

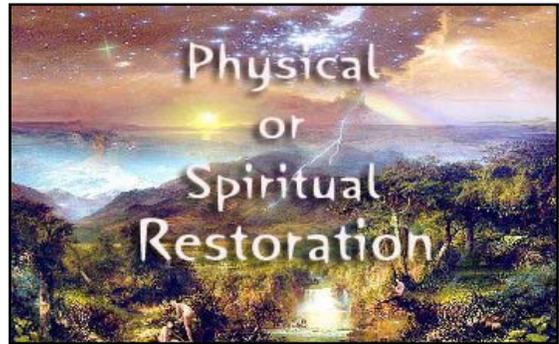
# THE RESTORATION OF ALL THINGS

[Acts 3:20-26](#)



The verses we come to this morning in the book of Acts are going to require some thought. They are theologically loaded. That's what happens when you teach verse-by-verse you run into some deep stuff. I am committed to verse-by-verse exposition of the Scriptures because God gave us the Scriptures in book form, and I believe we should study them in their context-not pick out our favorite topics and neglect the rest. The church talks a lot about the Bible but it doesn't spend much time studying it. There is not a lot of verse-by-verse exposition going on today and as a result we know a lot of Bible stories, but not much theology.

We are looking at Peter's second sermon which takes place in the court of the Gentiles in the Jewish Temple. Peter had just healed a lame man who had never walked and now this man was leaping and praising God. Because of this miraculous healing a crowd gathers and Peter begins to preach. Peter tells this crowd that this man was healed in the name of Jesus. Who is the Holy One, the Righteous One, He is the Prince of Life. These are messianic titles. Peter tells this crowd of Jews that they have killed their messiah. They are murders who are about to experience the wrath of God! Then Peter gives them a way out he tells them that what they have done, they have done in ignorance. Opening the door for the city of refuge. Then he tells them that forgiveness is available in Jesus name.



When we first started this study in Acts do you remember what I said the theme of this book was? I said that the theme of this book is the "[Redemption of Israel](#)." God had promised His people Israel that He would redeem them:

***Zion will be redeemed with justice, And her repentant ones with righteousness. (Isaiah 1:27 NASB)***

As the gospels end Jesus has been rejected by Israel. Then the writings of the New Testament are written to the Church. So the question is, "What happened to Israel?" What about all the promises God made to Israel? The book of Acts answers those questions.

Acts is a transitional book, showing how the worship of God moved from the physical Jewish temple, to the spiritual temple of God the church. Jesus told the Jewish leaders:

***"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it. (Matthew 21:43 NASB)***

Acts shows us the transition that lasted from the death of Jesus to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, which fulfilled this prophecy of Jesus'. This theme of "The Redemption of Israel" is clearly demonstrated in these verses that we are studying today. So, let's get started:

***"Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;<sup>20</sup> and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you,<sup>21</sup> whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. (Acts 3:19-21 NASB)***

After demonstrating from the Scripture that Jesus was the Messiah and that they had murdered Him Peter now tells

his Jewish audience that their sins can be wiped away and that they can experience the restoration of all things that the prophets have spoken of. This must have reminded them of Daniel 9 which promised a time when Israel's sins would be put away. Peter is saying the same thing here that Daniel taught.

The southern tribes of Israel had been carried off into Babylonian captivity. In Daniel 9, the 70 years for the Babylonian captivity was just about over. This prophecy is about "Daniel's people"—Israel:

***In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans--<sup>2</sup> in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. (Daniel 9:1-2 NASB)***

Daniel had calculated the number of years of the Babylonian captivity based upon the prophecy of Jeremiah 29:10. He knew that the time was near and he went to God in prayer asking God to remember his covenant and restore Israel. The redemption of Israel is at the heart and core of Daniel's prophecy. Remember that is our theme in Acts. An angel was sent to speak unto Daniel and this is what he said:

***"Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place. (Daniel 9:24 NASB)***

Daniel was told that 70 weeks had been determined on his people Israel, and city Jerusalem. By the end of this prophetic time period God promised that six things would be accomplished. For our purposes this morning I'd like to just focus on two of them.

***"Make an end of sins"***—Ezekiel prophesies of the time when an end would be made of Israel's sins. A time when Israel would be "clean."

