

# The Blessing of Trials

## James 1:12

James 1:12 (NKJV)

<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.

### Introduction

The Bible is full of examples of men and women that were tested by God to prove the genuine nature of their loyalty and love of Him

From the very beginning when God placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden, it was a test

We have examples like Meshach, Shadrach and Abed-Nego being tested as whether they would bow down to the statue of Nebuchadnezzar and because of their refusal were thrown into the fiery furnace.

Or Daniel's unwillingness to compromise and deny his God and his commitment to Him, he was given to the lions to be eaten.

We have the history of Israel that God gave repeated test to.....

Exodus 16:3–4 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> And the children of Israel said to them, “Oh, that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat *and* when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

<sup>4</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, “Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not.”

Deuteronomy 13:1–3 (NKJV)

“If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder,  
<sup>2</sup> and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, ‘Let us go after other gods’—which you have not known—‘and let us serve them,’  
<sup>3</sup> you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God is testing you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”

### Judges 2:20–22 (NKJV)

<sup>20</sup> Then the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel; and He said, “Because this nation has transgressed My covenant which I commanded their fathers, and has not heeded My voice, <sup>21</sup> I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died, <sup>22</sup> so that through them I may test Israel, whether they will keep the ways of the Lord, to walk in them as their fathers kept *them*, or not.”

One test that stands out among the rest is the story of Abraham and Isaac.

It is one thing to have your children taken from you, as in Job’s case. It is a whole other thing to have a commandment by the God you know who does not act as the pagans and sacrifice their children, to tell you to kill your only son for Him.

### Genesis 22:1–13 (NKJV)

Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!”

And he said, “Here I am.”

<sup>2</sup> Then He said, “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”

<sup>3</sup> So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. <sup>4</sup> Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. <sup>5</sup> And Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you.”

<sup>6</sup> So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid *it* on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. <sup>7</sup> But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father!”

And he said, “Here I am, my son.”

Then he said, “Look, the fire and the wood, but where *is* the lamb for a burnt offering?”

<sup>8</sup> And Abraham said, “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.” So the two of them went together.

<sup>9</sup> Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and

placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. <sup>10</sup> And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

<sup>11</sup> But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!”

So he said, “Here I am.”

<sup>12</sup> And He said, “Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only *son*, from Me.”

<sup>13</sup> Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind *him was* a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son.

Nothing so proves the genuine nature of saving faith as how one endures the trials of life, trusting God through it and believing His word in it.

In fact, this very illustration will be used later in James 2 to show how genuine faith works..

Review.

1. The Attitude in Trials—Joy
2. The Advantage of Trials—endurance -  
perseverance

3. The Acquiesce to Trials —- submission
4. The Assistance with Trials—wisdom from God through His word.
5. The Acknowledgment of the Trials —-  
poor — future is better  
rich—-your possessions  
are passing

## Lesson

# 1. The Fact that is Astonishing

<sup>12</sup> Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation;  
Μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν

Blessed— — from the very beginning we find this statement astonishing. Beyond comprehension!

James’s opening statement was a surprise: “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials” (1:2). But now James returns to the theme of trials:

Dorioni, D. M. (2007). [James](#) (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Dorioni, Eds.; p. 28). P&R Publishing.

it is generally recognized as forming the fitting conclusion to the discussion concerning trials begun with verse 2

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 82). BMH Books.

We might be inclined to say that is it wonderful that he has endured Testing, or that we are amazed that He endure through it all.... but blessed? This is probably low on our list of words to choose.

We don't usually put the word Blessed or Blessing in the same category of Trials. When we think of trials, we think of grief, trouble, sorrow, stress, anxiety, and depression.

The reason this is so, is because we have an earthly perspective of trials. We think too often in terms of the temporal and not the eternal. We are earthly minded.

I have heard the statement often about some christians that are so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good. Well, in this case we can be so earthly minded that we are no heavenly good.

By now, with our last few messages in James 1:2-11 you should know that trials of life and life itself has has a divine purpose and heavenly meaning, a

divine decree behind every trial that God is working to conform you to the image of Christ and to produce perseverance.

These are not random acts in a meaningless universe where atoms collide into one another by chance. NO, all is orchestrated by God. He has ordained it, He has decreed it.

