Persecution Helps Spread the Gospel

I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake. 2 Corinthians 12:10.

In every age God’s chosen messengers have been reviled and persecuted; yet through their affliction, the knowledge of God has been spread abroad. Every disciple of Christ is to step into the ranks, and carry forward the same work, knowing that its foes can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. God means that truth shall be
brought to the front, and become the subject of examination and discussion, even through the contempt placed upon it. The minds of the people must be agitated; every controversy, every reproach, every effort to restrict liberty of conscience, is God’s means of awakening minds that otherwise might slumber.

How often this result has been seen in the history of God’s messengers! When the noble and eloquent Stephen was stoned to death at the instigation of the Sanhedrin council, there was no loss to the cause of the gospel. The light of heaven that glorified his face, the divine compassion breathed in his dying prayer, were as a sharp arrow of conviction to the bigoted Sanhedrist who stood by, and Saul, the persecuting Pharisee, became a chosen vessel, to bear the name of Christ before Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. And long afterward Paul the aged wrote from his prison-house at Rome: “Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, ... not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds.... Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached.” Through Paul’s imprisonment the gospel was spread abroad, and souls were won for Christ in the very palace of the Caesars. By the efforts of Satan to destroy it, “the incorruptible seed” of the Word of God, “which liveth and abideth forever,” is sown in the hearts of men; through the reproach and persecution of His children, the name of Christ is magnified, and souls are saved.

This text is taken from Sons and Daughters of God by Ellen G. White. For free access to more of her writings, please visit EGWWritings.org.
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