

IN TIMES OF TRIALS AND AFFLICTIONS TO WHOM DO WE GO?

James 1:2-4, 5:13,14; Romans 12:12

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Trials: A painful experience, an instance of trouble or hardship, especially one that tests somebody's ability to endure.

Affliction: Distress, problems, a condition of great physical or mental suffering.



Trial and temptation of Adam and Eve.

The Fruit looks good to eat. You will not surely die

The two key words “Trial and affliction” are certainties in life, they are inevitable. There is no way you will say you have not encountered these two words in your life unless you are a toddler, they will not make any meaning to you. Within us some people are suffering due to illness, Job lost, lack of finance and so on. Starting a new business is a challenge, finding admission into schools is a challenge. Everything we do to improve our way of life is a challenge. When you are tempted to take short cut, it looks normal but it is not normal. At some point you begin to think where do I go from here.

James in his writing to the Jewish Christians of the 12 tribes of Israel that were scattered abroad as they were facing persecutions, trials and temptations provided some relief. James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials. James 1:3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. James 1:4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking

nothing. That is there is Profiting from Trials. Testing of your faith will produce patience and patience is your ability to wait which some don't have.

James 1:12 *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.* Meaning loving God under trials and doing his blessed command is great achievement. Every labourer deserves wages. The wages of the Christian who love God and endure temptation is a crown of life. The Crown of Life is also referred to in Revelation 2:10; to be bestowed upon "those who persevere under trials." To the Church in Smyrna "not be afraid of what they are about to suffer... Be faithful even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life." Those who have ears let them hear these words.

Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer. Rom 12:12

There are many scriptures concerning trials and afflictions in the bible. They are put down for us to learn how to conduct ourselves should we come across trials and afflictions. God entrusted Job, Joseph, Daniel, Moses, David, Isaiah, Paul and many others with major trials. Most of the people we remember today faced great trials. In fact, we remember them because of how they faced their trials and how they come out of it. If they had not faced a major trial, we probably wouldn't have known their names. Nothing will happen to you during trial that has not happen before but we are sometimes quick to say God why me.

Trials and temptation are everywhere. When you are posted to or elected into an office then you say it is my turn, yes, your turn to do what? Correct mistakes? steal from your employer? confiscate properties or ask for wisdom to manage the office? Solomon said Lord give me wisdom to judge your people. For every trial there is always a way of escape it is left for you to discover the route. **1 Corinthians 10:13** *There hath 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 ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

James presented a good summary of the practical duties of all believers. The leading truths of Christianity are there and on careful consideration, it also contains exhortations of patience, hope and obedience of faith and love, followed with warnings, advise and encouragements. The truths exposed in the book of James are very serious, and necessary to be maintained and the rules for practice ought to be observed in all times.

James did not see trials as a threat but saw maturity through trials. He says to his readers that they will endure challenges as Christians. He went on to say these

challenges are good thing because they will result in greater maturity. But be careful, in times of trial, that patience, and not passion, is set to work in us. Whatever is said or done, let patience have the saying and doing of it. When the work of patience is complete, it will furnish all that is necessary for our Christian race and warfare.

Trials are not death sentence neither is afflictions are, they require faith and patience. However, temptation is used by the devil to distract the believer and lead them into sin which will lead to their death physically and spiritually. Therefore, remember that trials are situations that test and grow our faith, so do not panic there is always a route for escape.

Affliction



James 5:13 *Is anyone among you afflicted? Let him pray.*

As Apostle Paul said *"This light and momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison"* (2 Cor. 4: 16-17) RSV. So don't lose heart; instead, count it all joy. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. Affliction or not "let not your heart be troubled" Believe in Christ you will overcome.

