

## Book Of James

1. This book is the first of seven epistles called "catholic" or "general" epistles (James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1 John, and Jude).
  - a. 1 John has no designation to whom written, but appears to be written to a large audience.
  - b. Second and Third John are also called "catholic epistles" because of their natural grouping with First John. Technically they are not. Second John was addressed to the "elect lady" and Third John to "Gaius."
  - c. 1 Peter was written "to those who reside as aliens" throughout the providence of Asia Minor. (1 Pet. 1:1).
  - d. 2 Peter was written to those who "have obtained a like precious faith." (2 Pet. 1:1).
2. These general epistles were addressed not to individual churches, as were most of the Pauline epistles, but to Christians in general especially to those who had been scattered.
3. There are several kinds of letters.
  - a. There are letters written to individuals. (1 Tim. 1:1). See 2 Tim., and 2 & 3 John
  - b. Letters written to a single congregation. (1 Cor. 1:2).
  - c. Letters written to more than one congregation. (Gal. 1:2).
  - d. Letters written to Christians at large. See James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1 John and Jude.
4. James does not mention any names of Christians or congregations in this book, but is addressing Christians at large.
5. Many scholars accept, as true, that the Greek of James is the best in the New Testament with the exception of Hebrews.
  - a. Other scholars argue it is not superior to the Pauline Greek.
  - b. Some reject James as author of this letter because they believe that the Greek is too excellent for a Jew like James the Lord's brother who grew up in Nazareth like Jesus.
  - c. This is non-sense since we have no way of knowing James' skill in Greek.

### Author Of Book

1. There are men by the name of James that are not regarded as possible authors of this epistle.
  - a. There is "James the less" (younger). (Mk. 15:40).

MAR 15:40 And there were also some women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses, and Salome.

- 1) His mother Mary was "the mother of James the Less and Joses, and Salome.

2 It is speculated, based on John 19:25, that this Mary was the wife of Clopas.

JOH 19:25 Therefore the soldiers did these things. But there were standing by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

1) "Mary the wife of Clopas" was the sister of Mary - the mother of Jesus.

2) "James" may be called "the less" because of his age or height.

**Note:** Some think this is "James, the son of Alphaeus," but we cannot be sure.

b. The Bible also speaks of James "the father of Judas (not Iscariot).

LUK 6:16 Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

1) This Judas (**Thaddaeus**) was the son of a man named James..

2). The other gospels called this Judas Thaddaeus.

MAT 10:3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax-gatherer; James the son of Alphaeus, and **Thaddaeus**;

MAR 3:18 and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and **Thaddaeus**, and Simon the Zealot;

3) Nothing is really known about this James.

2. Some think it was James the son of Zebedee. (Matt. 10:1, 2). See Mk. 3:17.

a. It should be noted that this James died very early in the history of the church. (Acts 12:1,2). He was killed by Herod Agrippa I in about 44 A.D. during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

b. He died even before the 3 missionary journeys of Paul. 1<sup>st</sup> journey was about 45-49 A.D., 2<sup>nd</sup> journey was about 50 to 52 A.D. and the 3<sup>rd</sup> journey was about 53 to 57 A.D.

c. It is questionable that he was alive when this epistle was written or that he was well enough known merely to write "James" at the beginning of this epistle and his identity be known. He is rarely mentioned in Acts by name. (Acts 1:13; 12:2).

3. Some think it was James the son of Alphaeus. (Matt. 10:3; Acts 1:13).

a. This James was not very well known as the author of this epistle seems to be.

b. The author of this epistle was so well known that he could simply state that his name was "James" and his readers would know who he was.

4. Most scholars believes James the brother of the Lord wrote this epistle.

a. The Bible talks about James and his other brothers. (Matt. 13:55; Mk. 6:3; Jn. 7:5; Acts 1:13, 14).

b. James became a great leader and an apostle. (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; 1 Cor. 15:7; Gal. 1:18, 19; 2:9; Jude 1:1).

c. Jude, the Lord's half-brother and brother to James, wrote Jude. (Jude 1:1; Matt. 13:55).

