

## **PASCHA SUFFERING FOR CHRIST**

Our lesson title comes from the special Greek word, pascha, used by Paul to describe a Church Age Believer's undeserved suffering in the world, for Christ's sake.

(1 Thess.2:14) "For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for **you also endured the same suffering (Pascho) (a.a.ind.2pl)** at the hands of your countrymen, even as they did from the Jews."

Pascha was used by Paul to describe Jesus as the sacrificial Passover lamb in (1 Cor.5:7) - "Christ our Passover (to pascha) (noun) also has been sacrificed." (Ex.12:1-11; Mark 14:12; John 1:29; 1 Pet.1:19)

**This lesson will study six aspects of Christian's Pascha Suffering for Christ (1 Thess.2:14-16).**

### **1. Before his salvation, Paul (Saul of Tarsus) was one of the "hands of apostate Jews" that was used for persecuting the Church of Jesus Christ.**

**At the death of Stephen, the apostate Jews:**

(Acts7:58) "laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul."

(Acts 8:1) "And on that day a great persecution began **against the church** in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles."

(Acts 9:1-2) "**Now Saul**, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to high priest, and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to **the Way**, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem." (John 14:6; Acts 9:15-19; Gla.1:13)

### **2. Once again Paul brags on the Church of Thessalonica for being imitators of Pascha Suffering for Christ.**

(1 Thess.2:15) "even as they (Jewish believers) did from their Jewish countrymen" (undeserved suffering)

Two groups were under Pascha Suffering for Christ in the church. (1 Thess.2:16; 1 Cor.15:3-4; Rom.1:16; Eph.2:8-9).

- One group was those publically haring the gospel of grace salvation.
- The other group were those becoming believers by faith in that grace gospel od salvation.

But we can see by **Ananias' ministry to Saul** how involved the Lord is with His church (Acts 9:3-19).

Later Paul will use his salvation experience to declare equal apostleship with the other disciples of Jesus – Read (Gal.1:11-2:10).

### **3. Pacha Suffering for Christ is the norm and standard for all Christians during the Church Age.**

(Phil.1:29) "**For to you it has granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer (pascho) for His sake."**

(John 16:33) “These things I have spoken to you so that in Me, you may have peace, in the world you have tribulation, but **take courage, I have overcome the world.**”

(John 17:14) “I have given them **Your word**; and the world has hated them; because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”

Like Jewish believers in Judea, the Gentile Thessalonian believers were under **Pascha Suffering for Christ**.

#### 4. **Jewish apostate religion killed their prophets sent to preach the message of grace salvation - IN Christ and Not in the Law! (Books of Acts; Romans; and Galatians)**

Then they murdered their one and only messianic Savior (Luke 20:9-18) [The Parable of Vine-growers].

(Luke 20:14-16) “But when the vine-growers saw Him, they reasoned with one another, saying, ‘This is the heir; **let us kill Him so that the inheritance will be ours.**’ So, they threw Him out of the vineyard and killed Him. What, then, will the owner of the vineyard do to them? **He will come and destroy these vine-growers and will give the vineyard to others.**”

(1 Thess.2:14-15) “**You also** endured the same suffering at the hands of your own countrymen, **even as they** did from the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and **drove us out**. They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all men.” (Acts 7:52)

#### 5. **The devil uses apostate religion and legalistic believers to promote hostility towards the teaching of Grace Doctrines.**

The devil tries to keep them in bondage - because grace doctrines liberate them. This was point in writing the Books of Romans and Galatians (Gal.5:1, 13).

(1 Thess.2:16) “Hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved; with the result that they always fill up the measure of their sins. **But wrath** has come upon them to the utmost.”

(John 8:32) “and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

(Gal.2:1-5) “Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but *I did so* in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain. But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. But *it was* because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage. But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you”.

(Gal.2:18-21) “For if I rebuild what I have *once* destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor. For through the Law, I died to the Law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness *comes* through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.”

(Gal.3:1-5) “You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed *as* crucified? This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain - if indeed it was in vain? So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?”