

6 EXPLAINING HOPE

3 8 Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. 9 Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. 10 For,

“Whoever would love life and see good days must keep their tongue from evil and their lips from deceitful speech. 11 They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it. 12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

13 Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? 14 But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. “Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened.”

15 But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

17 For it is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. 18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. 19 After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits—20 to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, 21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

1. V10-12 quote [Psalm 34](#). What would it have meant to “love life and see good days” in Episode 2? What does it mean in Episodes 4 and 5?

2. How do v8-14 reaffirm earlier instructions from Peter?

3. If we live this way, what questions will that provoke from those around us? (v15) How could we provoke such questions in our current situation?

4. How should these questions be answered? (v15-16) Are you ready to answer like that? Why or why not?

Verses 18-22 are famously tricky! But it can be helpful to take them as explaining v17. Why is it better to suffer obediently? Well, firstly, **Christ’s own obedient suffering** - his death on the cross - brought us to God **successfully** (v18). In his resurrection, he even **proclaimed that victory** to the spirits/angels (v19-20,22) - the “sons of god” from [Genesis 6](#) - who originally disobeyed God, took humanity away from God, and so brought on the flood to wash away human corruption. Secondly, Noah was saved through those flood waters, and that prefigures Christian salvation through water baptism (v20-21). How so? Baptism is our pledge to God that, since our consciences have been washed clean by Christ, we’ll **now live like it** (v21). So that’s two reasons for suffering obediently: 1) Christ’s own demonstration that suffering obediently ends in victory and 2) our salvation through that victory was precisely so that we’ll now obey God. For Peter’s audience, that was a powerful argument (though complex) to suffer obediently like Jesus!

5. Are you personally ready to obey God through suffering? If so, how could you best explain that readiness to people you know?

