



• DELIVERY ROOM •

# FAITHFUL FATHER, DIVINE DELIVERY

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JAMES 1:16-18 LESSON

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## JAMES 1:16-18 CONTEXT

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- **1 James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion. Joy be to you! 2 Consider it all joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 And let this perseverance bring about [its] perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete -- lacking in nothing. (Jas 1:1-4,AT)**
- **5 If any of you lacks wisdom, that person must ask God who gives to all sincerely and without reproaching, and it will be given to you. 6 But they must ask in faith(fulness), not wavering in doubt. For the one who doubts is like a surge of waves on the sea, being blown by the wind and tossed back and forth. 7 That person must not expect that they will receive anything from the Lord 8 – a double-minded individual, unstable in all their ways. (Jas 1:5-8,AT)**





## JAMES 1:16-18 CONTEXT

DELIVERY ROOM

- **9 The believer in humble circumstances must boast in their high position – 10 but the rich in their humiliation, because like a flower of the field they will pass away. 11 For the sun rises with scorching heat, and the field dries up, and its flower falls, and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed. In the same way, the rich -- in their journeys [in life] -- will fade away (Jas 1:9-11,AT)**
- **12 Blessed is the one who perseveres trial, because having been tested, they will receive the crown of life, which [the Lord] has promised to those who love Him. 13 When being tempted, let no one say, "I am being tempted by God." For God is untemptable by evil – and He tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted by their own desire, being lured and dragged away. 15 Then desire, having conceived, begets sin; sin, having been brought to maturity, gives birth to death (Jas 1:12-15,AT)**



WRONG  
WAY

## JAMES 1:16 DON'T BE DECEIVED, LED ASTRAY



- **Don't be deceived, my beloved brothers and sisters** (Jas 1:16,AT)
- The heart is **deceitful** above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? (Jer 17:9, NIV; Blomberg/Kamell, 73)
- Being deceived (πλανάω | *planaō*) refers not to minor moral lapses but “serious deviation[s] from the truth” (Davids U, 51; cf. πλάνη in 2 Pet 2:18, 3:17; 1 Jn 4:6; Davids N, 86; Martin, 37) – denying the faith (Martin, 37), **wandering**, going astray (McCartney, 108; cf. Mt 18:12-13; Dt 4:19, 11:28; Lk 21:8; Is 44:20; Johnson, 194-195)
- 12 “What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them **wanders away** [*planaō*], will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that **wandered off** [*planaō*]? 13 And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not **wander off** [*planaō*]. 14 In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish. (Mt 18:12-14, NIV; Johnson, 194)
- 19 My brothers and sisters, if one of you should **wander** [*planaō*] **from the truth** and someone should bring that person back, 20 remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins (Jas 5:19-20, NIV; Johnson, 195; Martin, 37; Richardson, 84; McCartney, 108)



# JAMES 1:16

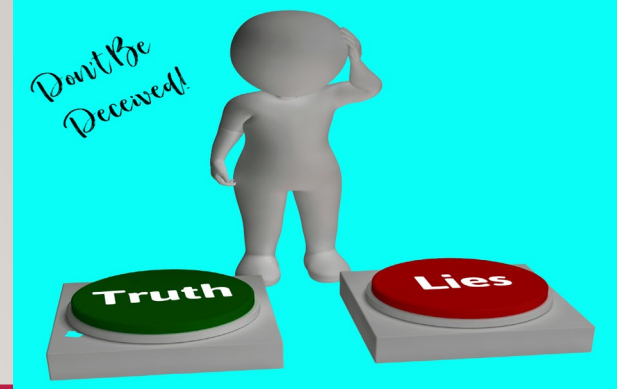
## DON'T BE DECEIVED



- This is a common rhetorical expression (i.e., “Make no mistake...”) (UBS, 35).
- **Do not be deceived [planaō]:** “Bad company ruins good morals.” (1 Cor 15:33, ESV; UBS, 35; Osborne, 35; Martin, 37)
- Often is a warning against going astray theologically (Guthrie, 223). Don’t allow yourself to be deceived or possibly “do not deceive yourselves” (Blomberg/Kamell, 73)
- 9 Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? **Do not be deceived [planaō]:** Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor 6:9-10, NIV; UBS, 35; Osborne, 35; Johnson, 195; cf. Rom 1:27; Davids U, 51; Martin, 37; Guthrie, 223)
- 7 **Do not be deceived [planaō]:** God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. 8 Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. (Gal 6:7-8, NIV; UBS, 35; Osborne, 35; Davids U, 51; Johnson, 195; Martin, 37; Guthrie, 223)
- 8 If we claim to be without sin, we **deceive [planaō] ourselves** and the truth is not in us. (1 Jn 1:8, NIV; Osborne, 35; Davids U, 51; Martin, 37; Guthrie, 223)



