

PRACTICAL FAITH

A Letter from James



Trials and the Wisdom of God (Pt.2) - James 1:5-12

1

INTRODUCTION

- Our Scriptures are written in a real world, the same world in which we live daily
- They were not written in isolation, a philosophical bubble of ideas and religious conceptualization
- For this reason, it isn't surprising that there is a significant presence of suffering and misery of all kinds between the original and final Paradise
- It is in this real world, with these realities, James is written
- Brief review of James

2

GREETINGS (1)

James, a servant of God and Lord Jesus Christ,
 To the *twelve tribes* in the Dispersion:
 Greetings.

3

JOY IN LIFE'S TRIALS (2-4)

Count it all *joy*, my siblings,
 when you meet *trials/temptations* of various kinds,
 for you know that the *testing* of your faith (trusting reliance)
 produces *steadfastness*.

And *let* steadfastness have its *full effect*,
 that you may be *perfect* and *complete*, lacking in nothing.

4

WISDOM IN LIFE'S TRIALS (5-8)

If any of you *lacks* wisdom, let him *ask* God,
 who gives generously to all without reproach,
 and it will be given him.

But let him *ask in faith (trusting reliance)*, with no *doubting*,
 for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea
 that is driven and tossed by the wind.

For that person must not suppose
 that he will receive anything from the Lord;
 he is a *double-minded* man, *unstable* in all his ways.

5

A CASE STUDY IN WISDOM (9-11)

Let the lowly sibling boast in his exaltation,
 and the rich in his humiliation,
 because like a flower of the grass he will pass away.

For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass;
 its flower falls, and its beauty perishes.

So also will the rich person fade away in the midst of their
 pursuits.

6

THE OUTCOME OF ENDURANCE (12)

Blessed is the person who remains steadfast under trial,
 for when they have stood the test
 they will receive the crown of life,
 which God has promised to those who love him.

7

RESPONSE

- Trial/temptations (of all kinds) are not to be rejoiced in themselves, but the potential they have to produce in us wholeness
- Trusting reliance is necessary for the transformation of seemingly meaningless suffering into virtue (i.e. it isn't automatic, nor passive)
- The application of wisdom of, particularly focused on the final outcome, is crucial to growing in wholeness
- Despite the incredibly difficulty of embracing meaning in suffering even when not understood (because of God as good, wise, and sovereign) is the way of faith - consider the alternative
- Meanwhile, we long and cry out for That Day when we will experience glory outweighing our suffering - Romans 8:18ff

8