

TRIALS AND THEIR OBJECTS

1. WHAT does the apostle Peter say concerning the trials through which every believer must pass?

“Beloved, *think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*” **1Peter 4:12, 13.**

2. How important is the trial of our faith?

“That the trial of your faith, *being much more precious than of gold that perisheth*, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” **1Peter 1:7.**

NOTES — “When David was fleeing through the wilderness, pursued by his own son, he was being prepared to become the sweet singer of Israel. The pit and the dungeon were the best schools at which Joseph ever graduated. The hurricane that upset the tent and killed Job’s children prepared the man of Uz to write the magnificent poem that has astonished the ages. There is no way to get the wheat out of the straw but to thresh it out. There is no way to purify the gold but to burn it.” *Talmage’s “One Thousand Gems,” page 83.*

Nothing “happens” to the Christian. Everything that enters his life is sent or permitted to come by an all-wise and all-loving Heavenly Father, and is designed for the perfection of character, and the fitting up and the enlargement of capacity for service. The rocks and rough places on the Mountainside are the things we climb on. Even failures, if taken rightly, may become stepping-stones to higher ground.

3. What reason did Paul give for glorying in tribulations?

“We glory in tribulations also: *knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*” **Romans 5:3–5.**

4. What, according to the prophecy of Daniel, was to befall the people of God down through the ages?

“And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: *yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.*” **Daniel 11:33.**

5. Why was this to be?

“And some of them of understanding shall fall, *to try them, and to purge, and to make them white,* even to the time of the end.” **Verse 35.**

6. Looking forward to the conflicts through which His followers must pass, what cheering message did Christ send them through the revelator?

“*Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; . . . be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. . . . He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.*” **Revelation 2:10, 11.** See studies on “The Seven Churches,” and “The Lord’s Great Prophecy.”

7. What description does Paul give of the sufferings endured by some of God’s people in former ages?

“Others were *tortured*, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of *cruel mockings* and *scourgings*, yea, moreover of *bonds* and *imprisonment*: they were *stoned*, they were *sawn asunder*, were *tempted*, were *slain with the sword*: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) *they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.*” **Hebrews 11:35–38.**

8. How many does Paul say will suffer persecution?

“Yea, and *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*” **2Timothy 3:12.**

9. Does God willingly afflict the children of men?

“For the Lord will not cast off forever: but though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His

mercies. *For He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.*” **Lamentations 3:31–33.**

10. Why, then, does God permit the chastening rod to fall?

“For they [parents] verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He *for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness.*” **Hebrews 12:10.**

11. Referring to Peter’s coming sore trial, for what did Christ say He had prayed?

“Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, *that thy faith fail not.*” **Luke 22:31, 32.**

12. What cheering promise is made to those who endure the trials and temptations of this life?

“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.” **James 1:12.**

NOTE — Says a Christian writer: “Our sorrows do not spring out of the ground. God ‘doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.’ When He permits trials and afflictions, it is ‘for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness.’ If received in faith, the trial that seems so bitter and hard to bear will prove a blessing. The cruel blow that blights the joys of earth will be the means of turning our eyes to heaven. How many there are who would never have known Jesus had not sorrow led them to seek comfort in Him! The trials of life are God’s workmen, to remove the impurities and roughness from our character. Their hewing, squaring, and chiseling, and their burnishing and polishing, is a painful process. It is hard to be pressed down to the grinding-wheel. But the stone is brought forth prepared to fill its place in the heavenly temple.”

THERE’S never a night but is followed by day,
And the darkest to dawn must give place:
There’s never a sorrow that crosses our way
But is sent with a message of grace.
It comes to the peasant, it comes to the king,
It comes in our pleasures and pain;

It comes from the Father of mercies, to bring
To His fold His own stray ones again.
O soul! is thy burden too heavy to bear?
Does the load seem too weighty for one?
There's a Helper at hand all thy sorrows to share,
'Tis thy Father's own well-beloved Son.
Then cast every burden on Jesus thy Lord,
And thy troubles will quickly depart;
Make every sweet promise in His precious Word
An entrance to His loving heart.

REV. JOHN WILLIAMS.