

## The Book Of James (Part 7) February 7, 2026

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.cornerfringe.com/media/x2bh6jb/part-7>

\*Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is **not verbatim**. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document be printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliteration into the English alphabet. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.

### The Rod of Correction

This teaching by **Pastor Daniel Joseph of Corner Fringe Ministries** expounds on James 1:2–3, urging believers to “count it all joy” when facing trials by discerning the **source and purpose** of suffering. Daniel identifies three distinct contexts of tribulation: **persecution because of faith in Yeshua, affliction permitted by God to produce humility and reliance on Him (as seen in Paul’s life), and severe chastening resulting from unrepentant sin**. Drawing extensively from Scripture, Daniel emphasizes that God is deeply personal in affliction—He **sees, hears, knows, and feels** the suffering of His people—and that even the terrifying “rod of correction” is **an act of divine faithfulness** meant to lead to **repentance and restoration**. Ultimately, the teaching calls believers to self-examination, wholehearted obedience, and trust in God’s love, affirming that enduring trials with right understanding produces **righteousness, perseverance, and hope**.

Well, Shabbat Shalom, everyone. Hopefully, we get through today's message without any bizarre interruptions. For those of you who don't know what I'm talking about, in the last message, we didn't even get through it. The fire alarm went off. So that means today we have to circle back. We need to finish out the thought, so we've got some cleanup to do. So that's really what's on the docket for today, which, I feel like is putting us a week behind, but that's okay; the Lord can fix this stuff. Amen?

So, with that said, currently we are right here. We're looking at the beginning, the introduction of James's Epistle, and this cry, where he says in James 1:2-3—<sup>2</sup> **My brethren, count it all joy when**—it's not a matter of if, it's only a matter of when—**you fall into various trials** (emphasis added). It's going to happen. There's going to be a point in your life when you will know adversity. You will know the challenges of this life. You will know trial. You will know tribulation, and James is concerned. How do you respond? What is the response? The response is that you are to count it all joy. That's never going to happen unless you have clarity, if you have revelation. <sup>3</sup> **knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience**.

One of the things, really, the whole basis of the last message, was bringing to the table the reality that there are three explicit contexts by which you're going to experience this. And having the discernment and distinction between these different contexts is going to be absolutely critical. And yes, it will affect your response.

The first one that we brought to the table was this. You're going to know trial and tribulation because of your faith. And I just want to stop here. Faith in the name of the Messiah, Yeshua. Faith that you confess that He is your mediator of the New Covenant. Faith that says He is the confession; He is (Hebrews 3:1) the **High Priest of my confession**. Faith that says He is the King—(John 1:49) the **King of Israel**, (Matthew 27:11) the **King of the Jews**, and (Revelation 19:16) the **King of all kings** and the **Lord of all lords**. Faith that says He is (Mark 2:28) the **Lord of the Sabbath**. Faith that declares He is (John 8:58) the Great **I Am**. Faith that states **before Abraham was, He was**. Faith that actually says He's (Revelation 1:8) **the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End**, the first and the last. Faith that declares that He is (John 1:14) the **Word became flesh**, and that (John 1:1) **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."**

Your confession that He has the power—Yeshua has the power to forgive sins—is going to be offensive to a lost and dying world. All of these confessions are about the name of Yeshua, that is John 14:6— **"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."** It's going to be offensive. It's going to be offensive when you state, "No, it is true; whoever has seen Him has seen God." That is going to be offensive. Yeshua says in Matthew 10:22—**"And you will be hated by all for My name's sake."** You will be hated because of your faith and faithfulness, meaning your obedience and your allegiance to the Holy Word of God.

When you go out and just live this document, when you live His Word, when you walk in His commandments, when you keep His laws. To a lost, dying, and deceived world, they're going to be offended. They're going to be offended when you take the position that abortion is murder. They're going to be offended when you say, "Well, gay marriage is prohibited. It's an abomination to the Lord God." Unfortunately, we even find that you're going to offend fellow Christians when you say, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Your obedience to the commandments of God is going to rub people the wrong way, and Yeshua tells us why in John 7:7—**The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil.**

When you take on the righteousness of the Lord through faith in Yeshua and through your willingness to submit to His Holy Word, you're in for a surprise. The persecution will come. The hatred you will know. And it's in that moment that I want you to remember something; in fact, this is so critical, it's what's going to give you the strength to actually endure it. And that is Isaiah 63:9—**In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His Presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old** (emphasis added).

