

# 1 Thessalonians 3:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

## Analysis

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**For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know**—kai gar hote pros hymas ēmen proelegomen hymin hoti mellomen thlibesthaiProelegomen, 'we were foretelling you that we were about to suffer tribulation'). The imperfect tense indicates repeated warning: Paul didn't mention suffering once but continually prepared them. Kathōs kai egeneto kai oidate (καθὼς καὶ ἐγένετο καὶ οἴδατε, 'even as it came to pass and you know') appeals to fulfilled prediction—Paul's warnings proved accurate, validating his prophetic insight.

Honest evangelism includes suffering's cost. Jesus required would-be disciples to 'count the cost' (Luke 14:28-33); Paul warned converts about tribulation. This produces genuine conversions: those attracted solely by promised blessings flee when persecution comes (Mark 4:17); those prepared for suffering persevere. The phrase 'even as it came to pass' confirms Paul's credibility—he didn't exaggerate or fear-monger but accurately predicted persecution, demonstrating prophetic authority. When suffering arrived, the Thessalonians recognized it as prophesied reality, not divine rejection.

## Historical Context

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Paul's ministry in Thessalonica lasted only three weeks (Acts 17:2) yet included comprehensive teaching on suffering, Christ's return, sanctification, and other doctrines. This compressed timeline required focused discipleship. The persecution he predicted arrived immediately—Jews incited a mob, attacked Jason's house, dragged believers before authorities (Acts 17:5-9). Paul fled by night, but afflictions continued for the Thessalonian church (2:14). His warnings prepared them to interpret suffering correctly: as expected Christian experience, not divine abandonment.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How does your evangelism and discipleship honestly prepare people for suffering's reality rather than promising only blessing?
2. What role does fulfilled prediction (Paul's warnings proving accurate) play in validating spiritual authority?
3. How do you interpret your sufferings—as confirmation of following Christ or as evidence of God's displeasure?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ γὰρ ὅτε πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἦμεν προελέγομεν ὑμῖν ὅτι  
**and For when with you** <sup>G1510</sup> **before you that**  
G2532 G1063 G3753 G4314 G5209 G4302 G5213 G3754

μέλλομεν θλίβεσθαι καθὼς καὶ ἐγένετο καὶ οἴδατε  
**we should suffer tribulation as and it came to pass and ye know**  
G3195 G2346 G2531 G2532 G1096 G2532 G1492

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Thessalonians 2:14** (Parallel theme): For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

**1 Thessalonians 2:2** (Parallel theme): But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.