One of the reasons we often misunderstand verses like this is because we have a simple definition of “Blessed”.

It is often simply defined as “happy”.

When it comes to trials, the one thing that usually does not come to our minds is “blessed” or as so often defined as “happy”.

I just lost my job, I am so happy and blessed.

My doctor just told me that I have terminal cancer, I am so happy and blessed

I just had a tragic and unexpected death in my family, I am so happy and blessed.

My spouse was just diagnosed with Alzheimers disease and I’m watching them leave me day by day...am I happy and blessed.

We just lost everything we have in the storm, I am so happy and blessed.



When Joni Eareckson Tada dove into a pool, breaking her neck and leaving her a quadriplegic leaving her permanently paralyzed was her response to be, I'm so happy

Or when William Tyndale was be led to the stake and strangled to death and his body to be burned, was he happy.

The two don't seem to mix.

The same is the case in  
Matthew 5:3;10-11 (NKJV)

- 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 4 Blessed are those who mourn,  
For they shall be comforted.
- 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for  
righteousness' sake,  
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 11 **"Blessed** are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

And it is true that it can and does have that meaning of happy in it. But it is more than that. Much deeper than that. An happy in our culture is so emotionally driven and is like the waves of the

oceans to the steam off your coffee. It comes and goes.

This is not the meaning of the term in the Bible. It is much more than a fleeting emotion of bliss or feeling of happiness.

The tendency to translate with the word “happy” (e.g., TEV, REB) is a misguided effort to avoid unclear “religious” language and should be resisted. A person who is “blessed” may not be “happy” at all. For our emotional state may and will vary with the circumstances of life. But we can be assured that, whatever those circumstances, if we endure them with faith and commitment to God, we will be the recipients of God’s favor

Moo, D. J. (2000). [The letter of James](#) (pp. 69–70). Eerdmans; Apollos.

Blessed — — μακάριος,

① **pert. to being fortunate or happy because of circumstances, *fortunate, happy.***

② **pert. to being esp. favored, *blessed, fortunate, happy, privileged,*** fr. a (a) **of humans**  
***privileged recipient of divine favor***

Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000). In [A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature](#) (3rd ed., pp. 610–611). University of Chicago Press.

The key to understanding this is the word's  
fortunate, favored, privileged.  
a privileged recipient of divine favor.

In the New Testament it is always a strongly religious concept denoting an inner quality of life, a joy and happiness not dependent upon favorable external circumstances. It commonly denotes “the distinctive religious joy which accrues to man from his share in the salvation of the kingdom of God.” F. Hauck, “Makarios, Makarizō, makarismos,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 4:367.

It points to a state of soul that the believer begins to experience in his life, even amid adverse outward circumstances, but its full bliss will be realized only in the future life.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, pp. 82–83). BMH Books.

And here in our verse it is not just

Privileged and favored is the one who has trials..... No there is more to the verse.

<sup>12</sup> Blessed *is* the man who **endures** temptation; (testing)

The blessedness consists not in being free from trials, or yet in the fact that he is being subjected to testing, but that he “perseveres” under trial in the manner indicated in verses 2–4. The present tense denotes that he bravely and steadfastly remains under the trying ordeal until it is ended. It implies that “pressures and problems exist right now and are the norm for the lives of the brethren.” The meaning is not that he will never sink in defeat under a certain trial. Failure can be repented of and reversed. Rather, the tense portrays him as characteristically enduring the varied tests and refusing to give up. Such perseverance is the sign of genuine faith. In verse 2 the trials were referred to as plural to denote their great variety; here, the noun is a collective singular, pointing to trial as the characteristic feature of present human experience.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 83). BMH Books.

The trial does not stand alone. It is not trials for the sake of trials, trouble for the sake of trouble.

trial” refers to any difficulty in life that may threaten our faithfulness to Christ:

Moo, D. J. (2000). [The letter of James](#) (p. 70). Eerdmans; Apollos.

The trial as a purpose...

It shows the validity of your faith and that you love the Lord, and even through the worst of times you will not forsake your Lord.

YOU are real!!!

