

## Exegetical Notes, James 1:13-18

### “The Blame Game”

Prepared by Robert W. Rice

#### **Verses 13-14**

*When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.*

- God does not tempt us, but he does allow us to be tempted. God cannot be tempted successfully because there is nothing in his nature that temptation would appeal to.
- God would not tempt anyone because that would be against his nature as well.
- We allow ourselves to be tempted. We have evil desire that Satan can appeal to. When we allow this desire to get the best of us, we are dragged from God where we belong, and become enticed.

#### **Verse 15**

*Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.*

- James tells us how the cycle continues. After we are dragged away from where we belong, and are enticed, desire follows. This desire leads to sin. Sin, if not taken care of and repented of, will lead to death.
- The cycle is always the same, but it can be broken.

#### **Verses 16-17**

*Don't be deceived, my dear brothers. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*

- James is careful to make sure that the reader is listening, he doesn't want there to be any doubt in the mind that God

sends only good gifts to his children. Temptation and sin aren't from God but good and perfect gifts are.

- We also see that God does not change, unlike the sun and moon, and other heavenly lights that create shadows and are moving, God remains steady.

### **Verse 18**

*He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.*

- God chose to give us new life through the Gospel, it was His decision alone.
- The firstfruits implies that Christians are a foretaste of the amount of people that will eventually come to Jesus.