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A just weight
and balance

are the
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- Today we begin our study of the book of “James”
 - James is like the prophets of old.
 - Short and Direct.
 - He ends his letter as he began.
 - Plain, Simple, Direct.

- He begins by addressing them as “**my brethren.**”
 - As a brother he asks his brethren to accept his admonition;
 - As a brother he is concerned.
 - Regarding the trials with which they are tried.
 - He and they are “brethren” in “the faith,”
 - Slaves of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- To James the gospel of Christ was simply the true Judaism,
 - Judaism fulfilled and transfigured.
 - It was “*the law of bondage,*” (Galatians 5:1) transformed into “*the law of liberty.*” (James 1:25)

- How should the readers consider their many trials?
 - As "all joy."
 - Because their little faith is thus developed into strong faith.
 - As fire removes the impurities from gold..
- Christians ought to rejoice because of that and not pity themselves.

- There is no denial that trials produce strain and pain.
 - And they will come.
- And when we evaluate them correctly.
 - We ought to bear them with joy.

- The flesh will not like them,
- But the spirit will rejoice.
- And why is that?
 - To prove itself
 - And to gain from the trials what Christ intended should be gained.

- James 1:2

*My brethren, count it all joy
when you
fall into
divers temptations.*

- The verb is used in the sense of
“encounter”

- As the man who
“fell among thieves”
(**Luke 10:30**)

- One falls somewhere where trials are all around him, and he cannot get away.
 - Not of his own doing.

- **Remaining strong**
like the
prophets and **apostles**.
- Habakkuk would
rejoice
even in the
Chaldean invasion,
and notwithstanding the
desolation of his country.

- **Habakkuk 3:17-18** (KJV)

***Although the fig tree
shall not blossom,***

- ***neither shall fruit be in the vines;***
- ***the labor of the olive shall fail,***
- ***and the fields shall yield no meat;***
- ***the flock shall be cut off from the fold,***
- ***and there shall be no herd in the stalls:***
 - **18 *Yet I will rejoice
in the LORD,
I will joy in the
God of my salvation.***

- The KJV is better read:
*Consider it pure joy, my brothers,
when you are involved in
various trials,
(ISV James 1:2).*
- The difference being:
“trials” are from without.
 - “Temptations”
are from within
and are due to one’s own
“lust”.
(James 5:13)

- One of the best tests of Christian maturity **is tribulation.**
 - When God's people go through personal trials, they discover what kind of faith **they really possess.**
 - Trials not only **reveal** our faith;
 - They also **develop** our faith and Christian character.

- The Jews to whom James was writing were experiencing trials, and he wanted to encourage them.

- The strange thing is that James tells them to rejoice!

- The word “greeting” (James 1:1) can be translated “rejoice!”

- How is the Christian able to have joy in the midst of troubles?
- James gives the answer in this first chapter by showing the assurances Christians have in times of tribulation.

- At the very beginning of his letter

James describes himself.

- ***The slave of God***
and of the
Lord Jesus Christ.

- There are at least four implications in this title.

(# 1) It implies absolute obedience.

- The slave knows no law but his master's word;
- He has no rights of his own;
- He is bound to give his master unquestioning obedience.

- (# 2) It implies absolute humility.
 - He thinks not of his privileges but of his duties,
 - Not of his rights but of his obligations.

- **(# 3)** It implies absolute loyalty.
 - His only interest
is
his God.
 - What he does,
he does for God.
 - His own preference
do not enter into his
calculations;
 - His loyalty
is to God
and Him alone.

- (# 4) The Title James chooses for himself is one of pride.

