

*The Letter to the  
12 Tribes*

# James

*Jas. 1:17-22*



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Jas. 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.



## INTRODUCTION, 1:1

### I. THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS BATTLES, 1:2-16

#### A. The Testings of the Christian Life, 1:2-12

1. Testings are for a purpose, 1:2-11

2. Testings are for our profit, 1:12

a. The crisis endured, 1:12a “Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation...”

b. The crown ensured, 1:12b “...for when he is tried, he shall receive the **crown of life**, which **the Lord hath promised to them that love him.**”



- B. The Temptations of the Christian life, 1:13-16
  - 1. The source of temptation, 1:13-15
    - a. What we must realize, 1:13
      - (1) Recording a common error, 1:13a
      - (2) Refuting a common error, 1:13b
    - b. What we must recognize, 1:14-15
      - (1) The mother of sin, 1:14-15a
      - (2) The method of sin, 1:15b
      - (3) The maturity of sin, 1:15c
  - 2. The subtlety of temptation, 1:16



## II. THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS BIBLE, 1:17-27

### A. God's Word is Likened to a Gift, 1:17-18

#### 1. A gift that brings divine light, 1:17

Jas. 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

#### a. The nature of the gifts, 1:17a-c

(1) Their monopoly, 1:17a “**Every** good gift...”

Any and every act of giving a gift that is good comes from God. He has a monopoly on the quality of “good.”



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Mt. 7:9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give **good gifts** unto your children, **how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things** to them that ask him?

Original Word: δόσις

Transliteration: dosis

Definition: a giving, gift, donation.

*dósis*— gift, **emphasizing the intention (aim) that motivates the giving** and the chain-reaction of giving-and-responding.

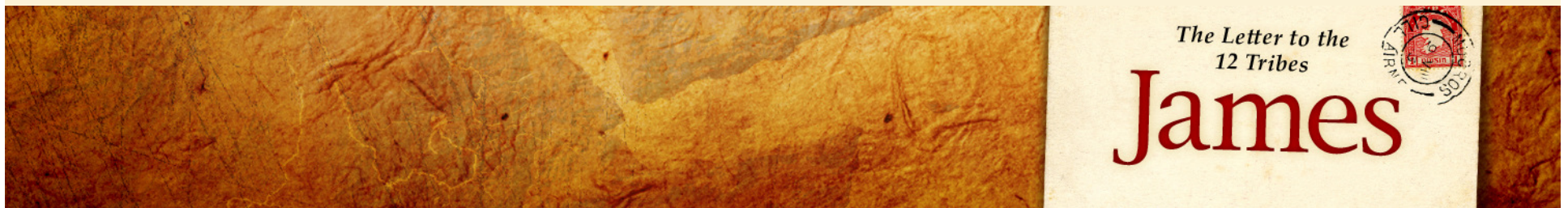
<http://biblehub.com/greek/1394.htm>

Phil. 4:15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning **giving** and receiving, but ye only.

## (2) Their majesty, 1:17b-c

(a) Godlike in their purity, 1:17b –  
“...and **every** perfect gift is **from above...**”

“In the Greek text there are two separate words to describe God's giving. **The first word (*dosis*) means 'the act of giving'** and is accompanied by the adjective for *good*, while the **second (*dorema*) denotes the actual gifts received and is preceded by the adjective for *perfect***. The first expression emphasizes the goodness of receiving something from God, while the second, the perfect quality of whatever God gives. God's giving is continuously good, and His gifts are always perfect.” *The Nelson Study Bible*, p. 2105.



1 Cor. 4:7 For who maketh thee to differ *from another*? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? **now if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it*?**

(b) Godlike in their perfection,  
1:17c – “...and cometh  
down from the Father of  
lights...”

1 Jn. 1:5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that **God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.**

b. The nature of the giver, 1:17d-e



(1) He is unchallengeable, 1:17d – “.....with whom is no variableness...”

(2) He is unchangeable, 1:17e – “...neither shadow of turning.”

Mal. 3:6 For **I am the LORD, I change not**; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

2. A gift that brings divine life, 1:18

Jas. 1:18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

a. According to the will of God, 1:18a – “Of his own will begat he us...”



