

## THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

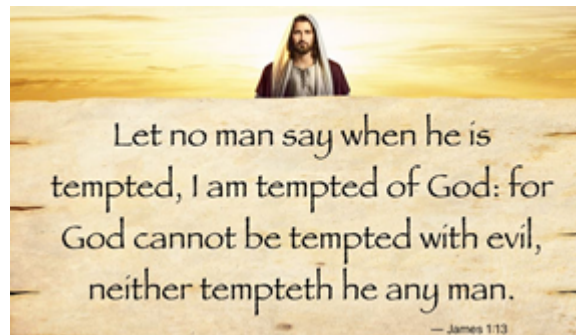
### Theme: "The Testing of Your Faith"

Lesson: 6 Text: 1:13-20 Date: 2-26-23

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### TEXT AND STUDY NOTES

(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.

(14) But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.

(15) Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin,  
and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

**(Gen 3:6-22; 22:1; 2 Sam 11: 2-17; Job 15:35; Ps 7:14; Prov 19:3; Is 59:4;  
Rom 5:12; 6:23; 1 Cor 10:13)**

(16) Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.

(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.**

(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.

**(Gen 1:3-5,14-19; Ex 22:29; 23:19; Lev 23:9-14; Num 23:19;**

**Ps 85:12; 102:27; 136:7; Jer 2:3; Dan 2:22; Mal 3:6;**

**Jn 1:5,13; 3:3-8,27; Rom 8:19-23; 16:5; 1 Cor 4:7; 6:9; 15:20-28; 16:15;**

**Eph 1:12; 2 Tim 2:15; 1 Pet 1:3,23-25; 1 Jn 1:5; Rev 14:4)**

(19) Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;

(20) for the anger of man does not produce **the righteousness that God requires.**

**(Prov 10:19; 14:29; 17:27; Eccl 5:1,2; 7:10;**

**Mt 5:22; 13:17; Lk 1:6,75; 2:25; 23:50; Rom 6:1-5,12-24; 1 Jn 2:21)**

### Commentary on James – "The Epistle of Faith" – Dr. David Scaer - CPH

God Himself is morally good in His essence and has no choice but to oppose all evil. Evil is to be understood as anything opposed to God. Tribulations experienced by Christians do not originate with God. Sin arises through the interaction between man's sinful nature and the world's hostility to God's purposes. The petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation" (Matt. 6:13) is a request for God to equip the Christian to overcome temptation.

opportunity for sin. Temptation, though always evil in origin and satanically inspired (Matt. 4:1; 6:13), is of positive benefit in the Christian's life if it forces increased reliance on God and less reliance on self. The Christian overcomes the temptation, Satan is conquered, and Christ is victorious in His saints. This, like Easter, is occasion for joy. Completely disastrous are the results when the Christian tries to resist the temptation with his own resources. Then Satan's victory is assured. God is neither the inventor nor the cause, direct or indirect, of those external circumstances which are called temptations. God's invariableness, a topic of the following pericope, allows Him no participation in the cause of evil. James will say of God that with Him "there is no variation or shadow due to change" (1:17). Luther also saw that God uses Satan and evil to strengthen the Christian in his faith. This Luther

James' graphic description of the development of sin within the Christian is unmatched by any other New Testament writer. Not even Paul, the Augustinian without peer in the New Testament, does a better job. Sin's progress is compared to the conception of a child, its birth, and finally the full development of an adult human being.<sup>6</sup> Sin takes shape because our internal desires have been successful in their unrelenting drive to conceive sin within us. The conception-birth imagery reflects "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." The conception of sin by our own desires allows for no abortion in its development. After birth, sin eventually evolves into death. On this point James would later be paralleled by Paul, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). For James the death which is the end result of desire conceived into sin is eternal death and not only the termination of human life on earth. Counterbalanced with the prospect of death for the sinner is the reward of the resurrected life for believers (1:18). Paul has a similar formula in Rom. 6:23, "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." On this point, as with many others, James has anticipated

The vocabulary of this section with its strong Christological terminology and salvific expressions indicates that James is speaking of God's plan of salvation in an abbreviated way. It could be paraphrased in this way: "The one perfect and good gift of salvation has already come down from heaven." This would of course be God's work of incarnation and atonement in Jesus Christ. Since this suggestion may to some be startlingly new, it must be carefully delineated.

What is the "every good and perfect gift"(NIV)? Must it refer to many gifts or could it possibly refer to simply one gift which can be beneficial in any number of situations?

The two Greek words translated as "gift" (*dosis* and *dōrēma*) have overlapping but still distinguishable meanings. *Dosis* carries the meaning of gift, and *dōrēma* the idea of generosity.<sup>7</sup> Paul uses the latter word for God's generosity in giving salvation (Rom. 5:16). *Dosis* is derived from *didōmi*, (to give) and, as mentioned, is frequently used of God's giving of Himself in Jesus Christ for the world's salvation. The Greek words for "all" (*pasa* and *pan*) stress the gift's wholeness, totality, and purity, which can be individualized for a particular situation.<sup>8</sup>

The words "good" (*agathē*) and "perfect" (*teleion*) add still another dimension. Most appropriately "good" refers to God Himself (Matt. 19:17). The gift is good because it originates with God and carries with it God's own qualities. James has moved beyond the ethical, moral, or philosophical

#### LIFE APPLICATION

**God** cannot be tempted with evil, and **he himself** tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. How is this a good description of the Old Adam – the sinful nature?