



Samuel Rutherford

(1600-1661)

Romans 8:31-39

The saintly Rutherford of Scotland went through persecutions beyond the lot of most men. Like John Bunyan in Bedford's jail, Samuel Rutherford did his best work while suffering imprisonment for the gospel. His enemies had meant to silence him, but instead they perpetuated his ministry through the centuries.

It was out of this period that most of his famous ***Letters*** came, each one saturated with deep love for His Saviour. In none of these did he murmur or complain of his wretched prison conditions. At the end of his life he could write: **Deep waters crossed life's pathway, The hedge of thorns was sharp; Now these all lie behind me, Oh, for a well-tuned harp!**

It is wonderful that a man who had been through Job-like sufferings, should cry out in desire for a heart to praise the Lord. May our hearts likewise be bursting with praise and thanksgiving to the One who sustains us through difficult trials. "Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely [appropriate, fitting] for the upright" (Psalm 33:1).

Upon the restoration of Charles II in 1660, Rutherford's book *Lex, Rex* [*The Law and the Prince*] was condemned to be burned, and he was summoned to appear at the next Parliament on a charge of high treason. The messengers who brought the summons to him found him on his deathbed, where he was about to receive a much higher summons: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34). Some of his last words: "My Honorable Master and Lovely Lord has pardoned, loved, and washed, and given me 'joy unspeakable and full of glory.'"

✦ **Note:** *Lex, Rex*, showing that no king is above God's law, was a key influence in the writing of our *Declaration of Independence*.

~George Zeller: www.middletonbiblechurch.org



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