# JAMES 1:16 DON'T BE DECEIVED



- We should not deceive ourselves into rationalizing sin (Osborne, 35)
- Some of James' audience may have been questioning God's goodness (McKnight, 123) or good gifts (e.g., wisdom) (McKnight, 123). They need wisdom to help them understand (cf. Jas 1:5-8; McKnight, 123)
- We should not be deceived into thinking that God tempts us to do evil (UBS, 35; Stulac 1:16; Osborne, 35; Davids U, 37; Moo P, 76; Martin, 37; Richardson, 84; McCartney, 107) – this would be a grave mistake (McKnight, 122)
- We should not be deceived into thinking that God does not give good gifts (Stulac 1:16; Davids U, 37; Blomberg/Kamell, 73)
- God has a right to test us, but He does not tempt us (to sin) (Richardson, 84; cf. Ps 94:12; Nystrom, 75)
- Don't get it twisted (cf. Jas 1:22, 26 though different words (McCartney, 108)): God gives wisdom to endure trials (cf. Jas 1:5; Davids U, 37) and brings about salvation (Davids U, 37) /new birth (cf. Jas 1:18; Moo T, 101)



## JAMES 1:16 BELOVED

- Again “brothers (and sisters)” refers to brothers and sisters in **Christ** (Davids U, 37; Guthrie, 223)
- “My brothers and sisters” often starts a new paragraph/section in James (Davids U, 37; cf. Jas 1:2, 9, 2:1, 5, 14, 3:1, 11, 4:11, 5:7, 12, 19 but see Jas 2:15, 3:10, 12, 5:9, 10; Moo P, 76; cf. McCartney, 107)
- This serves as a transition/hinge between Jas 1:13-15 to Jas 1:17-18 (Moo P, 76; McCartney, 107; cf. Blomberg/Kamell, 72)
- **Beloved** (ἀγαπητός | *agapētos*): sometimes James adds this affectionate term to “brothers and sisters” (cf. Jas 1:19, 2:5; UBS, 35; Johnson, 195; Guthrie, 223; Blomberg/Kamell, 73)
- This term was often used by Christians when referring to fellow believers (Ac 15:25; Rom 1:7; 16:5, 8, 9, 12; 1 Cor 4:14, 17; 2 Cor 12:19; Phil 2:12; 4:1; Col 1:7; Philemon 1; Heb 6:9; 1 Pet 2:11; 2 Pet 3:1; 1 John 2:7; Jude 3; Johnson, 195)
- James’ warning stems from loving concern (Stulac 1:16; Osborne, 35; Guthrie, 223)
- “James earnestly wants to help his readers in their suffering and to save them from the greatest danger to their lives: **sin**” (Stulac 1:16)

**GOOD  
GOOD**



## JAMES 1:17 ALL GOOD FROM GOD



- **All good giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the [heavenly] lights – with whom there is no variation or shadow from turning (Jas 1:17,AT)**
- May be a quote of a proverb or poetic saying (cf. 1 Cor 15:33; UBS, 36; Davids N, 86; cf. Moo T, 101; McKnight, 125; Guthrie, 223; McCartney, 111). First eight words are in hexameter (Moo T, 101 FN; cf. Adamson, 74; Johnson, 195)
- Two different but related words for giving – likely synonymous (Motyer, 55; Moo T, 101; McKnight, 124; Johnson, 195; Martin, 38; Blomberg/Kamell, 73). Repetition is for emphasis (Johnson, 195) and rhetorical effect (Martin, 38)
- **5 If any of you lacks wisdom, that person must ask God who gives to all sincerely and without reproaching, and it will be given to you (Jas 1:5,AT; Stulac 1:16; Motyer, 55; Davids U, 37; Moo P, 77; Martin, 38; Guthrie, 223; Nystrom, 75; McCartney, 108; Blomberg/Kamell, 73)**
- **4 And let this perseverance bring about [its] perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete -- lacking in nothing. (Jas 1:4,AT; Motyer, 56; Osborne, 35; McKnight, 125; Johnson, 195; Richardson, 85; Blomberg/Kamell, 73)**
- Perfect does not necessarily mean pleasurable (cf. Heb 12:11; Osborne, 36) God's gifts are **perfect** for their **intended** goal (Motyer, 56; Osborne, 35-36; Richardson, 85) – “spiritual wholeness” (Osborne, 36). **God knows what's best for us** (Osborne, 36)