Some of the most life-giving words you will ever know are in the thick of it. When you're here, you know, we can talk about it. We can talk all we want about persecution; it doesn't do it justice until you get there. And what I'm telling you right now—these are words of life. This is what's going to give you strength to endure what you're going to experience, to endure things you've never endured before. You're going to have to draw from this life that in all your afflictions, He is afflicted. It's personal for Yeshua.

I think of Acts Chapter 9, and we have Saul making his way to Damascus to lay waste to the Messianic Jews. There's a movement growing among Jews calling upon the name of Yeshua of Nazareth and being saved, and Saul isn't going to have it. He wants to gut the church right out of Judaism. So, he makes his way to Damascus, and the Lord meets him on the way. His glory has shone, knocking him off his animal. And Yeshua says (Acts 9:4), **"Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"** He doesn't say, "Why are you persecuting My disciples," even though that's legitimate. He doesn't say, "Why are you persecuting My

church?" He says, "**Why are you persecuting Me?**" Do you understand how personal a thing this is to the Lord? That the hardship, the heartache, the adversity, the trials, and the tribulation that you're going to go through, He knows, and He feels them. Now that, for me, is life; that is a life-giving strength.

To further put this into context, I want to take you back to the Torah. Exodus 2:23— **Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage.** Exodus 3:7— **And the LORD said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows"** (emphasis added).

He sees, He hears, He knows, and He feels. That, for me, is life in that moment. And all this time He has seen, He has known, He has heard, He has felt, and Israel didn't even know. They had no clue. But God sends two prophets, which is very prophetically significant when you read Revelation, Chapter 11. He sends two prophets to convey to His people that He is coming. He is coming, and He is going to deliver them, and He is going to bring them into their land. He's going to redeem them from this bondage, from this affliction. He's going to take the pain and sorrow away.

This is the message of these two prophets. And I think of that; that's the message today. Jesus is coming soon. And the pain and the sorrow and the hatred and the lawlessness and everything that we see that is absolutely abhorrent, everything that is painful. He's coming to wipe away every tear. He's coming to take us away from this. And Yeshua says, "He is coming quickly." And so, we get this picture of the end times here.

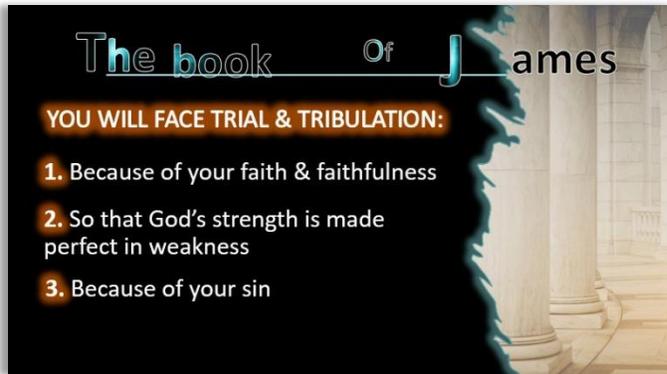
Listen to how they respond when they bring the Word of the Lord, the promises of the Lord, to them. Exodus 4:31— **So the people believed; listen to this: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel and that He had looked on their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshiped** (emphasis added). Did you see the moment they were enlightened with the reality that He cares, He sees, He knows, He hears, and He feels? The moment they heard that, they got strength, and what did they do? They worshiped Him.

So, when it is time, this war becomes more and more intense over whether you are going to worship the beast or you are going to worship Yeshua. You're going to need this information. You're going to need to know, and not just know it intellectually; you will have to believe that He loves you. You will have to believe that He sees, He hears, and He knows. In all your affliction and tribulation, He is there.

