

# James

## (1) Introduction

### Christian Maturity

James 1:1-4

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:

Greetings.

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. NIV

#### The background of James...

What's the story of James, Jesus' (half) brother? Mt.13:55-56; Jn.7:5; Acts 1:14,12:17; Gal.2:9

**Initially an unbeliever but later saved and became a 'pillar' in the early church/Jerusalem**

What do you learn about James' belief in Christ from James 1:1a? see Acts 2:36

**He sees Jesus, not as his older brother, but as God, the Lord Jesus Christ! Amazing!**

When do we believe this book was written? (Note: Likely the first NT book!)

**Probably AD44-49. Before Paul's ministry blossomed. Before Jerusalem Council, AD49.**

#### The character of the book...

If this book was written *prior* to Paul's great epistles, did James know of *faith*? Acts.3:16, etc.

**Of course! Salvation has always been by faith. James knew it and taught it.**

What is the writing *style* of James? What is this book patterned after? Prov.10; see IITim.2:15

**It's a wisdom style book, like Proverbs. A string of pearls. Individual unlinked topics.**

As such, is James, like Proverbs, *mainly* a book of *doctrine*? see IITim.3:16

**Not so much. It's a book about how to live. Extremely practical. Tests of real salvation.**

To whom is the book addressed? James 1:1 What insight does this give?

**To the 12 tribes (aka, Jews), scattered among the gentiles. Early in church, before Paul.**

Why would James be 'limiting' this letter to the Jews? Why no reference to gentiles? Acts 9:15

**This letter was written when the church was virtually all Jews! No Gospel to gentiles, yet.**

What was (is) true in general about the Jews? Jn.8:31-39

**They have "faith", but it's in their lineage. They're Abraham's descendants.**

But what does Jesus emphasize over and over to these Jews? Jn.8:39

**IF you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham. Live a life of faith.**

How does James capture that exact same message? James 2:14-18

**If your faith is genuine, it will be accompanied by good works! Test yourself on this!**

What is the general topic, focus, of the book of James? Eph.4:11-13; Heb.5:11-13

**It's about growing up, maturity, in Christ. Getting of the milk and onto the meat!**