James #4

The challenge of people testing.

Our current study in James has us now entering a series on the doctrine of momentum testing;

/Jam 1:3 knowing that **the testing of your faith** produces endurance.

Momentum testing is how God reveals our growth and helps us to learn to continue growing so as to receive all blessings and rewards.\

Now starting into a doctrine like Momentum testing, I first must put your mind to rest, that these tests will come and go and some you will fail and others will be easier for you.

Over time the growing Believer begins to pass these tests much more habitually than they do failing them.

At super-grace maturity, the Christian walks through the testing and even blatant attacks from Satan with ease, because they are skilled and mature enough.

 REPEAT

First – remember you are not called into sinless perfection.

 So, the focus is more on the journey then this maturity goal, that you finally obtain perfection and sit back and rest in.

/The objective of the OSN is to control the soul. It cannot control the soul because the soul has human volition and so the OSN tickles us with arrogance and temptation. Satan’s system is one of consistent temptations, trickery, counterfeits and very subtle lies mixed into truth. The sooner a Christian understands the angelic conflict and the OSN, the sooner they can walk with less guilt, anxiety and arrogance.\

The origin of sin has always been human volition from our first divine institution - free will. GOD did not create sin or evil.

HE did know from eternity past, that created creatures with complete freedom of thought will fall into sinful behaviors and lead themselves into evil.

Only our Triune GOD is true purity, veracity untouched, sinless perfection from divine righteousness.

 REPEAT

His perfect grace plan, is that we all can be saved and put in union with HIM forever, by simply agreeing to HIS justice system, which points to the person and work of TLJC.

/Our personal sins are not imputed to us, but to Christ. Man’s 23 contaminated chromosomes which fertilize the female ovum, which is uncontaminated by the Adamic-nature, pass on the OSN to each member of the human race. Christ (humanity) is the only exception; Jesus received the twenty-three male chromosomes from the Holy Spirit. He was born without a sin nature, and no original sin could be imputed to Him.\

You can become imitators of Christ in time, yet you will never be the exact sinless perfection of the only impeccable human being - Jesus Christ.

The Christian’s true goal is to become more Christ-like in time, which is really the person GOD created you to be.

Do not allow the combination of your OSN and the Cosmic System to keep you in a state of frustration or despair.

The grace plan of GOD is perfect and it is designed for flawed creatures.

/Embrace the full plan of God for your life and keep moving forward no matter what struggles arise;

Phl 3:13 Brothers *and sisters,* I do not regard myself as having taken hold of *it yet;* but one thing *I do:* **forgetting what *lies* behind**and **reaching forward to what *lies* ahead**, \

Momentum testing will not discourage you once you begin to grow and understand the nature of God and the full plan of God.

Your job is to keep your focus on Christ which is staying in the New Nature more so than the old one. Then get into a steady diet of HIS mind to replace your human viewpoint. That’s it – eventally in HIS timing you will grow into maturity.

/Testing can spark frustration in the flesh as well as a spirit of despair, Satan is the only victor when that happens in the life of a Bel. People testing is one that we face on a regular basis, this needs to be addressed first because relationships in any form pit two OSN against each other. If the growing Christian does not rise above the OSN there will always be some form of friction in people testing.\

People testing is inevitable, we are going to live around people. We work with people; our family and friends are people - all with an OSN just like you!

Go into the OT – the book of Esther to begin this study.

/People become a major distraction to the momentum of the Believer who refuses to grow up spiritually. Emotions and the focus of eyes on people (problems & OSN) rather than solutions (BD & Filling of HS) trip up most Christians. Love relationships become skewed and personal, daily relationships (work, family, friends…etc.) also become extreme distractions and stumbling blocks for a weak Bel.\

There are two compounded areas of testing that often go hand in hand – people testing and system testing.

/System testing & people testing often entwine because of their basic nature. Whether it is families, marriage, work, government, church… etc. they are all systems with people functioning, colliding and communicating with one another. Authority and chain of command are woven into the foundation of all of this as well. Therefore, it is ripe with testing – system and people.\

Now what we have in the story of Esther is a difficult circumstance under a form of slavery. Also, many deceptions and personality conflicts in the midst of a system of Persian government.

This took place after the fall of the Babylonian Empire under the Persian military power.

Many biblical scholars brush off the book of Esther as of not much importance other than historically value.

Though it is a wonderful story of God’s divine providence in the face of adversity, some theologians give it very little attention.

At this historic point, the nation of Israel is now under Persian dominance which was much more relaxed than the Babylon culture. Yet the Persians were still very strict and domineering toward all of their slaves.

We will be bouncing around a bit… so let us first open in Esther chapter 2.

/The Persian king had gotten rid of his first queen because of disobedience. On the faulty advice of his court leaders, he basically banished Queen Vashti and began enjoying the concubines. The slave girls were lined up for him by his court advisors and leaders. Esther who was under the care of a relative named Mordecai, was eventually brought into the herd of slave girls. Mordecai advises his young relative to not mention her culture as a Jew.\

This is the basic backdrop of the story.

There were believed to be up to 400 concubines. Esther became one of the king’s immediate favorites, just by her looks alone.

Esther was considered a stunning beauty, body, face and her personality – the complete package as some men would say!

She was ranked among a handful of slave girls, who got the special beauty treatments leading up to her night with the king.

