

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES

¹ James the seruaut of God and of the Lorde Iesus Christ sendeth gretinge to thee .xii. trybes which are scattered here and there. ² My brethren count it excedynge ioye when ye faule into divers temptacions ³ for as moche as ye knowe how that the tryinge of youre fayth bringeth pacience: and let pacience ⁴ have her perfect worke that ye maye be perfecte and sounde lackinge nothinge. ⁵ Yf eny of you lacke wysdome let him axe of God which geueth to all men indifferentlie and casteth no man in the teth: and it shal be geuen him. ⁶ But let him axe in fayth and waver not. For he that douteth is lyke the waves of the see tost of the wynde and caried with violence. ⁷ Nether let that man thinke that he shall receave eny thinge of the Lorde. ⁸ A waveringe mynded man is vnstable in all his wayes. ⁹ Let the brother of lowe degre reioyce in that he is exalted ¹⁰ and the ryche in that he is made lowe. For even as the flower of the grasse shall he vanysshe awaye. ¹¹ The sonne ryseth with heate and the grasse wydereth and his flower falleth awaye and the beautie of the fassion of it perissheth: even so shall the ryche man perissh with his aboundance. ¹² Happy is the man that endureth in temptacion for when he is tryed he shall receave the crowne of lyfe which the Lorde hath promysed to them that

love him. ¹³ Let no man saye when he is tepted that he is tempted of God. For God tepteth not vnto evyll nether tepteth he anie man. ¹⁴ But every man is tepted drawne awaye and entysed of his awne concupiscece. ¹⁵ Then when lust hath conceived she bringeth forth synne and synne when it is fynished bringeth forthe death. ¹⁶ Erre not my deare brethren. ¹⁷ Every good gyfte and every parfayt gyft is from above and commeth doune from the father of light with whom is no variablenes nether is he chaunged vnto darcknes. ¹⁸ Of his awne will begat he vs with the worde of lyfe that we shuld be the fyrst frutes of his creatures. ¹⁹ Wherfore deare brethren let every man be swyfte to heare slowe to speake and slowe to wrath. ²⁰ For the wrath of man worketh not that which is ryghteous before God. ²¹ Wherfore laye a parte all fylthynes all superfluite of maliciousnes and receave with meknes the worde that is grafted in you which is able to save youre soules. ²² And se that ye be doars of the worde and not hearers only deceavinge youre awne selves with sophistrie ²³ For yf eny heare the worde and do it not he is lyke vnto a man that beholdeth his bodyly face in a glasse. ²⁴ For assone as he hath loked on him silfe he goeth his waye and forgetteth immediatlie what his fassion was. ²⁵ But whoso loketh in the parfaict lawe of libertie and continueth ther in (yf he be not a forgetfull hearer but a doar of the worke) the same shall be happie in his dede. ²⁶ Yf eny man amonge you seme devoute and

refrayne not his tonge: but deceave his awne herte this mannes devocion is in vayne ²⁷ Pure devocion and vndefiled before God the father is this: to vvisit the frendlesse and widdowes in their adversite and to kepe him silfe vnspotted of the worlde.

2

¹ Brethren have not the fayth of oure lorde Iesus Christ the lorde of glory in respecte of persons. ² Yf ther come into youre company a man with a golden ryng and in goodly aparell and ther come in also a poore man in vyle rayment ³ and ye have a respecte to him that weareth the gaye clothyng and saye vnto him. Sit thou here in a good place: and saye vnto the poore stonde thou there or sit here vnder my fotestole: ⁴ are ye not parcial in youre selves and have iudged after evyll thoughtes? ⁵ Harken my deare beloved brethren. Hath not God chosen the poore of this worlde which are ryche in fayth and heyres of the kyngdom which he promysed to them that love him? ⁶ But ye have despised the poore. Are not the rych they which opresse you: and they which drawe you before iudges? ⁷ Do not they speake evyll of that good name after which ye be named. ⁸ Yf ye fulfill the royall lawe accordyng to the scripture which sayth. Thou shalt love thyne neghbour as thy silfe ye do well. ⁹ But yf ye regarde one person more then another ye commit synne and are rebuked of the lawe as transgressours. ¹⁰ Whosoever shall kepe the whole lawe and yet fayle in one poynt he is gyltie

