

STANDING THE TEST

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Greetings of love and peace from your brethren who assemble in Columbus, Indiana,

We appreciate the kind invitation of the _____ brethren to stand before an assembly such as this to consider a very sobering and critical topic ... That of STANDING THE TEST.

Please open your Bibles to James 1:12 for the theme Scripture of our discourse: (I'll be reading from the Moffatt translation)

“Blessed is he who endures under trial for when he has STOOD THE TEST, he will gain the Crown of life which is promised to all who love him.”

Here lies the question that all of us must answer -- Are we STANDING THE TEST?, are we enduring under trial?

You know, sometimes when we see the soldiers of the cross walking in from the battlefield of life, we imagine them walking in with suits of armor. We see one brother walking in with heavy dents all over his breastplate, indicating a life and death struggle with a wily adversary. Next a sister limps in on crutches because she lost her foot in battle. Still another brother - an old soldier who appears to have taken a heavy blow to his helmet, is being carried in on a stretcher by two fellow soldiers who wouldn't leave him lying by himself on the battlefield of life. Others walk in wiping the dust off their armor from a long dusty trail, thirsting for water from the fountain of life to sustain their strength.

Turn with me now to Ephesians 6:10-17.

But now another brother soldier walks in, that's strange -- no dust on his armor, no dents on his breastplate or helmet, no limp in his walk. Everything about him would indicate no visible signs of even being in a battle. Why is it that others have received such battle wounds and evidences of struggle, and not he? Sometimes brethren, as we all know, there are trials brethren are going through that we know nothing about.

Oh yes, this soldier's armor covered a badly burned body from a fiery experience that few could even understand. The heat and smoke was so great, and so blinding that if it wasn't for his captain's call from behind him, he would have died in the blaze.

Isa. 30:21 “And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, this is the way, walk ye in it. When ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left.” Still another soldier walked in with a briefcase and reading what looked like a business magazine, totally engrossed in earthly endeavors and the affairs of this life. At one time this soldier was 'one of the best' in our Lord's command. He was the son who might have been.

Turn with me to 2 Tim. 2:3-4. “Thou therefore 'endure' hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath-chosen him to be a soldier.”

All of these soldiers have several things in common. First of all, each one volunteered. None were forced to join. Second, each one was fully aware there would be battles to fight, and rugged training to prepare them for these battles. Thirdly, all of them, except, perhaps, the last, had a sincere devotion to the cause for which they fought, and the courage to push on when they felt like running away or quitting. And so we have here today many warriors of the flesh, warriors of the world...and warriors of the adversary who have come to this convention to sharpen their swords of truth and to encourage and be encouraged by other soldiers of the cross in the fellowship of his suffering. Phil. 3:10

Battles of physical ailments. Battles of persecution against righteousness. Battles of financial problems. Or battles of standing for the truth in love. Battles of loneliness or grieving for a loved one lost in death.

Trials with people at work. Trials with relatives, neighbors; and perhaps even trials of those within your own home. Matt. 10:34-39

Tell me, is a new creature's life to be peaceful? Yes - and no. From within we have “the peace that passeth all understanding.” From without, storms and battles will be the rule. It was that way with our beloved Master. It will be that way with you, for “the servant is not above his master.” And you won't have to go looking for these storms and battles, They will find you. Can you stand the test?

You know, some of the very best Christians must have come from the Smyrna stage of the church. That's the stage where Jesus said, be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life. Why? Because to become a Christian in that great time of persecution took a lot of courage and a great amount of faith. No half-hearted person would have enlisted in the ranks of those persecuted and tortured under the order of Diocletian. Only those fully devoted to doing God's will at whatever expense to the flesh, consecrated to the tribulation they endure, for the name of Christ could stand the test. What are you and I willing to endure for the name of Christ?

