

James

¹ James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes of the Dispersion: Greetings.

² Consider it pure joy, my brothers, when you encounter trials of many kinds,

³ because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.

⁴ Allow perseverance to finish its work, so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

⁵ Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

⁶ But he must ask in faith, without doubting, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

⁷ That man should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

⁸ He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

⁹ The brother in humble circumstances should exult in his high position.

¹⁰ But the one who is rich should exult in his low position, because he will pass away like a flower of the field.

¹¹ For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its flower falls and its beauty is lost. So too, the rich man will fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

¹² Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

¹³ When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone.

¹⁴ But each one is tempted when by his own evil desires he is lured away and enticed.

¹⁵ Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.

¹⁷ Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, with whom there is no change or shifting shadow.

¹⁸ He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we would be a kind of firstfruits of His creation.

¹⁹ So then, my beloved brothers, everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger;

²⁰ for man's anger does not bring about the righteousness that God desires.

²¹ Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and every expression of evil, and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save your souls.

²² Be doers of the word, and not hearers only. Otherwise, you are deceiving yourselves.

²³ For anyone who hears the word but does not carry it out is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror,

²⁴ and after observing himself goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

²⁵ But the one who looks intently into the perfect law of freedom, and continues to do so—not being a forgetful hearer, but an effective doer—he will be blessed in what he does.

²⁶ If anyone among you considers himself religious and yet does not bridle his tongue, he deceives his heart and his religion is worthless.

²⁷ Pure and undefiled religion before our God and Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

2

¹ My brothers, as you hold out your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, do not show favoritism.

² Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in.

³ If you lavish attention on the man in fine clothes and say, “Here is a seat of honor,” but say to the poor man, “You must stand” or “Sit here under my footstool,”

⁴ have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

⁵ Listen, my beloved brothers: Has not God chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom He promised those who love Him?

⁶ But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you and drag you into court?

⁷ Are they not the ones who blaspheme the noble name by which you have been called?

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law stated in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well.

⁹ But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

¹⁰ Whoever keeps the whole law but stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

¹¹ For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

¹² Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom.

¹³ For judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers, if someone claims to have faith, but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?

¹⁵ Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food.

¹⁶ If one of you tells him, “Go in peace; stay warm and well fed,” but does not provide for his physical needs, what good is that?

¹⁷ So too, faith by itself, if it does not result in action, is dead.

¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith and I have deeds.” Show me your faith apart from your deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.

¹⁹ You believe that God is one. Good for you! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

²⁰ O foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is dead?

²¹ Was not our father Abraham justified by what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar?

²² You see that his faith was working with his actions, and his faith was perfected by what he did.

²³ And the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called a friend of God.

²⁴ As you can see, then, a man is justified by his deeds and not by faith alone.

²⁵ In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute justified by her actions when she welcomed the spies and sent them off on another route?

²⁶ For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

3

¹ Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

² We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to control his whole body.

³ Indeed, when we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can guide the whole animal.

⁴ Consider ships as well. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot is inclined.

⁵ In the same way, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it boasts of great things. Consider how small a spark sets a great forest ablaze.

⁶ The tongue also is a fire, a world of wickedness among the parts of the body. It pollutes the whole person, sets the course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

⁷ All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man,

⁸ but no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

⁹ With the tongue we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness.

¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, this should not be!

¹¹ Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?

¹² My brothers, can a fig tree grow olives, or a grapevine bear figs? In the same way, no spring can produce both salt water and fresh water.

¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good conduct, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

¹⁴ But if you harbor bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast in it or deny the truth.

¹⁵ Such wisdom does not come from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic.

¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every evil practice.

¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first of all pure,

then peace-loving, gentle, accommodating, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial, and sincere.

¹⁸ Peacemakers who sow in peace reap the fruit of righteousness.

4

¹ What causes conflicts and quarrels among you? Don't they come from the passions at war within you?

² You crave what you do not have; you kill and covet, but are unable to obtain it. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask.

³ And when you do ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may squander it on your pleasures.

⁴ You adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore, whoever chooses to be a friend of the world renders himself an enemy of God.

⁵ Or do you think the Scripture says without reason that the Spirit who dwells in us yearns with envy?

⁶ But He gives us more grace. This is why it says: "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

⁸ Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

⁹ Grieve, mourn, and weep. Turn your laughter to mourning, and your joy to gloom.

¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you.

¹¹ Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother and judges him speaks against the law and judges it. And if you judge the law, you are not a practitioner of the law, but a judge of it.

¹² There is only one Lawgiver, the One who is able to save and destroy. But who are you to judge the other?

¹³ Come now, you who say, "Today and tomorrow let us go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business, and make a profit."

¹⁴ You do not even know what will happen tomorrow! What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

¹⁵ Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord is willing, let us live and do this or that."

¹⁶ As it is, you boast in your proud intentions. All such boasting is evil.

¹⁷ Anyone, then, who knows the right thing to do, yet fails to do it, is guilty of sin.

5

¹ Come now, you who are rich, weep and wail over the misery to come upon you.

² Your riches have rotted and moths have eaten your clothes.

³ Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and consume your

flesh like fire. You have hoarded treasure in the last days.

⁴ Look, the wages you withheld from the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of Hosts.

⁵ You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts as in the day of slaughter.

⁶ You have condemned and murdered the righteous, who did not resist you.

⁷ Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer awaits the precious fruit of the soil—how patient he is for the fall and spring rains.

⁸ You, too, be patient and strengthen your hearts, because the Lord's coming is near.

⁹ Do not complain about one another, brothers, so that you will not be judged. Look, the Judge is standing at the door!

¹⁰ My brothers, as an example of patience in affliction, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

¹¹ See how blessed we consider those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen the outcome from the Lord. He is full of compassion and mercy.

¹² Above all, my brothers, do not swear, not by heaven or earth or by any other oath. Simply let your "Yes" be yes, and your "No," no, so that you will not fall into hypocrisy.

¹³ Is any one of you suffering? He should pray. Is anyone cheerful? He should sing praises.

¹⁴ Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord.

¹⁵ And the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick. The Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.

¹⁶ Confess your trespasses to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power to prevail.

¹⁷ Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.

¹⁸ Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth yielded its crops.

¹⁹ Brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back,

²⁰ consider this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

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Translation by: Berean Bible Translation Committee

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2025-07-30

PDF generated using Haiola and XeLaTeX on 30 Jul 2025 from source files dated 30 Jul 2025

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