in all. ¹¹ For he that sayd. Thou shalt not commit adulterie sayed also: thou shalt not kyll. Though thou do none adulterie yet yf thou kill thou arte a transgressor of the lawe. ¹² So speake ye and so do as they that shalbe iudged by the lawe of libertie. ¹³ For ther shalbe iudgement merciles to him that sheweth no mercy and mercy reioyseth agaynst iudgement: ¹⁴ What a vayleth it my brethren though a man saye he hath fayth when he hath no dedes? Can fayth save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or a sister be naked or destitute of dayly fode ¹⁶ and one of you saye vnto them: Departe in peace God sende you warmnes and fode: not withstandinge ye geve the not tho thynges which are nedfull to the body: what helpeth it the? ¹⁷ Even so fayth yf it have no dedes is deed in it selfe. ¹⁸ Ye and a man myght saye: Thou hast fayth and I have dedes: Shewe me thy fayth by thy dedes: and I will shewe the my fayth by my dedes. ¹⁹ Belevest thou that ther is one God? Thou doest well. The devyls also beleve and tremble. ²⁰ Wilt thou vnderstonde o thou vayne man that fayth with out dedes is deed? ²¹ Was not Abraham oure father iustified thorow workes when he offered Isaac his sonne vpo the aultre? ²² Thou seist how that fayth wrought with his dedes and through the dedes was the fayth made parfect: ²³ and the scripture was fulfilled which sayth: Abraham beleved God and it was reputed vnto him for rightewesnes: and he was called the frede of God. ²⁴ Ye se then how that of dedes a man is iustified and not of fayth only. ²⁵ Lyke wyse also was not

Raab the harlot iustified thorow workes when she receaved the messengers and sent the out another waye? ²⁶ For as the body with oute the sprete is deed even so fayth with out dedes is deed.

3

¹ My brethren, be not every man a master remembringe how that we shall receive the more damnacion: ² for in many thinges we synne all. Yf a man synne not in worde the same is a perfecte man and able to tame all the body. ³ Beholde we put bittes into the horses mouthes that they shuld obeye vs and we turne aboute all the body. ⁴ Beholde also the shyppes which though they be so gret and are dryven of fearce windes yet are they turned about with a very smale helme whither soever the violence of the governer wyll. ⁵ Even so the tonge is a lyttell member and bosteth great thinges. Beholde how gret a thinge a lyttell fyre kyndleth ⁶ and the tonge is fyre and a worlde of wyckednes. So is the tonge set amonge oure members that it defileth the whole body and setteth a fyre all that we have of nature and is it selfe set a fyre even of hell. ⁷ All the natures of beastes and of byrdes and of serpentis and thinges of ye see are meked and tamed of the nature of man. ⁸ But the tonge can no man tame. That is an vntuely evyll full of deedly poyson. ⁹ Therwith blesse we God the father and therwith curse we me which are made after the similitude of God. ¹⁰ Out of one mouth procedeth blessynge and cursynge. My brethren these thinges ought

not so to be. ¹¹ Doth a fountayne sende forth at one place swete water and bytter also? ¹² Can the fygge tree my Brethren beare olive beries: other a vyne beare fygges? So can no fountayne geve bothe salt water and fresshe also. ¹³ If eny man be wyse and endued with learnynge amonge you let him shewe the workes of his good conversacion in meknes that ys coupled with wisdom. ¹⁴ But Yf ye have bitter envyinge and stryfe in youre hertes reioyce not: nether be lyars agaynst the trueth. ¹⁵ This wisdom descendedeth not from a boue: but is erthy and naturall and divelisse. ¹⁶ For where envyinge and stryfe is there is stablenes and all maner of evyll workes. ¹⁷ But the wisdom that is from above is fyrst pure then peasable gentle and easy to be entreated full of mercy and good frutes without iudgyng and without simulacion: ¹⁸ yee and the frute of rightewesnes is sowen in peace of them that mayntene peace.