**Note:**

1. The Bible teaches that after the birth of Jesus Mary and Joseph came together and had children. (Matt. 1:25). They had 4 sons including James and at least 2 daughters. (Matt. 13:55; Mk.6:3).
2. James, the Lord's brother, was not one of the twelve apostles (Matt. 10:2-4), or at first a believer in Jesus (Jn. 7:5).
  - a. It is never stated why His brothers, at first, did not believe He was the Messiah, the Son of God.
  - b. It may have been because the family was so very poor including Jesus, but this is speculation.
  - c. It could have been because of an misunderstanding of the Messiah to come and how Jesus matched their misunderstanding and expectations.
3. We find in Acts 1:13-14 that His brothers became believers after His resurrection and ascension into heaven.
  - a. His "sisters" are not mentioned after His resurrection. (Acts 1:13, 14).
  - b. We do not know what happened to them, and it is useless to speculate.
  - c. The absence of their present in Acts 1:13, 14 does not prove or disprove anything about their salvation.
  - d. There is absolutely no evidence that the 120 **were the only followers of Christ** at that time. Luke does not affirm they were the only believers.
4. Although he was not one of the twelve, he was included among those who saw the risen Lord . (1Cor. 15:5, 7).
5. Like Paul and Barnabas, he received the title of apostle (Gal.1:19) and was recognized by the zealots of the law as their leader ( Gal. 2:12).
6. He occupied a prominent in the church at Jerusalem (Gal 2:9), was the leader of the first council (Acts 15:13), and, with the elders, received Paul upon his return from his third missionary tour (Acts 21:18), A.D. 57.
7. He was the author of the epistle that bears his name.
8. Eusebius tells us that James was surnamed "the Just" by the ancients on account of his eminent virtue.
9. Assuming his life was like this marvelous epistle, he was truly a great man of God and the study of this great epistle will bless men until the end of time.

**Date** - Unknown

1. It was probably written between 45 and 68 A.D.
  - a. Tradition indicates he was likely martyred in A.D. 68.
  - b. Josephus wrote that he was cast from the temple in Jerusalem and then stoned.
2. Some think it was the first epistle to Christians, but this is conjecture.
  - a. There is no way to date this book with exactness.

- b. The exact date of this epistle will likely always be unknown.
3. The epistle shows no evidence of the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, but neither is there any reference to the missionary journeys of Paul. It is a mistake to base too much all of silence.
4. Many scholars believe it was written about A.D. 60, but again this is uncertain.

**Note:**

- It appears this book was written after the persecutions of A.D. 33 and 44. Christians had been scattered by persecution. (Acts 8:1ff; 12:1ff).
- It should not be overlooked that Jews from the known world had been present at Pentecost. (Acts 2:5). Many or most of those present on that Pentecost had long returned home by the time this epistle was written.
- All of the date arguments are mostly based on silence. They mostly argue dates on the basis of what James did not mention. This really does not prove much if anything.

**Destination** - It was written to “the twelve tribes who are dispersed.”

- “Twelve tribes” could refer to the twelve tribes of Israel. (Exod. 24:4; Matt. 19:28; Lk. 22:30; Acts 26:7; Rev. 21:12).
1. Some think this refers to those who were “fleshly Israel” (Judaistic Christianity, believing Jews) scattered among the nations.
    - a. Early Christians are been scattered by persecution. Acts 8:1ff; 12:1ff.
    - b. “Dispersion” - See John 7:35.

JOH 7:35 The Jews therefore said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we shall not find Him? He is not intending to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks, is He?"

- c. The readers of this epistle were believers. (Jas. 2:1), but it is far from certain that these believers were Jews only.

JAM 2:1 My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism.

2. Some think this refers to those who were “spiritual Israel” (both Jews and Gentiles) scattered among the nations.
  - a. Christians are called “Israel” (Gal. 3:27,29; Rom. 2:28, 29; Gal. 6:16; Phil. 3:5).
  - b. The first theory may be the correct one (written to believing Jews), but it is impossible to be certain **and it is not likely that he would write to Jewish Christians and ignore Gentile Christians.**
  - c. This would promote division, and might even suggest there were different standards for Jewish and Gentile Christians.