# JAMES 1:17

## ALL GOOD FROM ABOVE



- God is the ultimate source of all goodness and good gifts (Lockett/Evans, 268; Moo T, 101; McKnight, 123; Richardson, 84). Failure to recognize this can lead to spiritual adultery (Hos 2:5, 8, 12; Stulac 1:16)
  - 13 Who is **wise** and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from **wisdom**. 14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such “**wisdom**” does not come down **from heaven** [**anōthen**] but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. (Jas 3:13-15, NIV; Davids U, 37; McKnight, 125; Johnson, 195; Martin, 38; Richardson, 86; McCartney, 108)
  - 16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. 17 But the **wisdom that comes from heaven** [**anōthen**] is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. (Jas 3:16-17, NIV; McKnight, 125; Johnson, 195; Richardson, 86; Nystrom, 75; Blomberg/Kamell, 73)
  - God doesn’t send tests to break people; He sends good gifts (Keener, 673) from above (ἄνωθεν | **anōthen**) – especially **wisdom** (Davids U, 37; McKnight, 125; Johnson, 195).
  - God “gives the **antidote**, not the poison” (Davids U, 37; cf. McKnight, 125). His gifts are good, not evil (Guthrie, 223; McCartney, 108)
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**GOOD  
GOOD**



## JAMES 1:17 ALL GOOD FROM GOD



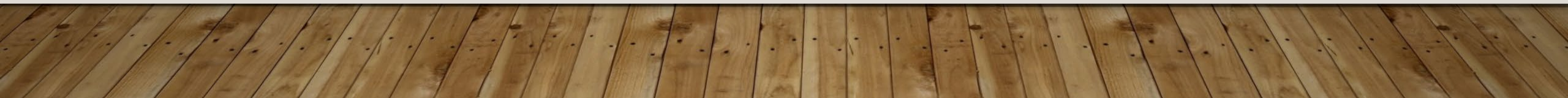
- During trials, persecutions, etc., we must trust in the Lord Who gives good gifts (Stulac 1:16) – testings can produce perseverance (Stulac 1:16).
- This **wise** mindset can help us love our enemies (Stulac 1:16) who may be persecuting us
- 27 “But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you (Lk 6:27-28, NIV; Stulac 1:16)
- 11 If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your **Father in heaven give good gifts** to those who ask him! (Mt 7:11, NIV; McCartney, 108; Blomberg/Kamell, 79)
- 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to **give good gifts** to your children, how much more will your **Father in heaven** give the **Holy Spirit** to those who ask him!” (Lk 11:13, NIV; Osborne, 35; Blomberg/Kamell, 73)

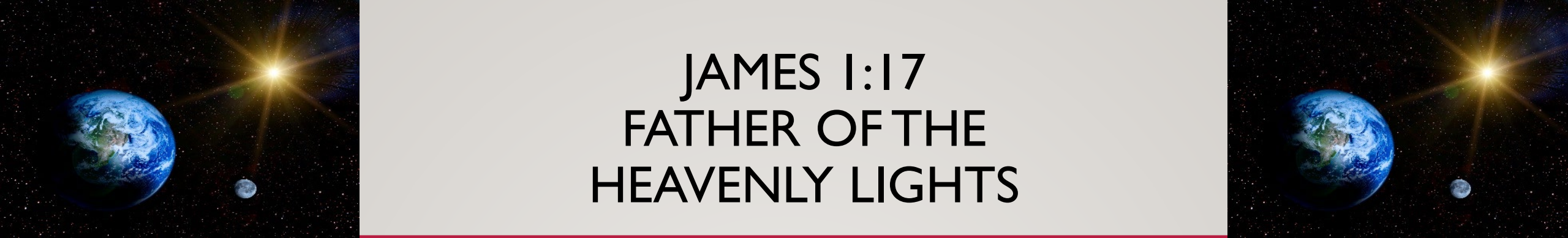


# JAMES 1:17 FATHER OF THE HEAVENLY LIGHTS



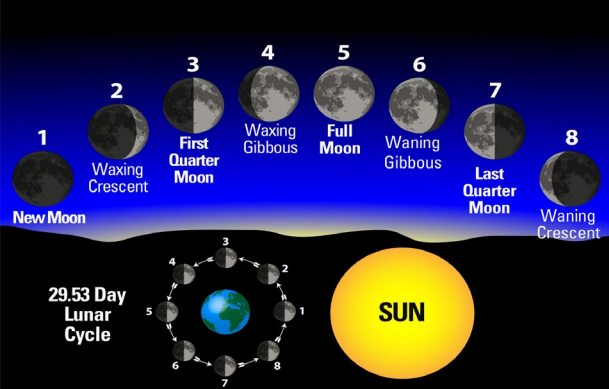
- This passage contains several astrological/astronomical terms (Lockett/Evans, 268; Adamson, 74; Richardson, 86; Nystrom, 76). God is the Father of the **heavenly lights** – the sun, moon, stars, etc. (cf. Gen 1:14-19; Ps 136:7; Jer 31:35; UBS, 36; cf. Job 38:2-7; Jer 4:23; Osborne, 36; cf. Job 38:4-15, 19-21, 31-33; Ps 136:4-9; Is 40:22, 26; Moo T, 102; cf. Davids U, 38, 52; McKnight, 127; Johnson, 196; Martin, 38; Guthrie, 223; Richardson, 86; Nystrom, 75; McCartney, 108; Blomberg/Kamell, 74)
- Father of lights likely means “Creator of the stars” (Keener, 673; cf. UBS, 36; cf. Job 38:28; Moo T, 102; Martin, 38; cf. Richardson, 86; McCartney, 108; Blomberg/Kamell, 74) — He is their “ultimate source” (UBS, 36; cf. Johnson, 196)
- 3 And God said, “**Let there be light,**” and there was **light**. (Gen 1:3, NIV; Motyer, 56; Johnson, 196; Martin, 40)
- 14 And God said, “Let there be **lights** in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, 15 and let them be **lights** in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. 16 God made **two great lights**—the **greater light** to govern the day and the **lesser light** to govern the night. He also made the stars. 17 God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, 18 to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day. (Gen 1:14-19, NIV; UBS, 36; Keener, 673; Richardson, 86; Nystrom, 75; McCartney, 108)





