

# Bethany Bible Study & Discussion

## James (Part-1) (Chapter 1)

### **Trials & Temptations**

**Introduction (1):** Who is the author of this epistle? When was this epistle written? Who is it addressed to? Who does the 'scattered abroad' refer to?

**Trials & Temptations (2-17):** What is the difference between trials & temptations? How do we respond to trials in life? What is the biblical response to trials? Why must we go through trials? Is anyone exempt from trials? What is the source of temptations? What is the biblical response to temptations? What is the 'deathly' consequence of not adopting a biblical response to temptations? How can we be victorious in the midst of temptations?

**Application:** *He is the giver of good and perfect gifts ... have you collected your gift yet?*

# James 1

Introduction (1)

Trials (2-12)

Temptations (13-17)



# Epistle of James

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**Timing:** around 45-50 AD  
(written before any of Paul's epistles)

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**Audience:** Believers (primarily Jewish converts from early church, but applies to us also)

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**Theme:** Be doers of God's word  
(emphasis on works that should follow genuine faith)

# Content ... important topics

Trials &  
Temptations  
(1)

Word of God  
(1)

Faith + Works  
(2)

Partiality (2)

(Ab)Use of  
Tongue (3)

True Wisdom  
(3)

Covetousness  
(4)

Illusion of  
Riches (5)

Healing (5)

Who is James?

# Who is James?

Brother of Jesus; biological parents - Joseph and Mary

- Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers **James**, Joses, Simon, and Judas? (Mathew 13:55; Galatians 1:19)

Not always a believer

- Even his brothers did not believe him (John 7:5; Mark 3:21)

Likely saved after post-resurrection appearance of Christ

- After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles (I Corinthians 15:7)

# James, the early church leader

- Found praying with small group (Acts 1:14)
- Present at Pentecost and blessing of Holy Spirit (Acts 2)
- Speaks in defense of Peter and Paul (Acts 15:13-21)
- Elder in church (Acts 21:18)
- Martyred (AD 62)

# Salutation (1)

James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.

From: James

Introduces himself as “bondservant”  
(not brother of Jesus)

To: Scattered twelve tribes

- 12 tribes could refer to “Jews”, in general
  - Original dispersion of Jews ... Babylonian conquest of northern kingdom, Israel and Assyrian conquest of southern kingdom, Judah
- Scattering due to persecution of early church
  - At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles (Acts 8:1)

# Trials (2-12)

- Meaning
- Inappropriate Responses
- Appropriate Response
- Tools
- Blessings

## James 1:2-12

<sup>2</sup> My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces <sup>[a]</sup>patience. <sup>4</sup> But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be <sup>[b]</sup>perfect and complete, lacking nothing. <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> *he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. <sup>9</sup> Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, <sup>10</sup> but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away. <sup>11</sup> For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits. <sup>12</sup> Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him

# What are trials?

- Sent by God
- Affects all believers
- Varies (in intensity, duration)
- Unexpected
- Triggered by people & circumstances
- Designed to test & refine our faith

## Inappropriate response to trials

- Discouragement
- Bitterness
- Complain
- Self-pity
- Lose faith/hope
- Question God & His wise ways

# The Appropriate response to trials

- Welcome trials with Joy (2)
- Use wisdom (5)

“count it all joy when you fall into various trials” (2)

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God” (5)

# Wisdom: a powerful tool (5)

## Use wisdom to respond to trials

- Wisdom comes from God (wisdom is application of knowledge)
- Wisdom is revealed to us in the scriptures and through the Holy Spirit
  - Using worldly wisdom or our rationale to deal with trials will lead to more distress, confusion, and losses.

## Wisdom is available in abundance but we must ask in faith (6)

- **Saving faith** ... believing in the finished work on the cross
- **Sustaining faith** ... continued dependence on God's plan & power.

# Consequence of wavering faith (6-8)

<sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> *he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

## Consequences of wavering faith

- Restlessness and Anxiety
- Weakened immunity to deal with uncertainties of life
- Unanswered prayers
- Poor testimony

Ascending Blessing of Trials (3,4,12)  
... trials can put us on a higher ground

Can we  
mature  
without  
trials?

Test of faith

Patience

Maturity

Crown of Life\*

(James 1:12, Revelation 2:10)

Can we  
get a  
crown  
without  
the cross?

# Exhortation to the rich & poor (9-10)

**Poor** to rejoice in the richness of (spiritual) blessings

- James 2:5 (rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom)
- Spiritual blessings in Heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3)

**Rich** should not depend on riches

- riches are temporary and will end at the grave
- spiritual riches will continue for ever

“Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty *man* glory in his might, Nor let the rich *man* glory in his riches; <sup>24</sup> But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I *am* the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, <sup>[1]</sup> judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,” says the Lord (Jeremiah 9:23-24)

## James 2:13-17

<sup>13</sup> Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. <sup>14</sup> But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. <sup>16</sup> Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. <sup>17</sup> Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

