

# James 1 - Endurance under trial

"In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith - of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire - may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed." **1 Peter 1:6-7**

## v1-12 ENDURING UNDER THE TRIAL OF OUR FAITH

James immediately launches into the key issue here: Faith under trial.

**v1 James:** A Greek form of **Jacob**. Jacob had 12 sons/tribes: **Gen 49:28**.

**Servant:** Though James was the Lord's half brother, he does not base his authority on genealogy or position. A servant follows in the footsteps of Christ: **Isa 42:1; 52:13; 53:11; Mk 9:35; Jn 13:14-17; 15:15,20; Phil 2:7-8; 2 Tim 2:24**. **Twelve tribes:** James writing to early Jewish ecclesias. **Scattered:** Gk. *diaspora*, ie. dispersed throughout the Roman Empire.

**v2 Joy:** Trial purifies us and reminds us of what is really important in life: **Rom 8:18-19; 2 Cor 4:17; 1 Pet 1:6-7**. This was taught and lived in the life of Christ: **Matt 5:12; Heb 5:7-8; 12:2**. Think about the context of Jesus' words about joy: **Jn 15:7-13; 16:20-24; 17:13**. Key verses: **1 Jn 1:4; 2 Jn 1:12; 3 Jn 1:4; Phil 1:4,18,25; 2:8-9,16-18; 3:1; 4:4**. Our hope inspires joy in us: **Mt 13:20,44; 25:21; Heb 12:2**. God's Kingdom is a place of amazing joy: **Isa 12:3; 35:2,10; 51:3,11; 55:12; 65:18-19**.

**v2 Temptations:** Also **1:12** and **1 Pet 1:6; 4:12; 2 Pet 2:9; 1 Tim 6:9**. Used in the context of being put to the proof by trial, also being enticed. The antidote to temptation is in **1 Tim 6:11**. The solution is to fill our lives with the positive aspects of the gospel: **Rom 13:14; Gal 5:16**.

**v3 Trying of faith:** To partake in Christ's sufferings: **1 Pet 4:11-16**. Faith is tested over a lifetime: **Mt 10:22**. Faith is like the refining of gold, it develops character and perseverance: **Job 23:10; Prov 17:3; 1 Pet 1:7**. It is through much tribulation that we enter the Kingdom: **Isa 48:10; Mal 3:3; Acts 14:22; 2 Cor 1:4; Rev 2:10**. **v4 Patience:** A fundamental principle! See **Jas 5:7-11**. Emphasised 7x in Revelation: **Rev 1:9; 2:2,3,19; 3:10; 13:10; 14:12**. It is the hardest lesson for us to learn. A constant theme in Scripture for faithful saints eg. **Lk 8:15; Rom 2:7; 5:3-4; 8:25**.

**Perfect and entire:** NIV "mature and complete", tr. *accomplish* in **Lk 9:31**. God is working with us over time to develop our characters: **Phil 1:6**. This concept is seen in the burnt offering which was entirely consumed: **Lev 1:9**, and ultimately fulfilled in Christ: **Eph 5:2**.

**v5 Lack:** same in Gk. as *wanting* in **v4** - a connecting thought. **Wisdom:** The practical application of knowledge, explained in **Jas 3:13-17** and emphasised over 50x in **Proverbs**. Key verses: **Prov 2:1-8**. **Liberally:** unreserved, whole-hearted, free from division of motive and loyalty. In **Eph 6:5** servants serve in *singleness* of heart (same Greek word). **Upbraideth not:** NIV "without finding fault" **v6 Nothing wavering:** ie. "not doubting" **Wave of the sea:** symbolic Gentile nations that rage: **Isa 57:20-21**. Think about the lesson of Peter walking on water in **Mt 14:28-30**.

**v8 Double minded man:** opposite to the single-mindedness of God. It is serving 2 masters: **Mt 6:24**. Halting between 2 opinions: **1 Kings 18:21**. In **Lk 17:26-28** Jesus warns it is easy to be like this in the last days. Now James deals with the greatest cause of double-mindedness in **1:10**.

