

YESTERDAY/TODAY/FOREVER

THE LESSON: JAMES 1

We live in a world of constant change. From the aging of our bodies to the headlines in the daily news, change is something that touches us all. While we may find some of these changes good and exciting, change can also be disorienting, frightening and exhausting.

Believers throughout the centuries have lived in radically different situations, many of them fraught with difficulty, but what they (and we) have in common is a God who does *not* change. No matter what we face, God can be our “anchor” and “refuge”. Scripture tells us that Jesus is the same “yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). Our God’s holy and loving character and his plan for our salvation are the same right now as they were two thousand years ago, and as J.I. Packer points out, “this thought brings comfort as we enter in to the perplexities of each day: amid all the changes and uncertainties of life”.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON’T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer))

What are the “changes and chances of this fleeting world” that you find wearying? Bring those things before God and ask him to help you find comfort and confidence in his changelessness.

Take some time each day to reflect on one of the following passages of scripture:

- Psalm 90:1-2: *Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.*
- Hebrews 13:7-8: *Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever.*
- James 1:17: *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.*

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this collect.

Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the silent hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this fleeting world, may repose upon thy eternal changelessness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (AN ADDITIONAL PRAYER FROM COMPLINE, BCP PAGE 727)

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JAMES 1:12-17: **OUR UNCHANGING FATHER**

¹²Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. ¹³Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”, for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

¹⁶Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.