

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED UPON THE LETTER OF JAMES

DON'T BLAME GOD

James 1:13 “When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone. . .”

Why God, did You . . .?” This question is one you have probably asked God on more than one occasion when He failed to do something you thought He should have or did something you should thought He should not have done. As you think about this question do you realize what you have said to God when asking this question? You are acting out exactly as did Adam after he and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. “The woman **YOU** [my emphasis] put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” (Genesis 3:12)

When you are about to ask “why God did you” questions, stop and think for a moment what James wrote here in James 1:13, “When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone. . .”

Jesus taught us in His prayer to pray to our heavenly Father, “And lead us not into temptation.” (Matthew 6:13) Luther explains, “God tempts no one. We pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice. Although we are attacked by these things, we pray that we may finally overcome them and win the victory.” (Small Catechism, Sixth Petition)

God does “test” you in order to exercise your faith to strengthen it. (James 1:1-12) God, who is holy, never causes you to do anything that is sinful. It is the Devil, the evil one, the world, your sinful flesh that leads you into sinful conduct. Peter wrote, “resist him (Devil), standing firm in your faith. . .” and Solomon, “. . .if sinners entice you, do not give in to them.” (Proverbs 1:10) God has gifted you with faith in Jesus, through whom you are able to resist the evil one and his temptations to sin.

When the Devil tempts you, as Jesus prayed for Simon, so He prays for you, “that your faith may not fail.” (see Luke 22:31-32) St. Paul exhorts, “Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devils’ schemes. . .” (Ephesians 6:11)

Prayer: Lord, there are times when I am weak and prone to succumb to the Devil’s temptations and the evil in this world. Protect me, strengthen me in my faith that through my faith in Jesus I am able to overcome and obtain the victory. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

O God, forsake me not! Your gracious presence lend me;
Lord, lead Your helpless child; Your Holy Spirit send me
That I my course may run.
O be my light, my lot, My staff, my rock, my shield—
O God, forsake me not!

O God, forsake me not! Take not Your Spirit from me;
Do not permit the might Of sin to overcome me.
Increase my feeble faith, Which You alone have wrought.
O be my strength and pow’r— O God, forsake me not!

O God, forsake me not! Lord, hear my supplication!
In ev’ry evil hour Help me resist temptation;
And when the prince of hell My conscience seeks to blot,
Be then not far from me— O God, forsake me not!

O God, forsake me not! Lord, I am Yours forever.
O Keep me strong in faith That I may leave You never.
Grant me a blessed end When my good fight is fought;
Help me in life and death— O God, forsake me not!
(LSB 731)