**v9 Rejoice:** literally means to *glory* or be exalted. Godliness with contentment is great gain: **1 Tim 6:6**. See also **Ecc 5:15; 2 Cor 12:9-10; Phil 4:11-13; Heb 13:8**. Financial gain now is incomparable to eternity. The gospel is a free gift: **Isa 55:1; Acts 8:20; 1 Pet 5:2**. The great challenge through the ages has been to see beyond the present. To trust in things not seen, to look for a future reward: **Heb 11:6,13,39-40**. Job understood this principle: **Job 1:21**. In **Lk 12:15-22** Jesus says our life does not consist of material things. The poor brother takes comfort in that he will inherit the Kingdom: **Lk 6:20; Jas 2:5**. Rich and poor can both be pre-occupied with money: **Prov 30:8-9**.

**v10 Rich:** the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil: **1 Tim 6:10**. All flesh is grass - a symbol taken from **Isa 40:6-7** and **Psa 103:15**. **v11 Burning heat:** literally means a "scorching wind" as in **Job 27:21; Jer 18:17; Hos 13:15**. **v12 Endure temptation:** particularly trials in this context. **Crown of life:** *Stephanos*, the wreath of victory, as in the games: **1 Cor 9:25; 2 Tim 4:8; Rev 2:10; 3:11**. In **Rev 14:14** the saints are wearing a *golden crown* - those who gain the victory have had their faith tried in the fire and have become as pure gold: **1 Pet 1:7**.

**v13-18 REAL SOURCE OF TEMPTATION. v13 Let no man say:** We must not blame God by blaming our circumstances: **Prov 19:3**. **v14 Tempted:** Temptation comes "within, from the heart of man": **Mk 7:21-23; Rom 7:18-21**. The 3 lusts are described in **1 Jn 2:16** as *the world*. It was *the serpent* that deceived Eve: **Gen 3:6**. Eve saw that it was good for food (lust of the flesh), it was pleasant to the eyes (lust of the eyes) and desired to make one wise (pride of life). These 3 lusts were overcome by Jesus in the 3 wilderness temptations: **Lk 4:1-13**. He overcame sin by *faith* in God's Word.

**8** <sup>a</sup> A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

**9** Let the brother of low degree <sup>b</sup>rejoice <sup>c</sup>in that he is exalted:

**10** But the rich, <sup>e</sup>in that he is made low: because <sup>f</sup>as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

**11** For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but <sup>g</sup>it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

**12** <sup>h</sup>Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive <sup>i</sup>the crown of life, <sup>j</sup>which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

**13** Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with <sup>k</sup>evil, neither tempteth he any man:

**14** But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away <sup>l</sup>of his own lust, and enticed.

**15** Then <sup>m</sup>when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, <sup>n</sup>bringeth forth death.

**16** Do not err, my beloved brethren.

**17** Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from <sup>o</sup>the Father of lights, <sup>p</sup>with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

**18** <sup>q</sup>Of his own will <sup>r</sup>begat he us with the word of truth, <sup>s</sup>that we should be a kind of <sup>t</sup>first-fruits of his creatures.

**19** Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, <sup>u</sup>slow to speak, <sup>v</sup>slow to wrath:

**20** For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

**21** Wherefore <sup>w</sup>lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of

**v14 Drawn away:** used of hunting/fishing with bait. **Own lust:** **Eph 2:3; Gal 5:15-21**. **Enticed:** to trap as with bait. Concept of the harlot in **Prov 7:6-23** who traps a youth.

**v15 Lust conceived:** like conception of a child in the womb in an immoral woman. **Bringeth forth:** literally means to bring to the birth. **Sin finished:** fully grown. **Death:** Sin's children are death. Close parallels with **Gen 3:** Eve enticed by the fruit. Adam then followed. Lust conceives and the child of sin (Cain) is born. When Cain grows up he murders his brother. The result is death. **v16 Do not err:** NIV "be not deceived" - conclusion to **1:12-15**. **v17 Father of lights:** Continues the father/child theme here. We are not children of sin but *children of God* by repentance, conversion and baptism. We become new creatures as a result of God's Word growing within us: **Jn 1:12-13; 6:63; Rom 1:16; 1 Pet 1:23-25**. God is light dwelling in light: **Jn 1:5-10; 3:16-21; 1 Tim 6:16; 1 Jn 1:5-8**. **Variableness/shadow of turning:** Scientific term relating to the sun / earth. The earth revolves around the sun. Like the sun, God is unchangeable. We are the ones who move. **v18 Begat:** God's Word is not only the means of *begetting* and *birth*, but also *growth*: **1 Pet 2:1-2**. In the sower parable, the Word is seed being sown: **Lk 8:4-21**. **Firstfruits:** **Lev 23:17** - An offering to God symbolising our whole lives given as an offering to Him. Fruits are *first* ie. more follow: **1 Cor 15:20; Acts 2:1; Zech 14:16; Rev 14:4**.