***"For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own land.<sup>25</sup> "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.<sup>26</sup> "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.<sup>27</sup> "And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.<sup>28</sup> "And you will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God. (Ezekiel 36:24-28 NASB)***

This prophecy speaks about the same time as the seventieth week of Daniel, and the new heaven and earth of Revelation 21. This is the promised New Covenant. We know that because one of the six things that Daniel said were to happen at this time was that God would ***"seal up vision and prophecy"***. If you have done much study using commentaries, you know that there is little that Bible scholars agree on. That gives great force to this phrase, which has almost unanimous agreement of Bible scholars across the board. The Hebrew commentaries are in agreement on the meaning of to ***"seal up vision and prophecy"***—they say it means: ***"to give or reveal,"*** it is the process of inspiration, but it's not just that, it also means: ***"to confirm by the fulfilling of the prophecy."*** [Keil and Delitzsch](#), highly respected Hebrew authorities, state in volume 9 page 344 that ***"seal up vision and prophecy"*** means: ***"Prophecies and prophets are sealed, when by the full realization of all prophecies prophecy ceases, no prophets any more appear."*** What does ***"seal up vision and prophecy"*** mean? Hebrew scholars agree that it means: ***"the end and complete fulfillment of all prophecy."***

To ***"seal up vision and prophecy"*** clearly means to give prophecy and fulfill it. Daniel's prophecy then, tells of the time when all prophecy would **cease** to be given and what had been given would be **fulfilled**. When would this be? Daniel's vision ends with the [destruction of Jerusalem](#) that occurred in A.D. 70:

***"So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem***

*until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.<sup>26</sup> "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. (Daniel 9:25-26 NASB)*

Who is, "*the prince who is to come,*" of verse 26? Some say this is the beast. The nearest antecedent for the coming prince in verse 26, would carry us back to the "Messiah the Prince" (verse 25), who was cut off (verse 26). Therefore, Christ becomes the one and only "Prince" in the whole context. The "people of the prince" speaks of the Jewish people who were the ones responsible for the destruction of the city Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70, when all of the facts of biblical and secular history are considered.

*"And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate." (Daniel 9:27 NASB)*

In the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> week, comes the abomination that makes desolate. When this happened, prophecy ceased. We know from the teaching of Jesus when this happened.

*"Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), 16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; (Matthew 24:15-16 NASB)*

The "abomination of desolation" is referring to the Roman army in the holy place, which is the city of Jerusalem.

*or then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. (Matthew 24:21 NASB)*

"Then"—being when the Roman armies surrounded and laid siege to Jerusalem in A.D. 70. There is no tribulation to equal what happened in A.D. 70, prior to it or after it. The great tribulation is over, it happened in A.D. 70. Sorry if that disappoints you. :)

*"Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. (Matthew 24:34 NASB)*

"[This generation](#)"—the generation that Jesus was speaking to. The generation that was listening to Jesus speak would experience all he had spoken of, including the great tribulation and His [parousia](#).

So Daniel tells us that his vision ends with the destruction of Jerusalem, which would bring an end to all prophecy. This is exactly what Luke tells us.

*"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand.<sup>21</sup> "Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city;<sup>22</sup> because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled. (Luke 21:20-22 NASB)*

So Daniel and Luke both tell us that all prophecy was to cease, and be fulfilled by the time Jerusalem was destroyed, which we know happened in A.D. 70. Daniel said the Lord would redeem Israel at the consummation of the 70 weeks. This is what Peter is talking about. Israel was living in the last days, God was about to come and judge them, if they were to be delivered they must turn to Jesus their Messiah in faith.

*"Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may*

***come from the presence of the Lord;* (Acts 3:19 NASB)**

The word for “refreshing” is from the Greek word *anapsuxis*, which means: *“to revive, refresh, a recovery of breath.”* This spiritual refreshing was symbolized in the prophets by the picture of rain pouring down and bringing life and fruitfulness and of rivers of life giving water ([Isaiah 32:1-4](#), [15-18](#); [44:1-5](#); [55:10-13](#); [Ezekiel 36:25-26](#); [47:1-12](#); [Psalm 36:8](#); [46.4](#)). It was symbolized in terms of receiving a refreshing drink in the hottest and driest of conditions ([Isaiah 55:1-3](#)). It was symbolized by the shadow of a great rock in a hot and weary land ([Isaiah 32:1-4](#)).