James 5:11 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup> Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end *intended by* the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

Psalms 94:12–13 (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup> Blessed *is* the man whom You instruct, O Lord,  
And teach out of Your law,  
<sup>13</sup> That You may give him rest from the days of  
adversity,  
Until the pit is dug for the wicked.

Psalms 119:71 (NKJV)

<sup>71</sup> *It is* good for me that I have been afflicted,  
That I may learn Your statutes.

**12** Blessed *is* the man who endures  
temptation;

Μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν

So we could say,

High favored or privileged is the man who  
perseveres in temptation.

Blessed— adjective describing the man who  
endures. The **man** who endures is a blessed man.

The beatitude, like those of Jesus (Matt. 5:3–11;  
Luke 6:20–22), contains no expressed verb (“is”). It  
is neither a wish, “May he be blessed,” nor a prosaic  
statement of fact, ***but a ringing verdict***

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 82). BMH Books.

ἀνὴρ The Greek word is the same one that James used in  
v. 8: *anēr*, which is usually gender specific: a “man” in  
distinction from a woman; or a “husband” in distinction  
from a wife. But this is almost surely another instance in  
which James uses this word as equivalent to *anthrōpos*,  
“person.”

Moo, D. J. (2000). [The letter of James](#) (p. 70). Eerdmans; Apollos.

“man” (*anēr*), is again used in the same general  
sense as in verse 8 above, with no thought of

restricting the beatitude to the male sex. The noun is without an article, thus making it of general application, “any one who” has the indicated character.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 82). BMH Books.

The uncial manuscripts A and 044, and several minuscules, change *anēr* to *anthrōpos* in order not to exclude women

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition). BMH Books.

## 1. The Fact that is Astonishing

# 2. The Finish that is Approved

<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.

for when he has been approved,  
ὅτι δόκιμος γενόμενος

for—-ὅτι

“because” (*hoti*) introduces the reason for the blessedness of endurance under trial

approved, The promised reward will be given when the time of testing has been completed. The adjective *dokimos* (“has stood the test”) was used of the testing of coins and metals to establish their genuineness

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). *James* (Revised Edition, p. 83). BMH Books.

### Proverbs 17:3 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> The refining pot *is* for silver and the furnace for gold,  
But the Lord tests the hearts.

### 1 Peter 1:6–7 (NKJV)

<sup>6</sup> In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, <sup>7</sup> that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

To be rewarded, the believer must not only be “tested” but also be “attested” as having shown himself genuine. The aorist participle “having been proved” (Darby)

γενόμενος

denotes that the testing has effectively demonstrated his character as firm and reliable. Each new test the believer



successfully endures adds fresh proof of fidelity to God and contributes to approved character.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 83). BMH Books.

### [English Standard Version](#)

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

### [NASB 1995](#)

Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; ***for once he has been approved,*** he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

1. The Fact that is Astonishing
2. The Finish that is Approved

## **3. The Future that is Amazing**

12 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.

he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

λήμψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς, ὃν ἐπηγγείλατο  
τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν.

the crown of life — — —

**στέφανος<sup>a</sup>, ου m:** a wreath consisting either of foliage or of precious metals formed to resemble foliage and worn as a symbol of honor, victory, or as a badge of high office— ‘wreath, crown

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 75). United Bible Societies.

The word *crown* conveys to most of us a gem-studded headpiece worn by kings and queens. But people in the Greco-Roman world would probably have thought more often of the laurel wreath given to the victors in athletic contests.

In the Septuagint, the word *stephanos* was used to symbolize a special honor or as representative of happiness and prosperity (Ps. 21:3; Prov. 12:4; 16:31; Lam. 5:16; Ezek. 16:12; Zech. 6:11) and also of a royal crown (2 Sam. 12:30; 1 Chron. 20:2). Clearly James was not thinking of a fading crown, such as was given to victors in the athletic contests, but of a crown that was living and imperishable.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 84). BMH Books.

Paul uses the word in this way in 1 Cor. 9:25:  
 “Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to gain a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.

Moo, D. J. (2000). [The letter of James](#) (p. 70). Eerdmans; Apollos.

The crown is not the reward, it is life that is the crown, which is the reward.