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2 Cor. 4:6 For **God**, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, **hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.**

Jn. 1:12 **But as many as received him**, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

13 **Which were born**, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but **of God.**

b. According to the Word of God, 1:18b – “...with the word of truth...”

1 Pet. 1:23 **Being born again**, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, **by the word of God**, which liveth and abideth for ever.



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c. According to the wisdom of God, 1:18c – “...that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”

Lev. 23:10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, **then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest** unto the priest:

11 And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: **on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.**

1 Cor. 15:20 But **now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.** ...

23 But every man in his own order: **Christ the firstfruits;** afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.



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1 Cor. 16:15 I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that **it is the firstfruits of Achaia**, and **that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints**,)

Jn. 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: **the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.**



## Recap

- James says to count it all joy when we face temptations.
- Temptations test our character by trying our faith.
- James encourages us to pray for wisdom in order to understand such challenges.
- James states that endurance of trials because of our love for Christ will produce a reward, the crown of life.
- James makes it clear that God doesn't tempt anyone.
- We have to resist spiritual LSD – Lust -> Sin -> Death.
- The method of resistance is our fidelity to the Word of God!

James says to rejoice in the midst of temptation, by realizing the method of temptation, resisting the misery of temptation, by relying on the mastery of temptation --- the Word of God!

## B. God's Word is Likened to a Graft, 1:19-22

### 1. To effect a change in our talk, 1:19-20

a. Be swift to respond to speaking, 1:19a –  
“**Wherefore**, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear...”

b. Be slow to resort to speaking, 1:19b-20

(1) A first principle, 1:19b – “...slow to speak...”

Prov. 10:19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips *is* wise.

Prov. 13:3 He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: *but* he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.

Prov. 17:27 He that hath knowledge spareth his words: *and* a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.

28 Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: *and* he that shutteth his lips *is esteemed* a man of understanding.

Prov. 29:11 A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise *man* keepeth it in till afterwards. ...

20 Seest thou a man *that is* hasty in his words? *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

"The tribute was once paid to a great linguist that he could be silent in seven different languages." *The Letters of James and Peter*, Wm. Barclay, p. 6.5



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(2) A further principle, 1:19c-20

(a) The rule, 1:19c – “...slow to wrath:”

Prov. 14:29 **He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding:** but *he that is* hasty of spirit exalteth folly.

Prov. 15:1 A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

Eccl. 7:9 **Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.**

(b) The reason, 1:20

Jas. 1:20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

**The difficulties of life are intended to make us "better," not *bitter*.**



Psa. 19:14 **Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD**, my strength, and my redeemer.

Prov. 16:23 **The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth**, and addeth learning to his lips.

Eccl. 5:2 **Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter *any* thing before God**: for God *is* in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore **let thy words be few**.

Mt. 12:34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for **out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh**.

Mt. 15:18 But **those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart**; and they defile the man.

Lu. 6:45 A good man out of the good **treasure of his heart** bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil **treasure of his heart** bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

2. To effect a change in our walk, 1:21-22

a. What to reject, 1:21a – “**Wherefore** lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness...”

Col. 3:8 But now ye also **put off all these**; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

9 Lie not one to another, **seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds**;

10 **And have put on the new man**, which is **renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him**:

“Superfluity of naughtiness” = excessive wickedness, evil

b. What to receive, 1:21b – “...and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

Prov. 10:27 The fear of the LORD prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.

Prov. 11:19 As righteousness *tendeth* to life: so he that pursueth evil *pursueth it* to his own death.

Prov. 12:28 In the way of righteousness *is* life; and *in* the pathway *thereof there is* no death.

Prov. 13:14 The law of the wise *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

Prov. 19:16 He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his own soul; *but* he that despiseth his ways shall die.

Rom. 8:13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

1 Cor. 11:30 For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

1 Jn. 5:16 If any man see his brother sin a sin *which is* not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

c. What to resolve, 1:22

Jas. 1:22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

## Conclusion

Rom. 13:11 And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