It says in Psalm 22:24—**For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted.** He doesn't despise it. He doesn't reject it. He doesn't abandon you. In those moments, be absolutely certain about this. In the moments when this happens and you're experiencing things in your life you have never experienced before, the enemy is going to be telling you every step of the way, He doesn't care. He doesn't love you, and He's left you; that's why you're going through this. Don't believe it. He sees, He hears, He knows, and He feels. In your affliction, He will be afflicted. It's very personal to Him. So personal that when you read the words of David in Psalm 56:8, David talks about his tears and how God collects them in a bottle. Not a tear is falling to the ground, which you will cry that the Lord doesn't hold His hands out and grab hold of. That is an amazing thing to me. This is a completely different perspective than what Satan wants you to have.

And so, as we look at this in Proverbs 12:25, **Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression.** Where does despair come from? Fear and anxiety. It leads to total depression, and depression leads you to give up—

but a good word makes it glad. That's what I'm sharing with you today—the good word lest this happen. Lest the anxiety, the fear, and the sheer terror of the things that are coming upon the earth take you out lest you be discouraged.



And so, looking at point number one, context number one, you will face trial and tribulation because of your faith and your faithfulness. Number two, we looked at the life of Paul in 2 Corinthians and how a demon was sent to afflict him. And he asked for it to be taken, and the Lord said, "No, it stays." And when Paul found out why, it changed everything. When he finds out it's so that the power of Christ may continue to rest on him and he might not become puffed up and exalted, the Spirit of God is

going to leave him in that context. Paul actually counted it all joy. He rejoiced in the affliction. Oh, it matters that you have discernment in the context of why you are being afflicted. You need to know.

The third reason we brought up, and this is where we left off, is because of sin. This is so different, this context. Very, very different from the first two. You will know trial, you will know tribulation, and you will know adversity when you step off the straight and narrow. God will see to it Himself. And we looked at Psalm, Chapter 39, and we'll begin here. David says in Psalm 39:10-11, <sup>10</sup> "Remove Your plague from me; I am consumed by the blow of Your hand." This is important: David recognized that the context of his suffering and tribulation was the hand of the Lord. But then he says this: <sup>11</sup> "When with rebukes You correct man for iniquity, You make his beauty melt away like a moth; surely every man is vapor. Selah." (Emphasis added). It's because of sin. I love this statement, "You make his beauty melt away like a moth"—pure poetry. In fact, what I would call this is euphemistic poetry.

This is really code for the Lord has hurled you into an unimaginable abyss of pain and suffering, the likes of which you are experiencing things never experienced before in your life. That's a little different than this very euphemistic, poetic way to lay this out. In fact, let me say this. I don't know how many times I've read the Bible at this point, but it's many. I spend every day in the Word, and I can tell you some of the scariest times in the Bible, and may I say in history, are those times that the Lord opens up the rod of correction on His people.

There are times that I am actually reading the text, and I don't want to believe it's possible. I don't want to believe Leviticus Chapter 26, which says, "Hey, if you're going to rebel against Me, you're going to walk away from Me; you entered into a covenant with Me. I am going to afflict you seven times more. I will send the beast, and it'll lay waste to your family. If you still don't want to listen to Me, guess what I'm going to do? I'm going to send such a famine that you will eat your young. You will eat the flesh of your children."

So, when I am telling you that God opens up the rod of correction, it's not hyperbole. It's the scariest part in Scripture ever. Unimaginable things happen when the Lord's hand comes out against His people with the rod of correction. God doesn't play. This is not where He's going to put you in a little time-out. We're not talking on this level. We're talking about your world getting rocked so intensely that it flips your world upside down in a day. It's terrifying.

To put this into context, I want to take you to the prophet Jeremiah, who has this unique way of instilling the fear of God in us. And it begins in Jeremiah 30:12—**"For thus says the LORD:** just to be clear, it is the LORD Himself talking here. And what does the LORD Himself say? The people He is addressing His people, the people of the covenant. **'Your affliction is incurable, your wound is severe** (emphasis added). The last thing that we want to be confronted with is us being hurled into a situation where there's no cure. If you want to know fear and sheer terror, this is it. Your wound isn't curable.

