A cosmic scene with a large planet, a smaller moon, and a bright star in a dark blue space. The planet is on the right, the moon is to its right, and a bright star is in the upper left. The background is filled with stars and a nebula-like glow.

JAMES 1:16-18

THE CHARACTER OF GOD AND THE
WORD OF GOD CAN BE TRUSTED

INTRODUCTION

- ISAIAH 45:7
- LAMENTATIONS 3:37–39
- ECCLESIASTES 7:14
- IS JAMES SAYING SOMETHING THAT CONTRADICTS WHAT OTHER WRITERS OF SCRIPTURE HAVE SAID PRIOR TO HIM?
 - NO. IT IS AN ISSUE OF PERSPECTIVE AND ULTIMATE PURPOSE.
 - ACTS 2:22–23
 - ROMANS 8:28
 - JAMES UPHOLDS THAT GOD IS GOOD AND ALL HIS WAYS CAN BE TRUSTED!

DON'T DISHONOR GOD WITH SELF-CENTERED JUSTIFICATIONS OF SINFUL COMPROMISE (1:16)

16 DO NOT BE DECEIVED, MY BELOVED BROTHERS.

- VERSE 16 LIKELY SERVES AS A PIVOT POINT BETWEEN VERSES 12-15 AND 17-18.
 - WHEN FACING TRIALS, FOLLOWERS OF JESUS ARE CALLED TO PERSEVERE, NOT GIVING IN TO SIN AND BLAMING GOD FOR SELF-CENTERED CHOICES. (12-15)
 - GOD'S FAITHFULNESS AND DEPENDABILITY CAN BE COUNTED ON (17-18)
- "BE DECEIVED" – MEANS TO BE MISLED OR TO BE LED ASTRAY
 - JAMES DOESN'T WANT THESE BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST THAT HE LOVES, TO BE LED ASTRAY FROM THE TRUTH.
 - THIS IS THE HEART OF JAMES FOR THEM AND HE WANTS IT TO BE THEIR HEART FOR ONE ANOTHER.
 - JAMES 5:19-20

STRIVE FOR CONSISTENCY THROUGH GOD-HONORING DEPENDENCE ON GOD'S TRUTH (1:17-18)

17 EVERY GOOD GIFT AND EVERY PERFECT GIFT IS FROM ABOVE,

- GOD DOES NOT TRY TO CAUSE HIS PEOPLE TO FALL INTO SIN.
- GOD'S INTENTION IS TO DO GOOD THINGS FOR HIS CHILDREN.
 - MATTHEW 7:11
- IN CONTEXT, WHAT WOULD BE GOOD AND PERFECT GIFTS?
 - HOLDING FIRM TO THE PROMISES OF GOD WITH STEADFAST FAITH (CF. 1:2-4).
 - WISDOM FROM GOD IN DEALING WITH TESTING AND TRIALS (CF. 1:5).
 - EXALTATION FOR THE POOR AND LOWLY (CF. 1:9).
 - HUMILITY FOR THE RICH AND PRIVILEGED (CF. 1:10).
 - A CROWN OF LIFE FOR EVERY FAITHFUL FOLLOWER OF JESUS (CF. 1:12).

STRIVE FOR CONSISTENCY THROUGH GOD-HONORING DEPENDENCE ON GOD'S TRUTH (1:17-18)

COMING DOWN FROM THE FATHER OF LIGHTS,

- GOD IS THE CREATOR OF THE HEAVENLY LIGHTS, SUCH AS THE SUN, MOON AND STARS.
- GOD IS ALSO THE CREATOR OF SPIRITUAL LIGHT IN HIS NEW COVENANT PEOPLE.
- THE STEADFAST FAITH GOD INSPIRES IN THEM PUTS THE LIGHT OF GOD'S GOSPEL GLORY ON DISPLAY.
 - MATTHEW 5:14-16

WITH WHOM THERE IS NO VARIATION OR SHADOW DUE TO CHANGE.

- LIGHTS OF THIS WORLD, EVEN THE SUN, MOON AND STARS, ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.
- BUT OUR UNCHANGING GOD IS THE SOURCE OF SHADOWLESS LIGHT, WHOSE CONSTANT GOODNESS IN AND THROUGH HIS CHILDREN IS RADIANT.
 - 1 JOHN 1:5-7

STRIVE FOR CONSISTENCY THROUGH GOD-HONORING DEPENDENCE ON GOD'S TRUTH (1:17-18)

18 OF HIS OWN WILL HE BROUGHT US FORTH BY THE WORD OF TRUTH,


- OUR BIRTH AS HIS CHILDREN IS NOT BY CHANCE OR ACCIDENT.
- WE ARE BLESSED WITH SPIRITUAL LIFE BY THE DELIBERATE AND INTENTIONAL GOSPEL PURPOSE OF GOD.
 - 2 CORINTHIANS 4:6
- TRUTH IS NOT SOMETHING ONE KNOWS, IT IS SOMETHING ONE KNOWS AND DOES.
 - JOHN 13:17
 - JAMES 1:22

THAT WE SHOULD BE A KIND OF FIRSTFRUITS OF HIS CREATURES.

- "FIRSTFRUITS" IN THE OLD TESTAMENT ARE THE FIRST HARVEST OR FINEST PRODUCE SET APART AS AN OFFERING TO GOD AND CONSIDERED GOD'S SPECIAL POSSESSION.
- AS THE "FIRSTFRUITS," THOSE WALKING IN THE LIFE OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST REFLECT GOD'S GLORY TO THE WORLD.
- GOSPEL GRACE DOES NOT RESIDE IN HEARTS IN A STATIC MANNER.
- THE GOD OF GOSPEL LIGHT AND LIFE IS REFLECTED IN THE FAITH AND PRACTICES OF HIS CHILDREN.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- HOW HAVE YOU DISHONORED GOD WITH SELF-CENTERED JUSTIFICATIONS AND SINFUL COMPROMISE?
- HOW ARE YOU TEACHING PEOPLE NOT TO WANDER FROM GOSPEL TRUTH?
- WHO HAVE YOU SOUGHT TO RESTORE TO THE PATHWAY OF TRUTH?
- WHO HAS SOUGHT YOU?
- WHAT ARE SOME OF THE GOOD GIFTS THAT HAVE COME DOWN TO YOU FROM THE FATHER OF LIGHTS?
- WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO KNOW YOU ARE A KIND OF FIRSTFRUITS OF HIS CREATURES?

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