

191013-1 Ja 1, 9-12, Temptations of the Poor & the Rich Brother-CThurman

James was a servant of God set apart to the ministry of the word of God to feed the church of God in Jerusalem. Now the Spirit of the Lord moved James to write a letter to the churches that were predominately made up of Christian Jews scattered abroad of the twelve tribes of Israel. These churches fell into practical error and were in need of correction. The letter opens by informing these churches that their faith must be tested.

Some men criticize the KJV Bible because it uses the word *tempt* and *temptation* for both trial of faith and enticement to sin. They suggest the KJV Bible is a poor translation and needs to be corrected. However, no one criticizes the original Greek for doing the very same thing. In the Greek the noun *πειρασμός*, and the verb *πειράζω* refer to both trial of faith and enticement to sin. If these men were consistent with their criticism they would propose that the original Greek should be corrected too. Thankfully, few would agree to that. Bar none, the KJV Bible is the best translation of the Scriptures for the English-speaking world that there will ever be. I make no apology for that conviction that has been proven time and time again.

πειρασμός, noun, Lk.22.28; 1Ti.6.9; 1Pe.4.12; 2Pe.2.9

πειράζω, verb, Mt.4.1; Jn.6.6; Ac.16.7; 2Co.13.5; He.11.17

These Jewish churches were to count these tests all joy. Count them all joy probably in two ways.

First, knowing that by manifold temptations the Lord was developing their endurance to the end that they might be perfected in Christ. Second, it brought into focus the joy that was before them.

A casual reader might not get this from James, the first chapter, but he is not vacillating in and out of the topic of temptations. He begins with the temptation of our faith (vss.2-4). Then (vss.5-8) in that temptation we need to ask God for wisdom. More often than not we don't know what is the will of God; we don't know what decisions to make; or we don't know what is the best decisions to make to receive the end of that which He has designed in it for us: but God

knows. Ask of Him. I think, more than anything else, and it is something we all need to know better, and that is we learn more about ourselves and how much we need the grace of God to work in us in everything.

As we consider the next verses (vss.9-12) remember the topic is of the temptation (trial) of our faith.

‘Turning from the consideration of trials in general, he passes to the consideration of a particular kind of trials, that which results from a change of circumstances in life, from poverty to affluence, and from affluence to poverty. The idea which seems to have been in the mind of the apostle (or properly, brother of the Lord Jesus [added]) is, that there is a great and important *trial of faith* in *any* reverse of circumstances; a trial in being elevated from poverty to riches, or in being depressed from a state of affluence to want. Wherever *change* occurs in the external circumstances of life, there a man’s religion is put to the test, and there he should feel that God is trying the reality of his faith.’ *Barnes’ Notes*, vol. , p.21

9 <u>Let</u> the brother	of low degree <u>rejoice</u>	in	that he is exalted:
in his particular temptation	glory		his exaltation

let rejoice, καυχάσθω, 3ps. pres. imper. of καυχάομαι; tss. to boast, rejoice, glory.

low degree, ταπεινός; noun tss. lowly, low degree, low estate, cast down, base, humble; the verb ταπεινός, is tss. to humble, lowliness, lowliness of mind.

is exalted, ὕψει, dat. sing. of ὕψος; a noun tss. high, height, exalted, lifted up.,

The brother is of low degree in what way? Not spiritually, but naturally; his is a lowly state. He is of meager means. He is in poverty. He should rejoice or boast because he is raised up in Christ. His poverty is no bar to having free access to all of the benefits that are in Christ.

Jas 2:5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

*Re.2.8 ¶ And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;
9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.
10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

This poor brother in Christ and this church should rejoice in their exalted position in Christ.

9 Καυχάσθω δὲ ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινὸς ἐν τῷ ὕψει αὐτοῦ

10 But the rich,	ἐν	τῇ ταπεινώσει
brother, in his peculiar temptation	in	that he is made low:
		his lowliness

made low, ταπεινώσει, dat. sing. of ταπεινός;

The point should be clear: no matter who we are, of lowly state or rich, we are all tested.

The Lord gives wealth to whom He will.

De 8:18 But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

They that are rich 'are apt to bear themselves upon their wealth, and get confidence in it, 1Tim. vi 17.' *Matthew Poole Commentary on the Holy Bible*, vol.3, p.881

The rich brother should rejoice in that he is humbled. To see the Lord as he should He must humble himself before the Lord, not trusting in his good.