# JAMES 1:17 FATHER OF THE HEAVENLY LIGHTS

- Jews often thought of the stars as angels (Keener, 673; cf. Is 14:12; McKnight, 126)
- Gentiles often believed that stars were **gods** (Keener, 673)
- In the first century, astrology was growing in popularity (Keener, 673) and people feared the “powers of the stars” (Keener, 673)
- James may be combating the belief that the stars determined human destiny (Martin, 42; cf. Nystrom, 76; Blomberg/Kamell, 74)
- James: God made the stars and is Lord of the stars (Keener, 673; Nystrom, 77; Blomberg/Kamell, 75; cf. Martin, 42)
- Testings are not due to random fate or astrological movements (Keener, 673) They come from God (Keener, 673) – from above! (Osborne, 36)
- So look up! (Stulac 1:16). John Bunyan: “Temptation provokes me to look upward to God” (Stulac 1:16)

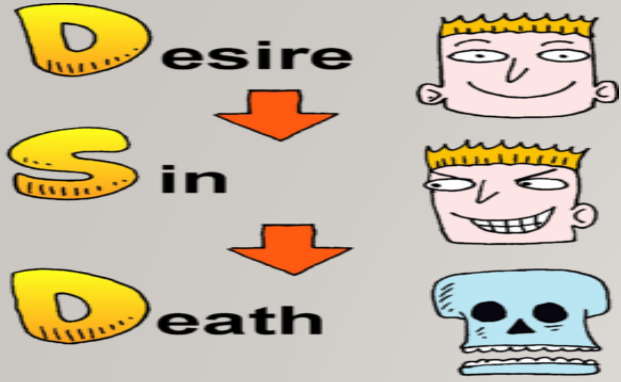


# JAMES 1:17 THINGS CHANGE; GOD DOESN'T



- “Variation” and “shadow” referred to movements from heavenly bodies (Osborne, 36; Davids U, 38; Moo T, 102-103; McKnight, 128; Johnson, 196; Martin, 38; Guthrie, 223; McCartney, 112; Blomberg/Kamell, 74) – though the precise movement they refer to is debated (Davids N, 88; Moo T, 103; Adamson, 74)
- There are many textual variants (Osborne, 35; Johnson, 196; Martin, 38; Richardson, 86; McCartney, 112; etc.) but the overall meaning is clear (Johnson, 196; McCartney, 109)
- Shadows shift with the movement of the heavenly lights (BDAG, 120; EDNT, 141; Guthrie, 223) – including sunsets, eclipses, moon phases, varying constellations, orbits, etc. (UBS, 37; cf. Davids U, 38; Adamson, 74-75; McCartney, 109)
- (The apparent position) of stars change; God’s goodness does not (EDNT, 31; UBS, 37; Motyer, 57; Osborne, 36; Davids U, 38; Moo T, 101; Johnson, 196; Guthrie, 223) – His nature is immutable (Stulac 1:16; Osborne, 36), unchanging (Motyer, 56; Davids U, 38; Moo T, 101; Martin, 39; Blomberg/Kamell, 75; cf. Mal 3:6; McKnight, 128; McCartney, 109; Blomberg/Kamell, 79)
- In the Father of lights there is no darkness at all (cf. 1 Jn 1:5; McCartney, 109)
- God’s love does not change – even in suffering (Stulac 1:16) – in contrast to the “double-minded” (Jas 1:5-8; Osborne, 36)
- In contrast to pagan gods (McCartney, 113), there is no “shadow of a change” with God (EDNT, 370); we serve a God of steadiness and faithfulness (McCartney, 109)





