

aggressors. We think of the little band of Christians going out from Jerusalem and carrying the message of Christ and persecuted, thrown to the lions in the arena, as Paul said; "Who are the ^{offscourings} of the earth". Going ^{through} in misery and yet from the midst of the fires glorifying the Lord. We think of the reformation and of the thousands who were burned at the stake ^{for their} ~~was/were~~ loyal ^{ty} to the name of Christ. We think of the people, the suffering, the misery that the people have gone through for the name of Christ, but have glorified the Lord in the midst of the fire. There is a picture in verse 14 through the middle of verse 16 of a time when there are individuals here and there glorifying God, giving praise and glory to the righteous God. All over the world the message reaches, to the uttermost parts of the earth the message goes, a glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has sent Him that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish but have eternal life. And then ~~if~~ you would naturally expect ~~that~~ after this wonderful picture of the outgoing in the midst of persecution and trouble of the Word of God, the outgoing to the isles of the sea to the uttermost part of the earth, you would expect verse 16 to go and say, "And so the whole world comes to believe in the Lord God of Israel, and all are redeemed, and God sets up a wonderful kingdom of happiness and joy." But instead of that we have this sharp change. These people are singing glory to God in the midst of the fires, and in the last half of 16 shows us something of the fires. But the fires which are pictured from the middle of 16 here up to the end of verse 20, the fires which are pictured here, the misery is not really a misery for the Christians, it is a misery for the earth. And a strange thing about it is the way it ~~if~~ starts, what does the Christian say? "Glory ~~to~~ to the righteous, but I said, My leanness, my leanness." Not the usual expression; a man is in sorrow--he says, My leanness. But in the case of failure to bear such fruit as you would like; failure to reach ^{out} ~~and~~ ~~to~~ to finish and to accomplish the things