

Series: Behold the Lamb

PRAYING DURING THE HARD TIMES OF LIFE JAMES 1:2-4

Text: James 1:2-4

James 1:2-4

² My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; ³ Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. ⁴ But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Introduction:

Josiah Henson was a former slave who escaped to Canada, and became instrumental in the abolitionist movement. Once, Henson was introduced to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The bishop was so impressed with Henson's manors and speech that he asked him which university he had attended. Henson responded, "The University of Adversity."

It's certainly not natural to enjoy or even appreciate adversity, for God's people the things which try us and

test us are the things that make us spiritually strong, and eventually form us into the people we should be.

It is with this end result in mind that James makes what appears to be an absurd statement in verse 2.

James 1:2

² My brethren, **count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;**

The word “temptations” in that verse refers to any experience in life that tests us and tries us. James asserts that we should consider it a joy when enter in to those testing experiences.

Usually, we only rejoice about trials when they are over. However, we are told that we are to look at trials in such a way that we can rejoice, even in the face of difficulties.

Turn and read Exodus 17:8-16

Exodus 17:8-16

⁸ Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. ⁹ And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. ¹⁰ So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹ And it came to pass,

when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. ¹²

But Moses' hands *were* heavy; and they took a stone, and put *it* under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. ¹³ And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. ¹⁴ And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this *for* a memorial in a book, and rehearse *it* in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. ¹⁵ And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi: ¹⁶ For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn *that* the LORD *will have* war with Amalek from generation to generation.

Note:

1. THEY LEARNED THAT A TRIAL OFTEN FOLLOWS A VICTORY

Note the verses that precede these that we just read.

Exodus 17:1-7

¹ *And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink. ² Wherefore the people did chide*

with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD? ³ And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? ⁴ And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. ⁵ And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. ⁶ Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷ And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?

The children of Israel had just been blessed by the miracle of water from the rock.

If you feel like the devil always gets you right after something good has happened you are in good company.

Not only did “They Learn That a Trial Often Follows a Victory” but also:

2. THEY LEARNED THAT THEY COULD DEPEND ON GOD IN BATTLE

While most of us will never go to battle, everyday life can be difficult. By their nature balancing friendships, finances and family etc can be difficult. Some days you feel like you are in a war balancing everything. This is where prayer is essential.

Moses had learned that he didn't need to worry or fret when confronted by the enemy, he needed to pray. By faith he immediately put a plan in motion that would give Israel victory involving prayer and practical action.

Exodus 17:9

⁹ And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.

Not only did “They Learn That a Trial Often Follows a Victory” and “They Could Depend Upon God in the Battle” but also:

3. THEY LEARNED THE VALUE OF PRAYER

Exodus 17:11

¹¹ *And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.*

When Moses held up his hands to the Lord, he revealed his dependence on God and his faith in Him.

That day the people learned that strength and victory was found only in a CONTINUOUS drawing to God and faith in Him.

When Moses' prayer ceased, the flow of divine power ceased.

It is the same today. If we fail to call upon God daily in prayer, then God's blessings will begin to cease flowing toward us.

Our only assurance of victory lies in continually drawing near to God through Christ for help. It should be a regular part of any Christian home to pray for peace and prosperity for your family members. Because peace and prosperity come from God not from our own efforts.

Not only did “They Learn That a Trial Often Follows a Victory” and “They Could Depend Upon God in the Battle” The Value of Prayer” but also:

4. THEY LEARNED THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER

Exodus 17:12

¹² But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

We too should always be praying for one another.