# JAMES 1:18 OUR DESIRE VS. HIS WILL



- According to His will, He gave birth to us by the word of truth so that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures (Jas 1:18,AT)
- Lit. “having been desired” (AT) or “having made His decision” (Motyer, 58), “of His own wish” (Adamson, 75)
- Children do not choose to be born (Motyer, 58)
- God chose to give us birth – further showing the goodness of His character (Davids U, 38)
- He did not have to; this was His free will **choice** (Moo T, 103; Martin, 39; Blomberg/Kamell, 75)
- Not necessarily referring to predestination (Osborne, 36; contra Motyer, 58) – God chose to give birth to “a new people, the Christ-followers” (Osborne, 36; cf. McKnight, 129). God is the author of our faith (Adamson, 75-76)
- This contrast with the **desire** of Jas 1:14 (McKnight, 129; Martin, 39). **Human** desire leads to **death**; **God’s** desire leads to **new birth** (McKnight, 129)

# JAMES 1:18 GAVE BIRTH

- Can refer to how God created all human beings in general (UBS, 37-38; Osborne, 35; Nystrom, 77; cf. Davids U, 38).
- This fact is obvious, however (UBS, 37-38)
- Can mean how God metaphorically gave birth to His son -- the nation of Israel (Hos 11:1; UBS, 37-38; Nystrom, 77) who had a privileged position over other nations (cf. Dt 7:6; UBS, 37-38; Guthrie, 224)
- “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. (Hos 11:1, NIV; UBS, 37-38; Nystrom, 77)
- You deserted the Rock, who **fathered** you; you forgot the God **who gave you birth**. (Dt 32:18, NIV; Moo T, 103)
- For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. (Dt 7:6, NIV; UBS, 37-38; Martin, 40)



# JAMES 1:18 BORN AGAIN/ FROM ABOVE



- Likely refers to how God spiritually gives birth – Christians are **born again/from above** (cf. Jn 3:3-8; Tit 3:5; 1 Pet 1:23; UBS, 37-38; cf. Keener, 673; Osborne, 35, 36; Nystrom, 77; Blomberg/Kamell, 75; cf. Rom 12:2; Eph 1:5; Davids U, 38; cf. Col 1:10; Eph 2:15, 4:21-24; Martin, 40; cf. 1 Pet 1:3; 1 Jn 4:1; Richardson, 87) – regeneration (Stulac 1:16), redemption (Guthrie, 224)
- Same verb used in Jas 1:15: **15 Then desire, having conceived, begets sin; sin, having been brought to maturity, gives birth [ἀποκυέω | apokyeō] to death** (Jas 1:15, AT; UBS, 37-38; Keener, 673; Stulac 1:16; Moo T, 103; McKnight, 124; Johnson, 197; Richardson, 87)
- Sin **gives birth** to death; “God gives birth to spiritual life for Christians” (UBS, 37-38; cf. Keener, 673; Davids U, 38; Moo T, 103; Adamson, 76; McKnight, 124, 130; Johnson, 205; Martin, 38, 39; Guthrie, 224; Richardson, 87; Nystrom, 77; McCartney, 109) – a “good gift” (Keener, 673).
- 23 You have been **born anew**, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the **living and enduring word of God**. For 24 “All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, 25 but the word of the Lord endures forever.” That word is the **good news** that was announced to you. (1 Pet 1:23-25, NRSV; UBS, 37-38; Keener, 673; Motyer, 59; Davids U, 38; McKnight, 130; Johnson, 198; Martin, 40; Richardson, 87; McCartney, 110)
- 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of **rebirth** and renewal by the **Holy Spirit** (Tit 3:5, NIV; UBS, 37-38; Davids U, 38; McKnight, 130; Richardson, 87)





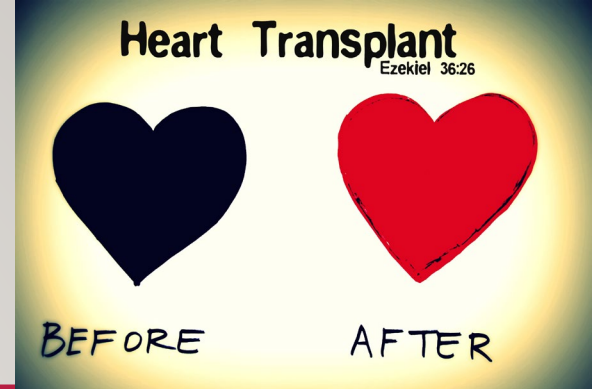
# JAMES 1:18 BORN AGAIN/ FROM ABOVE



- 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but **born of God**. (Jn 1:11-13, NIV; McKnight, 130; Johnson, 198; Richardson, 86; Nystrom, 77)
- 3 Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born **from above** [*anōthen*]" (Jn 3:3, NRSV; Osborne, 36; Adamson, 77; McKnight, 130)
- 3 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are **born again**." 4 "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" 5 Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are **born of water and the Spirit**. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. 7 **You should not be surprised** at my saying, 'You must be born again.' (Jn 3:3-7, NIV; UBS, 37-38; Keener, 673; Davids U, 38; Adamson, 77; Richardson, 87)
- 10 "You are **Israel's teacher**," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? (Jn 3:10, NIV)