Today, persecutions seem small in comparison to that time. Life and limb are not usually endangered. The trial or test of our day in this area of the world is more subtle in nature. Will the love of ease and the comforts of materialism sway away your heart from the cross of Christ? Will we hang our sword over the fireplace? Will we remove our helmet and breastplate, leaning our shield against the television while we sit back in our la-z-boy recliner? Will you stand the test? What test? The total test - of proving how sincere your words were to the Lord when you gave him your heart in full consecration. When you told him that you were willing to endure whatever temptations the Lord would allow, to endure whatever trials that would prove your new creature's determination in being rooted, grounded, and fixed in the principles of truth, righteousness, and love.

Now, where does faith enter into all of this? Let's look at two Scriptures in 1 Peter 1:6-7: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of you faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:"

Trial of your what? Yes, the trial of your faith. A faith that is much more precious than gold - why? Because faith is more precious to God than gold. The Scripture says it is impossible to please God without faith. He puts a premium on our faith. But faith and gold both have something in common. Both are refined by fire. What God is seeking in us by permitting trials and temptations is the development and perfection of our faith. Yes, perfect faith is not impossible.

Our faith can be said to have two elements: 1) of heart reliance, and 2) of intellectual assurance. Both the heart and the head - the affections and the intellect are needed together - to withstand the fiery trials to which faith is subjected.

With some, faith is all emotion. With others, it is all intellectual. Each of these elements of faith, by themselves, cannot withstand the intense heat of the tests God will expose us to. Only together, a heart and a head fully relying on Him, will pass the tests. Perfect faith should be our goal.

Discouragement is offset or displaced in proportion to our faith and trust in God. Faith is, in effect, the bleach that removes the stain of discouragement on your white robe of righteousness.

This character of gold that Peter refers to is also mentioned in Rev. 3:18 by our Lord. It says there "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich." You know, just like human characters, gold is not usually found in its pure form. There are other alloys mixed with it. And the only way to separate these impurities from the gold is to subject the gold into the fiery crucible for refining. And you all know what that crucible is - Yes, the fiery trials, temptations, - the test. That should not come unexpectedly to a new creature in Christ. Are you standing the test? R-1944 Gold Tried In The Fire

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, not murmur or complain or become despondent, but rejoice "--- Why? "inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy!"

"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." 1 Pet. 4:12-13, 5:10

Yes, this gold is indeed a treasure. But where do we have this treasure? Please turn your Bibles to 2 Cor. 4:7 for the answer: But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

So we see that we have this gold - purchased - How? - by the exchange of our lives - by entire consecration of our all - in these earthen vessels of flesh. When we give our lives fully to the Lord, He becomes the refiner. As is stated in Isa. 1:25 And I

will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin. Our Lord looks to see just how clear his reflection is imaged in the gold being purified. Does he see His face in you? Does He see it in me?

And so we ask these questions: what is the necessity and the purpose of our trials and temptations? And what should be our attitude toward these? To find these answers, we must first appreciate the fact that God is developing a very special class of sons, for a very special purpose. This purpose is a mystery amongst the gentiles, a mystery hid from ages and from generations, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (1 John 3:1) states: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." 144,000 sons, disciplined and trained to be conformed to the highest of all standards -- God's standards, exemplified and demonstrated by the highest of all sons, Christ Jesus.

There used to be a certain troop of soldiers in the British army known as the king's own composed of men of large stature and special development -- the various particulars of height, weight, number, etc., being determined in advance. So also does our heavenly father have certain requirements involving predetermined character attainments that his new creation must achieve before sealing their sonship permanently. We learn of those requirements by rigorous study and application of such study in our daily lives, 2 Tim. 2:15. The purpose of this royal priesthood is Scripturally identified in Heb. 5:1-2 where we see a secondary application to the underpriests. "For every high priest having been taken from among men is appointed in behalf of men in things relating to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins, being able to deal gently with the ignorant and erring, since he himself is also surrounded by infirmity." The Jewish priests were taken from among their brethren. In this arrangement the priests were able to sympathize with the people because they were subject to the same weaknesses, and also had need of the forgiveness of their own sins. And so God's purpose is beautifully pictured not only in this priesthood arrangement, but in so many more pictures in the Scriptures, too numerous to mention. A glorious sympathetic priesthood who experienced all the same problems and weaknesses of mankind, yet were victorious in overcoming these trials and tests. And as a reward for their faithfulness in overcoming, these are all given immortality and made partakers of the divine nature, the highest of all natures. I Cor. 15:53; 2 Pet. 1:4

