



The Gift of Temptation (James 1:1-18)

Perfect and Complete





“James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the **twelve tribes which are scattered abroad**: Greetings. 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**. If any of you **lacks wisdom**, let him **ask of God**, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and **it will be given to him**. But let him **ask in faith, with no doubting**, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a **double-minded** man, unstable in all his ways.” James 1:1-8 NKJV

James 1:1-8

☑ “James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the **twelve tribes which are scattered abroad**: Greetings.”

James 1:1 NKJV

Twelve Tribes


-  The reference to twelve tribes is an interesting one. And of course the author James, the brother of Y'shua, or the "half brother", is a Jew. Let's consider a bit of history. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Jacob was renamed Israel, and became the nation of Israel. He had 12 sons who became the 12 tribes of Israel. From where do the Jews descend?
-  Many confuse Judaism with representing all of the 12 tribes of Israel. However, as God warned against, it was because of Solomon and his sins of multiplying gold and silver and horses and wives, indirect violation to Yahweh's Commandments, that his kingdom was eventually divided and later exiled (to Assyria in the North and Babylon in the South).
-  Because of God's faithfulness to David, he waited until Solomon was dead and then He sent the kingdom into dispersion. Ten tribes went to the north and became the kingdom of Israel and two tribes to the south that became the kingdom of Judah. Part of the tribe of Benjamin existed in each of the two kingdoms.
-  When we reference Jews, it is those who came from the southern kingdom who eventually came back into the

land. The derogatory term Jew was given to those in the land, thereby representing those that descended from Judah, Levi (who were the priests serving in the temple and therefore living in and around Jerusalem), and part of Benjamin. Paul, for instance, was from the tribe of Benjamin.


- ☑ Now consider James' comment, recognizing that the 12 tribes of Israel are still in dispersion, in a sense not living within their inherited land as a free nation. To this day, the 10 tribes, or 9 1/2 tribes, remain in dispersion, as they went into dispersion to the north and have never returned. Many believe they were scattered up into Europe and have ultimately spread throughout the world, possibly representing a large contingent of Christianity even to this day. Judah, Levi, and part of Benjamin were back in the land at the time of the writing of James, but we're still technically "dispersed" in exile because they were not free.

- ☑ *"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**." James 1:2-4 NKJV*

Perfect and Complete

-  This is the end goal. We are designed as humans to become like Christ. As a man, he was perfect in every way and lacked nothing. The picture here is that as Christ, who was commanded to move into the wilderness for the ultimate testing before His earthly ministry officially began, we too are tested in the wilderness. Each test is designed to purify us like the dross being removed from precious metals as they are melted into a liquid by fire. The admonition here is that we should be joyful when we are tested (burned, heated, melted), because testing is the impetus for transformation.

Testing—Patience—Perfect Work

-  Two things come to mind here, first the recognition is that it is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom of heaven. In fact, the gospel of the kingdom, understood in its purest form, is simply the perfect manifestation of God in a human. Isn't that the perfect description of Christ Himself? When we consider what it means to "enter the kingdom", the deeper reference is "become like Christ." The path to becoming like Christ is through testing, and when we endure and are victorious through the trial, we are purified like gold and silver. The

second idea is about who God considers His “true sons”, those who are legitimate sons are the ones that are tested.

☑ **Beaten to the point of death, the purifying of precious metals, becoming like Christ.**

- ☑ *“Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, **supposing him to be dead.** However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, “**We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.**”” Acts 14:19-22 NKJV*

☑ **Perfect through suffering...**

- ☑ *“For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, **in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.**” Hebrews 2:10 NKJV*

☑ **If you are a legitimate son you are tested, and the outcome is the fruit of righteousness, even if you don't like the process!**

☑ *“If you endure chastening, **God deals with you as with sons**; for **what son is there whom a father does not chasten?** But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, **then you are illegitimate and not sons**. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. **Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.**” Hebrews 12:7-11 NKJV*

☑ **The testing, the suffering, and the trials are all worth it!**

☑ *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children*

of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. **For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.**

Romans 8:14-18 NKJV

- ☑ “If any of you lacks wisdom, **let him ask of God**, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, **and it will be given to him.**”
James 1:5 NKJV

- ☑ **Ask!**

- ☑ The idea of asking and receiving is ubiquitous in scripture. First we are directed to ask. Ask and you receive. Secondly we are directed to ask with right intent.

- ☑ **Ask and it will be given...**

- ☑ ““**Ask**, and it will be given to you; **seek**, and you will find; **knock**, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.” Matthew 7:7-8 NKJV

- ☑ **Ask with the right intent! Wrong intent is birthed from selfish desires!**

- ☑ “Where do wars and fights come from among you? **Do they not come from your desires for pleasure** that war in

*your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. **You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.***” James 4:1-3 NKJV

- ☑ *“But let him **ask in faith**, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a **double-minded man**, unstable in all his ways.”*
James 1:6-8 NKJV

☑ **Faith and double-mindedness**

- ☑ James then adds a critical stipulation. Yes, we are directed to ask God, petition Him for our needs. However, we are warned, do not ask without faith. Asking without faith is likened to a man speaking out of both sides of his mouth. On one hand he is petitioning the Creator of the universe, the One who can provide all. And on the other hand he is doubtful that his Creator can provide what he’s asking for. James says “do not” ask in such a way. If you do, you are certain to not receive!