# JAMES 1:18 BORN AGAIN/ FROM ABOVE

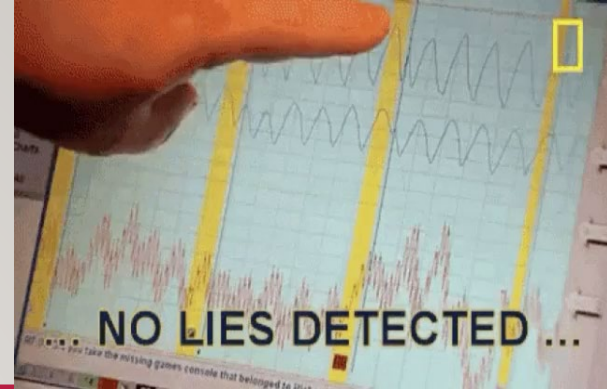


- 25 I will sprinkle **clean water** on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a **new heart** and put a **new spirit** in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will **put my Spirit in you** and move you to **follow my decrees** and be careful to **keep my laws**. (Eze 36:25-27, NIV; Keener, 255; Motyer, 57)
- The “new heart” God gives is one that is ready to follow the Lord in faithful obedience (cf. Jer 31:31-34; Motyer, 57)
- 9 No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. (1 Jn 3:9, NIV; Davids U, 52; Richardson, 87; McCartney, 110). **Living in sin** unrepentantly is different than stumbling and repenting (Keener, 711)
- 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us **new birth** into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (1 Pet 1:3, NIV; McKnight, 130; Richardson, 87)
- This “new birth” (cf. 1 Pet 1:3-5, 23, 2:2-3; McKnight, 130), this “divine delivery” (McKnight, 129), comes through the Holy Spirit (Gal 3:21; Rom 4:17; 8:11; 1 Cor 15:22, 36, 45; 2 Cor 3:6; 5:17; Tit 3:4-7; McKnight, 130)



THE  
**POWER**  
OF  
GOD'S WORD

# JAMES 1:18 WORD OF TRUTH



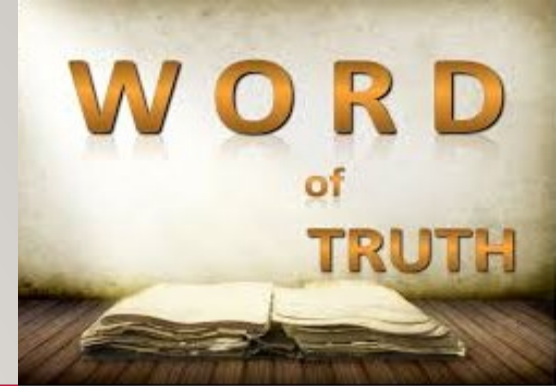
- Can refer to God's powerful, creative word that we see in Genesis 1 (UBS, 38; Davids U, 38; McKnight, 131; cf. Blomberg/Kamell, 79) (Gen 1:26 Keener, 673; Johnson, 197; Martin, 40; contra Stulac 1:16)
- By the **word of the Lord** the **heavens** were made, and all their **host** by the breath of his mouth. (Ps 33:6, NRSV; Davids N, 89; Martin, 40)
- God's word fulfills its purpose. I I so is my word that goes out from my mouth: **It will not return to me empty**, but will **accomplish what I desire** and **achieve the purpose** for which I sent it. (Is 55:11, NIV; Davids N, 89; Martin, 39; Nystrom, 77)
- Of course, all of God's words are true (Davids U, 38). 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth (Jn 17:17, NIV; McCartney, 110)
- 43 And take not the **word of truth** utterly out of my mouth, for my hope is in your rules. (Ps 119:43, ESV; Davids U, 38; Johnson, 197)
- Your righteousness is righteous forever, and your law is **true**. (Ps 119:142, ESV; Johnson, 197)
- But you are near, O Lord, and all your commandments are **true**. (Ps 119:151; cf. Mal 2:6; Johnson, 197)
- The sum of your **word is truth**, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever. (Ps 119:160, ESV)



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# JAMES 1:18 WORD OF TRUTH: THE GOSPEL