These trials and tests of sonship are an absolute necessity when you consider this high reward of immortality God will crown us with if faithful. How careful our

Father must be in this regard. How disastrous would it have been for God to have given Lucifer immortality. Even God's only begotten son Jesus had to be proven and tested before exalted to such a high position of favor.

Have you ever considered the text in 1 Timothy where it declares Jesus to be justified in the spirit? What does this have to do with being proven and tested? Let's read this in 1 Tim. 3:16: "And without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness:" Now where we read "God" in the King James nearly all ancient manuscripts render it "he who" instead of "God." (see your footnote in your Diaglott.) So we continue reading: "He who was manifest in the flesh (referring to Jesus), justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Focus in on the wording "justified in the spirit." Have you ever thought about what that means? It couldn't mean that Jesus was made right or justified in the sense that we are - because of our fallen human nature. Most of us are familiar with the thought that justification is the making right of a person or thing which is wrong. But Jesus was perfect, without blemish, without sin. There is another definition of justification that is applicable in this text, and that is the thought of the declaring or proving right of a person or thing which is right. Even God is declared right or justified in both Luke 7:29 and Rom. 3:4.

Yes - we should want whatever tests, whatever trials or temptations are necessary to develop and fix our characters, and prove us capable of being trusted with such a high office and nature. We wouldn't want it otherwise! - Would we?

But why do we bring this text to your attention In 1 Tim. 3:16? We bring it up because we wanted to demonstrate:

1. That our master was proved right, proved perfect – in the spirit.
2. Being tried, tested, and proven is the whole idea around the purpose and necessity of our trials and temptations.
3. The new creature is not to be justified in the sense of being made right, because the new creature has done no sin and would have no sin to be justified from.
4. Like our master, I believe our new creature might be spoken of as justified in spirit - our new creature proved right or proved perfect. Consequently, I believe that all of our tests, whether they come from trials or temptation are a means by which the new creature is tested. Tested or proven to see whether the new mind is fixed and rooted in righteousness and love. It's the new creature that is on trial - for its life.

Trials and temptations. Let's talk about these two words for a while since they have so much to do with our subject And are closely related to each other in Scripture. Did you realize that often the two words are synonymously used in many passages in the Bible? In both the Old and the New Testament, various translators will use trial and temptation interchangeably. For example, the Scripture you are all familiar with in James which states "blessed is the man that endureth temptation" (King James rendering), the Moffatt translation says, "blessed is he who endures under trial. The question naturally arises, is there a difference in the meanings of these two words, and if so, what is it? Are all trials a temptation? Are all temptations a trial? I can't spend time right now to review the various Hebrew and Greek renderings of these terms, so I'll simply summarize the results of my investigation. A summary definition of the word trial in the Scriptures is basically: "the act or process of trying, testing, or putting to the proof. A test, usually involving suffering, hardship, temptation, or pain." GM, Ford, and Chrysler give their new models trial runs which is a process of testing their vehicles stamina or ability.

Now let's look at the word temptation. A consideration of options that will try, cause trial, test, and / or prove your degree of love for the principles of righteousness. A recent Chicago publication on the temptations of Christ stated it well: "temptation is the consideration of an option to a **wrong** course of action. A temptation occurs when considering optional courses of conduct in a given situation and one or more of the courses violates principles of righteousness." Now please take note: The consideration of these wrong options is what forms a temptation. The choosing of one of these wrong options forms a sin.