This was a 12-month process before her big night with the king of Persia.

By the way – both the name Mordecai and Esther have roots in the Persian culture. Which was common under slavery for names being changed to suit the new masters.

/Est 2:15 Now **when the turn of Esther**, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai who had taken her as his daughter, **came to go in to the king, she did not request anything** except what Hegai, the king’s eunuch who was in charge of the women, advised. And Esther was finding favor in the eyes of all who saw her.\

Esther is a young woman of great poise and courage.

She is in a slave system, dealing with foreign people controlling almost every aspect of her life.

[Est 2:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/est/2/16/s_428016) So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus in his royal palace in the tenth month, which is the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.

This was around the month we know as December or January.

Probably in the year of 479 BC.

A-HASH-URUS was a title for leadership, this was king Xerxes (ZERC-SEES).

Actually just a few years prior to this, the Persian army had a defeat at the hands of a growing Greek military culture.

So, between that military loss and his queen in exile, the king needed lots of distractions.

Showing us God’s perfect timing which is a strong theme in this story.

/[Est 2:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/est/2/17/s_428017) **The king loved Esther more than all the women,** and she found favor and kindness with him more than all the virgins, so that **he set the royal turban on her head and made her queen** in place of Vashti.

Esther stood out with not only beauty, but a calm composer and never fell into despair or frustration.\

People testing and situation testing are often two entangled tests, that cause Christians to act out in their flesh.

/There are times a Bel is placed in a difficult system with people who are opposed to what they believe. Perhaps even considered enemies, yet that Bel has to maintain a calm assurance that GOD will carry them through while protecting them. Emotions never solve the problem and more often than not, emotions will multiple the adversity we are already in.\

Esther is a picture of a young Bel with calm assurance, that knew she had to operate in a system that was unfair. Also how to deal with people who did not hold her best interest, or share her same beliefs.

 REPEAT

The fact is Esther could have been as young as 16 or 17 years old here, we simply do not know.

Pretty impressive inner strength for a young woman.

[Est 2:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/est/2/18/s_428018) Then the king held a great banquet, Esther’s banquet, for all his officials and his servants; he also made a holiday for the provinces and gave gifts in proportion to the king’s bounty.

The Hebrew term for banquet, usually meant to come to rest, with a connotation of some release of taxation or even slavery. So, Esther had brought great relief for many people in the kingdom.

/[Est 2:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/est/2/19/s_428019) Now when the virgins were gathered together for the second time, **then Mordecai was sitting at the king’s gate**.

Mordecai was most likely a respected man in the kingdom (sitting at king’s gate). Even though he was Jewish he had gained some form of usefulness for the kingdom.\

This was a man who probably worked for the kingdom in a business capacity.

King Darius, was Xerxes father the first Persian ruler, Darius was much more generous to the Jews. Mordecai’s family probably was among the first group of Israelites given some jobs for the kingdom after freedom from Babylonian captivity.

Again, we see a Bel stuck in a foreign system, surrounded by hostile people and yet he is in a respected position.

/Whether we study the life of Joseph, Daniel or Mordecai and Esther we can see system testing and people testing inside the plan of God. The only avenue for success is a calm assurance and remaining faithful to GOD to the best of your ability. This points to a mature Bel applying BD to the very difficult circumstances. \

[Est 2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/est/2/20/s_428020) Esther *still* had not revealed her relatives or her people, just as Mordecai had instructed her; for Esther did what Mordecai told her just as she had when under his care.

This speaks to the doctrine of authority and understanding the chain of command. Esther respected her older cousin as a father figure, she knew he was a good man of GOD. This worked in her favor and actually kept both of them safe at this point.

Following the doctrines of God will never lead you astray.

/Est 2:21 In those days, **while Mordecai was sitting at the king’s gate**, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king’s officials from those who guarded the door, became angry and **sought to attack King Ahasuerus.**

God is always at work during any circumstance. More often than not, HE is working everything out in a fashion we would never assume.\

Christians often get in the way of the plan of God - instead of getting in line with the plan of God.

Luckily, GOD had it all figured out in eternity past.

He may allow you to reap the misery of your negativity, but HE always has a way of bringing us back into line with HIM, offering us more opportunities.

 REPEAT

/The Christian who falls into the emotional rollercoaster during testing not only fails that test. They will have to face it again in the future, yet now they have complicated their current circumstance. Many times, the Unbel gets some form of relief, or blessing because a Bel has allowed the flesh to interfere with the testing or circumstances.\

[Est 2:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/est/2/22/s_428022) But the plot became known to Mordecai and he informed Queen Esther, and Esther told the king in Mordecai’s name.

[Est 2:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/est/2/23/s_428023) Then when the plot was investigated and found *to be so,* they were both hanged on a wooden *gallows;* and it was written in the Book of the Chronicles in the king’s presence.

This is a recorded piece of accurate history.

/The plot against Ahasuerus' life, and Mordecai's discovery of it, shows us that God providentially arranged beforehand to ultimately deliver His chosen people from extinction—in addition to Queen Vashti's decision (1:12), then Esther's selection (2:17), and Mordecai's advancement (2:19), God’s perfect timing and perfect plan unfolds in incredible ways.\

When the testing comes…and it will, trust that GOD will give the guidance to get through it.