

JAMES

¹ James, the servant of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve kindreds, that be in scattering abroad, health.

² My brethren, deem ye all joy, when ye fall into diverse temptations,

³ witting that the proving of your faith worketh patience;

⁴ and patience hath a perfect work, that ye be perfect and whole, and fail in nothing.

⁵ And if any of you needeth wisdom, ask he of God, which giveth to all men largely, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given to him.

⁶ But ask he in faith, and doubt nothing; for he that doubteth, is like to a wave of the sea, which is moved and borne about of the wind.

⁷ Therefore guess not that man, that he shall take anything of the Lord.

⁸ A man double in soul is unstable in all his ways.

⁹ And a meek brother have glory in his enhancing,

¹⁰ and a rich man in his lowness; for as the flower of grass he shall pass.

¹¹ The sun rose up with heat, and dried the grass [*or the hay*], and the flower of it felled down, and the fairness of his cheer perished; and so a rich man withereth in his ways.

¹² Blessed is the man, that suffereth temptation; for when he shall be proved, he shall

receive the crown of life, which God promised to men that love him.

¹³ No man when he is tempted, say, that he is tempted of God; for why God is not a tempter of evil things, for he tempteth no man.

¹⁴ But each man is tempted, drawn and stirred, of his own coveting. [*Soothly each man is tempted of his own coveting, drawn from reason, and snared, or deceived.*]

¹⁵ Afterward [*or Then*] coveting, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin; but sin, when it is [*ful*] filled, engendereth death.

¹⁶ Therefore, my most dearworthy brethren, do not ye err.

¹⁷ Each good gift, and each perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is none other changing, nor over-shadowing of reward.

¹⁸ For willfully he begat us by the word of truth, that we be a beginning of his creature.

¹⁹ Know ye, my brethren most loved, be each man swift to hear, but slow to speak, and slow to wrath;

²⁰ for the wrath of man worketh not the rightwiseness of God.

²¹ For which thing cast ye away all uncleanness, and plenty of malice, and in mildness, receive ye the word that is planted, that may save your souls.

²² But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

²³ For if any man is an hearer of the word, and not a doer, this shall be likened to a man that beholdeth the cheer of his birth in a mirror;

²⁴ for he beheld himself, and went away, and anon he forgot which *[or what]* he was.

²⁵ But he that beholdeth into the law of perfect freedom, and dwelleth in it, and is not made a forgetful hearer, but a doer of work, this shall be blessed in his deed.

²⁶ And if any man guesseth himself to be religious, and refraineth not his tongue, but deceiveth his heart, the religion of him is vain.

²⁷ A clean religion, and unwemmed with God and the Father, is this, to visit fatherless and motherless children, and widows in their tribulation, and to keep himself undefouled from this world.

CHAPTER 2

¹ My brethren, do not ye have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory, in acception of persons. *[My brethren, do not in acception, or taking, of persons, have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory.]*

² For if a man that hath a golden ring, and in a fair clothing, cometh in your company, and a poor man entereth in a foul clothing,

³ and if ye behold into him that is clothed with clear clothing, and if ye say to him, Sit thou here well; but to the poor man ye say, Stand thou there, either sit under the stool of my feet;

⁴ whether ye deem not with your-selves, and be made doomsmen of wicked thoughts?

⁵ Hear ye, my most dearworthy brethren, whether God chose not poor men in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, that God promised to men that love him?

⁶ But ye have despised the poor man. Whether rich men oppress not you by power, and they draw you to dooms?

⁷ Whether they blaspheme not the good name, that is called to help on you? [*or that is in-called of you?*]

⁸ Nevertheless if ye perform the King's law, by scriptures, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well.

⁹ But if ye take persons, ye work sin, and be reprov'd of the law, as trespassers [*or as transgressors*].

¹⁰ And whoever keepeth all the law, but offendeth in one, he is made guilty of all.

¹¹ For he that said, Thou shalt do no lechery [*or Thou shalt not do lechery*], said also, Thou shalt not slay; that if thou doest no lechery, but thou slayest, thou art made [*a*] trespasser of the law.

¹² Thus speak ye, and thus do ye, as beginning to be deemed by the law of freedom.

¹³ For why doom without mercy is to him, that doeth no mercy; but mercy above raiseth doom.