Israel will be redeemed, her sins will be forgiven and times of refreshing will come, when she turns in faith to her Messiah Jesus. Now notice what else Peter says here:

***and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you,* (Acts 3:20 NASB)**

The NKJV and others have “preached” instead of “appointed”. But according to Vincent’s Word Studies, “The best texts read *prokeceirismenon*, appointed. This Greek word is only used by Luke in [Acts 22:14](#); [26:16](#). The verb originally meant: *“at hand, to take into one's hands, to choose.”* It is not "Jesus Christ" here nor "Christ Jesus," but "Jesus the Messiah," identifying Jesus with the Messiah. Jesus the Messiah chosen for you.

The reference is naturally to the second coming of Christ as verse 21 shows.

***whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.* (Acts 3:21 NASB)**

***“The period of restoration of all things”***– the word “restoration” here is from the Greek word (*anapsuksews*). This word speaks of the redemption of Israel. This word is one of the key words used in the LXX when God predicted the restoration of Israel under the Messiah. [Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament](#) says of this word, *“here only in the N.T., though common in late writers. In papyri and inscriptions for repairs to temples and this phrase occurs in Jewish apocalyptic writings, something like the new heaven and the new earth of Revelation 21:1. The verb *apokatisthmi* is used by Jesus of the spiritual and moral restoration wrought by the Baptist as Elijah (Matthew 17:11; Mark 9:12) and by the disciples to Jesus in Acts 1:6. Josephus uses the word of the return from captivity and Philo of the restitution of inheritances in the year of jubilee. As a technical medical term it means complete restoration to health.”*

So Peter is saying, If they will trust Jesus, they (Israel) will be redeemed, their sins will be forgiven and times of refreshing will come, and when Jesus returns to reward those who trust Him and destroy those who reject Him they will be safe:

***"And the nations were enraged, and Thy wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to Thy bond-servants the prophets and to the saints and to those who fear Thy name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth." (Revelation 11:18 NASB)***

Notice what else Peter says in Acts 3:21, ***“which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.”*** These have been revealed, and are recorded in the First Testament. God had spoken of his redemption of Israel as a resurrection:

***"Therefore prophesy, and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, My people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel. <sup>13</sup> 'Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves and caused you to come up out of your graves, My people. <sup>14</sup> 'And I will put My Spirit within you, and you will come to life, and I will place you on your own land. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken and done it,' declares the LORD.'"* (Ezekiel 37:12-14 NASB)**

The outpouring of the Spirit was for the purpose of redeeming Israel. At Pentecost the Spirit was poured out so Israel is being redeemed.

***"Moses said, 'THE LORD GOD SHALL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED in everything He says to you. (Acts 3:22 NASB)***

This quote is taken from [Deuteronomy 18:15](#). His point is that Jesus is that prophet Whom God has raised up who is "like Moses". No one was held in greater esteem in first century Judaism than Moses. He was exalted above all men.

From this appeal to Moses it is evident that Peter wanted them to understand that Jesus Christ was come, not as an ordinary prophet, to exhort to repentance and amendment, but as a legislator, who was to give them a new law, and whose commands and precepts they were to obey, or be destroyed. Therefore they were to understand that the Gospel of Jesus Christ was that new law which should supersede the old.

Christ had now come, speaking by His own authority, offering a more glorious deliverance to the people than that from Egypt, and issuing new laws for the government of men. This proved that He, and He alone, was the prophet spoken of by Moses, and Peter's hearers now perceive that the authority of Moses himself binds them to the authority of Jesus, and that they must hear him, on the penalty of destruction if they refuse.

Luke is giving us here "exodus topology." He is making a comparison between Moses and Christ. The exodus out of Egypt and into the Promised Land by the children of Israel under Moses is a direct shadow of the exodus of the New Testament generation from the cross to the entrance into the eternal land of rest—the kingdom of God.

Moses is a type and Jesus is the [anti-type](#). Moses was the first savior of Israel, whom God had empowered to redeem Israel; this was a prefiguring of the true Redeemer who by His perfect sacrifice redeemed Israel from sin death.