You can't help certain thoughts or temptations coming into your head. But

What you can help is how long it takes you before you kick them out the back door. "Resist the Devil and he will flee from you." James 4:7. But how can you do this? Finding certain Scriptures you can quote by memory are excellent tools in combating temptation, especially those that continually raise their ugly heads over and over again. For example ... Let's say that making uncomplimentary remarks about someone you find it hard to love, keep popping into your mind during conversation, you almost want to say something because they've hurt you in the past. You might commit the Scripture to memory that states, "Speak evil of no Man", or, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." And these memory texts help you to gain a victory over the temptation. As you recall, his technique of resisting

temptation was first introduced in the New Testament by our beloved example, Jesus, as he combated the temptations of the adversary in Matthew -- chapter four.

Yes, the adversary is a great trapper, self-trained over thousands of years to know just what kinds of snares have worked best to trap many careless Christians who were ignorant of his devices. Too many were uncircumspectful as they tripped his snares time after time, grieving or wounding the new creature. And each time they fall, their robes get a little more soiled by the earth below.

But now ... What does James mean when he says, "Count it all joy when ye fall into diverse temptations?" You certainly can't find it a joy when you are overcome by a temptation; when the teeth of a trap bites into your leg to hold you down. Then what does he mean?

It's not that we are to rejoice when we fall into sin when tempted, or when we fall as a result of various trials (Diaglott). No, what we have to joy in or rejoice in, sounds rather strange to the natural man. We rejoice in the opportunity that the temptation or trial offers us to demonstrate and prove the fullness of our love and devotion to our God, and to his cause. It's the new creature that rejoices, not the old creature. We should rejoice in the opportunity to solidify God's faith in us, as he had in Job, that our new creatures are fixed, rooted, and grounded in righteousness, and built up in love.

Yes, I suggest the thought that our heavenly father, in a certain way, demonstrates faith in us by the degree of difficulty presented in the trial or temptation permitted. Have you ever thought of that? The heavenly father has a programmed course of instruction intended for each of us to develop skills of sonship.

As a teacher, I would not give a twelfth grade test of calculus to a third grade student who hasn't yet mastered the skills of multiplication.

So too, our wise teacher, who constantly monitors our progress in the school of Christ knows exactly how challenging a test we can successfully pass. My point is this: I don't believe that our father predetermines our success. He only predetermines our ability to achieve success.

Therefore, one can assume an attitude of being honored as to God's faith in us, that the more difficult the trial or temptation, the greater indication of his faith in us to successfully overcome it. My how our attitude could change if we were to look at our trials and temptations in this light. Instead of being inclined to murmur and

complain, we would be encouraged and honored by the favor of God's faith in us, demonstrated in the difficulty of the test. Certainly it is our attitude regarding our temptations and trials that will make a significant difference whether we are standing the test or not. Our attitude will make or break us.

Another thought I suggest when enduring a certain trial or difficulty might be to ask yourself this question: What should I be learning from this experience that will better prepare me for my service in the kingdom? What segment of humanity will I be able to help going through this kind of trial? I ask you this: Are not our trials, successfully passed, our credentials for the heavenly position?

Now let's consider a few more Scriptures. In James 1:12, we'll read from the Revised Standard Version: "Blessed is the man who endures trial, - notice - for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love him." First of all I call your attention to the word "blessed". This suggests the condition of one-who is-in-the favor of God. Indeed, being in the favor of God is a very blessed condition. This is a very happy, desirable condition to be in. But this does not necessarily imply a happy condition as relates to feelings and emotions, but rather as relates to the outcome.

A medical student grueling under the pressures of studies and exams over many, many years is probably not very happy except in the prospect of what that endurance will bring to him at graduation. So with us. Hebrews 12:11 states it well: "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant. Later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it." And what do these trials ultimately bring us? James states that if you have stood the test faithfully you will receive the crown of life. This is another way of saying the reward of life. Not the reward of everlasting life that mankind has the opportunity to gain if they pass their test of the little season, but this reward of life will be on the highest plane possible. The apostle Paul speaks of this same crown as the "crown of righteousness". The apostle Peter calls it the "crown of glory". And you'll have the honor of sitting on the throne with Christ in the presence and service of God forevermore. Think of that!

