

INTRODUCTION.

TODAY ~ WE BEGIN THE FIRST MAJOR SECTION OF JAMES, ~ 1:2-27.

▶▶ As the outline indicates . . . , ~ this section consists ~ of a collection of proverbs ~ on a wide range of subjects.

▶▶ Again, ~ the format of this paragraph ~ does not have ~ the logical flow of an essay, ~ with a continuous line of argument.

▶▶ We'll be taking the subjects ~ as James presents them.

▶▶ James' overall purpose ~ is to instill ~ correct thinking ~ and right behavior ~ in believers.

THIS A.M., ~ WE'LL BEGIN ~ TO ZERO IN ON ~ VERSES 2-4 ~ OF JAMES, ~ CHAPTER 1.

THE LORD WANT US ~ TO VIEW EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES ~ FROM A BIBLICAL perspective.

▶▶ This is viewing our lives ~ accurately.

▶▶ To look at our lives from a biblical perspective, ~ we must perceive ~ ¶¶

▷▷ the spiritual realities ~ behind ~ each circumstance, ~ each event ~ in our lives.

▶▶ But far too often, ~ we adopt an ~ "under the sun" ~ viewpoint.

▷▷ Ecclesiastes . . . . ⇔⇔ Asaph . . . . ¶¶ 1/10

SO AGAIN, ~ WE MUST PERCEIVE ~ THE SPIRITUAL REALITIES ~ BEHIND ~ EACH circumstance, ~ each event ~ in our lives.

▶▶ And even if we can't identify them, ~ we must trust that ~ 77

▷▷ God is at work, ~ carrying out his good purposes for our lives.

↪↪ Paul not lying. ⇔⇔ And we know ~ that for those who love God ~ all things ~ work together for good, ~ for those who are called according to his purpose.

▶▶ IOW, ~ no matter what, ~ we must have ~ a biblical perspective ~ on our lives.

THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT ~ IN FACING TRIALS OF VARIOUS KINDS.

▶▶ And this ~ is what James deals with ~ in 1:2-4, ~ a biblical perspective on trials.

▷▷ Holding a biblical perspective on trials ~ is the correct way ~ to think about trials.

↪↪ And this correct thinking ~ will lead ~ to right behavior ~ within trials.

▶▶<sup>2</sup> Count it all joy, ~ my brothers ~ [ἀδελφοί], ~ when you meet trials ~ of various kinds, ~ [strange & unexpected] ~ [why:]<sup>3</sup> for you know ~ that the testing of your faith ~ produces steadfastness. ~<sup>4</sup> And let steadfastness ~ [endurance] ~ have its full effect, ~ that you may be perfect ~ [mature] ~ and complete, ~ lacking in nothing.

▶▶ In this, ~ James wants us to see ~ a progression of events ~ in the following pattern.

▶▶ Trials ➤ Testing Of Our Faith ➤ Endurance ➤ Spiritual Maturity.

▷▷ This ~ is the spiritual reality behind trials. ⇔⇔ View through this grid. ↓↓ 2/10

AND ~ IT IS THIS END GOAL, ~ SPIRITUAL MATURITY, ~ THAT IS ~ THE SOURCE ~ of our joy, ~ 77

▶▶not ~ the trial, ~ but ~ what the trial ~ ultimately produces. ⇔⇔ Joy set before him . . . .

▶▶Additionally, ~ this ultimate goal, ~ spiritual maturity ~ will give us motivation ~ to persevere ~ when our faith is tested ~ by trials of various kinds.

▶▶So we see the biblical perspective on trials ~ laid out for us. ⇔⇔ Need to apply it.

PAUL ~ BROADENS THE SCOPE ~ OF CORRECT THINKING ABOUT TRIALS ~ TO INCLUDE ~ all that's in store for us ~ in eternity.

▶▶Rom. 8:18, ~ For I consider ~ that the sufferings of this present time ~ are not worth ~ comparing with the glory ~ that is to be revealed to us.

▶▶2 Cor. 4:16-18, ~ <sup>16</sup> So we do not lose heart. ~~ Though our outer self ~ is wasting away, ~~ our inner self ~ is being renewed day by day. ~~ <sup>17</sup> For this light momentary affliction ~ is preparing for us ~ an eternal weight of glory ~ beyond all comparison, ~ <sup>18</sup> as we look ~ not ~ to the things that are seen ~ but to the things ~ that are unseen. ~~ For the things that are seen ~ are transient, ~~ but the things that are unseen ~ are eternal.

