

James

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes
in the Dispersion: Greeting. Count it all joy, my brethren, when you meet
various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces
steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be
5 perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. If any of you lacks wisdom, let
him ask God, who gives to all men generously and without reproaching, and
it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who
doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For
that person must not suppose that a double-minded man, unstable in all his
10 ways, will receive anything from the Lord. Let the lowly brother boast in
his exaltation, and the rich in his humiliation, because like the flower of the
grass he will pass away. For the sun rises with its scorching heat and
withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So will the rich
man fade away in the midst of his pursuits. Blessed is the man who endures
15 trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life which
God has promised to those who love him. Let no one say when he is
tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted with evil and
he himself tempts no one; but each person is tempted when he is lured and
enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to
20 sin; and sin when it is full-grown brings forth death. Do not be deceived,

my beloved brethren. Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

5 Know this, my beloved brethren. Let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger, for the anger of man does not work the righteousness of God. Therefore put away all filthiness and rank growth of wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if

10 any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who observes his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But he who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer that forgets but a doer that acts, he shall be blessed in his doing. If any one thinks he is

15 religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this man's religion is vain. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. My brethren, show no partiality as you hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. For if a man

20 with gold rings and in fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor

man in shabby clothing also comes in, and you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "Have a seat here, please," while you say to the poor man, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen,
5 my beloved brethren. Has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you, is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme that honorable name which was invoked over you? If you really
10 fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well. But if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," said also, "Do not kill." If you do not commit adultery
15 but do kill, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy; yet mercy triumphs over judgment. What does it profit, my brethren, if a man says he has faith but has not works? Can his faith save him? If a brother or sister is ill-clad and
20 in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be

warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body,
what does it profit? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. But some
one will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart
from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. You believe
5 that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe--and shudder. Do
you want to be shown, you shallow man, that faith apart from works is
barren? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered his
son Isaac upon the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works,
and faith was completed by works, and the scripture was fulfilled which
10 says, "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness";
and he was called the friend of God. You see that a man is justified by
works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the
harlot justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them
out another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so faith
15 apart from works is dead. Let not many of you become teachers, my
brethren, for you know that we who teach shall be judged with greater
strictness. For we all make many mistakes, and if any one makes no
mistakes in what he says he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body
also. If we put bits into the mouths of horses that they may obey us, we
20 guide their whole bodies. Look at the ships also; though they are so great

and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder
wherever the will of the pilot directs. So the tongue is a little member and
boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! And
the tongue is a fire. The tongue is an unrighteous world among our
5 members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the cycle of nature, and set
on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature,
can be tamed and has been tamed by humankind, but no human being can
tame the tongue--a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the
Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who are made in the likeness of
10 God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brethren, this
ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening fresh
water and brackish? Can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a grapevine
figs? No more can salt water yield fresh. Who is wise and understanding
among you? By his good life let him show his works in the meekness of
15 wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts,
do not boast and be false to the truth. This wisdom is not such as comes
down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where jealousy and
selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. But the
wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full
20 of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity. And the harvest

of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. What causes wars, and what causes fightings among you? Is it not your passions that are at war in your members? You desire and do not have; so you kill. And you covet and cannot obtain; so you fight and wage war. You do not have, 5 because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. Unfaithful creatures! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you suppose it is in vain that the scripture says, "He yearns jealously over 10 the spirit which he has made to dwell in us"? But he gives more grace; therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you men of double mind. Be wretched 15 and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to dejection. Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you. Do not speak evil against one another, brethren. He that speaks evil against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There 20 is one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who

are you that you judge your neighbor? Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and get gain"; whereas you do not know about tomorrow. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.

5 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and we shall do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. Whoever knows what is right to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold
10 and silver have rusted, and their rust will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure for the last days. Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. You have lived on the earth in luxury and in pleasure; you
15 have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. You have condemned, you have killed the righteous man; he does not resist you. Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it until it receives the early and the late rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of
20 the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble, brethren, against one another, that you

may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the doors. As an example of suffering and patience, brethren, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we call those happy who were steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the

5 Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful. But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath, but let your yes be yes and your no be no, that you may not fall under condemnation. Is any one among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is any among you sick? Let him call for the

10 elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great

15 power in its effects. Eli'jah was a man of like nature with ourselves and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth its fruit. My brethren, if any one among you wanders from the truth and some one brings him back, let him know that

whoever brings back a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul
from death and will cover a multitude of sins. *

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