He goes on and says in Jeremiah 30:13, **There is no one to plead your cause, that you may be bound up; you have no healing medicines** (emphasis added). You know, you think about those moments where a person goes to the physician to see the doctor; there are some things they're medically going through. And the doctor says, "There is nothing we can do for you." The amount of fear and terror and hopelessness that comes in that moment, right in that moment, you can barely swallow. And even when you hear these stories of this happening, you can feel the residue coming off of this. Everywhere they look, they can scour the earth; they can go to the greatest physicians on the planet, and they're going to tell them the same thing. I can't help you. Do you understand the magnitude of this situation—that no matter who you go to, no matter who you talk to on planet Earth, nobody's going to help you? Your wound is incurable. Why?

Because the LORD Himself has wounded you. Jeremiah 30:14— **For I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of your iniquities, because your sins have increased** (emphasis added). You're in a state of rebellion where you keep turning your back on God. That's when God steps in with the rod of correction. That's when things get really, really serious in your world.

And the LORD says this in Jeremiah 30:15—**Why do you cry about your affliction? Your sorrow is incurable** (emphasis added). This is fascinating to me because He began by stating, **"Your affliction is incurable."** When you're dealing with something, you're in a situation in which there is no help, and there is no cure. What follows? Horrific sorrow, horrific despair, of which the LORD says, "There'll be no cure for that." No cure, no restoration for that. Why? Continuing in Jeremiah 30:15—**Because of the multitude of your iniquities, because your sins have increased, I have done these things to you** (emphasis added). It's talking about refusing to put on the yoke of Yeshua. He says (Matthew 11:29-30), **"Take my yoke upon you... For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."** When you reject that, take these words in Jeremiah to heart and what he is saying.

We read in Psalm 107:10-12—<sup>10</sup> **Those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, bound in affliction and irons—<sup>11</sup> because they rebelled against the words of God.** I mean, we're talking bound in irons; there's no one that can set them free. This is the imagery that's being conveyed. Because they rebelled against the words of God **and despised the counsel of the Most High,** <sup>12</sup> **Therefore He brought down their heart with labor; they fell down, and there was none to help** (emphasis added). The scariest environment imaginable is when you get put in a situation, and there's no one who can help you. But is there no hope? Well, here's the beauty of it. God has this very persuasive way of closing every door of hope on earth so that you go back to Him. And once you go vertical and cry out to Him, this is what we read. Psalm 107:13— **Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses.** There are situations you may face where there is no cure for whatever situation you're in. There is hope. The idea is to turn back. Repent. Turn back to the Lord. Give up the things of the world. It's not worth it.

Do you want to know why the Lord gets so serious with the rod of correction, absolutely terrifying us? Because He knows what's at stake. Your soul is on the line of being eternally lost. I understand why the Lord would go to such an extreme, where we would experience things we've never experienced before. Terrifying. The idea is to bring us home. The Lord is **not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance** (2 Peter 3:9). That's the heart of the Lord, so He closes every door until we look up. I think of Jeremiah, chapter three. He cries out to His people in Jeremiah 3:22— **“Return, you backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.”** Those things that are incurable will be cured if you do as God says, if you return to the LORD.

Building on this, Isaiah 42:24 says, **Who gave Jacob for plunder, and Israel to the robbers? Was it not the LORD, He against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in His ways, nor were they obedient to His law** (emphasis added). This is the Lord giving His people over to their enemies. Arguably, the two most notable moments in history, recorded history, are the destruction of the First Temple and the destruction of the Second Temple.

In 586 BC, God brought in this pagan nation, known as Babylon. When you actually get back in the historical context, you can see how disturbing this would be for Israel in those days. Pagan heathens that worship demons came in and burned the city of the God of Israel to the ground, burning the Holy Temple where worship to the one true God was made. They burned it to the ground. And why did God allow that? Why did God Himself call Nebuchadnezzar to come in and destroy this? All you need to do is read Jeremiah Chapter 7, and it tells you they wouldn't keep His law. They would not submit to His law, and He literally starts going down the list of the Ten Commandments. But yet, they would go into the temple; they would lift their hands up, they would sing the songs, and they would offer the sacrifices to Yahweh, but they wouldn't keep His law. And because they would not return and repent, God laid waste to His temple.

