

# BLESSINGS OF TEMPTATION

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There are two kinds of trouble in the world. There are the temptations that Christians have to meet, and then there is the trouble that the world has. But the troubles of the world usually end in disaster, calamity and death, but the temptations and trials that the Christian meets with in God's way, always bring rich blessings of every kind. They will prove to be a stepping-stone to greater blessing, victory and a knowledge of God that we desire in our Christian life.

Temptation is one of the things that comes nearest to the heart of a real Christian. Of all the things that are trying, it is the temptations we meet with in the Christian life. God will enable us, as we are able to bear it, to prove it to the utmost and receive the fullness of blessing He has for us, and to be really and truly prepared for the coming of Jesus, because it is only as we go through the temptations and meet them in God's way that we will be ready for eternal life.

In James 1:12 it says, "*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.*"

The real thought of that verse is, "Blessed is the man who goes through his trials successfully, for when he has stood every test, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord will give to all those who love Him."

That is of the utmost importance and something we all have to contend with every day. A growing Christian is having some manifestation of Satan's opposition every day. He will be trying to put discouraging thoughts into their minds to make them downhearted and unbelieving. He will have someone in the home or workshop, say or do something to upset them, and his one object in doing that is to try to turn them from going all the way with God.

The average Christian will say: "The Devil never bothers me." Of course, he does not have to bother them any more than an out-and-out sinner. That is the sad part of it. If they had faith in God or the least desire to obey His Word, they will be tempted and tried. We are promised deliverance out of temptation.

1 Corinthians 10:13 tells us, "*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*"

The source of the temptation is always from Satan. He is the one who puts discouraging thoughts in our mind and the cause of every evil thing that is done to us. It isn't so much the one in the home or the employer or fellow-employee who does it; it is Satan in back of them and they are only a tool in his hands. Of course, it is to their sorrow that they allow the devil to use them, but we cannot afford to notice or deal with the instrument for a second. Our attention is to be directed to the power back of them, and when we are once clearly convinced that it is Satan back of the whole thing, that he is the one who is suggesting thoughts of unbelief and distress, and that he is the one who is in back of every attack in our bodies, when we see that clearly, our troubles will begin to disappear at once because in the first place. Satan will never work in the open, and when we can put our finger on the cause of our troubles, which is Satan, he will flee bag and baggage.

When we are sure it is Satan, we will not use human effort to meet it, because we know that no human power can cope with Satan one moment. If we put the blame on the one who did something mean to us, and meet them in the world's way, we cannot help but to hold hard feelings against them. But when we see it is not them at all, but Satan taking advantage of their blindness, unbelief, and rebellion, to use them to try to take advantage of us, it will cause us to rejoice and will be a real step toward victory.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:44-45, "*But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do*

*good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.*

People who treat us mean should be sympathized with and treated right. Could anyone be treated nicer than the demoniac of Gadara? The demoniac came out to Jesus like a roaring lion and said: "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most High God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not." (Mark 5:7) All Jesus said was, "What is thy name?" That is not a bad way to treat anybody when you talk pleasantly and ask them their name. When Jesus cast the Devil out of him, he became perfectly normal and his only desire was to follow Jesus.

The cause of temptation is a spiritual lack in us, and whatever it is, we need to know it. It may be that our surrender to go God's way is not final. That is really the foundation cause of every temptation. As long as there is any idea of using any human help, we will be tempted, tried and tested until we are rid of it forever. There must not be a speck of it left.

We will find ourselves being tempted and tested and Satan will strike at it and we will go through a series of temptations, just to the extent that we learn the lesson of laying aside all human help, wisdom and power forever, and place our confidence absolutely and only in God, we will be delivered out of that temptation and it will be eliminated entirely. The very moment we burn our bridges in trusting God alone, Satan's power is done in our lives. In James 1:3-5 it says: "*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. 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.*"

When we have burned our bridge on meeting things in God's way, the Devil's power is broken and we find that we have "the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby." If we do not settle it to go through, it will only increase and

enlarge our troubles. But when we have settled it right, our troubles will be minimized and Satan's power will wax weaker and weaker and we will be entirely delivered from his torments and temptations.

Luke 18:1-8, Jesus gives us a parable of a widow going to an unjust judge to be delivered out of some trouble she was in. At first, he would not listen to her, but afterwards, just to get rid of her, he gave her what she wanted.

Then Jesus applies it to us, and that is, when we have settled it finally and forever to get our deliverance from God alone, just as that widow did with the unjust judge, being determined to get our deliverance from God only and not to accept "no" for an answer, then, Jesus says, we will be avenged, or delivered speedily.

Verses 6-8, *"And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily."*

That was the cause of all David's troubles with King Saul. There was hidden down in his heart, some self-help, he had never surrendered altogether to meet things in God's way, there was always a possibility hidden in his life of using a carnal method to deliver himself. This came out when Nabal sent him that mean message, and God allowed this to reveal to David this hidden rebellion.

1 Samuel 25:5-11, *"And David sent out ten young men, and David said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name: And thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity, Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast. And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now thy shepherds which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there ought missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel. Ask thy young men, and they will shew thee. Wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes: for we come in a good day: give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David. And when David's*

*young men came, they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and ceased. And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants now a days that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?"*

Verse 13, *"And David said unto his men, Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred abode by the stuff."*

After he put on his sword and all his men with him and went to avenge himself, he was met by Nabal's wife, Abigail, and she told him the real Scriptural side of the whole thing and told him the great harm he was going to do to himself as well as others. Of course, David repented and humbled himself and settled it that this was the last time in his life he would ever use a carnal weapon.

Verses 32,33, *"And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me: And blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand."*

As they say, it is one thing to say it and another thing to prove it. So, God gave David another opportunity to prove that his repentance was genuine.

1st Samuel 26:6,7, *"Then answered David and said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab, saying, Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee. So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him."*

David stood at the head of Saul, his arch-enemy, the one Satan was using to make all the trouble for him. Beside him stood a strong soldier by the name of Abishai. My, what a test that was.

Verse 8, Abishai said: *"God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee. with the spear ever to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time."*

All he had to say was one word, it would not have cost him anything, nor would he have had to raise a finger or bend his back as the Hebrew children would have had to do. All he had to say was one word. You can imagine what a temptation that was.

Satan always tries to get us into something unscriptural and make it look wonderful, put a halo around it, and after he gets us in it, he makes it as black as the Pit itself. I am sure he pictured that as wonderful to David, but David had surrendered right. He said:

Verses 9-11, *"Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless? David said furthermore, As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him: or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish. The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed."*

David never had one speck of trouble from Saul from that moment. His troubles were over and Satan's power was completely broken everywhere.

It will work out the same for us, when we come to the place where, if we were in the direst trouble, spiritually, physically, financially, in the workshop, or in the home, we settle it that if we never get out of that trouble, we will not do anything but go through with God; that if we never get a deliverance, we will never do anything but trust God absolutely and alone. When that is settled, we will find that not only will that temptation prove a stepping-stone to a greater knowledge of God and His Truth, but it will eliminate Satan, and his power just to the extent that we depend on God and His power alone for everything that concerns us.



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