

God's Divine Meat Grinder

Psalm 66:1-20 Have you ever been through God's divine meat grinder? Some people today do not believe that God tests us, but the Bible says clearly that we are tested by the Lord. The request by God for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac was clearly a test from God. God, however, is not the tempter. James tells us that we are led astray by our own lusts and then tempted. He says, "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil" (James 1:13).

Temptation is the devil's business, and make no mistake, he is an expert at his job. Testing, however, is God's business, and sometimes God will allow Satan to tempt us simply because God wants us to learn to overcome temptation. If God never allowed Satan to tempt us, we would never grow in the skills of spiritual warfare. It is important to recognize that God has Satan on a leash. If we are walking faithfully with the Lord and our hearts are continually turned toward Him with the desire to keep walking in His ways, we can rest assured that whatever comes our way in the form of temptation or trial is ultimately going to work for our good. We also have to recognize that a lot of the troubles we get into and sins we commit are simply because we give into our fleshly lusts. We definitely cannot blame God for those times we have made stupid mistakes, been hasty in our decisions or willfully chosen the world's way instead of God's way. We learn in Job that Satan had to ask permission from God to tempt Job because Job was a righteous man.

Psalm 66:1-20 tells us clearly that God does allow affliction sometimes in our lives. We have only to look at the story of Israel to discover this truth. God is purifying us and forming His character in our lives, and to have this happen, we all will go through some type of fiery trial. God the Father allowed Jesus to be tempted forty days and forty nights, so we would be presumptuous to believe that we will never be

tempted. The good news is that God will not put us in His divine meat grinder unless He knows we will come out as steak. God's meat grinder is designed to mold us into something better than what went into the grinder. David says in this psalm, "For You, O God, have tested us; You have refined us as silver is refined" (v. 10).

The truth is, God will not give us more than we can bear, and with every temptation He will give us a way of escape. That way of escape is Jesus. Does this mean that the moment we call upon Jesus, He will instantly deliver us when we are going through severe trials and testings? God will allow us to remain in His divine meat grinder just long enough to make us come out like steak. The next time you experience trials, don't ask, "Why, Lord?" Instead, ask, "What, Lord? What do You want to develop in me through this trial?" Remember, tribulation works patience in our lives, and there truly is no other way for this fruit to be developed in us.

READ: Numbers 36:1-Deuteronomy 1:46; Luke 5:29-6:11; Psalm 66:1-20; Proverbs 11:24-26