Well, this gets really interesting because we fast forward to the New Testament, and here we are now at the Second Temple, and now another pagan nation, which has perfect symmetry to that of Babylon, Rome, comes in and takes them down. It totally burns the city to the ground, burns the temple to the ground, and strips it bare of its glory. And here's what's fascinating. Yeshua prophesied it in Luke Chapter 19. He said, "Here's the deal. The time is coming when they're going to surround you. Your enemies are going to surround you, and they're going to (Luke 19:44) **level you, and your children within you, to the ground.**" Why? Yeshua said, **“Because you did not know the time of your visitation.”** They rejected the Messiah.

Now, you can't make this stuff up. I go back to the First Temple, and what I see is that the temple was destroyed because they didn't keep the commandments of God. Then I go to the New Testament with the Second Temple, and it's destroyed because they didn't have the testimony of Yeshua. That is the entire theme of Revelation. Revelation 14:12— **Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.** If you don't have this, you will know the rod of correction. You will know the judgment of God.

Isaiah 42:25—**Therefore He has poured on him the fury of His anger and the strength of battle; it has set him on fire all around, yet he did not know; and it burned him, yet he did not take it to heart** (emphasis added). This is what I'm trying to tell you: as we look at the different contexts by which you will suffer trial and tribulation, you need to know why. And in this situation, Israel did not acknowledge, "Well, wait a second. This is a time for self-introspection. How am I doing with the Lord?"

Paul says in 2 Corinthians 13:5, **“Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.”** How do I do that? I have to go back to the Word. Only the Word of God can actually flesh out the deception of my heart and the deception of my mind. I need to go to the Word and say, "How am I doing, Lord?" And as I go through, dude, He will lay waste to my delusions. The Word of God will purge out the leaven that the enemy has sown in your heart. That's the power of the Word; it is (Hebrews 4:12) **“living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.”** Amen?

Solomon builds on this in Proverbs 15:31—**The ear that hears the rebukes of life will abide among the wise.** Meaning, when you start experiencing some serious adversity in this life, step back and examine yourself. Am I off? Do I need—is there something in my life where I've drifted off and I've drifted away from the Lord? But I need to come back, and I need to repent because if you do not make this distinction, the next step is going to get way worse. We have to test ourselves.

In the Book of Nehemiah, Nehemiah says in Nehemiah 9:29, **“And”** You, LORD, **“testified against them, that You might bring them back to Your law”** (emphasis added). You know, what is the job of a shepherd? One of the things that I did when I was down in Texas was speak to the shepherds. The shepherds have a job. Nehemiah did his job. The prophets did their job. It doesn't always mean the people responded in a godly way. But true prophets of God, true shepherds, go forth and bring you back to Yeshua; they don't bring you to themselves. They certainly don't bring you to the things of the world. True shepherds bring you back to Yeshua, back to His law. They turn you back to the Word and say, "This is the way; walk in it. This is the light."

Unfortunately, what we read here as we continue Nehemiah 9:29-30 is that <sup>29</sup> **“Yet they acted proudly, and did not heed Your commandments, but sinned against Your judgments, 'Which if a man does, he shall live by them.' And they shrugged their shoulders, stiffened their necks, and would not hear.** I read this, and I mean, it's chilling because these words are more applicable to this generation right now than ever before. We have people who refuse to hear, and I'm talking about in the church. <sup>30</sup> **Yet for many years You had patience with them, and testified against them. How? By Your Spirit in Your prophets** (emphasis added). In other words, a true message from God isn't man-made. It's not a thing of flesh; it's the Spirit of God flowing through His instruments. That's all it is. It's the Spirit. 2 Peter 1:20-21— <sup>20</sup> **... no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, <sup>21</sup> for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.** It's all the Lord. It's the work of the Lord.