1Ti 6:17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy

18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

flower, άνθος, flower (4) and is always with reference to grass, the flower of the grass (Ja.1.10, 11; 1Pe.1.24, twice)

grass, χόρτου, gen. sing. of χόρτος, and tss. grass, blade, hay.

he shall pass away, παρελεύσεται, 3ps. fut. ind. of παρέρχομαι, παρά by, near, with + έρχομαι, to come, go, light; παρέρχομαι, tss. to pass, pass by, pass away, to be past, to come upon, come forth, transgress.

The glory of the rich man is subject to be instantly stripped away, and then what is left if he trusted in riches?

10 ό δέ πλούσιος έν τή ταπεινώσει αύτοϋ ότι ώς άνθος χόρτου παρελεύσεται

σύν

11 For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat,

is no sooner risen, άντέτειλεν, 3ps. aor. ind. of άνατέλλω, άνά re-, again, above, up + τέλλω (?); this verb is tss. is sprung up, maketh to rise, was up, at the rising, rise, sprang, risen, arise; the noun, άνατολή, is tss. east, dayspring.

burning heat, καύσωνι, dat. sing. of καύσων; *heat, burning, burning heat*; the verb, καυσόω, *with fervent heat* (2Pe.3.10, 12); another noun, καῦσις, *be burned*.

but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth,
bud (?) falls off

withereth, ἐξήρανεν, 3ps. aor. ind. act. of ξηραίνω; *tss. to wither, wither away, to be dried up, pine away, to be ripe*; the noun, ξηρός, *withered, dry, and land* (meaning the rough or crooked land).

falleth, ἐξέπεσεν, 3ps. aor. ind. of ἐκπίπτω, ἐκ from, of, out, out of + πίπτω, *to fall or fail*; ἐκπίπτω, *tss. to fall, fall off, to be cast, to have none effect, to fail, to fall away*.

and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth:
beauty appearance becomes ruined or marred

grace, εὐπρέπεια, noun, εὖ well + πρέπει *tss. becometh, comely, became*; and only here in the N.T.; LXX, 2Sa.1.23 & 23.1, *beautiful*, Job 18.15, *excellency*, Zec. 10.3, *goodly*.

fashion, προσώπου, gen. sing. of πρόσωπον; *tss. face, person, countenance, presence, before, appearance, outward appearance, fashion*; **v.23, face**.

perisheth, ἀπόλλετο, 3ps. aor. ind. mid. of ἀπόλλυμι, ἀπό forth, of off, out of + ὄλλυμι LXX, *to perish, destroy, ruin, lose, slay*; ἀπόλλυμι, *tss. to destroy, to perish, to be lost, to lose, to mar, to die*.

so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

shall ... fade away, μαρανθήσεται, 3ps. fut. ind. pass. of μαραίνω; only here by James

with a negative particle, ἀμαράντινος and ἀμάραντος, once each and tss. *to fade not away*. (cf. 1Pe.1.4, *an inheritance ... that fadeth not away*; 5.4, *a crown of glory that fadeth not away*).

ways, πορείαις, dat. pl. of πορεία; tss. Lk.13.22, journeying.

Like the delicate grass of the field that withers in the heat of the day, so the glory of the rich man is subject to suddenly dissipate.

Pr 27:24 For riches are not for ever ...

1Ti 6:7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

There is in riches great *uncertainty*.

1Ti 6:17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy ...

Job is a prime example of how suddenly one is turned from great wealth to absolute poverty.

And we know that in desiring *to be rich* there is a snare.

1Ti 6:9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

Pr 23:5 Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.

But what? Whether lowly or rich be content with what we have. This is our rule.

when he is, γενόμενος, nom. sing. masc. part. aor. of γίνομαι, to become.

tried, δόκιμος, noun, tss. *approved* (6), *tried* (1); the verb δοκιμάζω is tss. *to discern, prove, like, approve, allow, examine, try*.

crown, στέφανον, acc. sing. of στέφανος, a noun tss. *crown* (18); the verb στεπανόω, *to crown* (3).