- James 1:1

"a slave of God and the Lord Jesus Christ,"

- It is far from being *a title of dishonor.*

- It was a title **of Great Honor.**

- It was the title by which the greatest ones of the Old Testament were known.
- Moses was the slave of God. (1Ki 8:53; Dan 9:11; Mal 4:4);
- So were Joshua and Caleb (Jos 24:29; Num 14:24);

- So were the great patriarchs:
- Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
(**Deuteronomy 9:27**);
 - So was Job
(**Job 1:8**);
 - So was Isaiah
(**Isaiah 20:3**);
 - Also a distinctive title
by which the prophets were known
(**Amos 3:7**; **Zechariah 1:6**; **Jeremiah 7:25**).

- By taking the title
“slave”

(**doulos-G1401**)

James sets himself in
the great succession of those
who found:

- **Their freedom**

- **Their peace**

- **Their glory**

in perfect

submission

to the will of God.

- In the Greek, that word
“**doulos**”
means “**slave**”.
- Never as anything but “**slave**.”
 - It doesn't mean:
 - “**servant**”;
 - “**worker**”;
 - “**hired hand**”;
 - “**helper**.”
- There are other Greek words
that do mean “**servant**”
but never
“**doulos**”.

- The faithful
(**doulos - servant**)
is far from being
a mere hireling.

- Interested only
in his wages.

- But is bound to
his master for life
in happy submission
to the Master's cause.

- Inasmuch as Christians are "*bought with a price*".
- The precious blood of our Lord.
(**1 Peter 1:18**).
- It is fitting that Christians should be thus designated.

- The letter is addressed to the twelve tribes who are scattered abroad.
- Literally the greeting is to the twelve tribes in the Diaspora {dee-as-por-ah'} (<G1290>),
- A technical word for the Jews who lived outside Palestine.
 - And there were millions of them.

- This dispersal of the Jews throughout the world was of the greatest importance

for the spread of Christianity.

- Because it meant that all over the world

there were synagogues.

- Thus allowing Paul and other men of God **to preach the Good News.**

- And it meant that all over the world there were men and women **who knew the Old Testament.**

- And who it was hoped **would be willing to listen.**

- James never suggested that Christianity would be easy.

- He warns them that they would find themselves involved in divers temptations.

- The word translated temptations is peirasmos (<**G3986**>).

- And

is not temptation
in our sense of the term.

- Rather,
it is testing
(trial in the RSV).
- A trial or testing
directed towards an end,
- And the end is that
he who is tested
should emerge stronger
and pureer from the testing.

- It is not
seduction into sin
- But of
strengthening
and
purifying.
- For instance,
a young bird is said
to test
(**<G3985>**)
its wings.

- **The Queen of Sheba**
was said to
test
(**<G3985>**)
the wisdom of Solomon.

- God was said to
test
(**<G3985>**)
Abraham,
- When he appeared to
be demanding the
sacrifice of Isaac
(**Gen 22:1**).

- When Israel came into the Promised Land,

God did not remove the people who were already there.

- Judges 2:21

- **Judges 2:21**

*I also will not henceforth
drive out any from before them
of the nations
which Joshua left when he died:*

- **2:22** *That through them
I may prove Israel,
whether they will keep
the way of the LORD ...*

- **2:23** *Therefore the LORD
left those nations,
without driving them out...*

- Christians must not expect **to be coddled along life's pathway.**

- **Rather expect:**

- Test of sorrows,
- Of disappointments,
- Of various seductions which seek to lure you from the right way.
- Tests of spiritual dangers,
 - Test of sacrifices which the Christian way must often involve.

- But they are not meant to make us fall;
 - They are meant to make us soar.
 - They are not meant to defeat us;
 - But to be defeated.
 - They are not meant to make us weaker;
 - But to make us stronger.
 - Therefore,
We should rejoice in them.

- Who would Abraham be without his trials?
 - Or Job,
 - Or Samson,
 - Or David,
 - Or Daniel,
 - Or Esther,
 - Or Rahab,
- Or Mary (Mother of Jesus)
 - Etc.

