

22S25 James 1:9-19 (Part 2) Loving God

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope everyone is doing well. Today we are beginning our study of James with James 1:9-18.

Before we start, we need to understand a little about this amazing short letter from James. Who was James? Historians are not sure. Many believe this is James the half-brother of Jesus or even another early Church leader. Most believe this is the same James that appears in the book of Acts and was the leader of the Jerusalem Council in Acts Chapter 15. We don't know the exact date it was written but there are indications that this was written before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD, but we really don't know. The best guess is 50-60AD. Which would make this one of the earliest New Testament letters. James was writing to Hebrew believers scattered among the nations who are facing many trials and persecution. The main theme in this letter is patient perseverance in the midst of the trouble of life. James is encouraging his readers to actively live what they have learned in Christ. He has strong messages about various sins but includes pride, hypocrisy, favoritism, and slander.

I'm reading from the New American Standard version (NAS) today. But of course, you can use whatever translation you choose.

Let's read James 1:9-18 (NAS) *⁹Now the brother or sister of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position; ¹⁰but the rich person is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. ¹¹For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so also the rich person, in the midst of his pursuits, will die out. ¹²Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. ¹³No one is to say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. ¹⁴But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. ¹⁵Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it has run its course, brings forth death. ¹⁶Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers and sisters. ¹⁷Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. ¹⁸In the exercise of His will He gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.*

Let's pray. Dear heavenly father, guide our discussion today such that your message is clear to each of us. As we read your word from James, help us see what James wants his readers to understand and why. I pray that you help me stay out of the way so your hope and peace can be shared with us. I pray this in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

So let's look at these verses more closely, James 1:9-10a (NAS) *⁹Now the brother or sister of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position; ¹⁰but the rich person is to glory in his humiliation,* James starts by stress we are all family in Christ. James is writing to his brothers and sisters or his Christian family. Then James makes an

amazing statement. Those in humble circumstances or poor should be glory in their high position. And the rich person glory in their humiliation or poverty. Rich are poor and poor are rich. This sounds upside down doesn't it. Let's read on

James 1:10b-12 (NAS) , *because like flowering grass he will pass away. ¹¹For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so also the rich person, in the midst of his pursuits, will die out. ¹²Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

This is a very important point so please hear this. Everyone faces troubles in life, that's just life. The rich person and the poor person face troubles. We are all like flowering grass which are scorched by the sun. No matter who we are or how much money we have, we will all face troubles. Blessed in the person who perseveres under the trials of life. Persevere is also translated as patiently endure, remain steadfast. It is this idea of we are going to get through it. Our troubles are not going to last forever. Trust God. Now troubles in life are sometimes our fault, we have given in to temptations and sometimes troubles are not our fault, it is just part of our life. Trust God and these troubles will pass. God promises to we will benefit from the trials of life for those who love God.

Then James says in James 1:13-14 (NAS) *¹³No one is to say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. ¹⁴But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.* We are all tempted but not by God. God does not do evil to us. But our savior understands, because He was also tempted like we are. But God **DOES NOT** tempt us. Our temptations are the devil's way of enticing us with our own desires.

Then James says in James 1:15-16 (NAS) *¹⁵Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it has run its course, brings forth death. ¹⁶Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers and sisters.* Our own desires often give birth to sin. Sin are things we do against God. And when we give in to our sinful desires and they run their course to our destruction. Destruction of relationships, destruction of our reputations, destruction of our self-respect and destruction of our , well you can fill in the blank. It brings death. All sin leads to death. So don't be deceived. God knows what is best for us. Sin always leads to death and destruction in our lives and the lives of the people around us.

But James has some good news in James 1:17-18 (NAS) *¹⁷Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. ¹⁸In the exercise of His will He gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.*

God has created everything, including us. God is our Father in Heaven and He gives us good and perfect gifts. He is the perfect gift. Jesus came and died for us. Jesus paid the price for our sin, so we could have a relationship with Him. We now have a way to be sons and daughters of God. We are the "first fruits" of all creation. What this means

is we have value to God. God has given us a way to be in relationship with him through His words in the Bible, His sacrifice for us on the cross and His guidance through the Holy Spirit. These are amazing gifts.

Let's review.

- 1) Rich are Poor and Poor are Rich? What does this mean. It means that from God's perspective there is no rich or poor. The person living in poverty are rich in God's glory. They are not forgotten. It means the person who has a lot should be humbled that God would entrust so much to them. Rich are humbled, Poor are empowered. Sounds good doesn't it.
- 2) Temptation? Temptations are not from God. Temptations are rooted in our own selfish desires. We deserve it. We want it. We, we. Or me, me, me. Selfishness leads to temptations which lead to pain, destruction and death. God knows best. Trust God.
- 3) Perfect Gift? God knows what is best for us. Trust God. Jesus knows what it is like to be tempted. Jesus knows what it is like to suffer. God does not want us to suffer. God wants to give us gifts, we are His children. In fact, God gave us the most "perfect gift" when He came and died to make a way for us to have a relationship with Him. That's a perfect gift.

Let's Pray. Heavenly Father thank you for this letter from James. Help us to read and meditate on this letter so we can hear the message you have for us. Help us to remember who you are Lord. You are our king, king of kings. You are our Lord, Lord over everyone. We can trust you, Lord. Help us to ask you for wisdom when we don't understand. I pray this in your Name Lord Jesus. Amen

Let me leave you with this, James was telling his reader to trust God. No matter your situation in life. Whether you are rich or poor, whether you are face big troubles or whether you are comfortable. Give everything to Jesus. Trust God. God want us to have good things as His children. We must resist our worldly desires and Trust God. Trust God knows what is best for us.

Thank you for joining me for our study of James. Please email me comments or feedback. Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.