

DELIVERANCE FROM EVIL

I. Providence Brings Hard Times

A. God uses hard times for His purposes. “Howbeit in *the business* of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was *done* in the land, **God left him**, to try him, **that he might know all that was in his heart.**” (2 Chronicles 32:31)

B. Some times Satan causes hard times. “And **Satan** stood up against Israel, and **provoked David to number Israel.**” (1 Chronicles 21:1)

C. People become so entangled in the small struggles of life that they lose sight of larger spiritual and moral realities. “And **the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word**, and it becometh unfruitful.” (Mark 4:19)

D. The presence of original sin corrupts personal judgment. “But **every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.**” (James 1:14)

E. Believers know the constant struggle of sin and righteousness within them. “For **the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh**: and these are contrary the one to the other: **so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.**” (Galatians 5:17)

F. God uses troubles to cause self-examination; sinners are their own biggest problem. “But **my people would not hearken** to my voice; and Israel would none of me. **So I gave them up unto their own hearts’ lust**: and they walked in their own counsels.” (Psalm 81:11-12)

II. Seek to Avoid Temptation

A. Jesus counseled to guard against temptation. “**Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation**: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.” (Matthew 26:41)

B. On the night of the betrayal Peter was tempted after being warned and still succumbed. “Now **Peter** sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he **denied** before them all, saying, **I know not what thou sayest**. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And **again he denied with an oath**, I do not know the man.” (Matthew 26:69-72)

C. Paul understood his own conflicting natures. “But **I see another law in my members**, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I **am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?**” (Romans 7:23-24)

III. Ask for Help to Escape

A. Paul struggled with temptation. “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, **there was given to me a thorn** in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, **lest I should be exalted** above measure. **For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.**” (2 Corinthians 12:7-8)

B. Get to the core of the problem. “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” (Psalm 51:10)

C. Turn the management of your life over to God. “Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.” (Psalm 119:133)

D. Do not rely on your own efforts to avoid trouble; the record is not good in that area. “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.” (Proverbs 3:5)

E. God knows a believer’s limits. “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 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.” (1 Corinthians 10:12-13)

F. Presumption is a terrible trap. “Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.” (Psalm 19:13)

G. The great battles of eternity are worked out in the human heart. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. 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 Peter 5:8-10)

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