Once as a reward in a contest. (cf. 1Co.9.25)

Once with reference to the dominion of the white horse rider. (cf. Re.6.2)

Once referring to the appearance of heads of the locasts, as *crowns like gold*. (cf. Re.9.7)

Once as a symbol of Israel's preeminence among the nations of the earth. (cf. Re.12.1)

Once of Christ's authority to execute justice upon the earth. (cf. Re.14.14)

Twice with reference to those that had come to Christ through the labors of the apostle Paul. (cf. Phl.4.1; 1Th.2.19)

Four times *crown* refers to the crown of thorns that was platted and placed upon the head of Christ in mockery of His right as King of kings and Lord of lords. (cf. Mt.27.29; Mk.15.17; Jo.19.2, 5)

Seven times as a reward for faithful service. (cf. 2Ti.4.8; **Ja.1.12**; 1Pe.5.4; Re.2.10; 3.11; 4.4, 10)

which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

that love, ἀγαπῶσιν, dat. masc. pl. part. pres. of ἀγαπάω; 2.5.

The man is blessed, because enduring temptation, which is the proof of his love for the Lord, he shall receive the crown of life. Love is proved by temptation and enduring temptation is rewarded with a crown. A love that does not endure trial is not love at all or is in need of strengthening.

I would refer to two instances in which the Lord Jesus dealt with Peter. In the first Peter needed to be turned from His self-reliance to trusting in the Lord. (Lk.22.32) In the second, Peter's love was not what it should have been and he needed to serve Christ unconditionally. (Jo.21.15-22)

'Love produces persevering *endurance* amidst sufferings: by this we attest our love.' *J-F-B Bible Commentary, vol. 3, p.583*

The promise of *a crown of life* means that there is a reward for faithfulness. The word reward has become a dirty word among some so-called sovereign grace Baptists. But when we speak of rewards we are not talking about meriting everlasting life. We're talking about the truth that we shall receive from the Lord for the things that we have done in our body.

2Co 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Call it whatever we want to call it, but the Lord uses the word *reward*. He is bringing His reward with Him in His second coming.

Re 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. (cf. Mk.9.41; Lk.6.35; 1Co.3.14; 9.17; Col.2.18; 3.24; He.10.35; 11.6; 2Jn.8; Re.11.18

The issue of rewards doesn't negate grace. The Christian that will avail himself to the grace of God, that grace which is sufficient for every trial of life, shall be rewarded. The Lord gave to every one of His children what they did not have themselves.

1Co 4:7 For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

Every child was to occupy themselves with those gifts or talents to the glory of God until He returns.

Lu 19:13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy (trade, v.15, Tyndale 1534, trade & sell) till I come.

And when He comes we shall be rewarded according to our service.

Mt.25.21 His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

What is a *crown of life*? (see the Greek *στέφανος*, above) Of the eighteen times the Greek *στέφανος*, seven refer to a time of reward for faithful service.

Re 2:10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. (life's crown (not only life, but life's crown, or the best of life, and so the reward of life)

Re 3:10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, (Meaning, 'Because you have kept my enduring word ...')

patience, ὑπομονή, tss. patient continuance, endurance, and patience.

I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. (hold the word of doctrine and life.)

12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

2Ti 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Reward is for faithful service. It is not just being saved. It is living for Christ.

Lk.19.20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

...

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

1Co.3.14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

2Pe.1.10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Both the lowly and the rich should rejoice because by enduring these temptation their love for Christ is proof positive that they shall receive from Christ that *crown of life*.

Do you know Jesus Christ as Savior? Do you know that by His death your sins are all forgiven? Have you said so? Have you received Baptist baptism as the first obedient step of following Christ? You know, you can't walk with Him until you have submitted to this first commandment upon your life. After baptism, have you been received into the fellowship of one of His N.T. churches? Now, if we answered yes to all of these questions, praise the Lord! Now, are we living for Christ? This is who James was writing to, to a church like this one. Are we suffering according to the will of God? Do we endure the trials to the end? If we love Him we do. And when our Lord Jesus Christ returns He will reward us with a crown of life.

This message is the same that the Holy Spirit of God communicated to the saints of God in the first century churches. It hasn't changed in the least. Temptations of faith haven't changed. They are still hard to bear, they still hurt, they still cause sorrow and grief, but in them is the proof of our love for Christ. Be faithful. Live for Christ.