Continuing in Nehemiah 9:30—**Yet they would not listen; therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands** (emphasis added). The most terrifying thing, the last thing—I mean, think about this. Let's put this into context today; we can really appreciate it. If we continue to rebel, the Lord is going to give us into the hands of our enemies. How would you like to see Chinese soldiers coming across this country? How would you like to see Islamic soldiers coming across this country?

Could you imagine just the thought of having Hamas continue to sweep across Israel? Your worst nightmares will come true if you don't turn back. And I'm going to tell you right now, the United States of America, the worst nightmares in this country are going to come true unless it turns itself back. Hear me loud and clear. This is not my opinion; this is the Word of the Lord. When a nation sins against Him by persistent unfaithfulness, we're told the Lord is going to stretch out His hand. And when the Lord stretches out His hands—who's going to help you? No one, no one, can help you but the Lord.

And so, we read in Psalm 119:67—**Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word.** I love the psalmist because he recognizes we're stiff-necked and oftentimes very dumb. We're inclined to be

dumb and stupid and walk away from the path of life. And God has this amazing way of jogging our memory by immediately stopping the rhythm of our lives in a second, and you experience horrible fear and terror, and your situation is incurable. And the idea is to go back to Him. There's hope; you have to go back.

Psalm 119:71—**It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes** (emphasis added). Again, as we talked about in the last message, here's the deal. This is exactly the idea that James is getting across. James 1:2— **... count it all joy when you fall into various trials.** Here the psalmist recognizes, "Man, I had a trial because of my sin, and it was good that the Lord got involved so that He could jog my memory and bring me back home." It's amazing how the Lord can give us perspective very quickly in a way that only He can do.

I love, how we continue in Psalm 119:75—I know, O LORD, that Your judgments are right, **and that in faithfulness You have afflicted me** (emphasis added). Now, you want to take that in because we need to have this perspective in the moment. We need to have this true perspective. It's His faithfulness by which we have been hurled into a situation that is incurable. It's the faithfulness of the Lord. The Lord knows what's at stake.

The writer of Hebrews throws his hat in the ring, and he says in Hebrews 12:5, **And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him"** (emphasis added). Why, pray tell, is the writer of Hebrews concerned about you turning to despise and hate and blame the Lord, getting angry with God in the moment of your tribulation? Because the threat is real. Your natural response is that once you get hurled into the Valley of the Shadow of Death, your wound is incurable. You want to cry, "Oh, why would You do this to me, God?" Why would You do this to me—to take a tone with the Lord, to get angry, to be frustrated with God? There is a real threat.

The writer, in wisdom, is heading this off because the enemy, you better believe, is in the wings just waiting to give you every reason in the book why you should turn your back on God, why you should curse God and die. He was betting against Job. He believed that when Job was hurled into the time of affliction, Job would curse God and die. And instead, Job responds (Job 1:21), **"Blessed be the name of the LORD."** It's just like the psalmist (Psalm 119:75), **"And that in faithfulness You have afflicted me."** You want to be very, very careful as to how you respond. It is the difference between whether you rise or fall in that moment. So he says (Hebrews 12:5), **"My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, and do not be discouraged."**

I can't help but think about what happened to the children of Israel. After everything God did, after everything they saw, they were taken out of Egypt supernaturally by the blood of the Lamb, the sea parting, and being brought into the wilderness. Literally with their own ears, every man, woman, and child heard the thunderous voice of God. It was so terrifying and very real. They said, "Let that not happen ever again, or we'll die." And yet they get up to go take the land that God had promised them, and a bad report comes out and says, "We are not able." Okay, everything God said, I'm going to bring you in. Everything in God's Word says, "You can do this."

But then discouragement came about at the time. Now, keep in mind, the people have been suffering in a barren wasteland of a land filled with serpents and scorpions. There was no natural food growing. There were no trees, no fruit trees, and no wells of water. It's a barren wasteland. And so, it's a culmination of everything coming to its crescendo. And then this negative discouragement comes out.

