

New Testament Survey
JAMES

Author: James, The brother of the Lord [There is some debate, but tradition and evidence fits this James. He is a “pillar of the church” (Gal. 2:9). He was prominent in the Jerusalem Council, and there are many parallels between his letter from that council (Acts 15) and this epistle].

Date: 45-48 (Probably the first NT book written. It is written to Jews (Christian) who are dispersed, so it would follow the persecution of Acts 8. The synagogues are still used by Christians (2:2). There is no mention of Gentile Christians, so prior to Acts 15 council.

Theme: Exhortations to those in the dispersion toward Christian Maturity.

Misc. Evidence he is the brother of the Lord: Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3; Gal. 1:19

Brief Outline

- I. Patient in Testing. (1)
 - A. Rejoice in diverse trials 1:2-12
 - B. Resist in deadly temptation 1:13-18
 - C. Rest in divine truth 1:19-27
- II. Practices the Truth. (2)
 - A. Partiality 2:1-13
 - B. Faith & Works 2:14-26
- III. Power over the Tongue. (3)
 - A. The Tongue 3:1-12
 - B. Two Wisdoms 3:13-18
- IV. Peace Maker, not Trouble Maker. (4)
 - A. Turn hatred into humility. 4:1-10
 - B. Turn judgement into justice. 4:11-12
 - C. Turn boasting into belief. 4:13-17
- V. Patience and prayer in Troubles. (5)
 - A. Patient Laborers. 5:1-12
 - B. Prayerful People. 5:13-20

Key Chapters & Verses: (Bold required for Elders)

- 1. Patience in Testing
- 1:2-4**. . . Rejoicing and Maturing through Trials
- 1:5. . . *"But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God . . ."*
- 1:13-15**. Origin of Temptation
- 1:17. . . *"Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above..."*
- 2:14-26**. Faith & Works
- 3:1**. . . Warning to teachers
- 3:2-12**. The Tongue
- 4:1-3**. . . The source of quarrels
- 4:6-7**. . . But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, 'God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'...Submit... resist..."
- 5:14-16**. Prayer for the sick

Detailed Outline of James

I. Becoming Mature (1)

A. Salutation (1:1)

B. Rejoice in Diverse Trials 1:2-12

1. The Purpose of Trials 2-4

a. The Requirement (2)

b. The Reason (3)

c. The Result (4)

2. The Place of Wisdom in Trials 5-8

a. Requesting Wisdom from God (5)

b. Requisite for Requesting (6-8)

3. The Proper Attitude in Trials 9-11

a. The Man of Humble Circumstances (9)

b. The Man of Rich Circumstances (10-11)

B. Resist in Deadly Temptation 1:12-18

1. The Blessing of Persevering Under Trial (12)

2. Temptation is not from God 13

3. Temptation is from Own Lusts 14,15

4. Good comes from God 16-18

C. Rest in Divine Truth 1:19-27

1. Receive the Word 19-21

2. Do the Word 22-27

a. General (22-25)

b. Specific (26-27)

II. Being Mature (2)

A. Avoiding Partiality 2:1-13

1. Example of Partiality (1-7)

2. The Royal Law (8)

3. Warning Against Partiality (9-13)

B. Working Faith 2:14-26

1. Uselessness of Faith Without Works 2:14-20

a. No beneficial effect (14-17)

b. No belief unto salvation (18-20)

2. Justification by Faith with Works 2:21-26

a. Abraham (21-24)

b. Rahab (25-26)

III. Speaking Maturely (3)

A. The Tongue 3:1-12

1. Warning to Teachers 3:1-2

2. The Power of the Tongue 3:3-12

a. It's Danger (3-8)

b. It's Hypocrisy (9-12)

B. Two Wisdoms 3:13-18

1. Earthly Wisdom (13-16)

3. Heavenly Wisdom (17-18)

IV. Acting Maturely (4)

A. Overcoming Conflict 4:1-10

1. The Danger of Selfish Envy 4:1-5

a. The Source of Conflict (1-3)

b. Hostility Toward God (4-5)

2. The Necessity of Godly Humility 4:6-10

a. God's Response (6)

b. Man's Responsibilities (7-10)

i. Submit (7)

ii. Draw Near (8)

iii. Repent (9)

iv. Humility (10)

B. Not Judging One Another 4:11,12

C. Living by the Lord's Will 4:13-17

1. Life taken for granted - earthly wisdom 4:13-14

2. Life seen as granted by God - godly wisdom 4:15-17

V. Living Maturely(5)

A. Warnings to Those Who Exploit 5:1-6

B. Encouragement To Be Patient 5:7-11

1. The Farmer (7)

2. The Coming of the Lord (8-9)

3. The Prophets & Job (10-11)

C. Exhortation to Have Integrity 5:12

D. Encouragement to Pray 5:13-20

1. Responding to Life's Circumstances (13-16)

2. The Example of Elijah (17-18)

E. Encouragement to Turn Back Sinners 5:19-20)