- Likely refers to the gospel (cf. Eph 1:13; Col 1:5; 2 Tim 2:15; UBS, 38; cf. Motyer, 59; cf. 2 Cor 6:7; Osborne, 37; Davids U, 38; Moo T, 103; Johnson, 198, 205; Richardson, 87; McCartney, 110; Blomberg/Kamell, 75) – “the true message” (UBS, 38)
- Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted **word**, which is able to **save your souls**. (Jas 1:21, ESV; Keener, 673; Moo T, 103; McCartney, 110)
- 13 In him you also, when you had heard the **word of truth**, the **gospel of your salvation**, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13, NRSV; UBS, 38; Motyer, 59; Osborne, 37; Moo T, 103; Johnson, 198; Martin, 39; Guthrie, 224; McCartney, 110)
- 3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, 4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, 5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the **word of the truth**, the **gospel** (Col 1:3-5, ESV; UBS, 38; Davids U, 38; Moo T, 103; Johnson, 198; Martin, 39; Guthrie, 224; McCartney, 110)
- 15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the **word of truth**. (2 Tim 2:15, NIV; UBS, 38; Osborne, 37; Davids U, 38; Moo T, 103; Johnson, 198; Martin, 39; Guthrie, 224; McCartney, 110)
- God spoke **creation** into existence through His powerful word (Gen 1:3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24); God spoke **new creation** into existence through the word of truth – the gospel (Osborne, 37; cf. Davids U, 38; Martin, 39). **God: “let there be life”** (Motyer, 59)



## JAMES 1:18 FIRSTFRUITS

First Fruits: Giving Our Best...

...not our leftovers



- **Firstfruits** (ἀπαρχή | *aparchē*): generally refers to the first portion of the flock or field that was to offered in sacrifice to the LORD (BDAG, 98; Lockett/Evans, 269; Motyer, 60; Johnson, 198; McCartney, 110)
- The first and **best** of the crops of the harvest had to be offered to the LORD/for the LORD’s servants (i.e., Levites) (cf. Ex 23:16, 19; Lev 23:10-14; Dt 18:4; UBS, 38-39; cf. Num 15:20-21; Lockett/Evans, 269; cf. Dt 14:23; Osborne, 37; cf. Motyer, 60; Davids U, 38; cf. Ex 22:29-30; Num 18:8-12; Lev 27:26; Dt 18:3, 26:2, 10; Eze 20:40; Davids N, 90; cf. Num 18:18; Dt 15:19-23; Martin, 40; cf. Adamson, 77; Johnson, 198; Guthrie, 224; McCartney, 110)
- 19 “Bring the **best** of the **firstfruits** [*aparchē*, **LXX**] of your soil to the **house of the LORD** your God. (Ex 23:19, NIV; UBS, 38-39; Johnson, 198; Martin, 40; McCartney, 110)
- The firstfruits “specially” belonged to God – they were consecrated to Him (Motyer, 60; cf. Davids U, 39), sacred, set apart (Adamson, 77, Guthrie, 224; Richardson, 88)
- In the OT, God’s people were metaphorically described as His firstfruits or firstborn (Lockett/Evans, 269)
- Israel was holy to the Lord, the **firstfruits** of his harvest; all who devoured her were held guilty, and disaster overtook them,’ ” declares the Lord. (Jer 2:3, NIV; Lockett/Evans, 269; Davids N, 90; Adamson, 77; Martin, 40; Guthrie, 224)
- 22 Then say to Pharaoh, ‘This is what the LORD says: Israel is my **firstborn** son (Ex 4:22, NIV; Lockett/Evans, 269; Davids N, 90; Martin, 40; Guthrie, 224; McCartney, 111)

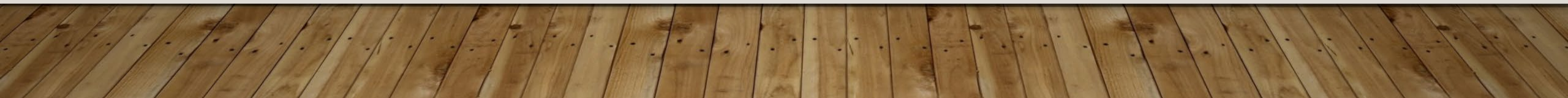


FIRST  
FRUITS

# JAMES 1:18 FIRSTFRUITS



FIRST  
FRUITS

- Could refer to humans as the first in importance of all of God's creatures (UBS, 38-39)
  - Could refer to being them being among the first to become Christians (UBS, 38-39)
  - 5 Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the **first convert** [*aparchē*] to Christ in Asia (Rom 16:5, ESV; Osborne, 37; McKnight, 131; Johnson, 198; Martin, 40; Guthrie, 224; Richardson, 88; Nystrom, 78; McCartney, 111)
  - 15 Brothers, you know the household of Stephanas: They are the **firstfruits** [*aparchē*] of Achaia and have devoted themselves to serving the saints. (1 Cor 16:15, HCSB; BDAG, 98; UBS, 38-39; Osborne, 37; Davids U, 53; Johnson, 198; Martin, 40; Guthrie, 224; Richardson, 88; Nystrom, 78; McCartney, 111)
  - 13 But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the **firstfruits** [*aparchē*] to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. (2 Th 2:13, ESV; BDAG, 98; UBS, 38-29; Lockett/Evans, 269; Davids U, 53; Moo T, 103; McKnight, 131; Johnson, 198; Martin, 40; Guthrie, 224; Richardson, 88; McCartney, 111)
  - Christ is called the **firstfruits** of those who will be resurrected (1 Cor 15:20, 23; Osborne, 37; Davids U, 53; Johnson, 198; Martin, 40; Richardson, 88; Nystrom, 77; McCartney, 111; Blomberg/Kamell, 75)
- 



