

THE TRIAL OF FAITH

BIBLE TEXT : James 1:1-21; I Peter 1:1-9; 4:12-19.

LESSON 448 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (James 1:12).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

James 1:1-21

¹ James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

² My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

³ Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

⁴ But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

⁵ If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

⁶ But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

⁷ For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

⁸ A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

⁹ Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:

¹⁰ But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

¹¹ For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

¹² Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

¹³ Let no man say when he is

Bible References:

I Perfection Through Trials

1. Greetings are sent to Israel dispersed among the nations, James 1:1; I Peter 1:1, 2.
2. Patience through trials brings us to perfection in Jesus, James 1:2-4; I Peter 5:10.

James 5:11

¹¹ Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

II The Unstableness of the Double-Minded

1. God gives wisdom to those who seek for it by faith, James 1:5;

James 3:13

¹³ Who *is* a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

2. The man who wavers in his faith is like the waves of the sea, James 1:6-8.
3. The Gospel exalts the lowly and brings down the high, James 1:9-11.

III Sundry Statements

1. The reward awaits those who stand true, James 1:12; I Peter 1:3-9.
2. Man is tempted when drawn away by his own lusts and enticed, James 1:13-18.
3. The Lord wants doers of the Word and not hearers only, James 1:19-27.
4. We are to rejoice when we suffer for Christ, I Peter 4:12-14;

Matthew 5:11-12

¹¹ Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

¹² Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

5. Judgment begins at the house of God, I Peter 4:15-19

Notes:

Suffering for the Gospel

James addresses this Epistle to the twelve tribes scattered abroad the dispersed among the Gentiles. But in the broader sense, it is greetings sent to Christians everywhere.

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." The word "temptations" here has reference to afflictions, trials or tests. It is not used in the sense of being allured into sin as we often think of the word temptation.

The exhortation here is to count it all joy when we suffer for the Gospel, or when the Lord permits us to be afflicted or go

tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

¹⁴ But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

¹⁵ Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

¹⁶ Do not err, my beloved brethren.

¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

¹⁸ Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

¹⁹ Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

²⁰ For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

²¹ Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

1 Peter 1:1-9

¹ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

² Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

⁴ To an inheritance incorruptible,

through hard trials to perfect that which is lacking in our life to bring us to perfection in Christ Jesus. In other words, when tests come, realize that God has permitted them to bring us to a more perfect knowledge of our relationship with Him

The Lord has always had a tried people. It is one way the Lord has of testing our loyalty to Him. Trials have a way of showing up our weaknesses as well as showing the true purpose of our heart.

The strength of an engine is not known until pressure is put on to test it. The moral character of a person is not known until he is placed in a position where he has to take his stand for the right amidst the pressure of the enemy to do that, which is wrong.

It has been said, "God tries men that they may rise; Satan tempts them that they may fall."

Tried in the Furnace

The Lord said to Satan, "Hast thou considered my servant Job, . . . a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evils" (Job 1:8). Satan said: "Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? . . . But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face" (Job 1:10, 11). The hedge was removed. Job did not say, "Why did all this happen to me?" He fell on his face and worshipped God and said, "The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD" (Job 1:21).

How the heart of the Lord must have rejoiced to see Job maintain his integrity amidst the severest trials that could have happened to him! The pressure of the enemy against Job lasted for a long while but Job kept his faith; and before the test was over, he said, "He [the Lord] knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23: 10).

Jobs faith and integrity in God and his hope of the resurrection has inspired Christians all down through the ages to hold fast their hope and faith while passing through the fiery trials.

Every possible trial that could come to a child of God is permitted for his good by the Captain of his salvation, to make him a more perfect man in Christ Jesus.

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (James 1:12).

Unseen

"Whom having not seen, ye love" (1 Peter 1:8). Usually it is a personal knowledge of one that causes you to love him. We have never seen Jesus with our natural eyes, but we know that He has washed our sins away, planted His love in our hearts, and given us a hope of one day seeing Him face to face. That is why we love Him.

Thomas did not believe Jesus had risen from the dead until he saw Him with his own eyes. Jesus said, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20: 29).

Wisdom

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not" (James 1:5). We need wisdom that will help us to rightfully understand the Gospel so we can count it all joy when we are tested and tried, and be able to endure it for Jesus' sake.

When we read the third chapter of Proverbs we find much in it about wisdom. "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding" (Proverbs 3:13). "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her" (Proverbs 3:18) . "The wise shall inherit glory" (Proverbs 3:35).

and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,
⁵ Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

⁶ Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

⁷ That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

⁸ Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

⁹ Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

1 Peter 4:12-19

¹² Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

¹³ But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

¹⁴ If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

¹⁵ But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

¹⁶ Yet if *any man* suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

¹⁷ For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?

When Solomon was confronted with the task of ruling the nation of Israel, he asked the Lord for an understanding heart. It pleased the Lord, and He not only gave him what he asked for, but many other blessings besides. James says that God "giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.

A Double-Minded Man

If you want wisdom ask in faith, nothing doubting. A man who doubts is like the waves of the sea, tossed to and fro, sometimes believing and sometimes doubting. "Let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord."

Doubts often arise from a failure to let go of something in the heart that the Lord wants surrendered to Him. The remedy for our doubts is simplicity of faith. Often the poor and illiterate have it, while the learned pass over its simplicity. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

A double-minded man is called by the Jewish Rabbi a man with two hearts, one for earth and one for Heaven. He will not give up earth, and is loath to let Heaven go; yet he can have only one. We are exhorted to have an eye single to the glory of God.

Trials and Tests

That trials and tests await the child of God the Bible tells us very plainly, but we are exhorted to bear them joyfully. "The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts" (Proverbs 17:3) "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Hebrews 12:11).

The Final Rewards

Jesus said, "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" (Matthew 5:11, 12).

James said, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." Peter said, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Peter 4:12,13).

Paul speaks about the "light affliction, which is but for a moment," working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

The Bible tells us that the trial of our faith is much more precious than gold. Gold could buy us a nice home and many comfortable things of this world for a few short years. But the trial of our faith, for a few short years, will bring us to an inheritance in Heaven that is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

QUESTIONS

1. Why are we to count it all joy when we fall into manifold temptations?
2. How are men tempted to sin?
3. Why do we need wisdom in our tests?
4. What is meant by a double-minded man?
5. We may be poor in this world's goods but in what can we be rich?
6. Where does God begin with judgment?
7. Why is the trial of faith more precious than gold?
8. Describe our future inheritance in Heaven.

¹⁸ And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

¹⁹ Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.