But did James say blessed is the man that has trials will receive this? No..... Blessed is the man that endures trials, time after time, day after day, proving his faithfulness, proving his loyalty, proving his obedience and trust, proving his love for the principles of truth and righteousness.

This is what it's all about brethren. Simply stated, the L. A. P. method - learning, applying, and proving to the Lord all that we have just stated. And the glories of the future will be proportionate to the trials faithfully endured.

What are you willing to endure. What am I willing to endure. Now key in on the word "willing". I suggest the thought that the more we are willing to endure, the more willing He is to give us to endure. And the more we are given to endure, the greater the reward becomes, if faithful. "Star differeth from star in glory", so also it will be in the resurrection of the dead. 1 Cor. 15:41-42

The apostle Paul gloried in tribulation - Why? - because he knew what tribulations would bring. Rom. 5:3 "We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope."

Yes, Paul knew that there was only one way to get from here to where he wanted to be, and that was by what faithfully enduring tribulations would bring. It would bring out a character - tried and proven - that would ultimately claim the promises God has offered. He declared himself willing and anxious to fill up as much as possible that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ.

James 1:13 "Let no one say when he is tempted, I am tempted by God, for God cannot be tempted with evil and he himself tempts no one." A very important point. Either the adversary tempts us - as in the case of our Lord in the wilderness, or those associated with him - if even for a moment - or the temptation or impulse to sin comes from the personal weakness of our fallen human nature. But God tempts no one with evil. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Notice the progression of deterioration here. First, temptation, if unchecked, leads to lust. Lust conceived, produces sin. And sin continued in, unrepented of, surely leads to the destruction of the new creature. Heb 6:4-6; 10:26, 38

We have various forms of enticements all about us. Influences toward evil stimulating our natural desires and weaknesses. Sometimes our companions and associates in life are the stimulators. Sometimes we stimulate ourselves through magazines, books, television, radio, and perhaps even with movies. Tell me what good does it do to pray to the Lord "abandon us not in temptation" if we are the ones who willfully put ourselves there in the first place? But from whatever the source of the stimulation to a wrong course of action, the new creature must

tenaciously resist the temptation, for nothing has the power to coerce our wills, and our wills were given to God - And it must be proven, demonstrated to God beyond any shadow of a doubt. A new creature cannot toy with temptations ... Because if he does, sin will gain more and more leverage as the adversary tries to break the will of the new mind. Remember this: The more you resist a certain temptation, the greater your resistance becomes. A good touch-stone for most every trial, temptation, or decision of life is answered with this simple question: "Would this please the heavenly Father?" Or, "What Scriptural direction or Scriptural principle should I apply in this situation?" If we truly love the Lord supremely, that love will be the chief impulse of our lives. Are you standing the test? Where can you and I improve?

Every trial and every test is designed to do one of the following:

- 1 Develop skills of sonship.
- 2 Prove or test those skills to see how fixed or permanent they are in our characters.
3. Demonstrate your loyalty and devotion to God, and our Lord Jesus.

And so dear brethren, we have attempted to examine many aspects on the subject of standing the test. There is still much more that could be said. The question now remains for all of us: Are we standing the test? What kind of grade do we want to get in this course? Do we want to merely receive a passing grade, or do we want to get an "A"? At least we can all get an "A" in our intentions and effort, maybe even an "A" in the category of perfect faith if we really work at it.

A new creature in Christ will have many temptations in his lifetime, and there will also be many trials to develop us and test our skills of sonship. Will we be fixed and rooted in the principles of righteousness? Will we be unshakable in the law of love?

