

Scripture

¹⁶Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. ¹⁷Every 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. ¹⁸Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

Commentary

'Do not be deceived' – a continuation of James' drive in the previous verses. All of the issues of difficulty itemized above, when viewed through the eyes of a child of God in faith, are in fact all good. Do not mistake these trials as something to be scorned, but recognize our Father's loving care in our journey to Glory, including the testing of our faith. James illustrates he is standing among us as a minister of God's Son, and with us as a fellow sinner. In this he calls us his '**beloved brethren**'.

How wonderful His patience, how Merciful and Beautiful His Name! Our Creator, He Who foresaw all of us and all of creation and time before there was any (**Eph 1:4**), Himself beyond even these unreachable bounds, has taken all of this effort upon Himself so that He alone may be Glorified. And as His children in Election, we enjoy the benefit, though we deserve total banishment from everything He offers. (**Eph 1:5-6**) For His sake and Glory alone, '**Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth**'. He has brought us forth as His creation. But through the mighty, saving power of His Living Word, our Lord Jesus, the Word in the flesh and alive in our hearts, He has brought us forth from our spiritual death, forgiving us into Eternal life.

So too is our Mighty Creator Righteous and True in His course. Above us all, beyond all comprehension, Holy without fault, loving without bounds, giving without restraint, solid, He is our unshakeable Rock and Salvation. (**Ps 18:2**) Forever pure and trustworthy, in the One Who made us '**there is no variation or shadow of turning**'. In God's creation, the sun above represents in some ways our Father to us. He is above all things, the center of our existence, bringing forth light to reveal what deep shadow of sin lurks in our heart. God, the '**Father of lights**', is too the Creator of the heavens above. The stars fixed in the night sky guide the captain across the sea. So too is our Lord steady and beyond being moved in Truth and Trust. (**Ps 73:24**), (**Mal 3:6**)

The world and all creation was declared '**good**' by God as He considered His work. (**Gen 1:31**) Man's rebellion loosed sin into the world, and today we still suffer the effect of our inheritance. (**Rom 5:12**) Our hearts are cold and hard, black as soot, before meeting the Lord Jesus. The regenerate heart sings praises, bringing forth good fruit, to the Father's Glory. In the miracle of Salvation and in God's Light in the world, truly '**all things good and perfect are gifts from the God above**'. His good, perfect, loving nature, that Light from above, blesses and sustains us in every way in this life. From the beginning of the existence of time, and from the beginning of our lives here, through the End of Days and the end of our days, and then on to Eternity, everything sustaining us comes from the Father. Everything. And at every turn we must recognize this and call thanks upward to our Provider in Heaven!

And all of this for what? For the Glory of God. (**2 Cor 4:15**) In this chapter of Creation, we in our Salvation '**might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures**'. The firstfruits of the harvest, that brought forth in adoration as a sacrifice to God. As the Christian shines forth in his life, God's Mercy and Work in his life brings Glory to the Father. In his heart, as he reflects upon the Truths of God, and his heart fills to then sing forth praises, this brings fruits in Glory to God. When the Christ gathers the Elect, we will be presented to the Father as firstfruits, a Sacrifice, for the Father's Glory.

Jesus resurrected was the First, and is the Firstfruit before the rest of us as believers. (**2 Cor 4:14**) The Apostles were the firstfruits by way of time and function in Christ's Church. All of us as believers, following the Truth revealed in the Word, are a firstfruits too. In all cases the believer is obligated to consider his life in light of these realities and examine himself. He must offer his purest effort for the Lord that he might be the best sacrifice to the Lord, to His Glory.

Key Summary

Do not be discouraged or deceived in the source and intent of the difficulties in your life. As the Sovereign's child, you are in training, under His sovereign care.

He is Good, and all things that descend from Him are good as well. This includes the trials of life.

It is our responsibility to recognize His effort in giving us birth in the Faith, and we must shine to the world as the Firstfruits of His efforts.

Study Questions

Why or how might the Brethren be deceived in this context?

Why does it matter that God does not change like shifting shadows?

What is a Firstfruit and it's significance?

Cited Scripture

Ephesians 1:4

just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love

Ephesians 1:5-6

having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

Psalms 18:2

The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Psalms 73:24

You will guide me with Your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

Malachi 3:6

For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.

Genesis 1:31

Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Romans 5:12

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned

2 Corinthians 4:15

For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 4:14

knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you.