And do you know how they responded? They said, "The Lord only delivered us out of Egypt because He hates us." He hates us and He wants to kill us. I'm telling you right now, when you get into that moment of affliction where your wound is incurable, the enemy is going to do everything he can to foster that moment where you say the Lord only hates me; He's only brought me this far to kill me, to reject me.

This is the antidote to all of that; it's this: Hebrews 12:6—"**For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.**" (Emphasis added). I'm going to tell you, if you want to find solace in the pain, you want to find comfort in the affliction, and you want to find hope in the despair, you better believe this. This is what sustains every single one of us in the moment. I don't care what your context is. This is what is going to sustain you. You have to receive the love of the Lord. You have to receive the truth that He loves you and that He cares for you.

I am telling you, our salvation hinges upon your faith in the character and in the truth of God. (John 3:16) He loved you so much that **He gave His only begotten Son**. Jeremiah 29:11, I know the plans that I have for you, plans to prosper you, **to give you a future and a hope**. When you're looking down in a situation that is incurable on earth, in the flesh, you need to know God has a plan for you. He only does good. We're told in Psalm 119:68, **You are good, and do good**. That's it. God is good, and He does good; that's our banner in the time of tribulation. It's us receiving the love.

You know, one of the things about being in the pastorate and being a pastor and seeing ministry and seeing the beauty of what God does and seeing the work of the devil. One thing I can tell you across the board, one of the hardest things for humanity to wrap their arms around, is that God loves them. And I'm going to tell you that's what sets you free. The moment you receive the reality and the truth that He loves you, I'm telling you, the bondages will be broken. This is the answer.

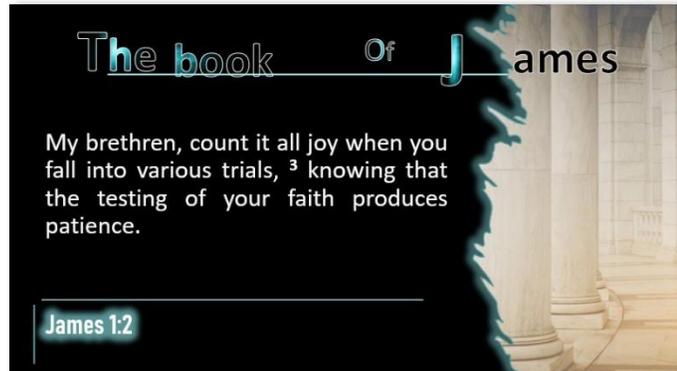
Hebrews 12:7-8—<sup>7</sup> **If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons and daughters; for what son or daughter is there whom a father does not chasten?** If you endure chastening, that means you don't give in to the discouragement in the moment. You don't give in to the lies that God hates you; He doesn't care. He's letting you suffer. He's abandoning you. That means you do not despise the chastening of the Lord. That's what this means. <sup>8</sup> **But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers,** Ooh, boy, that just got applicable. All have become partakers. Well, that would make sense because all have sinned. I wonder how many times we have been totally clueless that God is trying to get our attention because all have become partakers. So, if you are without chastening, **then you are illegitimate and not sons** (emphasis added). We have to let the Lord's work take place in our lives.

And we continue in Hebrews 12:11—**Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; horribly painful, nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it** (emphasis added). It's a training exercise. You being hurled into the Valley of the Shadow of Death, getting your world rocked, having your life flash before your eyes—it's training. It's time to purge the world. It's time to embrace the righteousness of God. And I love what Spurgeon says. He says, "**The Lord gets His best soldiers out of the highlands of affliction.**" The best soldiers come out of there. I can tell you, Ricky, he's right here. God got up into his world, and now he's in the prayer room every Shabbat before service; he never was before. You can see there are moments that God brings certain situations into your life to awaken you out of your sleep, and thanks be to Him for that.

Hebrews 12:12-13—<sup>12</sup> **Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.** It's talking about you when you enter into trial and tribulation. Strengthen your hands that hang down; they're hanging down. This is coming right out of Isaiah, by the way. He's quoting Isaiah. It's literally talking about terror, sheer terror, and fear. You can't lift your hands because of what you're confronted with. Your knees are knocking. And he says this: <sup>13</sup> **and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed** (emphasis added). Do you understand? But rather healed. Make a straight path; that means I have to return to the Word of the Living God, and there is hope. There will be healing.

