James 1:12-18

James 1:12 – "Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him."



- 1. "blessed" begins this verse with a blessing for the victor, which is the man who "remains steadfast under trial"
 - a. "remains steadfast" or "endures" hupomenei "to stay behind", "to await", "to endure" used to say "remain behind to serve", "to stand ground and show endurance", "to bear up against opposition"
 - b. "under trials" peirasmon from peirasmos "an experiment," "a trial", "a temptation"
- 2. "approved" dokimos "tested", "approved" used to say "tried and acceptable" and "tested for approval"

1:13 – "Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.



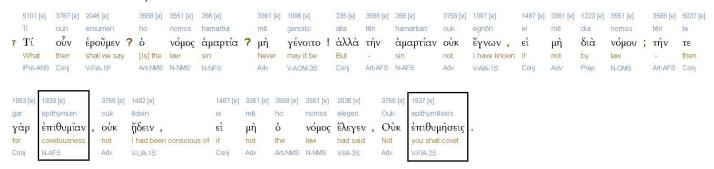
- 1. "trial" or "temptation" peirasmos this is an outward trial or a temptation to sin
 - a. Used in the form of a noun or a verb
 - b. Used in 1:2-3 to refer to "trials" and "testing"
 - c. Here it is used of a "temptation" as indicated by the use of the words:

- i. "evil" kakon in 1:13
- ii. "evil desire" epithymnias in 1:14
- iii. "sin" hamartian in 1:15
- 2. Reasons why "temptation" peirasmos cannot come from God:
 - a. "God cannot be tempted by evil"
 - b. Not only does God's holiness resist evil, but God's nature does not process, understand, perceive evil. It is to his nature a non-thing. Possibly like us being tempted by the smell of a color or enticed by the sound of a painting.
 - c. God's nature has no moral depravity so there is no basis for a temptation to originate in order to be passed on to a human experience.
 - d. Thus, God "himself tempts no one."

1:14 – "But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.



- 1. Temptation is experience by man "by his own desire" *epithymias* "desire, eagerness for, inordinate desire, lust, impassionate longing". Comes from the Greek word *epithumeo* meaning "a longing" which comes from a compound of epi = focused on and *thymos* meaning "passionate desire" which creates the word meaning "passion built on strong urges."
 - a. This is from man's "own desire":
 - i. Not God
 - ii. Not another person
 - iii. Not a situation
 - iv. Not a culture
 - v. Not even the devil is mentioned here.
 - b. Romans 1:24 "Therefore God gave them up in the <u>lusts of their hearts</u> to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves."
 - c. Romans 6:12 "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions."
 - d. Romans 7:7-8 "What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to <u>covet</u> if the law had not said, "You shall not <u>covet</u>." But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of <u>covetousness</u>. For apart from the law, sin lies dead.



- e. Romans 13:13-14 "Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires."
- f. Galatians 5:16 "I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the <u>desires</u> of the flesh."
- g. Galatians 5:24 "those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and <u>desires</u>."
- h. Ephesians 2:3 "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the <u>desires</u> of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind."
- 2. "Dragged away" (*exelkomenos*) and "being enticed" (*deleazomenos*) are both words taking from the practice of hunting and fishing:
 - a. "dragged away" exelkomenos "to draw out or away"
 - i. Used to say
 - 1. "draw out of the right place" and
 - 2. "draw aside out of the right way"
 - b. "being enticed" deleazomenos "to lure" and refers to using bait to entice.
 - i. Often seen in use with:
 - 1. baiting a hook
 - 2. setting a trap with bait
 - ii. 2 Peter 2:14 "They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They <u>entice</u> <u>unsteady souls</u>. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children!
 - iii. 2 Peter 2:18 "For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they <u>entice</u> by <u>sensual</u> <u>passions of the flesh</u> those who are barely escaping from those who live in error.

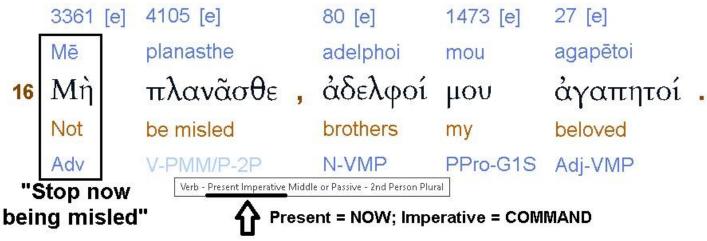
1:15 – "Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.



