

## Study of the book of James

### Part 2 – (James 1:2- 1:18)

#### Trials of faith (1:2- 1:18)

- A. Trials and its purpose (1:2-4)
- B. Wisdom, Prayer & Faith /asking in faith without wavering (1:5-8)
- C. Poverty and wealth / nothing to boast (1:9-11)
- D. Trials and temptations/ rewards & blessing (1:12-18)

#### A. Trials and its purpose (James 1:2- 4)

***V.2. Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind (manifold, various) come your way, consider (count) it an opportunity for great joy. 3 For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. 4 So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed (have its full effect, finish its work, must complete it's work, perfect result) you will be perfect (mature, entire) and complete, needing nothing. (NLT)***

***V.2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. (NKJV)***

Trials are not meaningless and in vain. It is always producing something when you journey with faith and if you have God in it.

**Examples: Fiery Furnace in Daniel 3:19-30.** Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego – bound & thrown into the blazing furnace because they didn't bow down and worship the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar set up. The furnace was heated seven times hotter as per the king's request. The flame was so hot that it killed the soldiers even as they threw the three men in. They wouldn't have made it if God wasn't in it. God appeared as the fourth man and they walked out of the fire unburnt - Not a hair on their heads was burnt, and their clothing was not scorched. They didn't even smell of smoke! – King finally acknowledged the God of Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego.

**Daniel in the den of lions in Daniel 6:16-25** – The decree of Darius was "Anyone who prayed to God would be thrown into a lions' den ". Daniel chose to pray to God anyway. Because he ignored the king's command he was thrown in the lions' den. A stone was placed over the mouth of the den, sealed with royal seal. At dawn the king calls him out thinking he was torn to pieces – He asked, "Was your God able to rescue you"? Daniel replied, "My God sent an angel to shut the mouth of lions so that they wouldn't hurt me". He wouldn't have made it if God wasn't in it. Daniel was lifted out it with not even a scratch on him. Instead, the men who accused were arrested and thrown in to the same den along with their families.

**Isaiah 43:2** *When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.*

Trials become meaningful when we have God beside us and in our midst.

**When** - He said when, not 'if' you fall into various trials.

Jesus told His disciples, ***"In this world you will have trouble" (John 16:33).***

***Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. (Psalm 34:17)***

**Trials / testing**: The word for testing (dokimoin) refers to the practice of metallurgy. Precious metals would be smelted—tested—by putting them through extreme heat and removing impurities. Tested metal being so pure so you could see your reflection in it. **More heat – more dross removed- purer you become.**

Each time the metal refiner raises the heat, he skims away more dross and increases the quality and purity of the refined metals. When God turns up the heat in our lives, and we experience a particularly fiery trial, we can take comfort in knowing that God's refining fire is removing the dross in our lives for a good purpose.

***Zechariah 13:9 "This third I will put into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on my name and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are my people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is our God'" (Zechariah 13:9)***

***Psalm 12:6 "The words of the LORD are flawless, like silver purified in a crucible, like gold refined seven times".***

***Job 23:10 He (God) knows the way I take. When He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold."***

It is good to be in the furnace of God's appointment. He constantly keeps His eye on you. He knows how long and how much.

God watches over you without taking His eyes off you. Our Refiner never steps away from the fire. He knows the precise temperature to maintain so we don't face more than we can bear.

***"And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, Malachi 3:3***

***God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it (1 Corinthians 10:13).***

God keeps refining us until He sees His image in us. Through the process of refining:

- Dross (impurity) is being removed from us.
- So He can see the reflection of His image/likeness in us. ***And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:18***

**Various trials (Poikilos)** many coloured, diversified ; skin of a leopard, colored robe. God's provision for our "multicolored" trials is "multicolored" grace...

Job suffered more intense "multi colored trials" in one day than probably any other individual in history. **Yet He was able to say "Though He slay me, I will hope (wait for) in Him". (Job 13:15).**

**My grace is sufficient for thee. 2 Cor 12:9**

**Consider/ count** - careful thought, mental evaluation, think about it, deliberate weighing of facts.

**Joy** is not our natural response to trials. It must be a supernatural reaction. If we value comfort more than character, then trials will upset us. If we value the material and physical more than the spiritual, we will not be able to 'count it all joy!' If we live only for the present and forget about the future, the trials will make us bitter, not better.