**3. The safe conclusion is that it was written to Christians - Jews and Gentiles.**

**Theme:**

1. The theme of the book is “Practical Religion” or “Faith At Work.”

2. It has been called a Christian book of Proverbs.
  - a. The writing is mostly in small sections, generally unrelated to the others.
  - b. The style is somewhat like that of Proverbs.
3. It has a lot of similarity also with the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus changes the subject frequently.
  - a. Joy in the midst of trials (Jas. 1:2; Matt. 5:10-12).
  - b. Boldness in prayer. (Jas. 1:15; Matt. 7:7-12).
  - c. The danger of bad temper. (Jas. 1:19, 20; Matt. 5:22).
  - d. Hearing and doing. (Jas. 1:22; Matt. 7:24-27).
  - e. There are other parallels that will be noted in this study. (Matt. 5:7 with Jas. 2:13; Matt. 5:19 with James 2:10; Matt. 6:19 with Jas. 5:2,3).
4. This letter needs to be studied by Christians in every generation.
5. It is a book that is very practical and one that cannot be seriously studied without becoming a better Christian.
6. **The key verse is James 1:22.** We must be doers of the word of God. See also Jas. 4:17.

### **Criticism:**

1. Martin Luther called this letter “a right strawy epistle” and placed it as a part of an appendix to his translation of the New Testament into German.
  - a. “Strawy” was something of small worth or significance. He did affirm it had some value.
  - b. It also noteworthy to point out that Luther questioned Hebrews, Jude and Revelation.
2. He pretty much rejected this marvelous epistle because it did not agree with what he interpreted Paul to teach about faith and works.
  - a. He misunderstood the kind of works James maintained were necessary for salvation.
  - b. He failed to distinguish between works of faith and works of merit.
  - c. The religious world, and many in the church, are still very confused on this issue.
3. A careful study of this epistle will show that James and Paul did not disagree on this vital subject of faith and works. **They were in complete agreement. Neither believe in meritorious works.**

## **Book Of James**

Salutation  
1:1-2

**JAM 1:1 James, a bond-servant [a slave] of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad [among the nations throughout the world], greetings.**

- Lit. the Greek “chaipain” is “to rejoice.” It is an infinite from the verb “chair’o” meaning “rejoice.” It is used here in the sense of “greetings” of “greeting.” ASV, KJV
  - “Iakobos” [ee a’ ko bos]- James. It is the Greek [Hellenized] form of “Iakob” [ee a\_kob”] meaning “Jacob.”
  - “James” was the name “Jacob” in the Old Testament.
  - “dispersion” (RSV) is from the Greek “diaspora” [dee a spo ra’] meaning “a scattering, dispersion.” It has reference to Christians scattered throughout the world, but did not exclude those who had not been scattered.
1. This is James the Lord’s brother. See Intro. to this epistle.
  2. The Greek “dou’los” means “slave, bond-servant.” He was a voluntary “slave” of Jesus.
  3. James shows his great humility recognizing God’s attitude towards the proud. (Jas. 4:6).
    - a. He did not boast because he was the Lord’s brother. (Matt.12:46-50; Jas. 1:19).
    - b. He did not boast because he was an apostle and a pillar in the church. (Gal. 1:18, 19; 2:9).
    - c. Paul also described himself as a “bond-servant” of Christ. ( Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Tit. 1:1)
    - d. Paul, like James, was very humble.
    - e. Though he was very humble, he wrote with great authority and used scores of imperatives throughout this epistle. Humility does not exclude authority.
  4. “the Lord Jesus Christ” - He recognized the Deity and Supremacy of Christ.
    - a. “Lord” is not a mere term of respect.
    - b. It denotes “Deity.” It was used, in the Roman world, of emperors who falsely considered themselves gods.
    - c. James recognizes the Jesus was not a mere man, but was Deity. (Matt. 16:16; Jn. 20:30,31; Phil. 2:5-11).
  5. “twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad” - likely a reference to spiritual Israel (Jewish and Gentile Christians) scattered among the nations.
    - a. Even those who believe it was written to Jewish Christians, believe the book is applicable and binding on all Christians.
    - b. From a practical side, the argument for Jewish Christians or all Christians makes little difference if the book is applicable to all.