Job 5:7; Yet man is born unto trouble, **Psalms 34:19** *Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.*

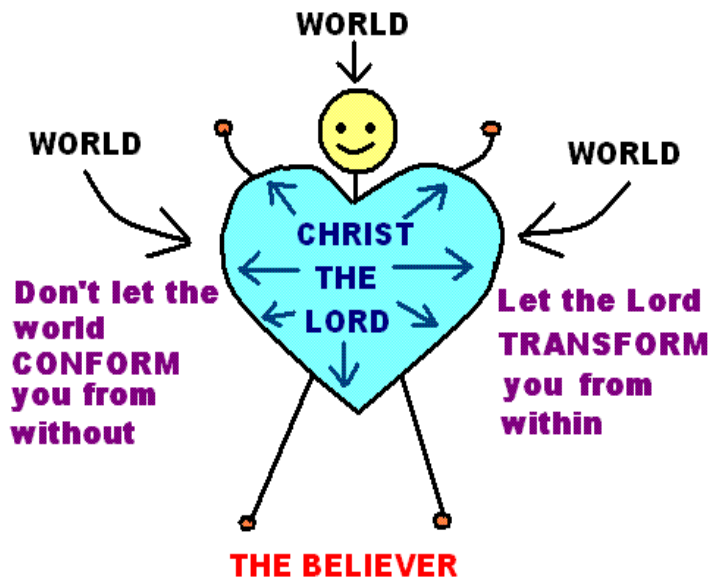
In a day of affliction nothing is more, timely than prayer. **James 5:13** *Is anyone among you afflicted? Let him pray.* When sickness come, the spirit is most humbled, different thoughts will set in and the heart is broken. It is necessary to exercise faith and hope under afflictions and prayer is the appointed means for obtaining and increasing the gift of God. Ask and you shall be given.

In afflictions your response makes all the difference. Apostle Paul's example, 2Cor 12:7, a thorn of flesh was given to me by the messenger of Satan to trouble me so that I will not excel. Paul took the message to the Lord. The response was "my grace is sufficient for you" to withstand any thing that is troubling you. Paul regarded these afflictions as opportunities from God to grow spiritually. We should be like Paul, trust in God, glory in trials that according to Roman 5:3-5 we knowing that our

patience produces experience and experience hope and hope does not disappoint us because the love of God is shed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us. Have faith in Christ so that you can withstand afflictions.

The believer's concept:

Ephesians 3:17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, be rooted and grounded in love. "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).



This is your courage to withstand affliction The trial of Job and how he finds solution: Job, a prosperous man of outstanding sincere attitude. Satan acted as an agent of provocation to test whether or not Job's sincerity is merely because of his prosperity. But Job, faced with the shocking loss of his properties, his children, and finally his own health, still refuses to curse God. And he said "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" In all this Job did not sin nor charge God foolishly. **Job 1:21-22**.

When trials and affliction surface, "To who do we go"

Job and others stick tenaciously to their God and they were able to overcome. The reality of today: Today the world has gone bananas: in every next two buildings there is a place call church, some blaring unrepentant prayers and commanding Satan to die by fire by force, very good if Satan dies, we will all be at peace. **Rev 20:10** *And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

The stories are endless of modern people looking for solutions to their problems. Money and materials that are meant for family up keep is been used to sow seeds to pastors and general overseers, in anticipation of overcoming their trials and afflictions. The end results are best described. Impoverished and broken homes characterize the land scape, while GO/Cs are wallowing in luxuries. Apostle Paul while addressing the issue of false teachers said “Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers” **Phil 3:2**.

Is any sick let him call the elders, some have turned this into money spinning ventures to milk their followers. When the blind lead the blind they will both fall into the dish. Call Elders indeed. By their fruits you should know them.

In everything give thanks to God: Sometimes to be thankful in a difficult situation is difficult, but the scripture is very clear on this **1 Thess. 5:18** To be thankful rather than to complain takes a conscious heart to act and it is a sacrifice of natural desire. The psalmist says “Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.” **Psalm 107:22**

Conclusion:

Trials and afflictions are common to man. If properly handled with patience and prayers they are meant to strengthen our faith and draw us closer to God. If not properly handled they will lead us to offend God. Tell me your friend so that I can tell you who you are.

Psalm 50:15 we are told, “*Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.*”

James 5:13-15 Is anyone among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church. They watch out for your souls. **Heb 13:17**.



May the Good Lord add blessings to these words in Jesus Name, Amen.