Our heavenly father desires to prove us, to test us, to determine if His Son's character is sealed within our own. Will our love for him be replaced by the temptation of earthly riches? Will our hearts turn bitter under the persecutions and misrepresentations we all must endure? Can a pretty face or a handsome stature of a man sway you away from the promises of God? Will you worship the Creator - or the created? Will our faith falter when physical afflictions seek to sap our energy and perhaps question His wisdom in developing our characters in just such a way? Can business pursuits and earthly interests detour our step from the path of sacrifice? Will our zeal for service fizzle under the cares of this life? Can spiritual

pride set in and spoil a beautiful relationship with the Lord - like it did Israel? Will you love father, mother, spouse, or children more than Him? Will you study to learn more of how God thinks and what his expectations are for you? Time for study is a premium in today's market place. Most will only find that study time by sacrifice. Sacrificing unnecessary mortgages on your time, and fleshly preferences of endeavor.

And here's a question not often asked: Do you love people? Do you love God's creation of man so much, as God did, that you can give the most precious possession you have - your life? -- as God gave the most precious possession He could give for them - his Son.

Yes God wants to thoroughly test you, to examine you from every angle he can to see if anything - anything at all - will separate you from the love of Christ, or your love for God.

Please turn with me, in closing, to James 1:12 once again: "Blessed is the man who endures trial, for when he has stood (past tense) the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love him."

Helpful reprint articles: 5499 The Purpose Of Our Trials
 1944 Gold Tried In The Fire
 5459 Trials Essential To Character Development

But now we come to another question: What do you do when you feel the heat of the crucible is more than you can take - you feel you are just going to break. Is it proper to pray for deliverance?

Let's look at our Lord's example to find the answer. Turn with me now to Mark 14:33-36: "And he taketh with him Peter and James ;and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; and saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt."

And we also read of this in Heb. 5:7: “Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.”

Our conclusion from these texts is that our beloved master prayed for deliverance -- deliverance from the fear of death. Oh, he fully knew he had to die as the ransom for man, but what he feared was not being resurrected from death -- extinction. He needed reassurance that he had been completely faithful to his covenant of sacrifice, and therefore would be resurrected from death.

We notice from the reading in Mark that he had some grief-stricken concern over the manner in which he would die, Gal. 3:13, but notice in his prayer for deliverance from “that cup” the submissive attitude of resignation to the Father's will, “Nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.” Thus we see that praying for deliverance is appropriate -- but with the stipulation only that if the father wills it.

We are promised in 1 Cor. 10:13 something very important. Let's look at it together. “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 (deliverance), that ye may be able to bear it.”

And so we are reassured of several things here: God will never permit us a temptation or trial greater than we can bear. He'll never allow that. He sets his son at the crucible as our advocate to watch that the temperature of heat never goes higher than we can take. That is why Jesus is so precious to us. He can succor us - because he's been tempted and tried - he's been in that crucible.

May we now turn to Hebrews 2:17-18: “Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.” How wonderful it is to know that he's standing right by us.

We also see another promise in 1 Cor. 10:13. God will always -- I repeat -- always provide a way of escape from any temptation or trial too hard to be borne. But bear in mind the way of escape may not always be a physical escape, but it may also be mental escape.

Your escape may come from an enlightenment of reassurance,, as our Master's was more of a mental deliverance. With us it may be a Scriptural promise, or like our Master, a messenger -- perhaps an elder, or another brother or sister in Christ who will “bear thee up” with some words of encouragement.

For me it was a touching Hallmark card by a very precious brother in Christ. His words of encouragement and succor were read more than once - when I wondered if I could hold up any longer.

Psa. 91:11-12 “For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.”

So dear brethren, when you are at the point where you'd just like to crawl into a corner and die, call out to the Lord “with strong cryings and tears” and look for the messengers and the escape that your Father in heaven will provide. “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers. I Pet. 3:12

On the other hand, keep in mind that deliverance from a trial by your request - could mean that the trial could be postponed for another time. After all - unless it was a self-induced trial, the Lord probably had a special skill he was developing or testing in you. One in which you must take -- sooner or later -- like a course in high school that's mandatory for graduation. The question might then be: Do you want to take that course in the Lord's time frame, or your own.