In [2 Corinthians 3](#), Moses stands in relation to the First Covenant as Christ does to the Second. One is inferior and preparatory; the other is spiritual and final. In these ways, then, the life of Moses points beyond itself to the life and work of Christ.

Like Moses, Jesus will grow up in Egypt. Like the story of Moses, Herod slaughters the male children ([Matthew 2:16-18](#)). Like Moses' exile to Midian, Jesus' exile to Egypt will end with the death of Herod/Pharaoh. And then we have a New Exodus foretold: ***"Out of Egypt I have called My son."*** Jesus also goes up on a mountain, like Moses, and gives the New *Torah*—the "Sermon on the Mount." The transfiguration experience is pregnant with exodus symbolism. Just as Moses went up into the mountain with three companions, so does Jesus. Moses' face shone with the glory of God; the face of Jesus "Shone like the sun," Matthew tells us. Moses and Elijah appear, and the voice from the cloud says, "This is my beloved Son; listen to Him" is most likely echoing the words of:

***The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. (Deuteronomy 18:15 NASB)***

From the mount our Lord descends, as did Moses, to find confusion on the plain. So Jesus is the anti-type of Moses, He is the redeemer of Israel—a spiritual redeemer. Moses redeemed a physical people from a physical bondage but Jesus redeems His people from sin death. Notice what Peter says about Jesus:

***'And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.'*** (Acts 3:23 NASB)

Peter identifies the true Israel. It is those who follow Messiah. If you reject the Messiah you will no longer be "the people." Here is a clear indication that the coming of Jesus will result in a new Israel arising out of the old, from

which all who reject Him will be cut off. This new Israel will be the nation to whom God will give what the old nation has forfeited ([Matthew 21:43](#)). A new nation will be formed with the Christ rejecters cast off.

***"And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days. (Acts 3:24 NASB)***

It was not only Moses who had spoken of these days which have now come. It was also all the prophets who followed him from Samuel onwards. The mention of Samuel was especially significant as he had anointed David ([1 Samuel 16:13](#)) in whom the promises of an anointed king to come had begun ([2 Samuel 7:16](#)).

***"It is you who are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.' (Acts 3:25 NASB)***

The Israelites to whom Peter was speaking were the sons ***"of the prophets and of the covenant"*** which God made with Abraham. And the promise given there was that in their seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed:

***And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Genesis 12:3 NASB)***

The "you" here is Abraham. In Abraham all the families of the earth will be blessed. Paul gives us the Divine commentary on this verse in:

***Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ. (Galatians 3:16 NASB)***

Let me tell you what I see this verse as saying and then try to explain why. Paul is saying that the primary recipients of the Abrahamic covenant were Abraham and Christ. This, of course, would include all who are in Christ—believers. This promise is not realized in the physical Israelites, but in the new Israel, the Church. Apart from Paul's divinely inspired commentary, how many of us would have understood that Abraham's seed was Christ? Please listen: When the New Testament authors comment on a First Testament passage, they do not give *an* interpretation, but **THE** interpretation. The New Testament interprets the First. The Old Covenant was a veiled representation of the New Covenant.

It is in the New Testament that we learn that the material things of the Old Covenant were types and shadows of spiritual counterparts found in the New Covenant. We are to interpret the First Testament through the lens of the New Testament. We must understand that the last 27 books are a divinely inspired commentary on the first 39 books.

Milton S. Terry, in his book [Biblical Hermeneutics](#) writes: ***"It is of the first importance to observe that, from a Christian point of view, the Old Testament cannot be fully apprehended without the help of the New"*** (p. 18).

When Paul says in Galatians 3:16, ***"The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed, that is, Christ,"*** he is giving us the divinely inspired commentary of the Abrahamic covenant. The importance of this verse cannot be overstressed. Paul, under inspiration of God, says, ***"The promises were given to Abraham and his seed."*** The Hebrew word used in [Genesis 15](#) for "seed" or "offspring" is [zera](#), which is a collective singular that can refer either to one descendant or many descendants. An English collective singular, for example, is "sheep"—that can refer to one sheep or many sheep. Paul explained that the seed God had in mind in [Genesis 13:15](#) and [17:8](#) was the one descendant, Christ.

The term seed not uncommonly denotes all the descendants of some great ancestor, but it is not normally used of one person. Used in this way, it points to the person as in some way outstanding; the seed is not simply one descendant among many, but THE descendant.