**v19-27 LIVING THE WORD:** **v19-20** See notes on **3:14-18**. **v21 meekness:** **Mt 5:5; Mk 10:15**. NIV "get rid of all moral filth and all the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you". See also **1 Pet 1:14-17**. **Engrafted word:** *implanted* ie. **sown** in the heart: **Mt 13:23**.

**v22 Key Verse:** See notes in *Background and Overview*.

**v23-24** Forgets what he sees as he only has a brief look. Thus he is deceived: **Jer 17:9**

**v25** In **2 Cor 3:18** Paul shows that this mirror contains the image of Jesus Christ. See *Background and Overview*.

**v26** See notes in **Jas 3:1-10**. **v27** Doers of the Word! See *Background & Overview* notes. **Fatherless and widow:** Elijah! See *Background & Overview*.

**v28** See notes in **Jas 3:1-10**. **v29** Doers of the Word! See *Background & Overview* notes. **Fatherless and widow:** Elijah! See *Background & Overview*.

**v30** See notes in **Jas 3:1-10**. **v31** Doers of the Word! See *Background & Overview* notes. **Fatherless and widow:** Elijah! See *Background & Overview*.

**v32** See notes in **Jas 3:1-10**. **v33** Doers of the Word! See *Background & Overview* notes. **Fatherless and widow:** Elijah! See *Background & Overview*.

**Colour code:** Blue (God & Jesus); Red (sin/devil/judgment of wicked); Green (Kingdom); Orange (important words & phrases); Purple (return of Jews to the land); Yellow (practical exhortation). Prepared for Study Week 2012. For a PDF file, go to [www.studyweek.net](http://www.studyweek.net) or email [acadangerfield@webshield.net.au](mailto:acadangerfield@webshield.net.au). Such assistance for this study has been obtained from notes by John Martin (Scripture Study Service) and talks by Carl Parry, John Martin and David Bailey.

## CHAPTER 1.

<sup>a</sup> We are to rejoice under the cross, 5 to ask patience of God, 13 and in our trials not to impute our weakness, or sins, unto him, 19 but rather to hearken to the word, and to do thereafter.

<sup>b</sup> **JAMES**, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes <sup>c</sup>which are scattered abroad, greeting.

<sup>d</sup> **2** My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

<sup>e</sup> **3** Knowing this, that <sup>f</sup>the trying of your faith <sup>g</sup>worketh patience.

<sup>h</sup> **4** But let patience have her

perfect work, that ye may be <sup>i</sup>perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

<sup>j</sup> **5** If any of you lack wisdom, <sup>k</sup>let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

<sup>l</sup> **6** But <sup>m</sup>let him ask in faith, <sup>n</sup>nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like <sup>o</sup>a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

<sup>p</sup> **7** For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

<sup>a</sup> ch. 3. 2.  
<sup>b</sup> Mat. 5. 48.  
<sup>c</sup> Acts 12. 7.  
<sup>d</sup> Cp. Acts 13. 55.  
<sup>e</sup> Acts 26. 7.  
<sup>f</sup> Deut. 32. 26.  
<sup>g</sup> John 7. 35.  
<sup>h</sup> 1 Pet. 1. 7.  
<sup>i</sup> Cp. Acts 4. 5-22.  
<sup>j</sup> Mark 12. 24.  
<sup>k</sup> 1 Tim. 2. 28.  
<sup>l</sup> Mat. 21. 21.  
<sup>m</sup> Luke 8. 24.  
<sup>n</sup> Eph. 4. 24.  
<sup>o</sup> Mat. 12. 7.  
<sup>p</sup> 1 Pet. 2. 7.  
<sup>q</sup> Luke 22. 19.  
<sup>r</sup> Rom. 5. 3.