

Walking in Faith

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count it all joy
when ye fall into
divers temptations;
Knowing this, that
the trying of your
faith worketh
patience.”*

—James 1:2,3

IN THIS SCRIPTURE, THE Apostle James admonishes us that whenever we are going through very difficult and trying experiences, we must keep in mind the promise that our Heavenly Father is directing our lives. He has a lesson for us in all of the trials of our consecrated life, even as he has in life's blessings.

Throughout this present Gospel Age, our trials are especially designed by our loving Heavenly Father as opportunities for us to grow in grace and knowledge. Sometimes this fact may become obscure, even as the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Rome. He told them, “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” (Rom. 8:18) Therefore, “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit.”—I Thess. 5:18,19

PATIENCE

When we accept the terms of our consecration to God, we begin our walk in newness of life. However,

we must be faithful to our covenant of sacrifice if we are to receive the wonderful promises of being a part of “The Christ” in his future kingdom. Each of us must be rightly exercised by the trials that are permitted by God’s grace to develop in us the graces of the Holy Spirit. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”—Rev. 2:10

In his epistle, James spoke further concerning the development of our faith, and that it is a life-long work of patient endurance. He wrote, “Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.”—James 1:4-6

Further to this, he also stated, “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.”—vss. 12,13

CONSECRATION

Consecration applies to all of those who offer themselves as a willing sacrifice to God during this present Gospel Age. Paul thus admonishes, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye

transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”—Rom. 12:1,2

When we give our hearts to the Heavenly Father, and present our sacrificial life to him, our spiritual priorities must be established. We will then learn how to follow the Lord’s leadings, and how we may carry out our consecration even unto death. We will be continuously tested to determine whether we are truly committed to God.

In connection with God’s providence with the children of Israel, we may relate their experiences to our own. We read, “The LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.” (Deut. 13:3) We should not be surprised when we are faced with a trying experience which we do not fully understand. We are being lead by the Holy Spirit of God and do not always know what his ultimate purpose may be. God’s ways are higher than our ways. “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!”—Rom. 11:33

“MIND OF THE SPIRIT”

In Paul’s letter to the brethren at Rome, he explained to them, “We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with

groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”—Rom. 8:24-28

A human parent might withhold something his child wants because he knows that at this early stage of his life it would hurt the child’s development or character. The Heavenly Father may sometimes do the same thing concerning his children. He may deny us something that we want because he knows it might damage us at that particular point in our consecrated life and development as New Creatures in Christ Jesus.

Our faith should realize God’s overruling providence even in life’s disappointments and trying circumstances. If we understood the divine working in every detail of our consecrated walk in newness of life, we would have no need for faith. When we cannot understand all of his ways, and yet try to live close to him and follow his commandments, we learn to trust him and to leave all matters in his loving hands.

A MAN OF FAITH

One of the most outstanding examples of faith recorded in the Scriptures is found in the life of Abraham, who has been called the father of the faithful. He walked with God for long periods of time when he could not understand everything that was happening to him. He was about seventy-five years old when the Covenant was ratified with

him at Haran, prior to his entering Canaan. He was promised that it would be through him that all the families of the earth would be blessed. It is recorded, "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."—Gen. 22:17,18

Abraham and his wife Sarah were of advanced age and must have wondered how this miracle would take place, but they learned that the judgments of God are unsearchable and his ways past finding out. However, as the father of the faithful, he kept his faith and followed God even when he could not trace him. Finally, God informed him that he was to become a father and that Sarah would be the mother. From the scriptural record, we read, "Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?"—Gen. 17:17

KEEPING THE FAITH

We, who are now living in the closing years of this present Gospel Age, must also keep our faith in God, even when the answers to perplexing problems are not apparent. We must remember that God is fitting the experiences and circumstances of our consecrated life into a complete picture which will only be fully seen when he is ready to reveal it.

If we have prayed and worried over our lack of understanding of what the Lord is accomplishing in our lives, we should not be discouraged if an answer to our prayer is not immediately forthcoming. Abraham had to wait twenty-five years from the time the promise was first made to him before he understood how God would fulfill it. Let us also trust that God is indeed working out great things in our lives in every experience of our consecrated walk.

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