▶▶Hardships are temporary. ⇔⇔ They are not ~ eternal realities.

▷▷And they are easier to bear ~ when put ~ in the perspective of eternity.

▶▶The goal of sp. maturity ~ & the promise of eternity ~ produce joy in present trials.

BACK TO JAMES.

▶▶Now let's begin to look at the details, ~~ in order ~ to get an even better understanding ~ of what James is saying. ⇔⇔ Verse 2 today. 77 3/10

VERSE 2a.

COUNT IT ALL JOY.

▶▶ A state of delight and well being ~ that results ~ from knowing and serving God.

▶▶ TPID, ~ joy ~ is the fruit ~ of a right relationship with God.

TRANSLATED ~~ CONSIDER IT ~ A GREAT JOY.

▶▶ Boiled down, ~ here's James' point.

▷▷ We should look at trials ~ as occasions ~ for great joy.

▶▶ Now, ~ it's important here to understand ~ also what James is not saying.

▷▷ He is not saying ~ trials are to be viewed ~ as occasions ~ 77

↳↳ for no other emotional response ~ except joy, ~ 77

→→ as though grief ~ is never to be ~ experienced ~ or expressed.

▶▶ If James did mean that, ~ he would be contradicting Peter.

CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO 1 PET. 1:6.

▶▶ In this you rejoice, ~ though now for a little while, ~ if necessary, ~ you have been grieved ~ by various trials. 77 4/10

▶▶ The verb form of the word Peter uses for "grieved" ~ means ~ to cause pain, ~ to cause to sorrow, ~ to put to grief.

▷▷ The word expresses ~ not suffering ~ but the mental effect ~ of suffering.

▶▶ Notice ~ Peter acknowledges ~ that trials can cause us ~ mental pain, ~ sorrow, ~ and grief.

▶▶ Notice too, ~ he does not ~ rebuke believers ~ for feeling this way.

▶▶ Observe further, ~ that ~ pain, ~ sorrow, ~ and grief ~ can exist ~ simultaneously ~ with joy ~ in the Christian life.

▶▶ When a person walks with the Lord, ~ the person can continue to rejoice ~ even when troubles come.

▷▷ Jesus spoke ~ of those who could rejoice ~ even when persecuted and killed

↳↳ Matt. 5:11-12, ~ NIV ~ Blessed are you ~ when ~ people insult you, ~ persecute you ~ and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ~ Rejoice and be glad, ~ because great is your reward in heaven, ~ for in the same way ~ they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

▷▷ They left the council ~ rejoicing ~ that God had counted them worthy ~ ¶¶

↳↳ to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus.

BACK TO JAMES.

▶▶ James is telling us ~ we should look at trials ~ as occasions ~ for great joy. ¶¶ 5/10

▶▶ We could express it ~ this way as well.

▷▷ James is telling us ~~ "Look at trials ~ from the bright side, ~ as capable ~ of being turned ~ to our highest good."

▷▷ ① Glass . . . . ⇔⇔ ② Joseph . . . .

▷▷ ③ Should we accept ~ only good from God ~ and not adversity?" ~~ Throughout all this ~ Job did not sin ~ in what he said.

.....  
▶▶ This ~ is looking at trials ~ from God's perspective.

▶▶ We should never ~ consider trials as ~ a punishment, ~ a curse, ~ or ~ a calamity.

▶▶ And ~ we must avoid ~ being like Job's "counselors" ~ when a fellow believer ~ is going through a trial.

### JAMES CONTINUES, ~ VERSE 2b.

### WHEN YOU MEET TRIALS OF VARIOUS KINDS.

▶▶ The Greek word for trials here ~ can refer ~ to internal temptations.

▶▶ The inner temptation ~ is expressed in ~ 1: ~ 13 ~ by the verb form of this word.

▶▶ The context makes clear ~ the term is ~ not used ~ in vs. 2 with this sense.

▶▶ But rather ~ the other primary meaning for the word ~ is used here.

▷▷ I.e., ~ the external trials of daily life ~ that believers encounter. ↯ 6/10

▶▶ The reference cannot be ~ to inner temptations to sin ~ as in 1:13-14, ~ ~ ¶¶

▷▷ since such experiences ~ could not be urged ~ as a ground for rejoicing.

↳↳ Let there be ~ sadness instead of laughter, ~ and gloom instead of joy. (NLT)

▶▶ Furthermore, ~ as we'll see, ~ the word for ~ "meet" ~ brings out ~ ¶¶

▷▷ the externality of the temptation ~ ¶¶

↳↳ in opposition to the internal temptation ~ arising from our evil desires.

