

## TESTED BY FIRE

**“... that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:7, NKJV).**

**E**lect. Foreknowledge. Sanctification. Mercy. Hope. Resurrection. Inheritance. Faith. Salvation. Glory. Revelation. Joy. Grace. Prophets. Angels. The Father. The Son. The Holy Spirit. What a torrent of deep thought cascades from the mind of the aged Peter in his first words to the pilgrims of Asia Minor.

“Pilgrims” makes Americans think of early settlers in odd clothing. But the word means “one who comes from a foreign country into a city or land to reside there by the side of the natives” (Thayer, p. 488). Why is Peter so intent on raising the eyes of his fellow sojourners heavenward? Because they have been “*grieved by various trials*” (1 Pet. 1:6). The natives, it appears, have taken great offense at their new neighbors who “*do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation*” (1 Pet. 4:4).

Suffering is the theme of First Peter – not the ravage of disease or the likelihood of accident but the deliberate injury to the Christian by those who resent his ideals: he is “*reproached for the name of Christ*” (1 Pet. 4:14). It can be difficult to accept that God’s people who love others self-sacrificially can be so hated by them.

Peter anoints his wounded brethren with the balm of the ancient prophets who foresaw “*the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow*” (1 Pet. 1:11). There is soothing comfort in the foreknowledge of God.

And then Peter bids them gaze upon the future when their refined faith would pour forth “praise, honor, and glory” as the invisible Savior finally comes into view (1 Pet. 1:7-8). We will not reach heaven unwounded. But what “joy inexpressible” when we at last step into the light! JMJ