Rejoice knowing that it is going to be productive.

Complete joy, unadulterated joy, highest joy. To have joy does not necessarily mean we will be hilarious and laughing about the trials we are experiencing, but it means we will have a deep-seated confidence that God knows what He is doing and that the results will be for His glory and our good.

"that inward peace and sufficiency that is not affected by outward circumstances.

**1 Pet 4:12-13 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.**

**1 Peter 1:6-7 In this you rejoice greatly, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, which is much more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested and purified by fire, may be found to result in [your] praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

**Romans 5: 3-5 We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. 4 And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. (suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.) 5 And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.**

**Hebrews 12:2 our eyes on (by faith turning our eyes away from earthly things and fixing them on) Jesus, the Author and Perfector of faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

**2 Cor 8:2-3 for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. 3 For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord.**

**2 Cor 12:10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.**

***Habakkuk 3:17-19 Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on my high places.***

***Acts 5:41 The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.***

***Romans 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.***

***2 Cor 4:17 For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,***

***1 Peter 5: 10 And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.***

***Romans 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?***

**Patience/ endurance/ perseverance** is the ancient Greek word **hupomone**. This word does not describe a passive waiting but an active endurance.

v. The ancient Greek word hupomone comes from hupo (under) and meno (to stay, abide, remain). At its root, it means to remain under. It has the picture of someone under a heavy load and actively choosing to stay there instead of trying to escape. It portrays a picture of steadfastly and unflinchingly bearing up under a heavy load and describes that quality of character which does not allow one to surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial. It presents the picture of being under a heavy load and resolutely staying there instead of trying to escape.

***Hebrews 12:2 Looking steadfastly (aphorao) on Jesus, the Leader and Completer of faith, who, in view of the joy lying before Him, endured (verb hupomeno) [the] cross".***

***Hebrews 10: 36-39 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. 37 For, "Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; 38 but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him."***

***V.4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect (mature) and complete, lacking nothing***

Perfect result (5046) (teleios) means complete, mature, fully developed, full grown, brought to its end, finished, wanting nothing necessary to completeness, in good working order.

### **Summary :Trials**

- **opportunity to count it as joy / rejoice**
- **Endurance is being developed (refining – dross removed, image / likeness daily)**
- **Perfect result (we will be spiritually mature, fully grown, complete, lacking nothing)**

## **B. Wisdom, Prayer & faith (James 1:5-8)**

**James 1: 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord.**

**Wisdom** – Sophia (mental excellence, prudence, counsel, decision making) not knowledge or information. In trials, we lack wisdom, and we need it a lot more than we need knowledge. Godly wisdom gives us the right counsel, helps us to navigate through things effectively and make wise decisions. It helps us to see in the light of God's divine purposes for our lives.

**Ask-** go to God directly and simply ask him instead of leaning towards a source of human wisdom. An action is required from our side.

**In faith** – Pistis . Faith (4102/pistis) is always received from God, and never generated by us.

**Without reproach** – without judgement, disgrace, embarrassment

**Who gives (Didomi** – continual giving) – James 1<sup>st</sup> chapter shows God as a giver of all things (Giver of every good & perfect thing)

*(Story of persistent/annoying neighbour in Luke 11- But I tell you this—though he won't do it for friendship's sake, if you keep knocking long enough, he will get up and give you whatever you need because of your shameless persistence. Ask and it shall be given. Luke 11:8)*

**Generously** – who pours it out without limit. He gives according to His standard of excellent greatness.

**Without doubt (Diakrino** – going back and forth, waver, dispute, to make distinction). Ask in faith, without doubting God's ability or desire to give us His wisdom.

*Romans 4:20 (note) yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God,*

**Is unsettled like the wave of the sea:** Surf - Compares an individual's vacillation between two opinions. Lack of confidence in God's faithfulness or power. Wave of sea is unstable and without rest.

*1 Kings 18:21 Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him."*

The Israelites were like a wave of the sea getting tossed around. They were limping around, not fully trusting the LORD. We cannot live steadfast lives when we limp between different opinions. The one who doubts and lacks faith (a double minded man) should not expect to receive anything from the Lord

## **C. Poverty and wealth / nothing to boast (1:9-11)**

**Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, 10 and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. 11 For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.**

Both poverty and riches are temporal not permanent. We cannot find security in material things. They fade away as the flower fades away.

