Suffering is universal in all mankind. The question is not “if you will suffer,” but how you will handle it when you do—as a **BELIEVER** in grace or an **UNBELIEVER** awaiting final judgement.

- The choice is ours whether we have a life of resting in grace—even when the storms blow—or an anxious heart, even in our rest, waiting for the final storm: God’s wrath/the Day of the Lord.
God will justly deal with the injustices against all believers in His future, final judgment.

- He might refrain from judgment for the present, and even allow good to come to evil people.
- How mature believers react to affliction is an obvious sign of dynamic faith, or lack thereof.
- Ultimately, suffering is a ROM. 8:28 good thing.
SUFFERING HAS LASTING VALUE

- Adversity makes prosperity all the more wonderful.
- The Christian who suffers like a yo-yo, always up and down, does not have the stability that comes from trusting God’s providential care for his life.
- All humankind may fail you, but God absolutely always cares for you. *1 PETER 5:7*
TWO VERY DIFFERENT ENDS v. 6-8

1. The BEST is yet to come for believers. 2 COR. 4:17
2. The WORST is yet ahead for the non-believer—HEAVEN for us, HELL for them.

REST OR RETRIBUTION, THE CHOICE IS Ours!
- Because God is just, He will afflict the afflicters.
- God would be unjust if there was no final deferred judgment for the unbeliever.
- God desires one end for all people. 2 PETER 3:9
NOW OR LATER? v. 9

Doing your own thing without Jesus is an attempt to have your heaven here, not in the hereafter; that is a bad choice.

- One day God will repay the persecutors of the church by giving them “eternal destruction” in return for rejecting the gospel and persecuting the messengers of the gospel.

- The word “punished” means to pay a price by way of return, to pay in full a penalty.
SERIOUSLY, HOW BAD CAN HELL BE?

Being an unbeliever is everlastingly bad, complete with “everlasting destruction.”

- A number of churches today reject the idea of eternal punishment.
- They say that “destruction” means annihilation, and that unbelievers will simply cease to exist; they could not be more wrong.
- Unbelievers will be fully alive and totally separated from all other beings and all that is good . . . forever.
YOU DON’T HAVE TO GO THERE! v. 10

- **Yet future**—“in that Day.” This coming of the Lord Jesus is the Second Coming, not the Rapture which is 7 years earlier (Daniel’s 70th week). **DAN. 9**

- At this coming, He will fight the battle of Armageddon and then establish His kingdom on earth for 1,000 years. **REV. 19:11–20:4**

- “**To be glorified in His saints**”—a kingdom of rest!

REST OR RETRIBUTION—THE CHOICE IS OURS!