



## [Hebrews 12:1-4](#)

(1) Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, (2) looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (3) For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. (4) You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.

## [James 1:2](#)

(2) My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,  
*New King James Version*

We can learn a great deal about why [patience](#) is so vital by comparing the process we are going through to an artist sculpting a work from a piece of marble. Chip by chip over a period of time, an artist uses hammer and chisel to shape a conception from a raw slab of rock until the finished figure is revealed. [God](#) is doing much the same with us except we are living, raw material with mind, emotions, and the liberty to allow or disallow the Artist to continue. If we are impatient, not allowing the Creator to complete His artistry by our constant yielding to His tools, we will never be perfect and entire.

It is easy for us to magnify our burdens. Notice, however, what grumbling did for the Israelites in the wilderness when God finally responded. Would we rather have our trial or grumble and receive what the Israelites did? We must begin to cultivate the habit of thinking of life, including all of its trials, as being God's way to shape godly character in us.

James makes what seems to be a paradoxical statement in [James 1:2](#): We should count our various trials as [joy](#). Why? Because verse 3 says that doing so produces patience!

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Hebrews 12:1-4 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

We need patience so God can mold us into His likeness. Even God cannot produce godly character by fiat. James is teaching us that we should not measure the experiences of life by their ability to please our ambition or tastes but by their capacity to make us into God's image. If we have any vision - and a zealous desire to live as God does - we can welcome our trials as steps in God's creative process and meet them with patience and hope.

Perfection in this life is to become what God wants us to become. What could be better than that? If we understand that our lives are in God's hands as He molds and shapes us, then the meanings - the eventual outcome - of joy and sorrow are the same. God intends the same result whether He gives or takes. The events of life are merely the scaffolding for shaping us into His image, and we should meet them with patience as He continues His work. This will work to flatten out the emotional extremes we tend to experience.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**

**[The Fruit of the Spirit: Patience](#)**

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