

Mistreated, Strength-Depleted? Find Your Reward Here.

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"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matthew 5:11-12).

Toward the conclusion of Jesus' historic Beatitudes from His Sermon on the Mount that highlights the favor of God upon needy persons who are submissive to His will, He shares a life-altering imperative!

In Matthew 5:11-12, He said you are blessed when men revile, persecute, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for His sake. Then He said that when we find ourselves in that situation, we should rejoice and be overjoyed, because heaven will be our reward along with the prophets who were mistreated (understatement) in the same way before you.

Before I comment, we must note the comprehensive counsel from the Amplified Bible version of this Scripture: "Blessed (happy, to be envied, and spiritually prosperous—with life-joy and satisfaction in God's favor and salvation, regardless of your outward conditions) are you when people revile you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil things against you falsely on My account. Be glad and supremely joyful, for your reward in heaven is great (strong and intense), for in this same way people persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matthew 5:11-12, AMP).

I told you this would be life-altering!

Jesus spoke of the favor He bestows upon those who are poor in spirit, that is, those who sense their deep spiritual poverty. He spoke of the favor bestowed upon those who mourn, that is, those who, because of their deep sense of spiritual poverty, grieve. He spoke of the favor bestowed upon the humble, hungry and thirsty after righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, and peacemakers. All of these blessings are attributes of heavenly origin.

Take special note that the term for "blessing" that Jesus used was not simply to be made happy, although this is a part. The Amplified Bible rightly includes the spiritual prosperity and favor embedded in the original term Jesus used for "blessed." This gives greater context to Jesus' imperative to rejoice when people lie on you, persecute you, insult you, and say all manner of evil about you because you choose to serve Him. This rejoicing only comes to those who are daily receiving His spiritual favor (power) and spiritual prosperity. In His strength, we can actually look forward to the rich reward of company with the righteous prophets, holy angels, and the Most High in heaven. The key to all of this is submission to God's will and acceptance of His favor and spiritual prosperity.

So, when you stand for righteousness at work, school, being at home with your child, in the unemployment line, in the hospital, in prison, in your marriage, at church, or anywhere else Providence directs you, rejoice when persecution comes as a result of your faith. Great is your heavenly reward. You are not the first to be persecuted in this way, nor will you be the last. Just be faithful, in His strength.

Be faithful to God no matter what and look forward with hope to the great

reward He has promised.