



Undeserved Suffering, Old Testament Examples

Ezra's Father in the Death March from Ramah to Babylon

This is a study of what happens to young people during and after an invasion, in the destruction of cities, and how Bible doctrine makes the difference. It is based on the death march from Ramah to Babylon after the complete destruction of Jerusalem in August of 586 BC by the army of King Nebuchadnezzar. See category on [Maximum Adversity, The Believer's Triumph](#).

The Prophets

In James 5:10, "As an example, brethren" is ὑπόδειγμα (hupodeigma) in the Greek and means an exhibit for imitation or warning or an example. This was a growing believer receiving an example. By application, it means "Receive an example, members of the family of God."

"As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord." (James 5:10, NASB)

"Suffering" is κακοπάθεια (kakopatheia) and refers to undeserved suffering. It means to endure affliction in fellowship when all manner of evil things are thrown your way. "And patience" is μακροθυμία (makrothumia) and means long suffering. It is staying in fellowship under pressure. This is the growing or mature believer able to withstand undeserved suffering while staying filled with the Holy Spirit and relying on God's grace resources including the *epignosis* Bible doctrine in the right lobe of their soul.

In James 5:10, "take the prophets" is the term used for the gift of communication in the Old Testament and is comparable to the gift of pastor-teacher in the Church Age. "Who spoke in the name of the Lord" is the aorist active indicative of λαλέω (laleō) and means to communicate Bible doctrine.

A corrected translation of James 5:10 is; "Members of the family of God, take as an example of endurance in suffering and patience, the prophets who have communicated doctrine in the name of the Lord."

The prophets of the Old Testament used Bible doctrine which was the coin of the realm for the spiritual life. In spiritual maturity, they had a capacity for freedom, life, love, happiness of God, grace, and prosperity. They used it in time of adversity, tragedy, and adversity. Both Elijah and Job started as spiritually maturity believers, both went into reversionism and both of them recovered. They are perfect illustrations! They knew undeserved and deserved suffering.

Job

The testing of Job is an example of undeserved suffering to prove to Satan that an inferior creature with volition can stay positive to the love of God even through intense undeserved suffering.

In James 5:11, "We count those blessed" is the present active indicative of μακαρίζω (makarizō) and means to congratulate because they have achieved or done something worthy of recognition or worthy of happiness. This is like congratulating a bridegroom. It means to recognize their happiness. This applies to any spiritually mature believer who has doctrine in their soul for all kinds of pressure situations. It means to recognize those believers who are saturated with Bible doctrine and have inner happiness in prosperity and in adversity.



“We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.” (James 5:11, NASB)

Job had three friends who failed miserably. Job had spiritual maturity and had everything in terms of material wealth. When adversity came, he lost everything and his wife became a nag. When all of those things hit, Job’s three reversionistic friends should have come by and congratulated Job for handling his undeserved adversity! Had they done this, the Book of Job would be only four chapters long. Instead, Job prayed for his friends. At that time, Job was applying Bible doctrine and had reliance on the plan of God regardless of his situation. Job 1:21; Job 13:15.

“He said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD.”” (Job 1:21, NASB)

““Though He slay me, I will hope in Him. Nevertheless I will argue my ways before Him.” (Job 13:15, NASB)

His negative wife had some rather contrary things to say to Job in Job 2:9-10, but he kept his cool, his integrity and stayed in fellowship with God.

“Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!” But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.” (Job 2:9-10, NASB)

In James 5:11, “who endured” is the aorist active participle of ὑπομονή (hupomonē) and refers to those who stayed in fellowship and continued to apply Bible doctrine when undeserved suffering came. “You have heard” is the aorist active indicative of ἀκούω (akouō). The Jews had been taught and understood the Old Testament Scriptures.

“Endurance of Job” is ὑπομονή (hupomonē) and means steadfastness, constancy, endurance. Job stayed in fellowship with God. He continued to apply Bible doctrine to the extreme testing situation! When the terrible news came in, he focused on God's promises and continued to trust in God's Word even in catastrophe.

In James 5:11, “and have seen” is the aorist active indicative of ὁράω (horaō). This skips over his reversionism, because that would anticipate what was coming up. The aorist tense means the point when they studied Job under some teacher. The active voice means they sat and listened to the teaching of Job and understood it. The indicative mood means the reality of the fact that when they did it, they were understanding the issue of Job and moving toward spiritual maturity. “The outcome of the Lord’s dealings” is τέλος (telos) and refers to the end of the story of Job under suffering.

Job lost his livelihood, his children, and his health during this intense testing. Job passed these tests. However, he failed the testing initially that involved his three close friends. In a series of speeches in Job 3 through Job 14, Job’s speech was followed by those of his three friends, each in turn answered by Job.

In Job 15 through Job 21, each of the friends spoke to Job and was answered by him. In Job 22 through Job 31, Eliphaz and Bildad speak until answered by Job. They imply that Job deserved all of this and that, in some way, he had stepped out of line badly with God.

Job answered them and said he was under undeserved suffering and that there was something that his friends did not understand. Job then went on to review doctrines relating to the perfect essence of God, the promise of resurrection, judgment, etc. Job’s point was that God has designed a plan for each



believer with grace provision to withstand and grow spiritually from all deserved and undeserved suffering.

Job prayed for his reversionistic friends, just as the pastor-teacher is to pray for a reversionistic flock. Just as Elijah prayed for a reversionistic nation. Job phased out doctrine and listened to his idiot friends. Then, when he got straightened out, God told the three idiot friends to call on Job and he would pray for them and the captivity of them all would be turned. Then God poured out His very own happiness on Job and it was fantastic. “That the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.” Even with spiritually mature believers, the emphasis is still always on the Lord. See category on [Testing of Job](#).