

**DON'T BE DECEIVED, RESIST THE TEMPTATIONS**  
**THAT COME ALONG WITH TRIALS!**  
**JAMES CH1:13-18**

**INTRODUCTION**

How many verses are there in the Book of James? 108! With **55 of them being direct, not watered down, clear "imperatives or commands"**, James had plenty of instructions to pass on to his generation of born again Christians, which are still applicable now!

1. Ch1:2 – Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds ...
2. v4 – Let steadfastness have its full effect ...
3. v5 – Let him ask God who gives generously ...
4. v6 – Let him ask in faith, with no doubting ...
5. v7 – That person must not suppose that he will receive anything ...
6. v9 – Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation ...
7. v13 – Let no-one say when he is tempted ...
8. v16 – Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers ... **12 in Ch1**
9. v19 – Know this, my beloved brothers let ...
10. v21 – Put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness ...
11. v10 – Receive with meekness the implanted word ...
12. v22 – Be doers of the word and not hearers only ...
13. Ch2:1 – Show no partiality as you hold the faith ...
14. v5 – Listen my beloved brothers, has not God ...
15. v12 – Speak and so ... **5 in Ch2**
16. v12 – Act as those who are to be judged ...
17. v18 – Show me your faith apart from your works ...
18. Ch3:1 – Not many of you should become teachers ...
19. v4 Look at the ships also: although they are so large ...
20. v13 – Let him show his works in the meekness ... **5 in Ch3**
21. v14 – Do not boast ...
22. v14 – Do not be false to the truth ...
23. Ch4:7 – Submit yourselves therefore to God ...
24. v7 – Resist the devil and he will flee ...
25. v8 – Draw near to God and he will draw near to you ...
26. v8 – Cleanse your hands ...
27. v8 – Purify your hearts ...
28. v9 – Mourn ...
29. v9 – Weep ... **12 in Ch4**
30. v9 – Let your laughter ...
31. v9 – Let your joy ...
32. v10 – Humble yourselves before the Lord ...
33. v11 – Do not speak evil against one another ...
34. v13 – Come now you who say ...
35. Ch5:1 – Come now, you rich ...
36. v1 – Weep ...
37. v1 – Howl ...
38. v4 – Behold the wages of the labourers ...
39. v7 – Be patient therefore brothers, before the coming of the Lord ...
40. v7 – See how the farmer waits ...
41. v8 – Be patient ...
42. v8 – Establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord ...
43. v9 – Do not grumble against one another ...

- 44.v9 – Behold the judge is standing ...
- 45.v10 – Take the prophets ...**
- 46.v11 – Behold we consider those blessed ...
- 47.v12 – Do not swear ...
- 48.v12 – Let your “yes” be yes ...
- 49.v13 – Let him pray ...
- 50.v13 – Let him sing praise ...
- 51.v14 – Let him call for the elders ...
- 52.v14 – Let them pray ...
- 53.v16 – Confess your sins ...
- 54.v16 – Pray for one another ...
- 55.v20 – Let him know ...

## **21 in Ch5**

“For these reasons, James has been called **“the proverbs of the New Testament”** (Proverbs being – a brief saying that conveys a lesson about how to live wisely and well, usually drawn from observations about nature and life. The Book of Proverbs contains the vast majority of biblical proverbs, but they occur in other Books of the Bible as well).

**James is therefore highly relevant to the Christian life.** Unlike many of the other Books of the New Testament, James's aim is not to give a theological presentation of the gospel. Rather, **he writes his book to those who already believe the gospel, and his goal is to help them live faithfully as followers of Jesus.** There are many different and seemingly disconnected themes in James – perseverance under trial, riches and poverty, wisdom, the danger of the tongue, prayer, and faith and works. But what ties them all together is James's desire to take the teaching of Jesus and apply it to the Christians personal life” (Cited in James by Greg Gilbert, pg 7+8).

### **GOD'S NATURE AND WILL IN THE TRIAL! V13**

According to Douglas J. Moo “For every trial brings temptation. Financial difficulty can tempt us to question God's providence in our lives. The death of a loved one can tempt us to question God's love for us. The suffering of the righteous poor and the ease of the wicked rich can tempt us to question God's justice, or even existence. Thus testing almost always includes temptation, and temptation is itself a test. Persevering under trial (v12) demands that we overcome these kinds of temptations” (Douglas J. Moo, The letter of James, pg96).

