

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



“What the Pressure Can Produce”

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): James/Jacob 1:12-18; Deut. 7:9; Deut. 8:11-18; Matt. 5:10-12; Dan. 12:8-13; Rev. 2:9; Rev. 3:8-11; Rev. 3:17; Jer. 17:9-10

There are moments when life squeezes us, and what comes out of us can be surprising. Sometimes pressure brings out faithfulness, patience, and a deeper love for the Lord. But sometimes pressure reveals anger, selfishness, fear, pride, resentment, or cravings that had been hidden under the surface. The trial may be the circumstance around us, but the deeper issue is what the trial exposes within us.

That is where James, or Jacob, takes us in Jas. 1:12-18. He has already told us to ask God for wisdom in the midst of trials. Now he shows us what pressure can produce. It can produce endurance that is proven and crowned with life. It can expose desires that conceive sin and bring forth death. Or, as we receive what comes from above, the Father of lights can bring forth new life in us by His word of truth.

1. PRESSURE CAN PRODUCE ENDURANCE

James says, *“Blessed is the man who endures trials, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to those who love Him”* (Jas. 1:12). The word “blessed” here is not merely about feeling happy. It has to do with being rightly related to God. Blessed is the one who stands under the test, who remains steady under the pressure, who does not let the trial pull him away from loving the Lord.

This is not just enduring for the sake of enduring. The end of the verse tells us what is at the heart of it: love. The crown of life is promised to those who love Him. So the pressure tests more than our strength; it reveals the direction of our love. Will I keep loving Him when I do not understand? Will I keep trusting Him when I am tired? Will I keep walking in His way when another path looks easier? Blessed is the one who comes through the fire proven, still loving Him, still standing, still His.

2. PRESSURE CAN PRODUCE WHAT OUR CRAVINGS CONCEIVE

James continues, *“Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am being tempted by God’—for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself tempts no one”* (Jas. 1:13). At first, this can be confusing because Scripture *does* speak of God testing His people. He tested Abraham. He tested Israel in the wilderness. But James is making an important distinction. God may allow the test, and He may allow the fire to bring what is in us to the surface, but the temptation toward evil does not come from Him.

James says, *“But each one is tempted when he is dragged away and enticed by his own desire. Then when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is full grown, it brings forth death”* (Jas. 1:14-15). So when the pressure squeezes me and selfishness

comes out, I do not get to blame that on God. That came from somewhere else. It came from my own cravings, my own desires, my own flesh. The pressure did not create the craving, but it revealed it. And if that craving is allowed to conceive, it gives birth to sin; and when sin matures, it brings forth death.

3. PRESSURE CAN PRODUCE NEW LIFE FROM THE FATHER OF LIGHTS

James then says, *“Do not be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow”* (Jas. 1:16–17). In other words, do not be led astray about the source. The evil that comes out of me is not from God. The selfish craving that leads to sin and death is not from Him. But every gift that is good, every gift that leads to maturity and completion, every gift that forms us into His likeness, comes from above.

And then James gives the contrast: *“By His will, He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all He created”* (Jas. 1:18). In verse 15, sin brings forth death. But in verse 18, the Father brings us forth by the word of truth. Sin gives birth to death, but God gives birth to newness. So the pressure does not have to end with what my cravings produce. If I bring what is revealed into the light, the Father of lights can bring forth something new in me. He can make me a kind of firstfruits, a beginning picture of His restoration, His new creation, and His life.

CONCLUSION

So when you are under pressure, do not only ask, “How do I get out of this?” Ask, “Lord, what is this producing in me?” Or maybe even more honestly, “Lord, what is this revealing in me?” If the pressure is producing endurance, then keep standing. Keep loving Him. Keep trusting Him. Keep asking for wisdom from above. Let the Lord bring you through the fire proven, steady, and faithful.

But if the pressure has revealed cravings, selfishness, anger, resentment, pride, despair, or unbelief, do not hide it and do not blame God for it. Bring it to Him. Today, let the Father of lights deal with what the pressure has exposed. Come before Him and say, “Lord, I do not want my desires to conceive sin and bring forth death. I want Your word of truth to bring forth life in me. Make me new. Make me steady. Bring me through this pressure still loving You.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. In Jas. 1:12, what does it mean to endure trials rather than simply survive them?
2. Why do you think James connects enduring the test with loving the Lord?
3. James says desire can conceive and give birth to sin. What does that image teach us about how sin develops in the heart?
4. In modern life, what kinds of pressure tend to squeeze out what is really inside us—family conflict, financial stress, success, social media, work pressure, disappointment, or something else?
5. What is one area where you need to ask the Father of lights to bring forth new life by His word of truth?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Father of lights, thank You that every good and perfect gift comes from You. Thank You that there is no darkness in You, no shifting shadow, and no evil intent toward us. When we are under pressure, give us wisdom from above. Help us to endure the test, to stand steady, and to keep loving You.

Lord, when pressure reveals cravings in us that lead us away from You, bring them into the light. Do not let sin bring forth death in us. By Your word of truth, bring forth new life. Make us a kind of firstfruits of Your new creation, formed in the likeness of Messiah Yeshua.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.