## **Joy Of Trials**

1:2-4

**JAM 1:2 Consider it all [great] joy, my brethren [brothers] when you encounter [face, fall into] various trials,**

- “peirasmos” [pay ra smos’]- “a trial, temptation.” It is used here of “trials.”
1. Trials were a cause of joy or happiness. (Matt. 5:10-12).
  2. The trials themselves were not joyous, but the end results.
  3. They make us stronger. They build Christian character and build spiritual stamina.
  4. Trials may come in the form of persecutions, dangers, loss of health, financial problems, death of loved ones, etc.

**Note:**

- Persecutions (Jas. 2:5,7); Sicknesses (Jas. 5:14); Injustices (Jas. 5:4); victims of partiality. (Jas. 2:1-12); Cursed. (Jas. 3:10).
- Trials “yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness.” (Heb. 12:11).

**JAM 1:3 knowing that the testing [proving] of your faith [through hardships, temptations, persecutions] produces [develops] endurance [spiritual strength, steadfastness].**

- “dokimion” [ do kee’ mee on] - “testing, proving”
  - “hupomone” [hoo po mo nay’] - “endurance, perseverance”
1. Trials help us develop spiritual endurance, strength, steadfastness.
  2. Trials, as unpleasant as they may be, help us get to heaven.
  3. Trials often produce thankfulness for what we have and enjoy.

**JAM 1:4 And let endurance have its perfect [complete] result [finish its work, full effect], that you may be perfect and complete [entire], lacking in nothing [spiritually].**

- “teleios” [tel’ ay os] - “perfect, complete, mature”
1. Testing produces endurance, and endurance produces Christian character. It produced maturity.
  2. Though we will never be sinless, Christian character is necessary to please God.
  3. Peter exhorted Christians to develop the Christian graces. (2 Pet. 1:5-11). These graces bring glory to God and make us stronger.

**Wisdom**

1:5-8

**JAM 1:5 But if any of you lacks [is deficient of] wisdom [from above], let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously [liberally] and without reproach [for asking or asking too often], and it will be given to him.**

- “lei’po” [lay’ po] means “lacks, be destitute of, needs.”
- “haplos” [hap los’] - “generously, liberally”

- “If any of you” really describes us all. We all need more wisdom and need to constantly ask for it.
- “to all men” - This is used generically to refer to both men and women. It primarily refers to believers who believe in God and His Son and approach God in faith. It may not exclude the prayers of non-Christians who believe in God and Christ and are seeking wisdom from God. Cornelius was a non-Christian and lost man who was a man of prayer. (Acts 10:1-4). This did not mean Cornelius was saved because God was hearing His prayers. He was lost until he obeys the gospel.. (Acts 11:13-15; 10:48).
- **Man is not saved by prayer alone.** (Acts 9:11; 22:16).

1. One could be a “walking Bible” and not be wise, but on the other hand the one who is ignorant of God and His word is not wise.	6. We must ask God for wisdom. (Jas. 1:5). “Wisdom from above” (Jas. 3:17).
2. It is not knowing the answer to every question or problem. It is not becoming another Solomon.	7. He is the source.
3. It involves the proper use of knowledge, and the ability to discern good from evil. (Heb. 5:11-14).	8. Wisdom of world is foolishness to God. (1 Cor. 1:20).
4. It involves right living. (Jas. 3:13-18).	9. “The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.” (Prov. 9:10; Psa. 111:10).
5. It understands God’s will. (Eph. 5:17). See also Rom. 12:2.	10. "And to man He said, 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; And to depart from evil is understanding.'" (Job 28:28).

**Note:**

- Wisdom does not denote knowledge gained by direct revelation as Joseph Smith claimed. See Jn. 16:13; Gal. 1:8.
- It is not worldly knowledge.
- This wisdom is described in James 3:13-18, and is manifested in our life style.