- 1. The process:
 - a. "Desire" (epithymia) "conceives" (syllabousa)
 - b. "Desire" (epithymia) "gives birth" (tikteii)

- c. "Sin" (hamartian) is born
- d. "Sin" (hamartian) grows up or matures (apotelstheisa)
- e. Mature Sin (apotelstheisa hamartian) "brings forth" (apokyei) "death" (thanaton)
- 2. "**conceives**" *syllabousa* "to conceive", "to become pregnant", "to collect", "to take", "by implication to take part with"
- 3. "gives birth" tiktei "to beget", "to bring forth"
- 4. "**sin**" hamartian "failure", "missed the mark". This is a self-originating failure that brings with it the guilt of having not hit the target or the goal.
- 5. "**fully grown**" apotelestheisa "to bring to an end", "complete". Used to say "accomplish", "fully formed", "perfect", "bring to maturity."
- 6. "brings forth" apokyei "to give birth to". It is a medical or physical word marking the close of pregnancy.
 - a. This word is used two times in the NT:
 - i. James 1:15 "sin when it is fully grown **brings forth** death.
 - ii. James 1:18 "Of <u>his own will</u> he **brought** <u>us</u> **forth** <u>by the word of truth</u>, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.
- 7. "death" thanaton "death" referring to physical and spiritual. This is separation from life if it be physical separation of the soul from the body, spiritual separation of the soul from God, or any number of separation of a person's existence from the plan and purpose of God.
- 8. <u>Temptation</u> → **DESIRE** → Conception → Birth → **SIN** → Growth/Maturity → **DEATH**

1:16 – "Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.



- 1. The opening word in the Greek *Me* along with the present tense imperative verb "be misled" (*planasthe*) means the readers are actively being deceived about this point of doctrine and are saying God is the source of the temptation and not their own sin nature.
 - a. "stop being misled"
 - b. "stop being deceived"
 - c. "stop holding to false doctrine"
- 2. They will never be able to recover, grow or find joy in God's plan if they maintain false doctrine.
- 1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.



- 1. To argue against the view that claims "I am being tempted by God" when a believer experiences the desire to respond to oppression and trials with violence, unrighteousness, foul language, etc. James uses another argument that says:
 - a. God only gives good, perfect gifts
 - b. God is the Father of lights
 - c. God is above
 - d. God has no variation, no change
- 2. God will bring judgment, but not by tempting the believer to do evil.
 - a. Romans 12:19-21 "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord. To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." <u>Do not be overcome by evil, but</u> overcome evil with good."
 - b. Proverbs 24:29 "Do not say, "I will do to him as he has done to me; I will repay the man according to his work."
 - c. 1 Samuel 26:10 "David added, "As surely as the LORD lives, the LORD Himself will strike him down; either his day will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish.
 - d. Deuteronomy 32:35 "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; for their day of disaster is near, and their doom is coming quickly."
- 3. Instead, God is going to send something from above, from the lights, from his goodness, from is perfection to overcome evil. And, the next verse tells us what God sends to us from above.
- 4. Notice in the NIV the word "heavenly" in the phrase "Father of heavenly lights" is not in the Greek, but added to help clarify the divine origin and not merely natural light. The addition is not necessary, but it does clarify the intention.
- 5. "Father" of lights indicates:
 - God is the creator of the heavenly lights (stars, moon, sun, and likely includes angels since the ancient world associated the stars with angels)
 - b. God is the sustainer and overseer of the heavenly lights
- 6. "variation" and "shifting shadow" could have two views, but both make the same point: God is unchanging. God's nature is always the same.
 - a. God IS NOT like the shadows cast by the sun. At noon there is little shadow, but at sunrise or sunset there are large shadows. But, God's light is the same always.
 - i. "Variation" indicates orderly and periodic movement
 - ii. "shadow of turning" could refer to phases of the moon that are always changing, or shadows that change minute by minute.

