devil will cast some of you into prison that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life” (Rev. 2.10).

What is God's word and counsel, then, His provision for us in such a time of trouble? Faithfulness. “Be thou faithful. Be faithful unto death.” And then—there it is again—those two things: tribulation and the throne, tribulation... and the crown of life.

And it's all about God “sending a man before them.” He leads us into trouble, because that's where He is going to have to lead the world—and the church out there in the world, our brothers and sisters—to turn their hearts to Him. He leads us there first, so that when others around us are going down for the third time, they will find a priest who knows the love of God, knows a kingdom that is above it all, reaching out the hand and lifting them up out of the waves and billows of trouble they are drowning in.

This is as Zechariah prophesied.

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts, in those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, ‘We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you’” (Zech. 8.23).

Ten men out of all nations? Ten is the number that in Scripture signifies trouble, trial, difficulty. We saw that just above: “Ye shall have tribulation ten days.” But our tribulation has rewarded us with a crown, and so now we are ready for the day when ten troubled men from all nations, whose world has fallen apart, go looking for God.

Where are they going to look? Maybe in a lot of places. For God is supposed to be with these people who call themselves Christians. At least that's what the Christians have told them. Are they going to find

Him? They're desperate, and they're going to take hold "of the skirt of him that is a Jew." Who might this be? You and me, hopefully.

"For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly: neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh, but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom. 2. 28,29).

Hopefully it is not just hearsay, then. "We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." I tremble at the thought. This, to me, is what being ready for the day of trouble is all about. If it's just a matter of being rescued out of it all for my own sake... okay, take me home right now, Lord, no use sticking around any longer. But beloved, the heart of my God is greater, far greater, than that. And when troubled ones come to me because they've heard I'm a Christian, and they're on their knees pulling on my pant leg: "Help me, please; you Christians are supposed to have an in with God..." will it be just a rumour they heard?

Or are they actually going to find Him?

Yes they are, if I continue in the pathway of a disciple. If we are earnestly seeking to submit to His dealings in *this* hour... if, instead of falling away in our time of present trouble, we are seeking to draw closer to Him, so that the sharp sword of the Spirit of God is accomplishing that deep circumcision in our lives, dividing asunder soul and spirit, and piercing our joints and our marrows—our relationships with others, and the core inside us: the true motives therein, the thoughts and intents of our heart—as we become those broken and contrite vessels that God is seeking for a habitation, then in the day of trouble when others in trouble come frantically seeking God, they will find Him.

In you. In me. In us they will find Him. Amen.

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