¹⁴ My brethren, what shall it profit, if any man say that he hath faith, but he hath not works? whether faith shall be able to save him?

¹⁵ And if a brother or sister be naked, and have need of each day's livelode [*or lifelode*],

¹⁶ and if any of you say to them, Go ye in peace, be ye made hot, and be ye [*full*]-filled; but if ye

give not to them those things that be necessary to the body, what shall it profit?

¹⁷ So also faith, if it hath not works, is dead in itself.

¹⁸ But some man shall say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; show thou to me thy faith without works, and I shall show to thee my faith of works.

¹⁹ Thou believest, that one God is; thou doest well; and devils believe, and *[together]* tremble.

²⁰ But wilt thou know, thou vain man, that faith without works is idle?

²¹ Whether Abraham, our father, was not justified of works, offering Isaac, his son, on the altar?

²² Therefore thou seest, that faith wrought with his works, and his faith was *[ful]* filled of works.

²³ And the scripture was *[ful]* filled, saying, Abraham believed to God, and it was areckoned to him to rightwiseness, and he was called the friend of God.

²⁴ Ye see that a man is justified of works, and not of faith only.

²⁵ In like manner, whether also Rahab, the whore, was not justified of works, and received the messengers, and sent them out by another way?

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

CHAPTER 3

¹ My brethren, do not ye be made many masters, witting that ye take the more doom.

² For all we offend in many things. If any man offendeth not in word, this is a perfect man, for also he may lead about all the body with a bridle.

³ For if we put bridles into horses' mouths, for to consent to us, and we lead about all the body of them.

⁴ And lo! ships, when they be great, and be driven of strong winds, yet they be borne about of a little rudder, where the moving of the governor will.

⁵ So also the tongue is but a little member, and raiseth great things. Lo! how little fire burneth [*or kindleth*] a full great wood.

⁶ And our tongue is fire, the university of wickedness. The tongue is ordained in our members, which defouleth all the body; and it is enflamed, [*or set afire*], of hell, and enflameth the wheel of our birth.

⁷ And all the kind of beasts, and of fowls, and of serpents, and of others is chastised, and those be made tame of man's kind;

⁸ but no man may chastise the tongue, for it is an unpeaceable evil, and full of deadly venom.

⁹ In it we bless God, the Father, and in it we curse men, that be made to the likeness of God.

¹⁰ Of the same mouth passeth [*or cometh*] forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, it behooveth not that these things be done so.

¹¹ Whether a well of the same hole bringeth forth sweet and salt water?

¹² My brethren, whether a fig tree may make grapes, either a vine figs? So neither salt water may make sweet water.

¹³ Who is wise, and taught among you? show he of good living his working [*or his work*], in mildness of his wisdom.

¹⁴ That if ye have bitter envy, and strivings [*or strives*] be in your hearts, do not ye have glory, and be liars against the truth.

¹⁵ For this wisdom is not from above coming down, but earthly, and beastly, and fiendly.

¹⁶ For where is envy and strife, there is unsteadfastness and all shrewd work.

¹⁷ But wisdom that is from above, first it is chaste, afterward peaceable, mild, able to be counselled [*or persuadable*], consenting to good things, full of mercy and of good fruits, deeming without feigning.

¹⁸ And the fruit of rightwiseness is sown in peace, to men that make peace.

CHAPTER 4

¹ Whereof *be* battles and chidings among you? Whether not of your covetings, that fight in your members?

² Ye covet, and ye have not; ye slay, and ye have envy, and ye may not get. Ye chide, and make battle; and ye have not, for that ye ask not.

³ Ye ask, and ye receive not; for that ye ask evil, as ye show openly in your covetings.

⁴ Adulterers, know not ye, that the friendship of this world is enemy [*or enmity*] to God? Therefore whoever will be the friend of this world, is made the enemy of God.

⁵ Whether ye guess, that the scripture saith vainly, The spirit that dwelleth in you, coveteth to envy?

⁶ But he giveth the more grace; for which thing he saith, God withstandeth proud men, but to meek men he giveth grace.

⁷ Therefore be ye subject to God; but withstand ye the devil, and he shall flee from you.

⁸ Nigh ye to God, and he shall nigh to you. Ye sinners, cleanse ye the hands, and ye double in soul [*or ye double of will*], purge ye the hearts.