The Abrahamic Covenant is based upon the very first promise in the Bible. This covenant was foretold in the Garden of Eden, as God declared to the Serpent:

***And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel." (Genesis 3:15 NASB)***

The word "seed" here is the Hebrew word zera', and it's the exact same word used by God to tell Abraham that the promise was given to his seed, his offspring. Both the seed in Genesis 3:15 and the seed in [Genesis 15:6](#), in reference to the seed of Abraham, is describing not many seeds, or many descendants, but one seed; Jesus Christ Himself.

Actually, even before Christ became flesh, the New Testament reveals that He is the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. In Luke 1 we read about the birth of John the Baptist. When he was eight days old, he was circumcised and was given the name John. At that point, his father, Zacharias, filled with the Holy Spirit, sang a song of praise. And this is what he sang in the first of that song:

***"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, <sup>69</sup> And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of David His servant-- <sup>70</sup> As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old-- <sup>71</sup> Salvation FROM OUR ENEMIES, And FROM THE HAND OF ALL WHO HATE US; <sup>72</sup> To show mercy toward our fathers, And to remember His holy covenant, <sup>73</sup> The oath which He swore to Abraham our father, (Luke 1:68-73 NASB)***

Knowing that his son would introduce Christ to the people, he praised God for performing the ***"the oath which he swore to Abraham our father."***

We have to realize that Paul's definition of seed contradicts the Jewish nationalistic interpretation of this term. Jews were convinced that the term seed referred to the physical descendants of Abraham, the Jewish people. Therefore, they believed it was absolutely necessary to belong to the Jewish nation in order to receive the blessings promised to Abraham.

Since Christ is the heir of the promises, all those, and only those, who are in Christ by faith are beneficiaries of the irrevocable trust agreement God made with Abraham:

***And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Galatians 3:29 NASB)***

Who is the "YOU" here? It is the Galatian believers and it applies to ALL believers. If you trust Christ you are a descendant of Abraham and the Israel of God.

If these Jews to whom Peter is preaching reject Jesus Christ they are not Abraham's offspring and they will not inherit the promise, they will be destroyed. But if they would repent and trust Christ they would receive the blessing of Abraham. The whole world was to enjoy the blessing, but the Servant had brought it to them first.

***"For you first, God raised up His Servant, and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways." (Acts 3:26 NASB)***

Who is the "YOU"? It is the Jews of the first century to whom he was speaking. He is talking here about the Abrahamic promises. You first—before the earth as a whole receives His blessing, as Isaiah has made clear that it will one day through the Servant ([Isa 49:6](#)), God has first appointed it to them, (to the Jew first, and then to the Gentile).

***For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes,***

***to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Romans 1:16 NASB)***

Speaking to the Jews Paul said:

***And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. (Acts 13:46 NASB)***

Why was it “necessary” that the Gospel be preached to the Jews first? They were God’s covenant people. The promises were made to them of the Messiah and Kingdom. Until God fulfilled His promises to Israel first there could be no promises to the rest of the world. We could have no hope unless God fulfilled his promises to Israel. And that is what we see happening here in Acts, the gospel is being preached and the Israelites are responding to it. They are inheriting the promises that God made to them. Thus God was redeeming Israel.

Peter’s second message stops here. Why does he stop here?

***And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple guard, and the Sadducees, came upon them, (Acts 4:1 NASB)***

Peter is arrested. We’ll pick it up here next week. But before you leave let me say this: What I want you to see in this text in Acts is the faithfulness of God. God fulfilled His promises to Israel and He’ll fulfill His promises to you. This should give us great hope and comfort.

In the book of Psalms, which recounts, more than any other book in the Bible, the struggles of the godly and their total dependence upon God’s faithfulness we find reference to God’s faithfulness some forty times. Consider for a moment the absolute necessity of the faithfulness of God, every aspect of our Christian life rests upon the faithfulness of God: our salvation, sanctification, our deliverance from temptation, our forgiveness of sins and our comfort in trials:

***And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28 NASB)***

Paul applies this to some very "present" (v. 18) problems like persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, or even the sword (v. 35). Our God is faithful, trust Him.

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This message was preached by [David B. Curtis](#) on August 3, 2008. Media #425.



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