- The Christian is like the athlete.
- **The tougher the training the greater the victory.**
- As Robert Browning said:
"welcome each rebuff that turns earth's smoothness rough,"
 - For every hard step is another step on the upward way.
(# 539)

- What is to be gained from this testing?
- V. 3 The “trying” of your faith. (KJV)
 - “testing” (NET)
 - “proving” (LTV) .
- The aim of testing is to purge us of all impurity.
 - 1Peter 4:12

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

- If we meet this testing in the right way,
it will produce
“*steadfastness*”
(**James 1:3** -- RSV)
- Which the King James Version translates as
“*patience*”.
 - But patience is far too weak.
 - It is not simply the ability to bear things;
 - It is the ability to turn them to greatness
and to glory.

- Having expressed a wish for joy for his readers,
- James proceeds to reveal how one expect to reach such a state.
 - And it is found in the most unlikely situation.

- However, we might feel that such a state would be **impossible to attain** amid severe persecution.
 - It being an empty **and thoughtless gesture,**
- The writer would have them know that these very trials **would provide the occasion** for the happiness which he wished for them.

- The trials
are not joy,
- But their possible results are.
- When Peter and John had been in prison for preaching the Gospel and eventually released
what was their attitude?

- Acts 5:41

*And they departed from
the presence of the council,
rejoicing
that they were counted worthy
to suffer shame for his name.*

- *Song: Faith of Our Fathers
(# 754)*

- There is, of course, no merit in the mere submission of one's self to life's difficulties;
- Multitudes of people suffer in life because of their misdeeds,
- And without profit.

- ***"For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters:
• but if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name."***
(1 Peter 4:15-16.)

- Christians are to recognize **the purpose of trials,**
- And **learn a lesson** from each conflict they experience.
- It is indeed this fact that enables one to **endure patiently.**

- **V. 3 knowing that the proving of your faith worketh patience.**
 - **“Proving”**
 - What is the secret of extracting **joy** from **trouble**?
- **A paradox to the thoughtless,**
 - **An obvious with the wise.**
 - **Or self evident.**
 - For **“trial”** means **“test.”**

- And it is as we are tested that we learn **our own weakness,**

- Learn **what** and **where** it is,

- And set on **correcting it.**

- Since chastening is grievous to us, the danger is that we should seek to escape it as soon as we can,
- Forgetting that only “***he that endureth to the end will be saved.***”
(**Revelation 2:10**)

- The troubles are not to be of our own making.
- It is not when we inflict suffering on ourselves,
 - But when we “fall into” it,
(**James 1:2**)
 - The word for “fall into” implies that it is unsought and unexpected.

- We have the assurance of Divine support.

- **1Corinthians 10:13**

There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.

- The way of trying whether you are a good soldier is to go down to the battle:



- The way to try whether a ship is well built is to send her to sea.



- And how do we know the lighthouse will stand?



- Your faith in God
is proven

when you can cling to Him
under trial and temptation.

- For a faith
that is never tried,
- How do you know
you can
depend upon it?

- It is a splendid thing to be able to prove even to Satan the purity of your motives.
- That was the great gain of Job.
- Therefore, when you are tested, “Count it all joy”
 - Then you will proof:
 - of your love,
 - of your faith.
 - James says, “Count it.”

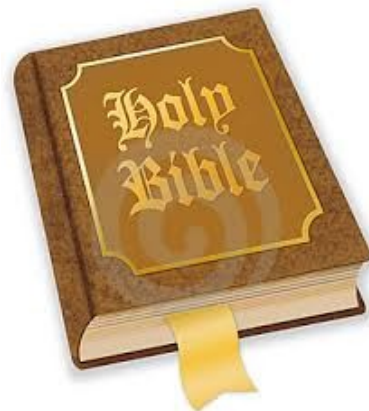
- The brick mason
must suffer
a bruised finger,
- The carpenter a splinter,
 - The mechanic
a busted knuckle,
 - And the saint
a tribulation.

- **Think on these things**
- **Philippians 4:8**

**The doors of the church
are open.**

**The Spirit and the Bride
Say
“Come”.**

Revelation 22:17



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