⁹ Be ye wretches, and wail ye [*or weep ye*]; your laughing be turned into weeping, and [*your*] joy into sorrow of heart.

¹⁰ Be ye meeked in the sight of the Lord, and he shall enhance you.

¹¹ My brethren, do not ye backbite each other. He that backbiteth his brother, either that deemeth his brother, backbiteth the law, and deemeth the law. And if thou deemest the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a doomsman.

¹² But one is Maker of the law, and Judge, that may lose and deliver. And who art thou, that deemest thy neighbour?

¹³ Lo! now ye, that say, Today either tomorrow we shall go into that city, and there we shall dwell a year, and we shall make merchandise, and we shall make winning;

¹⁴ which know not, what is to you in the morrow. For what is your life? A smoke [*or A vapour*] appearing at a little time, and afterward it shall be wasted.

¹⁵ Therefore that ye say, If the Lord will, and if we live, we shall do this thing, either that thing.

¹⁶ And now ye make full out joy in your prides; every such joying is wicked.

¹⁷ Therefore it is sin to him, that knoweth to do good, and doeth not.

CHAPTER 5

¹ Do now, ye rich men, weep ye, yelling in your wretchednesses that shall come to you.

² Your riches be rotten, and your clothes be eaten of moths.

³ Your gold and silver hath rusted, and the rust of them shall be to you into witnessing, and shall eat your fleshs, as fire. Ye have treasured to you wrath in the last days.

⁴ Lo! the hire of your workmen, that reaped your fields, which is defrauded of you, crieth; and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of hosts.

⁵ Ye have eaten on the earth, and in your lecheries ye have nourished your hearts. In the day of slaying

⁶ ye brought, and slew the just Man, and he against-stood not you. [*ye led to, and slew the just man, and he withstood you not.*]

⁷ Therefore, brethren, be ye patient, till to the coming of the Lord. Lo! an earth-tiller abideth [*the*] precious fruit of the earth, patiently suffering, till he receive timeful and lateful *fruit*.

⁸ And be ye patient, and confirm ye your hearts, for the coming of the Lord shall nigh.

⁹ Brethren, do not ye be sorrowful [*or do not ye be scornful*] each to other, that ye be not deemed. Lo! the judge standeth nigh before the gate.

¹⁰ Brethren, take ye ensample of evil going out, and of long abiding, and travail, [*or and of long abiding of travail*], and of patience, the prophets, that spake to you in the name of the Lord.

¹¹ Lo! we bless them that suffered. Ye have heard the patience of Job, and ye saw the end of the Lord, for the Lord is merciful, and doing mercy.

¹² Before all things, my brethren, do not ye swear, neither by heaven, neither by earth, neither by whatever other oath. But be your word Yea, yea, Nay, nay, that ye fall not under doom.

¹³ And if any of you is sorrowful, [*or heavy*], pray he with patient soul, and say he a psalm.

¹⁴ If any of you is sick, lead he in priests of the church, and pray they for him, and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord;

¹⁵ and the prayer of faith shall save the sick *man*[*or shall save the sick*], and the Lord shall make him light; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven to him.

¹⁶ Therefore acknowledge ye each to other your sins, and pray ye each for other, that ye be saved. For the continual prayer of a just man is much worth.

¹⁷ Elijah was a deadly man like us, and in prayer he prayed, that it should not rain on the earth, and it rained not three years and six months.

¹⁸ And again he prayed, and heaven gave rain, and the earth gave his fruit.

¹⁹ And, brethren, if any of you erreth from truth, and any converteth him,

²⁰ he oweth to know, that he that maketh a sinner to be turned from the error of his way, shall save the soul of him from death, and covereth the multitude of sins. [*Amen.*]

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Wycliffe's Bible with Modern Spelling, was made in response to requests from readers who wanted my Wycliffe's Old and New Testaments and Apocrypha in one volume. Printing limitations dictated the number of pages available to me and the letter size. In my previous books, Wycliffe's Bible, Wycliffe's Old Testament, Vols. 1 amp 2, Wycliffe's New Testament, and Wycliffe's Apocrypha, I have tens of thousands of rewritten verses, presented in parentheses "()", to provide help in comprehending the 14th century Middle English vocabulary and grammar. In this present volume, with space at a premium, those "helps" had to be eliminated, to make room for the text of the Apocrypha.

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