Lowly - James 4:6 But He gives a greater grace. Therefore, it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. 2 Corinthians 8:9*

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#### **D. Trials and temptations/ rewards & blessing (1:12-18)**

***<sup>12</sup> Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. <sup>13</sup> Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. <sup>14</sup> But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.***

***<sup>16</sup> Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. <sup>17</sup> Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. <sup>18</sup> Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.***

**Blessed** – The world sees 'blessed' differently – free of trials, problems, being happy. God sees differently. Blessed is the one who endures temptation. The purpose is to approve us; that through the testing we would be revealed as genuine and strong in our faith. One who endures, after being approved will receive the crown of life.

#### **Difference between Trial and Temptation:**

**Although both trial and temptation are translated from the same Greek word "peirasmos", it is a world of difference between them.**

Trial usually refers to events that will affect us both emotionally and physically such as death of a loved one, accident, illness, failure, disappointment, unemployment, betrayal, or rejection. While temptation usually relates to flesh and evil desires in us, waiting to be birthed into sin if one submits to it. It is enticing a person to sin by breaking God's laws and commandments.

Trials / tests are situations used by God to test, grow, strengthen, build our faith and to be spiritually matured. Temptation is the way the Devil tries to weaken our faith and tear us down.

	<b>Trials</b>	<b>Temptations</b>
<b>Passage</b>	<b>James 1:2-4,12</b>	<b>James 1:13-15</b>
<b>Source</b>	<b>God</b>	<b>Satan, flesh (desires and lusts of human nature)</b>
<b>Form of</b>	<b>Various kinds</b>	<b>Desires /lusts</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Test, strengthen faith, build us up</b>	<b>Destroy, weaken our faith</b>
<b>Process</b>	<b>Trial -&gt; Steadfastness -&gt; perfect</b>	<b>Desire -&gt; Sin -&gt; death</b>
<b>Results</b>	<b>Spiritual maturity</b>	<b>Death</b>

### **Source for trials/ tests: God**

The Lord tests His people:

**Psalm 66:10** For You, O God, have tested us; You have refined us like silver.

**Proverbs 17:3** A crucible for silver and a furnace for gold, but the LORD is the tester of hearts.

**Jeremiah 9:7** Therefore this is what the LORD of Hosts says: "Behold, I will refine them and test them, for what else can I do because of the daughter of My people?"

**Psalm 105:19** Until the time that his word came to pass, the word of the LORD tested him.

**Gen 22:1** Some time later, God tested Abraham's faith. "Abraham!" God called.

Job – Satan took Job's cattle, property, servants, children, killed them. God allowed the enemy to test Job because He knew the end result.

**Job 1:22** In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

### **Source of Temptation: The enemy, flesh**

God can not tempt anyone, nor can he be tempted. James 1:13 *13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.*

Devil tempted Jesus in the wilderness. The devil himself is called a tempter in Mathew 4:3

Jesus's prayer: Do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Eve tempted by the devil (not a trial) – fell into sin

David – Bathsheba (tempted not a trial) – fell into sin

Samson – Delilah – death

Joseph fled the temptation

Jesus overcame the temptation by the word of God .

Test/ Trials relates to faith and your loyalty to God and His word

Temptation relates to your flesh generally. If not overcome leads to sin & death.

***No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. 1 Cor 10:13***

***For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Hebrews 4:15***

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#### **# 4 b - Trials and temptations/ rewards & blessing (1:12-18)**

***James 1:16 So don't be misled, my dear brothers and sisters. 17 Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow. 18 He chose to give birth to us by giving us his true word. And we, out of all creation, became his prized possession (first fruits)***

Good (agathos) means intrinsically good, inherently good in quality but with the idea of good which is also profitable, useful, benefiting others, benevolent.

Perfect (teleios from telos = an end, a purpose, an aim, a goal) means complete, mature, fully developed, full grown, brought to its end, finished, wanting nothing necessary to completeness, in good working order.

Teleios signifies consummate soundness and includes the idea of being whole.

God is the source of all blessing. He is an unchanging God who doesn't go back on His word. Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth: James understood that the gift of salvation was given by God, and not earned by the work or obedience of man. It is of His own will that He brought us forth for salvation and made us His prized possession (His first fruits).



