

- 1) Next James has some important words to say regarding how we should be dealing with temptations...

***James 1:12–15 (NASB 2020)***

<sup>12</sup> Blessed is a man who perseveres under **trial**; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him.

... Does anyone have any other word than “trial” in verse 12?

- 2) The word used here is *peirasmos* (pA ras mos) and carries several meanings, test, trial, temptation, enticement, testing.
- 3) In this passage, *peirasmos*, (pA ras mos) the word translated “trial” in vs. 12 is used 5 more times.
- 4) In most translations I looked at it was translated “tempt or tempted” in those other 5 locations.
- 5) I personally feel that the word should be translated as “temptation” in verse 12 as well.
  - a) Several translations do use that definition – ASV, NRSV, YLT, KJV, NKJV just to mention a few.
- 6) I feel there are several reasons why this is the case.
  - a) I have included them in the notes that you can access on the website if you want to look at the details of my reasons.
  - b) **First**, though James has spoken of trials prior to this passage, the immediately preceding passage is not dealing with trials at all.
    - i) If the word trial is used, then vs. 12 becomes isolated.
      - (1) Now that is not really all that bad given the proverbial nature of this letter as we discussed it a bit ago.
    - ii) However, if this verse is translated with trial as the object of perseverance, it would fit almost perfectly after verse 1:4.
- <sup>2</sup> Consider it all joy, my brothers *and sisters*, when you encounter various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. <sup>4</sup> And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.
- <sup>12</sup> Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him.
  - c) **Second**, it follows that, if the word is translated as temptation, then this entire group of verses, 12 through 15, fit together coherently.
  - d) **Third**, the very next verse (13) begins speaking of the source of temptation and definitely not trials (association with evil).
  - e) **Finally**, if we consider the next passage, we find a clear reference back to this group of verses.
    - i) As we will see, he is saying that one should not be deceived about where good things come from, which ties into where temptations do NOT come from.
- 7) However, that being said, the primary reason I feel this way is one of context and coherency.

## James – Faith Demonstrated – 2025

- a) When translated as temptation in this manner this group of verses, 12 through 15, fit together coherently.
  - b) If the word is translated as trial, the vs. 12 does not fit contextually with the verses after or the verses before it.
  - c) Given the proverbial nature of this letter that might not be a problem, but it is a consideration, nonetheless.
- 8) As I see it, part of the problem with the “trial” verses “temptation” translation may be with the word translated *perseveres*.
- 9) If we go to BDAG again we find a meaning...

... to maintain a belief or course of action in the face of opposition, to stand one’s ground.

- 10) So, if we translate vs. 12 a little differently (not adding but simply using other appropriate definitions we might get ...

Blessed is the man who endures [in the face of] temptation, because when approved he will receive the crown of life which the {Lord} promised to those who love Him.

- 11) The meaning there is obvious – don’t give in to temptation ...

- 12) Then continuing with vs. 13-15 ...

<sup>13</sup> No one is to say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. <sup>14</sup> But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. <sup>15</sup> Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it has run its course, brings forth death.

- 13) So, looking at these verses a little closer ...

- 14) In verse 13, James makes it crystal clear that God has no part whatsoever in tempting us.

- a) We wind up in trying situations, but He does not tempt us to sin.

- 15) Then, in verse 14, James makes it equally crystal clear what the source of temptation is.

“... each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.”

- a) Simply put, we can NEVER blame God for a temptation we are facing.

- 16) As we have said many, many, times here – it is “self” that appears to always be the root of the problem.

- 17) We talked about the fact that in verse 2 through 4 of this first chapter, James shows us a positive progression.

- a) **Encounter** trials → **Testing** of faith → **Produces** (builds) endurance → **Completes** in perfection and lacking in nothing.

- 18) Here, we have a very much negative progression...

- b) We are **tempted, enticed** by our own lust → Lust then **conceives** → **Gives birth** to sin → Sin **runs its course** → **Brings forth** (literally gives birth to) death.

## James – Faith Demonstrated – 2025

- 19) Now, here is the absolute last reason why I feel temptation might be better in the translation of verse 12.
- 20) “Endurance [in the face of] temptation” is the place where this downward progression is broken.
- 21) If we stand up in the face of the temptations that come from within our own self then, lust will NOT conceive, and the chain is destroyed before it gets started!

## Ok – Comments / Questions / Thoughts?

### James 1:16–18 (NASB 2020)

<sup>16</sup> Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers *and sisters*. <sup>17</sup> Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. <sup>18</sup> In the exercise of His will He gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.

- 1) The phrase “Do not be deceived” is an imperative (Command).
- 2) Since James is talking about sources, we can easily expand this forward and backward in the text.
  - a) Do not be deceived about the source of temptations.
    - i) Temptations come from within us!
  - b) Do not be deceived about the source of all good things.
    - i) Good things come from God!

- 3) James uses an interesting phrase here to describe God.

“... the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.”

- 4) “Father of lights” is an ancient Jewish title for God, referring to Him as Creator.
- 5) The two Greek words translated SHIFTING and SHADOW are only used here and nowhere else in the New Testament.
- 6) The phrase “*or shifting shadow*” can be literally “or turning shadow.”
- 7) “Shifting or turning” has the meaning of “*darkening caused by turning*.”
- 8) One translation I read makes it somewhat clearer

17 ... with whom there is no variation *or shadow from change*.<sup>6</sup>

- 9) Having said all that, James is painting a word picture here.
  - a) God is unchangeable (immutable) whereas things He created do change.
  - b) This does not mean that God will not change His mind.
  - c) It does not mean that He will not get angry or have other emotions.

---

<sup>6</sup> A. K. M. Adam, [\*James: A Handbook on the Greek Text\*](#), ed. Martin M. Culy, Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013), 17.

## **James – Faith Demonstrated – 2025**

---

d) IT DOES MEAN – His love and care for us, his creation, will last for all eternity.

10) The other interesting wording here in verse 17 is “every perfect gift.”

11) Have you ever considered the fact that nothing ever comes from God that is not perfect?

12) At first thought, this seems really easy to claim as absolute truth – **and it is.**

13) However, *do we always consider God’s gifts perfect?*

**What about prayers that are not answered as we wanted them to be?**

**What about unanswered prayers?**

**Are there any other things we might struggle with calling them “from God and Perfect?”**

**How do we deal with these things that are so hard to accept and yet must be “perfect” because they come from God?**