

2 Thessalonians 1:3-12

Martyrs: Justice

Temporal trials ...

- I. Troublers of God's People
 - A. An Age-Old Story
 - B. Steadfast Saints
 - C. That Has an Ending
- II. Face God's Just Judgment
 - A. God's is Just
 - B. Rebellion Rewarded
 - C. Afflictors Afflicted
- III. How are We to Respond
 - A. Pray Against Them
 - B. Pray for Them
 - C. Prepare to Rejoice

... eternal punishment.

Children, listen ...

1. When will persecution of God's people finally come to an end?
2. Are people who persecute Christians able to be saved?
How?
3. Jesus said: "___ ___ ___ your enemies and ___ ___ ___ for those who persecute you. (Matthew 5:44)
4. What will those who hurt God's people face some day if they don't' repent?

Grace ... and Vengeance belong to the Lord

It really is hard to fathom the reality of eternal punishment for unbelievers, but we know it is a reality because God tells us so in His Word. It is equally hard to grasp the fact that some will escape that horrible reality due to the saving mercy of God through Christ Jesus. It's even harder to comprehend the grace that we who believe in Christ know. We know that we do not deserve the life we have now or the life that we can look forward to. Unbelief is dreadful enough, but an unbeliever that persecutes God's people is not only living under wrath now, he will receive a special measure of divine punishment in the next. This is the day of grace and the time to repent. Even the worse tormentors of God's people are not beyond the reach of salvation (consider Paul). We don't know who will or will not be saved among them, but this we do know, we have an obligation to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. (Matthew 5:44) We may have few personal enemies and we probably don't deal with much persecution, but many of our brothers and sisters around the world have hateful enemies and face violent persecutors simply due to their faith in Jesus. Those of us who know Jesus can pray for our fellow Christians and for those who harass them. Pray God's people find strength – pray that God will stop the hand of the persecutors – and pray that many who lift their hand against Jesus' people would repent and believe in the very One they are persecuting. (Act 9:4)