

August 19, 2018

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Don't Be Deceived" (2)

— Not to Fail in God's Blessings —

Text: James 1:16~18

**1:16 Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters.**

**1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.**

**1:18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.**

### Introduction

Last time we listened to God's voice by the sermon entitled "Don't Be Deceived(1)." Let's continue to study "Don't Be Deceived (2)" deeper today.

**1:16 Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters.:**

The author first addresses, "**My dear brothers and sisters.**" The receivers of the epistle were Messianic Jews . They were Jewish people who believed Jesus Christ as their Savior. James wrote them **not to be deceived.**

Not to be deceived has two meanings.

1) **God cannot be tempted.**

**1:13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;**

God never tempts us.

2) **We should not blame a temptation on other people.**

When we are tempted, we blame it on Satan, other people, our circumstances, experiences in our childhood and so on. We assert that the temptation was caused by other people, and it is not our fault. Is it true? The Bible teaches when a man is tempted and commits a sin, he should be blamed himself.

James records below.

**1:14 but each of you is tempted when you are dragged away by your own evil desire and enticed.**

As I mentioned last time, the word **peirasmos** (in Greek) that is translated into a trial and a temptation has two meanings: ① Attack from outside and ② attack from inside.

What about you? What did you think about the temptations? “Have you blamed them on other people?”

This is a big problem. We sometimes blame it on Satan, our circumstances and our childhood experiences. Don't we shift the responsibility to other people or things? When we are dragged away and tempted we sometimes place it on other people. Let's think well if we don't deceive ourselves.

We should admit that the temptations are **trials** that arise from our inside, so we have responsibility for them. However, some people wouldn't accept it even though they are Christians. As they don't repent of their fault they are eventually involved in a dispute.

The author urges, **“Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters.” (1:16)** We should remember that peirasmos (a trial and a temptation) is such a big problem.

Let's study God's will from the following two points today.

### Main Points

#### 1. The Father God Who Created the Heavenly Lights

**1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.**

The author first teaches that every good thing is from heaven.

**“Every good gift”** and **“perfect gift”** is from above, that is from God. It is truth that is still valid for today. Good things are continually given from above. The first on the list of good and perfect gifts is **wisdom from above**. God gives various gifts to Christians every day and they live with them.

Then, James calls God “the Father who created the heavenly lights.” It means the Father of the heavenly lights (the Creator). The sun and the moon wax and wane. However, James records that the Father of the heavenly lights does not change like shifting shadows, because He is the Creator of the heavenly lights.

In this way, God never tempts human beings.

Let's look back at our lives and examine how we spent them. We regret our misfortune and failure and finally blame our unhappiness on God, don't we? As a result, we are making ourselves suffer. Such people wouldn't repent before God. We should understand that those who blame temptations on other people quite misunderstand.

The temptations don't come from God. They also are not because of Satan, circumstances or childhood experiences.

James records below.

**1:14 but each of you is tempted when you are dragged away by your own evil desire and enticed.**

However, God sometimes allows a man to be tempted. God has His plan for him. God who created the heavenly lights has His plans.

So. When we are tempted, what should we do?

⇒ We should pray to God in the name of Jesus Christ. If we realize our sins before God, we should quickly repent.

When we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, no power in this world can oppose it. It is privilege that is given to the saints who believe God. There is no power that can oppose Jesus' blood on the cross.

Therefore, we should trust in the Word of truth (It never changes.) and God's love and grace.

What are the saints like who believed Jesus as Son of God (Messiah)?

## **2. The Position of People Who Belied in Jesus**

### **1 ) The Word of Truth**

The author records Verse 18 that concerns peirasmos (a trial and a temptation).

**1:18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.**

Sin leads us to death, but on the contrary God the Father gave us birth through the Word of truth. Therefore, we were newly born by God the Father.

As Verse 18 records, "**He chose**", we are not saved by making a human effort . It is God's work that we are saved. We were also newly born by the gift that comes from God. A newly born life is also one of good gifts that comes from God the Father.

Now we should understand a very important thing; We are saved by **the Word of truth**. The Bible says that human beings are saved by **the Word of truth**.

Let's read some Scriptures below.

**Romans 10:17** Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.

**1 Peter 1:23** For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

**1:24** For, all people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall,

**1:25** but the word of the Lord endures forever. • And this is the word that was preached to you.

Human beings hear the message of the Gospel and decide to accept it and are saved. Making a decision is our responsibility.

By the way, why did God save us?

Why did He save us who are selfish and quite sinful? We are worthless and unclean existence before the Holy God. God's precious secret is hidden there.

## **2) The Firstfruits of All God Created**

**1:18** He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

What is firstfruits? A certain biblical scholar writes that it means believers of before B. C. However, James sent the epistle to Jewish believers (Messianic Jews) so it is natural that the **firstfruits** meant Jewish believers.

My friends, the harvest follows the firstfruits. God plans the great blessed harvest after the firstfruits that they were Jewish believers. It is God's Master Plan.

### **{Illustration}**

**When I entered the Holocaust Memorial Center in Detroit I first saw a certain description; "Do you know the reason why the greatest number of a Nobel Prize among the receivers over the world were the Jewish people?" Then names of the prize winners were listed next. After the list, the Scripture was written as the answer of the question.**

**Isaiah 42:6 I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, (Isaiah 42:6)**

The Bible teaches that Israelites are chosen by God the Creator and loved by Him.

Israelites are loved by God and given a love-relationship with God. It is a type that pictures a relationship between God and all human beings. God has prepared His master Plan for the world that is getting disordered today. His Master Plan starts from salvation of Jewish people (firstfruits)

Jewish people crucified Jesus Christ and this is the greatest reason that Jewish people have been hated and persecuted by Christians for approximately 2000 years. However, God has His precious plan for Jewish people who had crucified Jesus.

My friends, do you know God's plan for Jewish people?

⇒ It is that Jewish people might be a kind of firstfruits of all He created.

**1:18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.**

### **3) God's Blessings**

Jesus taught many parables in His public life. One of them is the parable of the sower. The sower scattered seed on the 4 kinds of soil. Jesus said this about seed falling on good soil below;

**Matthew 13:23 But the seed falling on good soil refers to people who hear the word and understand it. They produce a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."**

The seed fell on good soil bear firstfruits and produce a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty of thirty times what was sown. There are Jewish people and also the Gentiles among a crop. We should know that seed which had been sown. The Bible records that a single seed fell to the ground.

**John 12:24 Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.**

A single seed (Jesus Christ) that fell to the ground grew out and Israelites, Jewish people, became firstfruits. The Bible teaches that a kernel of wheat produces many seeds including the Gentiles.

Therefore, if both Jewish people and the Gentiles are connected with a single seed (Jesus

Christ) that fell to the ground, its crop produces great numbers of blessings. On top of that, we experience the Lord's blessings in this world. God the Father gives us such blessings. Let's praise the name of God who gives us blessings.

### Conclusion

Title of the Message: "Don't Be Deceived" (2)

— Not to Fail in God's Blessings —

We listened to God's voice from the sermon entitled "Don't Be Deceived. (2)" Worldly people cheat every where. However, we listened the way to receive God's blessings through the Bible. To believe in God's Word of promise and accept it is the secret of the way to receive His blessings.

What are the important things for us?

**1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.**

What should we do to be a kernel of wheat and receive God's blessings? Our heart should become good soil.

**Matthew 13:23 But the seed falling on good soil refers to people who hear the word and understand it. They produce a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."**

Let's live lives that produce a crop as the saints who are loved by God.

\* God Bless You!