And so as we look at what James has to say here, right in his introduction, man, there is a lot that we are called to consider. There are specific contexts that we will experience that are very different and that we have to identify and discern because they are going to impact our response.

*[Closing prayer]*



Abba Father, we give You praise and glory for Your goodness, for Your faithfulness, and for the truth of Your Word. Man, that cuts like a knife. The power of this two-edged sword to slice through the deception. Even when truth is mixed with lies, Your Word is so powerful it cuts out every bit of the lie and leaves only the truth. And Lord this is the Word that we need in our hearts. This is the Word that we need so that we might not sin against You.

Lord, as I think about this generation more than ever, we need to have the reality and the truth of how to respond to trial and tribulation. As things get more and more intense against believers, against Christians throughout the world, Lord, give us the strength to respond with humility and in faith, that we may lay it all out, that we may surrender all and leave nothing of the world left.

I pray that this message, Lord, will challenge those people who have one foot in the world to take that foot out now. That they would test themselves, that they would examine themselves, whether they're in the faith. And cut those strings of the world that have been controlling them, dictating their lives, who have not been spending time with You, but ignoring You as they spend time with the world. They're not spending time in prayer. They're not spending time in Your Word. Lord, I pray for them that You would radically change their experience so that they will not spend another day on this earth without seeking first the Kingdom of God.

And I thank You for Your mercy, Lord. Your mercy is so good. The holy name of Yeshua is a name that saves, and we will cast down every high thing that exalts itself against His holy name. Everything that exalts itself against the holy Word of God, we will cast it down. And we will do this through the power of Your might, through the power of Your Spirit. We pray this in Yeshua's mighty name. Amen.

# UNDERSTANDING THE TRIALS OF FAITH

Adversity is a matter of "when," not "if." James 1:2-3 instructs believers to "count it all joy" during trials, but doing so requires discernment to understand which of the three specific spiritual contexts is driving the tribulation.

## The Three Contexts of Trial

 <p><b>FAITH AND FAITHFULNESS</b></p> <p>Persecution arises when your obedience to God's Word offends a lost world.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <th>Source of Trial</th> <th>Primary Biblical Example</th> <th>Spiritual Purpose</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>For the Name's Sake</td> <td>Saul/Paul (Acts 9)</td> <td>Witness and Allegiance</td> </tr> </table>	Source of Trial	Primary Biblical Example	Spiritual Purpose				For the Name's Sake	Saul/Paul (Acts 9)	Witness and Allegiance	 <p><b>PERFECTING STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS</b></p> <p>Some afflictions remain to prevent pride and allow Christ's power to rest on you.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <th>Source of Trial</th> <th>Primary Biblical Example</th> <th>Spiritual Purpose</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>For Humility</td> <td>Paul's Thorn (2 Cor 12)</td> <td>Perfecting Divine Power</td> </tr> </table>	Source of Trial	Primary Biblical Example	Spiritual Purpose				For Humility	Paul's Thorn (2 Cor 12)	Perfecting Divine Power	 <p><b>THE ROD OF CORRECTION</b></p> <p>Trials resulting from sin serve as a terrifying but necessary wake-up call.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <th>Source of Trial</th> <th>Primary Biblical Example</th> <th>Spiritual Purpose</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>For Rebellion</td> <td>Isaiah (Jeremiah 30)</td> <td>Repentance and Return</td> </tr> </table>	Source of Trial	Primary Biblical Example	Spiritual Purpose				For Rebellion	Isaiah (Jeremiah 30)	Repentance and Return
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## THE PATH TO JOYFUL ENDURANCE



**DIVINE EMPATHY IN SUFFERING**

In all your affliction, He is afflicted; God personally feels your heartache.



**DISCIPLINE AS PROOF OF LOVE**

Biblical chastening confirms your status as a legitimate child of God.



**THE NECESSITY OF SELF-EXAMINATION**

Use the Word to test yourself and return to the straight path.