**JAM 1:6 But let him ask in faith [with full confidence] without any doubting, for the one who doubts [wavers, hesitates, is unsure] is like the surf [the waves] of the sea driven [blown] and tossed by the wind.**

- “diakrin’o” [dee a kree’no] - “I differentiate, judge; Middle voice - “dispute, waver”
1. Prayer must come from faith. (Matt. 21:22; Heb. 11:6).
  2. Asking in faith means trusting God will answer the prayer according to His will. (1 Jn. 5:14, 15).
  3. Asking in faith does not assure we will get what we request because we often do not ask for the things that are good for us. (Jas. 4:2,3).
  4. Asking in faith does not mean we will always get an immediate answer to our prayers or that we will always get what we ask for. God answers our prayers according to His will and in His own time. (1 Jn. 5:14,15).

**JAM 1:7 For let not that [doubtful] man expect [suppose, think] that he will receive anything [he asks for] from the Lord [the Father or Jesus],**



1. James insists we must ask “in faith” to receive blessings from God.
  - a. James places great emphasis on faith in contrast to the belief of many.
  - b. He presents the fact that saving faith must trust and obey.
  - c. One cannot separate saving faith from action. (Lk. 6:46).
2. The one who is doubtful will not “receive anything from the Lord.”
  - a. See James 1:1 - “Lord” is Jesus.
    - 1) It is scriptural to pray to Jesus. (Jn. 14:13; Acts 7:59, 60; 1 Cor. 16:22; 2 Cor. 12:7-10; Rev. 22:20).
    - 2) The word could refer to Jesus.
  - b. See James 1:5 - “Lord” is not identified. He could be referring back to “God” the Father. (Jas. 1:1, 5).
3. James frequently used the words “Lord” and “God.”

a. Jesus as Lord

JAM 1:1 James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad, greetings.

JAM 2:1 My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism.

JAM 5:7 Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains.

JAM 5:8 You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

b. Father as Lord

JAM 5:10 As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

JAM 5:11 Behold, we count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.

c. Either the Father or Jesus as Lord

JAM 1:7 For let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord,

JAM 1:12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

JAM 3:9 With it we bless our Lord and Father; and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; (“Lord” may represent Jesus here and “Father” “God the Father.”).

JAM 4:10 Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

JAM 4:15 Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that."

JAM 5:4 Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

JAM 5:14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;

JAM 5:15 and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.

d. The “Father” is referred to as “God” by James.

JAM 1:1 James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad, greetings.

JAM 1:5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

JAM 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

JAM 1:20 for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.

JAM 1:27 This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

JAM 2:5 Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?

JAM 2:19 You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.

JAM 2:23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness," and he was called the friend of God.

JAM 3:9 With it we bless our Lord and Father; and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God;

JAM 4:4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

JAM 4:6 But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

JAM 4:7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

JAM 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

4. This does not mean that James did not view Jesus as "God" (Deity).

- a. He uses the word "Lord" to denote the Deity of Jesus.
- b. Paul normally used the word "Lord" in reference to Jesus (Rom. 1:7; 5:1; 6:23), but He strongly believed in the Deity of Jesus. (Col. 1:15-18; 2:9; Phil. 2:5-11). He likewise used the word "Lord" to affirm the Deity of Jesus.
- c. So did John. He recorded the words of Thomas (Jn. 20:20), and then added these words. (Jn.20: 30, 31). See also Jo. 1:1-3, 14, 18; 10:30).
- d. The apostles worshiped Him manifesting Jesus was Deity. (Matt. 14:33; 28:9, 17).
- e. Jesus was worshiped on other occasions. (Matt. 2:11; Jn. 19:37, 38; Rev. 5:13).

