

The Testing of Our Faith

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the **testing of your faith** produces **steadfastness**. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. James 1:2-4

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. James 1:12

Steadfast – fixed or unchanging; steady; firmly loyal or constant; faithful

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. **In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith--more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire--may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.** Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

1 Peter 1:3-9

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And

"If the righteous is scarcely saved,
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good. 1 Peter 4:12-19

[Consider more study on testing: Genesis 22 – God Tests Abraham; Deuteronomy 8; Job 1-2; and the book of Esther.]

Enduring with Grace

So to keep me from being too elated by the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, **"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."** Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. **For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities.** For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Reliance on God Who Delivers Us

For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. **For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.** Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. **But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.** He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. **On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.** 2 Corinthians 1:8-10

Job 19:25-27

"For I know that my Redeemer lives,
and at the last he will stand upon the earth.
And after my skin has been thus destroyed,
yet **in my flesh I shall see God,**
whom I shall see for myself,
and **my eyes shall behold, and not another.**
My heart faints within me!"

Finishing Well

But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. Acts 20:24

For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. 2 Timothy 4:6-8