Lowly vs. Self-sufficient

“Let the **lowly brother glory in his exaltation, but the rich in his humiliation**, because as a flower of the field he will pass away. For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. **So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.**” James 1:9-11 NKJV

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☑ Object Lesson

☑ Let us first clarify that the Bible does not in any way disparage wealth or diminish wealthy people. The lesson here is strictly speaking about the things on which people depend. The take-away is that if we put our trust in anything that the world offers, it is a dead end. Why? Because everything on this physical earth is going to fade and wither and become nothing. Relentless pursuit of things that will satisfy you in this life: wealth, physical

pleasure, recognition, power, and accomplishments all fade away.

- ☑ The reference to lowly is very likely accentuating the words of Christ in His Sermon on the Mount. “The meek shall inherit the earth.” When you consider Y’shua’s words as He opens His mouth in His first public sermon, the first three “people types” that He encourages are the “lowly.” He then clarifies the most valuable pursuit anyone could have in the earth: “Hungering and thirsting for righteousness.” This is in stark contrast to pursuing the things of the world.

- ☑ *““Blessed are **the poor in spirit**, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are **those who mourn**, For they shall be comforted. Blessed are **the meek**, For they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are **those who hunger and thirst for righteousness**, For they shall be filled.” Matthew 5:3-6 NKJV*

☑ **Obsession with worldly things...**

- ☑ Again, there is nothing inherently wrong with wealth. The admonition here is that when you are distracted with pursuing and maintaining earthly wealth, success, fame, and satisfaction, they will compete with your transformation process to becoming like Christ.

☑ *“Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is **hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.** And again I say to you, it is **easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle** than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.””* Matthew 19:23-24 NKJV

☑ See: [Valuations](#)

The Truth about Temptation

“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. **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. But **each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.** Then, when desire has conceived, it **gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.** Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. **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. Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that **we might be a kind of firstfruits** of His creatures.” James 1:12-18 NKJV

James 1:12-18

☑ *“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.” James 1:12 NKJV*

☑ **Endure Temptation**

☑ It is not a matter of if, but when. Temptation is part of the program, part of the plan. The premise is that the “wilderness” is a place of testing. “Testing what?” you might ask. The testing is to determine if you will obey God. It’s easy to appear compliant when everything seems to be going well. It’s another thing altogether to be obedient when things are difficult.

☑ *“**Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe**, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the Lord swore to your fathers. **And you shall remember** that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, **to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not**. So He humbled you, **allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna** which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live*

by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.” Deuteronomy 8:1-3 NKJV

- ☑ The reference is clear, as the devil tempts Y’shua in the wilderness, referring directly to Deuteronomy 8 and the need for bread when you hunger.
- ☑ *“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the **wilderness to be tempted by the devil**. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, **“If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”** But He answered and said, **“It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ ”**”*
Matthew 4:1-4 NKJV

☑ **Many Crowns**

- ☑ The symbolism of the “many crowns” be it a crown of righteousness, or a crown of life, or a crown of glory, points to the ultimate reward for obedience. Whether you are keeping the faith, or victorious in the trial, or humbly serving, protecting, and being a good example to God’s people, your reward is the crown of rulership!
- ☑ **Faith**

- ☑ *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I **have kept the faith**. Finally, there is laid up for me the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing."* II

Timothy 4:7-8 NKJV

☑ **Testing**

- ☑ *"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**."* Revelation 2:10 NKJV

☑ **Protection, Serving, Emulating**

- ☑ *"**Shepherd the flock** [protect the flock] of God which is among you, **serving as overseers** [serve the flock], not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; **nor as being Lords over those** entrusted to you, but **being examples** to the flock [uphold the law]; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the **crown of glory** that does not fade away." I Peter 5:2-4 NKJV (See: [Re-fund the Police](#))*

☑ *“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. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.” James 1:13-15 NKJV*

☑ **Pay attention to what is going on inside of you...**

☑ Let us first distinguish the subtle difference between a situation or circumstance that is tempting, and succumbing to that temptation. The enemy tempts you; your own flesh nature tempts you; God does not tempt you, nor can God succumb to temptation.

☑ Our Savior in the wilderness is the quintessential example. He was tempted by the enemy, yet never succumbed to that temptation.

☑ When we are enticed by our own desires, overtaken by temptation, the outcome is death.

☑ *“Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. **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**.” James 1:16-17 NKJV*

☑ **Good things from a predictable God!**

- ☑ God has only good things for you. The reason James solidifies this idea here is because of all this talk about trials and temptation.
- ☑ Faith is necessary to live an overcoming life, and with our God there is no inconsistency. He is ready to bless your faithful life.
- ☑ Do not be discouraged nor deceived that the testing and trials of life are in contrast to the blessings that are in store as you overcome. Remember, the trials themselves are designed for your purification process, and are that which prepares you for the blessings!
- ☑ **Our Study's Namesake!**
 - ☑ This is precisely why this study is titled "The Gift of Temptation." This is a perfect gift from the Father of lights; He knows precisely what each of us needs in order to cleanse the dross from our precious metals. The question remains—when you are rubbed, scraped, cut, and exposed, what lies just beneath your skin?
 - ☑ Are you a thin veneer of gold, only to reveal a cheap grade of other minerals just below the surface?
 - ☑ Or, when you are challenged, no matter how deep the gash, do you come up solid gold?

- ☑ *“Of His own will **He brought us forth by the word of truth,** that we might be **a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.**” James 1:18 NKJV*

- ☑ **Firstfruits**

- ☑ We are being birthed into a perfect people through this process. As James says, “a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”
- ☑ Of course this is a reference to the Feast of Firstfruits, the biblical feast symbolizing the resurrection. Christ is the first fruit resurrection, and as we emulate and imitate Him, we become like Christ, or in other words “a kind of firstfruits.”

NEXT TEACHING

Speak Less Do More (James 1:19-27)