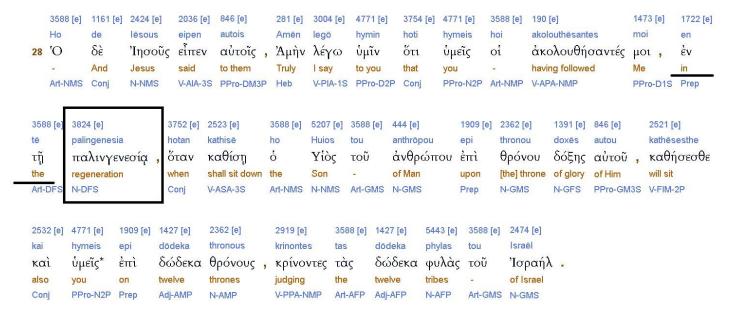
b. God IS like the planets and the stars since they do not change their orbit. They were set in place to establish and measure time. God is the same. He is unchanging.

1:18 – "Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

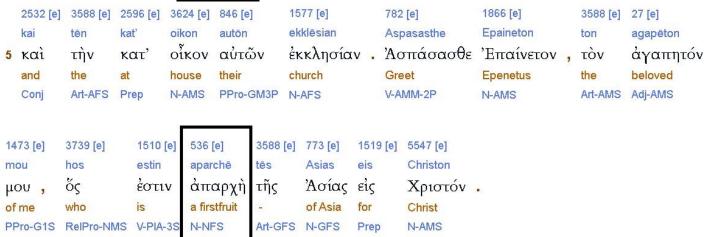
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	boulētheis	apekyēsen	hēmas	logō	alētheias	eis	to	einai	hēmas
18	βουληθεὶς ,	ἀπεκύησεν	ἡμᾶς	λόγφ	άληθείας ,	εἰς	τò	είναι	ἡμᾶς
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- 1. Now we get to hear what God is doing.
 - a. God is acting constructively from outside this fallen, evil world.
 - b. God has already began the work of salvation for these readers through the Word of Truth.
 - c. We are to receive this and grow in this Word
 - d. Our spiritual growth today (goodness, righteousness, faithfulness, etc.) is the beginning ("first fruits") of God's restoration of this fallen world.
 - e. We should embrace this spiritual growth now even though it is the small minority and seems insignificant and ignored because all of creation is going to follow us as God's good and perfect Word of Truth has conceived and given us new birth into the coming age centuries before this Kingdom Age overthrows this present cosmos.
- 2. Three steps in 1:18
 - a. "of his own will" this is God's desire. It is good and perfect and from above. It is not of this fallen age. It is not a temptation from man's evil desire.
 - b. "by the word of truth" the seed is not in man or in creation. It is not a philosophy or an academic concept. It is the Word of Truth penetrating the darkness of man's soul.
 - c. "that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" the reason for this happening to us is that we can start today producing what is eternal and what will eventually be the only reality remaining. All others are passing away.
- 3. "First fruits" and renewal of creation:
 - a. Matthew 19:28 "Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world (NIV "at the renewal of all things"), when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."



- b. Acts 3:19-21 "Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive <u>until the time for restoring</u> all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago.
- c. Romans 8:19-24 "
- d. 2 Peter 3:10-13
- e. Revelation 21:1-4 "
- f. Romans 16:5 "Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia.



g. 1 Corinthians 16:15 – "Now I urge you, brothers—you know that the household of Stephanas were the <u>first converts</u> in Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints."

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	Parakalō	de	hymas	adelphoi	oidate	tēn	oikian	Stephana	hoti	estin	aparchē	tēs
15	Παρακαλῶ	δὲ	ύμᾶς ,	άδελφοί,	οἴδατε	τὴν	οἰκίαν	Στεφανᾶ,	ὅτι	ἐστὶν	ἀπαρχὴ	τῆς
	I exhort	now	you	brothers	you know	the	house	of Stephanas	that	it is	firstfruit	-
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Achaias	kai	eis	diakonian	tois	hagiois	etaxan	heautous
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of Achaia	and	to	service	to the	saints	they have devoted	themselves
N-GFS	Conj	Prep	N-AFS	Art-DMP	Adj-DMP	V-AIA-3P	RefPro-AM3P