**JAM 1:8 being a double-minded man, unstable [undecided, fickle] in all his ways [about everything he does]**

1. The Greek "dipsuchos" [dips' oo khos] means "a double-minded, wavering, uncertain, doubting"
  - a. Lit. "a man with two minds" - one of doubt and one of faith.
  - b. The "double-minded man" is one who wavers in his faith rather than having full confidence in the power of God.
2. In James 4:8 it is used to the man who would serve God and the world at the same time.
3. "akatastatos" [a ka ta' sta tos] - "unstable, undecided, fickle." The one who doubts will not receives anything from God. **Faith is the absence of doubt.**

## Instructions Poor And Rich

1:9-11

**JAM 1:9 But let the [poor] brother of humble circumstances [poor, lack of wealth, power, status] glory in his high position [as God's child and heir to the true riches];**

- “hups’os” [hoops’ os] - “height, heaven , high position”
  - “kaucha’omai” [kau cha’ o mai] - “glory, boast, take pride, rejoice”
1. There were primarily two classes in the 1<sup>st</sup> century - the rich and the very poor
  2. Most Christians were poor and nobodies in the eyes of the world. (1 Cor. 1:26).
  3. They should not bemoan this fact knowing they are heirs to all the riches of heaven.
  4. There were some rich Christians., but Paul insisted they must share their wealth. (1 Tim. 6:17-19).

**JAM 1:10 and let the rich man glory in his humiliation [the fact he is slave of Christ and saved by His grace], because like flowering grass he will pass away.**

- “tapei’nosis” [ta pay’ no sis] - “humiliation”
  - “glory” is not in the Greek text but it is understood.
  - Lit. “and the rich one [glory] in his humiliation.”
1. The rich’s man wealth means nothing to God. (Psa. 24:1; 89:11).
  2. The rich man must become a spiritual beggar to be saved. (Matt. 5:3). See Lk. 12:20.
  3. His human frailty and human sinfulness should produce humility.
  4. Riches will not save a man, but make it hard for a man to be saved. (Matt. 19:26).
  5. It is only by coming to Jesus and becoming His bond-servant that He will be saved.
  6. James affirmed the rich “like flowering grass” “will pass away.”
    - a.. “They will soon die and leave behind all their busy activities.” Living Bible
    - b. “The rich man will fade away even while he goes about his business.” NIV

**JAM 1:11 For the sun rises with a scorching wind, and withers the grass [plant]; and its flower [blossom] falls off [withers and dies], and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits [for wealth, pleasure] will fade away.**

- “porei’a” [po ray’ a] - “journey, trip, way (of life), conduct, business”
  - “chor’tos” [chor’ tos] - “grass, plant.”
1. Life passes away even for the rich, and this can happen at any time. (Prov. 27:1; Lk. 12:16-21).

2. Death is certain for the rich and the poor. (Eccles. 3:2; Heb. 9:27).
3. The rich (and the poor} will leave all their wealth behind. (1 Tim. 6:7).

## **Temptations**

### **1:12-15**

**JAM 1:12 Blessed** [happy, fortunate] **is a man who perseveres** [endures] **under trial** [or temptation]; **for once he has been approved** [stands the test], **he will receive the crown** [wreath] **of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.**

- “maka’rios” [ma ka’ ree os] - “blessed, happy”
  - See James 1:1 for “trials”; Here the Greek verb “peira’zo” [pay ra’ zo] is used of “temptations” or “trials.”
  - “steph’anos” [stef’ a nos] - “that which surrounds, a crown, a wreath”
1. “Receiving the crown of life” requires coming to Jesus. (Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12).
  2. Receiving “the crown of life” requires loving obedience. (Jn. 3:36; 14:15; 15:14; Rev. 2:10). See “the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”
  3. “Receiving the crown of life” requires perseverance. (Rev. 2:10).
    - a. Christianity is an every day religion.
    - b. It is not “if I feel like it” religion.

#### **Notes:**

- Men will devote most or all of their life in the pursuit of a medal that, at most, can be of some benefit for this life only.
- Only one wins the coveted prize.
- How much more should we strive for “the crown of life” that endures forever.
- The devil often tempts us with our trials and temptations and seeks to destroy our faith in God.
- We are very vulnerable during times of trouble, and without God are easy prey for the devil
- Most often our faith is shaken because we do not understand trials and believe somehow God has done us an injustice.