### CONTINUING IN VERSE 2b ~ LET'S NOTE THREE OBSERVATIONS.

1<sup>st</sup>, ~ WHEN YOU MEET TRIALS OF VARIOUS KINDS.

▶▶ The Greek verb for ~ meet ~ occurs only twice elsewhere ~ in the New Testament.

▶▶ In Lk. 10:30 (CSB), ~ Jesus used it ~ of the man ~ ¶¶

▷▷ who went down ~ from Jerusalem to Jericho ~ and fell into the hands of robbers.

▷▷ The verb ~ pictures the man ~ as being surrounded by the thieves ~ on all sides, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ with no way of escape, ~ ~ and thus unavoidably ~ falling victim ~ to their assaults.

▶▶ It also occurs ~ in Acts 27:41 ~ of the ship that unexpectedly ~ struck a sand bar ~ and ran aground. ¶¶ 7/10

▶▶ So the idea ~ that James is getting at here is ~ of suddenly ~ finding ourselves ~ 77

▷▷ surrounded ~ by unanticipated difficulties.

▶▶ Trials ~ may be around the next corner.

▷▷ We can seldom anticipate them, ~ which may of course be just as well.

↳↳ At any moment ~ we may meet ~ an old difficulty ~ or ~ a new one.

▶▶ The unexpected nature of trials ~ makes it all the more necessary ~ 77

▷▷ that we should be prepared beforehand ~ with the knowledge ~ of how to react to them.

↳↳ And this ~ is what James is helping us with. ⇔⇔ See his pastor's heart?

2<sup>nd</sup> OBSERVATION FROM VERSE 2b, ~~ TRIALS ARE ~ UNAVOIDABLE.

▶▶ When ~ not if ~ you meet trials of various kinds.

▶▶ 1 Pet. 4:12, ~ 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.

▷▷ Context, ~ persecution, ~ but covers . . . .

▶▶ The implication here ~ is that fiery trials in our lives ~ should be expected, ~ 77

▷▷ not treated ~ as something out of the ordinary. 11 8/10



▶▶ But we do at times ~ act shocked ~ in a way that suggests ~ 77

▷▷ that we think something strange ~ or unusual ~ were happening to us, ~ don't we?

▶▶ We do so ~ because ~ that's what comes ~ naturally to us.

▶▶ We consider fiery trials ~ to be an abnormal state of life ~ that should be avoided ~ 77

▷▷ if at all possible ~ and at all costs.

▶▶ And if they can't be avoided, ~ then they should be dealt with swiftly ~ 77

▷▷ so that normal ~ quote/unquote ~ life can resume.

▶▶ Well, ~ Jesus, ~ Peter, ~ and James have news for us.

▷▷ Fiery trials ~ are ~ the normal state of life ~ for a Christian.

▶▶ Therefore, ~ we should never react to them ~ in a way that suggests ~ 77

▷▷ that we think something abnormal were happening to us.

▶▶ Rather, ~ our reaction should be, ~ 77

▷▷ "Ah, ~ yes, ~ I've been expecting this."

AND THE 3<sup>rd</sup> OBSERVATION FROM VS. 2b. ~~ TRIALS COME ~ IN DIVERSE FORMS.

▶▶ When you meet trials of various kinds. 77 9/10

▶▶ The Greek adjective, ~ translated as ~ of various kinds ~ 77

▷▷ does not describe ~ the great number ~ but ~ the diversity ~ or manifold forms ~ of trials.

▶▶ Original meaning of the adjective was ~ "many colored, ~ variegated," ~ like Joseph's coat of many colors. ⇨⇨ Septuagint . . . .

▷▷ It was used ~ of stones of many colors ~ or ~ of a piece of cloth ~ 77

↳↳ that had been embroidered with many different colors.

▶▶ The adjective, ~ of various kinds ~ thus stresses ~ the great variety ~ of the trials that befall believers.

▶▶ Large, ~ small. ~ Long, ~ brief.

▷▷ The good news is ~ God's grace ~ is sufficient ~ for all varieties of trials.

▶▶ Furthermore, ~ this exhortation leaves ~ no trial ~ out.

▷▷ IOW, ~ we cannot pick and choose ~ which trial we will count as great joy.

▷▷ All trials, ~ no matter the intensity or duration, ~ lead us along the road to spiritual maturity.

↳↳ And that means, ~ we're becoming more and more ~ like Jesus.

→→ And that is certainly ~ reason to rejoice ~ in the midst of trials.

LET'S PRAY . . . . 10/10