We are then assuming that *tēs zōēs* is an epexegetic genitive: “the crown which is life.”

Moo, D. J. (2000). [The letter of James](#). Eerdmans; Apollos.

“Since it is a reward for an accomplishment subsequent to initial faith, it must refer to a still higher quality of life.” It is not merely escape from eternal condemnation, but the believer’s eternal enjoyment of life as the approved of God in His presence.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 84). BMH Books.

Revelation 2:10 (NKJV)

<sup>10</sup> Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and

you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

James does not say that the one who successfully endures trials thereby earns eternal life. Eternal life is not earned through human effort and achievement; it is received as a gift through faith in Christ Jesus in this life

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 83). BMH Books.

You are receiving a reward for finishing the race, not being in the race. You were sovereignly placed in the race by God. You were designated a runner long before the world began.

This is not earning eternal life,  
John 1:12–13 (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup> But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Ephesians 2:8–10 (NKJV)

<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His

workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Titus 3:5 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

Romans 3:20 (NKJV)

<sup>20</sup> Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

he will receive the crown of  
life which the Lord has promised to  
those who love Him.

**“He will receive”** states that the bestowal of the reward is still future, but the future tense does not imply that the reward is uncertain,

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12 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.**

It is hard to identify a specific promise that James may have in mind, because there are so many throughout the Bible of God's promise of life to those who persevere and love him.

Matthew 10:22 (NKJV)

<sup>22</sup> And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

Matthew 19:28–29 (NKJV)

<sup>28</sup> So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>29</sup> And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.

This promise is not give to just anyone but rather to those that love HIM.

he will receive the crown of  
life which the Lord **has promised to**  
**those who love Him.**

[agapōsin](#)  
 ἀγαπῶσιν  
 loving  
[V-PPA-DMP](#)

This love is characteristically christian. It is what sets the true Christian apart from the professing fake christian.

A genuine on going habitual practice of Love of God.

[Young's Literal Translation](#)

Happy the man who doth endure temptation, because, becoming approved, he shall receive the crown of the life, which the Lord did promise to those loving Him.

This is the identifier of the Christians in the Old and New Testament, and it is evident not by words only but by obedience following the Lord.

**Exodus 20:6 (NKJV)**

<sup>6</sup> ....showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

### **Deuteronomy 7:9 (NKJV)**

<sup>9</sup> “Therefore know that the Lord your God, He *is* God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

### **Nehemiah 1:5 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup> And I said: “I pray, Lord God of heaven, O great and awesome God, *You* who keep *Your* covenant and mercy with those who love *You* and observe *Your* commandments,

### **Psalms 5:11 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> But let all those rejoice who put their trust in *You*;  
Let them ever shout for joy, because *You* defend them;  
Let those also who love *Your* name  
Be joyful in *You*.

### **Romans 8:28 (NKJV)**

<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.

### **1 Corinthians 2:9 (NKJV)**

<sup>9</sup> But as it is written:

*“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard,  
Nor have entered into the heart of man*



*The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*

**1 Corinthians 8:3 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.

**1 Peter 1:8 (NKJV)**

<sup>8</sup> whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

**1 John 4:19 (NKJV)**

<sup>19</sup> We love Him because He first loved us.

**John 14:15 (NKJV)**

<sup>15</sup> **“If you love Me, keep My commandments.**

**1 Corinthians 16:22 (NKJV)**

<sup>22</sup> If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!

This is also, the secret ingredient to perseverance and endurance in trials. You stay with someone through the thick and the thin, the good and the bad, the issues of life and sickness and death, because you love them.

So you stay with Christ, devoted to Him because you love Him.

Yet there are so many so say they love Christ or they love God, but they do not do the things He says, nor do they have any desire to spend time with Him. James says the true Christian is the one who loves the Lord so much that even though the trials come and may be severe, he will not leave, he will not forsake his Lord.

He says with the psalmist  
Psalm 42:1–2 (NKJV)

- 1 As the deer pants for the water brooks,  
So pants my soul for You, O God.
- 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.  
When shall I come and appear before God

Conclusion

1 Peter 5:6–11 (NKJV)

6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,  
7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. 10 But may the God of

all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*. <sup>11</sup> To Him *be* the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.