Whenever we face “trials or tests”, there is an “outer problem”, that can reveal itself in financial difficulties, or in a loss of a loved one, or even an injustice of some kind, but whatever the “outer problem” is, it leads to an “inner temptation”, a desire that works to lure us to have something, do something, take something, that God prohibits! The Greek word “peira” is used for both the “outer trial” and the “inner temptation”. God often tested His people:

1. God tested Abraham to offer his only son Isaac as a sacrifice – Gen Ch22:1
2. He tested Israel – Judges Ch2:22
3. He tested King Hezekiah – 2 Chronicles Ch32:31 + 2 Kings Ch20:12-19
4. God tested His Son, Jesus – Matthew Ch4:1-11

But whilst God has, is and will test Christians to strengthen their faith, He can never damage, destroy or diminish His people's faith and or trust in Himself!

James reveals to the Christians that he is writing to, that:

1. No-one when being tempted should blame God!
2. God cannot be tempted by evil!
3. God cannot tempt anyone!

***This is a reminder of God's holiness, whose moral purity is absolute, as there is not the smallest trace of evil in God's nature (1 John Ch1:5 – God is light and in him there is no darkness at all).*** Because of this particular character of God, holiness, this leads to a particular will of God, in that, He cannot tempt anyone, because of His Holy Character!

Think godly pattern that strengthens – Trial, test of faith, steadfastness, steadfastness' full effect, perfect, complete and not lacking anything!

### **OUR NATURE AND WILL IN THE TEMPTATION! V14-V15**

Satan on the other hand, and according to JESUS is “a murderer and the father of all lies” (John Ch8:44), the apostle John says that “... the devil has been sinning from the beginning” (1 John Ch3:8), he is described by the apostle Peter as “... Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter Ch5:8). He is always looking, as a thief, to steal, kill and destroy (John Ch10:10).

***Satan tempted our parents, Adam and Eve, by distorting God's Word and making a promise concerning sin, that sin can't keep! But we fall for this false promise often, because in our sinful desires, we long for things that God forbids and prohibits, because they damage our hearts!***

James makes it clear here, that human beings, can't blame God (v13) but have to take full responsibility for the way in which they actively engage in a godless, evil pattern – But each person – tempted – lured away – enticed – desires that conceive – give birth – fully grown – brings forth death! This death that James talks about is “spiritual death”, sin that has not been atoned, through repentance by faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ!!

***James' greatest concern for the Christians that he is writing to, is not the wrong that is being done to them, but the wrong they may do to themselves and others!***

### **GOD'S GOOD GIFTS AND WILL IN THE TRIAL! V16-V18**

James wants his readers to cling to the certainty of God's unchanging love in their trials and temptations!

***We now hit the 8<sup>th</sup> of 55 imperatives in 108 verses, that James writes! “Do not be deceived .....*”** If James, the younger brother of Jesus, the born again Christian, the apostle, the pillar of the Church and the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, has so many “imperatives or commands” to give to the 12 tribes of the dispersion (55 commands in 108 verses), these precious “Saints” who once lived so peacefully amongst their fellow Israelites in Israel, but were now persecuted by the very ones that they used to share so much with, how will James do it, so that what he has to say to a people now “on the run”, will be willing to receive what he has to say so well?

He uses a term over and over again filled with warmth, care and intent, revealing the vital relationship between preacher and congregation - ***“adelphoi mou” - my brothers and***

**sisters, or the variant “adelphoi mou agapetoi - my beloved brothers and sisters,** which comes through the lips straight from the heart (Ch1:2, 16, 19; Ch2:1, 5, 14; Ch3:1; Ch5:7, 9, 10, 12, 19 = 12 times in total).

**“Do not be deceived”, in what?**

Don't be deceived about God's nature and God's Will in trials, don't be deceived about human beings nature and will in temptations and don't be deceived about where good and perfect gifts come from! You see, v16 looks both backwards and forwards, in relation to “Don't be deceived.”

Because of God's good gifts, there is always a way to overcome temptation, through obedience to His Word (1<sup>st</sup> Cor Ch10:13 + 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor Ch8:9)!

During trials and temptations, what is your view of God? James wants it to be based on Biblical Truth – God has complete authority over your circumstances, God is trustworthy, every aspect of God's grace towards the Christian is generous, good, constant and unchanging!

V18 – Finally, this section with the way the syntax is formed (arrangements of words to create well formed sentences) suggest that God's Word of truth, which was not only spoken at the beginning to bring into creation all things, is the instrument through which God brings people to life! This phrase is used in 4 other places in the New Testament – 2 Cor Ch6:7; Eph Ch1:13; Col Ch1:5; and 2 Tim Ch2:15. There are further references to “word” in this chapter in v21, 22, 23!

Through God's Word of truth, the Gospel, pioneer Christians, James and the scattered Saints are a kind of “first-fruits”, declaring that more will come from the harvest!

**APPLICATION**

James wants his readers to cling to the certainty of God's unchanging love in their trials and temptations!

How has this passage spoken to you?

How have you been encouraged?