

Doers of the Word

Key Verse: “*Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*”

—James 1:22

Selected Scripture:

James 1

ALTHOUGH THIS EPISTLE

is addressed to the twelve tribes of Israel abroad, by identifying himself as a servant of God and the Lord Jesus, the Apostle James sets forth themes that apply to Christians throughout the Gospel Age.—James 1:1

He begins with an exhortation to rejoice if we have trials since they are permitted to test our faith in God. If we are properly exercised, they will assist in the development of patient endurance. This is required by all who would desire our Heavenly Father’s approval. “Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”—vss. 2-4

“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. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.”—vss. 5-7

As his servants, God will be pleased to give us increased wisdom if we approach him with reverence, and believe that our prayers will be answered.

Trials may stem from discouragement caused by

seemingly undesirable circumstances. Those of lowly station should rejoice in the spiritual blessings received because they have been accepted as followers of the Master. “Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted.”—vs. 9

“Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.” (Jer. 9:23,24) Any trial that weans the believer’s affections away from the desire for earthly prosperity may prove to be a great blessing if it enhances increased confidence and trust in God.—James 1:10,11

Temptations are often permitted by the Heavenly Father to come upon believers. Christians need to manifest cheerful endurance as an element of character which is a prerequisite for attaining eternal life. Unholy temptations originate from a source other than God who never entices anyone to commit sin.—vss. 12-15

A deception that is sometimes found among members of fallen humanity is that of attempting to blame the Creator for their misfortunes. He is the “Father of lights,” the author of all that is righteous as well as pure and the one who has opened our eyes of spiritual understanding. His unchanging attributes of wisdom, justice, love, and power make it impossible for him to deny himself or veer from his purpose of always providing what will be best for our eternal good.—vss. 16,17

Our Key Verse asserts that God requires that we not merely hear his word but that we practice its precepts and principles as part of a transformation that will produce the fruits of righteousness in our lives. If we obey God, we will become associates of Jesus Christ in blessing mankind when his kingdom is established. ■