A  
NEW  
CREATION

# JAMES 1:18 FIRSTFRUITS OF NEW CREATION



A  
NEW  
CREATION

- Here, firstfruits likely refers to these Christians being the **first** of God’s new creation through salvation in Christ (EDNT, 116; Stull, 1:16; Osborne, 37; cf. Rev 14:4; Lockett/Evans, 269; Davids U, 53; cf. Moo T, 103; McKnight, 130; Martin, 40; Richardson, 88; McCartney, 111). Christians are first in **order** and **importance** (UBS, 38-40)
- **Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: the old has passed away; the new has come!** (2 Cor 5:17, AT; EDNT, 116; Davids U, 52; McKnight, 130; Blomberg/Kamell, 79; cf. Eph 4:22-24; Motyer, 57; cf. **Eph 2:10**; Martin, 41)
- 15 Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is the **new creation**. (Gal 6:15, NIV; EDNT, 116; Martin, 41)
- Christians are the first of all of God’s **creatures/creation** (κτίσμα | *ktisma*) that will be redeemed (Richardson, 87; Blomberg/Kamell, 75; cf. Rom 8:18-25; cf. 1 Tim 4:4; Rev 5:13; UBS, 38-39; cf. Rev 8:9; EDNT, 116, 326; cf. Osborne, 37; Davids U, 38; Davids N, 90; McKnight, 130; McCartney, 113) – the first ripe fruit of God’s harvest (Davids U, 38; Blomberg/Kamell, 75), the “first instalment” (Moo T, 104), the “foretaste” (Moo P, 80)
- 22 We know that the **whole creation** has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.  
23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the **firstfruits** [*aparchē*] of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. (Rom 8:22-23, NIV; UBS, 38-39; Lockett/Evans, 269; Osborne, 37; Davids U, 38; Moo T, 103; McKnight, 131; Johnson, 198; McCartney, 113)



A  
NEW  
CREATION

# JAMES 1:18 FIRSTFRUITS OF NEW CREATION



A  
NEW  
CREATION

- 28 Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, at the **renewal of all things**, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Mt 19:28, NIV; McKnight, 130)
- 19 Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, 20 so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Messiah appointed for you, that is, Jesus, 21 who must remain in heaven until the time of **universal restoration** that God announced long ago through his holy prophets (Ac 3:19-21, NRSV; McKnight, 130)
- The Day of the LORD will come like a thief; the old heaven and earth will pass away. 13 But according to his promise we are waiting for **new heavens** and a **new earth** in which righteousness dwells. (2 Pe 3:13, ESV; McKnight, 130)
- Then I saw “a **new heaven** and a **new earth**,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (Rev 21:1-4, NIV; McKnight, 131; Blomberg/Kamell, 79)





## JAMES 1:18 FRUITFUL CREATURES



- We ought to be fruit-bearing new creatures in Christ. We should strive to be like God, producing godly fruit (Stulac 1:16)
- Godly fruit includes not being tempted by evil (cf. Jas 1:13; Stulac 1:16)
- Godly fruit includes gracious giving of good gifts (Stulac 1:16)
- Godly fruit includes perseverance. God's character does not change; our Christian character should not change (Stulac 1:16; McKnight, 129; cf. Blomberg/Kamell, 79)
- Again, trials can be occasions for joy because the testing of our faith produces such perseverance (Stulac 1:16) – if we trust God's process and respond with godly wisdom



# JAMES 1:16-18 CONCLUSION FAITHFUL FATHER, DIVINE DELIVERY

DELIVERY ROOM

- “We are prone to deceive even ourselves unless we constantly guard and preserve the truth” (Blomberg/Kamell, 73)
- In the midst of trials, we can’t blame God nor be deceived into thinking that He is unable (Martin, 42) or unwilling to help
- God does not tempt us to sin; God gives good and perfect gifts – including regeneration/salvation (Moo P, 79) and wisdom to persevere through trials
- Human destiny is not determined by astrological positions; The LORD created all of the heavenly lights and is sovereign over all
- While the apparent position of heavenly lights changes, God does not. His goodness is unchanging, His love and mercy endures forever (cf. Ps 106:1, etc.)
- God our Father gave us spiritual new birth through the gospel, so that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all of new creation
- For the Lord is **good** and **his love endures forever**; his **faithfulness** continues through **all generations**. (Ps 100:5, NIV). Great is His faithfulness (cf. Lam 3:22-23)



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