### **“Let No One Say When He Is Tempted”**

**JAM 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.**

- **This is an accusation often made by unbelievers, and even some believers have made it.**

1. God is incapable of being tempted by evil, and He never wants to do wrong.
  - He is absolute holiness and in Him is “no darkness.” (1 Jn. 1:5).
  - God is holy. (Isa. 6:3; Rev. 4:8; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16).
    - a. James affirms “God cannot be tempted by evil”
      - 1) It is impossible for God to be tempted. (Jas. 1:13).
      - 2) It is impossible for God to lie. (Heb. 6:18).
    - b. The Bible sometimes exclaims that nothing is impossible for God. (Matt. 19:26; Lk. 1:37; 18:27).
      - 1) This language is used to describe His infinite power. See Gen. 18:14.
      - 2) It is not language to be taken without exception.
      - 3) God cannot make a square circle, but a circle is not square.
      - 4) God cannot make a rock too heavy for Him to pick up because God being omnipotent there is no rock that God cannot pick up.
    - c. This “impossible” language must be taken in proper context.
      - 1) This language does not refer to the character of God
      - 2) God perfect character makes it impossible for God to lie, sin, be tempted, break a promise. (Heb. 1:13; Heb. 6:18).
2. God never tempts any man to commit sin, but helps us overcome temptation. (1 Cor.. 10:13).
  - a. Some have misunderstood Matthew 6:13 to teach God tempts us.
  - b. Jesus teaches us to pray we will not be tempted beyond what we can bear. See 1 Cor. 10:13.
  - c. The word “tempt” in Genesis 22:1 is also used in the sense of “test.”
    - 1) The word “tempt” comes from the Hebrew “nasah” that has the meaning of “tested” or “proved” in Genesis 22..
    - 2) God tested the faith of Abraham by telling him to sacrifice his son Isaac. (Gen. 22:1-16).
    - 3) The faith of Joseph, the son of Jacob, was tested by the great hardships he suffered at the hands of his brothers, and at the hands of the Egyptians.
    - 4) In all his trials he never lost faith;

**JAM 1:14 But each one is tempted when he is carried [drawn] away and enticed [allured] by his own lust (evil desires).**

1. It is our evil desires or lust that lead to sin.

2. Evil desires lead us to submit to the things of the flesh rather than the things of God.

3. The devil knows this, and he works constantly on our lusts. (1 Jn. 2:15-17).

### **Lust, The Mother Of Sin**

**JAM 1:15 Then when lust [the mother of sin] has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth [spiritual] death.**

- Lit. “the lust having conceived bears sin.”

1. Lust is the mother of sin.

2. Lust conceives or becomes pregnant when our will begins to unite with the evil desires.

3. Sin leads to spiritual death. (Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:2; Jas. 5:19, 20).

**JAM 1:16 Do not be deceived [about the source of temptation and sin or the source of good], my beloved brethren [brothers].**

New International: Don't be deceived, my dear brothers.

- The language suggests that some had already been deceived into thinking God tempts them to sin.

- But nothing could be further from the truth. God would never tempt us to do evil.

1. This verse may have reference to what preceded or follows.

**What Preceded** - God is not the source of evil (Jas. 1:13,14). He does not tempt us to sin.

**What Follows** - He is the source of good. (Jas. 1:17). He is the source of every good and perfect gift.

2. James warns them of being deceived because they are his “beloved brothers.” (Jas. 1:16, 19; 2:5).

a. He wants his brothers and sisters in Christ to be saved.

b. James refers to his readers as “brothers” [generic for brothers and sisters] over and over again in this epistle. (Jas. 1:2, 16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14, 3:1, 10,12; 4:11; 5:7, 9, 10, 12, 19).

c. “brethren” refers back “to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad” (Jas. 1:1).

1) See Introduction in regard to spiritual Israel.

2) Christians are called “Israel’ (Gal. 3:27, 20; Rom. 2:28, 29; Gal. 6:16; Phil. 3:3).

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