# Temptations (13-17)

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Source

Appropriate Response

Consequence of Inappropriate Response

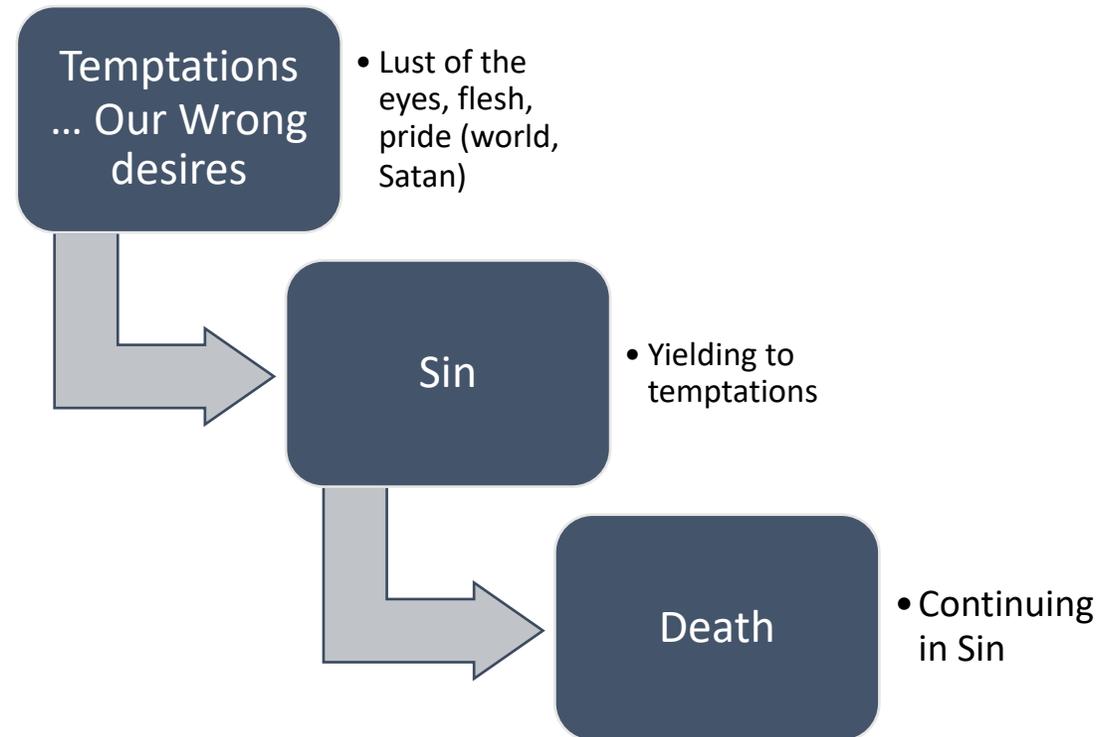
Blessings

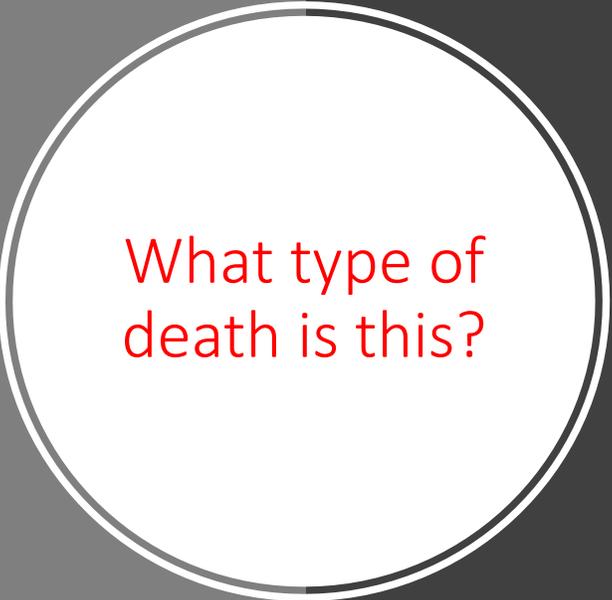
## Source of temptations

Not God (13, 17)

# Downward spiral of temptations

<sup>14</sup> But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.





What type of  
death is this?

- Not eternal (our salvation is secured for eternity)
- Not physical death (we don't die every time we sin!)

Rather, death refers to:

- Loss of communion with God (Isiah 59:1-2)
- Loss of joy of salvation (Psalms 51:12)
- Living death (I Timothy 5:6)
  - But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives. I Timothy 5:6



Appropriate  
response to  
Temptations

Do not Yield (like David did),  
Do not Compromise or rationalize (like Esau did),  
Do not discuss (like Adam & Eve did),  
Do not negotiate (like Judas did)

**INSTEAD,**

**FLEE** like Joseph did (Genesis 39:12)

**RESIST** (James 4:7)

**RUN TO GOD** (Hebrews 2:18)

**POWER OF GOD'S WORD** (Psalms 119:11)

**FILLING OF THE SPIRIT** (Ephesians 5:18)

**PRAY** ( Mark 14:38)

**LOOK FOR GOD'S EXIT DOOR** (I Corinthians 10:13)

# Verses for previous slide

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- **FLEE:** that she caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me.” But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside (**Genesis 39:12**)
- **RESIST:** Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you (**James 4:7**)
- **RUN TO GOD:** For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted. (**Hebrews 2:18**)
- **WORD of GOD:** Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You. (**Psalms 119:11**)
- **HOLY SPIRIT:** And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit (**Ephesians 5:18**)
- **PRAY:** watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation (**Mark 14:38**)
- **GOD’S EXIT DOOR:** No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*. (**I Corinthians 10:13**)

Yield not to  
temptation ...  
hymn by  
Horatio  
Palmer (1868)

Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin;  
Each vict'ry will help you some other to win;  
Fight manfully onward, dark passions subdue;  
Look ever to Jesus, He will carry you through.

*Refrain:*

Ask the Savior to help you,  
Comfort, strengthen, and keep you;  
He is willing to aid you,  
He will carry you through.



Shun evil companions, bad language disdain,  
God's name hold in rev'rence, nor take it in vain;  
Be thoughtful and earnest, kindhearted and true;  
Look ever to Jesus, He will carry you through.

To him that o'ercometh, God giveth a crown,  
Through faith we will conquer, though often cast down;  
He who is our Savior, our strength will renew;  
Look ever to Jesus, He will carry you through.



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