4

¹ From whence commeth warre and fighttynge amonge you: come they not here hence? even of youre voluptuousnes that rayne in youre members. ² Ye lust and have not. Ye envie and have indignacion and cannot obtayne. Ye fight and warre and have not because ye axe not. ³ Ye axe and receive not because ye axe a mysse: even to consume it apon youre voluptuousnes. ⁴ Ye advouterars and wemen that breke matrimonie: knowe ye not how that the freshippe of the worlde is ennimite to god warde? Whosoever

wilbe a frende of the worlde is made the enemie of god. ⁵ Ether do ye thinke that the scripture sayth in vayne The sprite that dwelleth in you lusteth even contrary to envie: ⁶ but geveth more grace. ⁷ Submit youre selves to god and resist the devyll and he will flye from you. ⁸ Drawe nye to god and he will drawe nye to you. Clense youre hondes ye synners and pourdge youre hertes ye waverynge mynded. ⁹ Suffre affliccions: sorowe ye and wepe. Let youre laughter be turned to mornynge and youre ioye to hevynes. ¹⁰ Cast doune youre selves before the lorde and he shall lift you vp. ¹¹ Backbyte not one another brethren. He that backbyteh hys brother and he that iudgeth his brother backbyteth the lawe and iudgeth the lawe. But and yf thou iudge the lawe thou art not an observer of the lawe: but a iudge. ¹² Ther is one lawe geuer which is able to save and to distroye. What art thou that iudget another man? ¹³ Go to now ye that saye: to daye and to morow let vs go into soche a citie and continue there a yeare and bye and sell and wynne: ¹⁴ and yet can not tell what shall happen to morowe. For what thyng is youre lyfe? It is even a vapoure that apereth for a lytell tyme and the vanyssheth awaye: ¹⁵ For that ye ought to saye: yf the lorde will and yf we live let vs do this or that. ¹⁶ But nowe ye reioyce in youre bostinges. All soche reioysynge is evyll. ¹⁷ Therefore to him that knoweth how to do good and doth it not to him it is synne.

5

¹ Goo to now ye ryche men. Wepe and howle on youre wretchednes that shall come apon you. ² Youre ryches is corrupte youre garmentes are motheaten. ³ Youre golde and youre silver are cankred and the rust of them shalbe a witnes vnto you and shall eate youre flesshe as it were fyre. Ye have heaped treasure togedder in youre last dayes: ⁴ Beholde the hyre of the labourers which have reped doune youre feldes (which hyer is of you kept backe by fraude) cryeth: and the cryes of them which have reped are entred into the eares of the lorde Sabaoth. ⁵ Ye have lived in pleasure on the erth and in wantannes. Ye have norysshed youre hertes as in a daye of slaughter. ⁶ Ye have condempned and have killed the iust and he hath not resisted you. ⁷ Be pacient therfore brethren vnto the commynge of the lorde. Beholde the husbände man wayteth for the precious frute of the erth and hath longe pacience ther vppon vntill he receave (the erly and the latter rayne.) ⁸ Be ye also pacient therfore and settle youre hertes for the commynge of the lorde draweth nye. ⁹ Grodge not one agaynst another brethren lest ye be dampned. Beholde the iudge stondesth before the dore. ¹⁰ Take (my brethren) the prophettes for an ensample of sufferynge aduersitie and of longe pacience which spake in the name of the lorde. ¹¹ Beholde we counte them happy which endure. Ye have hearde of the pacience of Iob and have knowen what ende the lorde made. For the lorde is very pitifull and mercifull. ¹² But above all

thynges my brethren sweare not nether by heven nether by erth nether by eny other othe. Let youre ye be ye and youre maye naye: lest ye faule into ypocrecy. ¹³ Yf eny of you be evyll vexed let him praye. Yf eny of you be mery let him singe Psalmes. ¹⁴ Yf eny be defeated amonge you let him call for the elders of the congregacion and let the praye over him and anoynte him with oyle in the name of the lorde: ¹⁵ and the prayer of fayth shall save the sicke and the lorde shall rayse him vp: and yf he have committed synnes they shalbe forgeuen him. ¹⁶ knowledge youre fautes one to another: and praye one for another that ye maye be healed. The prayer of a ryghteous man avayleth moche yf it be fervet. ¹⁷ Helias was a man mortall even as we are and he prayed in his prayer that it myght not rayne: and it rayned not on the erth by the space of thre yeares and sixe monethes. ¹⁸ And he prayed agayne and the heven gave rayne and the erth brought forth her frute. ¹⁹ Brethren yf eny of you erre from the trueth and an other convert him ²⁰ let the same knowe that he which converted the synner from goynge a straye out of his waye shall save a soule from deeth and shall hyde the multitude of synnes.

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