

# The Book of James

Adult Bible Study  
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## I. General Summary and introduction

A. **Overview:** The Book of James is filled with excellent instructions on how to bear afflictions, hear the Word of God, to mortify harmful passions, to bridle the tongue, to understand rightly the nature of God, to adorn our profession of faith with good works, with meekness and peace and love. This letter reminds us of the necessity of consistent, daily, godly behavior. The letter is among the earlier of the New Testament writings and was likely written by James the Apostle. The author was surely very familiar with the teachings of Jesus and presents them with many allusions to what the Lord himself said. For example:

1. James 1:4; Matt 5:48
2. James 1:5, 17 Matt 7:11
3. James 1:5; 4:2 Matt 7:7-8
4. James 1:6 Matt 21:22
5. James 1:22-25 Matt 7:21-27
6. James 2:5 Luke 6:20-23
7. James 2:8 Mark 12:31
8. James 2:10 Matt 5:7; 18:32-35
9. And so forth...

B. **Authorship** - The author identifies himself simply as “James a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.” The rest of the letter hardly gives us any information about the author except that he includes himself among the teachers (3:1), that he teaches with authority (1:13ff, 3:13ff), he reproaches his readers (1:21ff, 4:13ff) and takes them to task (4:11ff), and even threatens them (5:11ff). Thus he seems to have been an authority in the early Church. His letter is clearly pastoral in character and shows forth the concerns that one would expect of an individual who had responsibility for a Christian community. He also seems to have been of Jewish Background due to his frequent quoting of the Old Testament and the fact that the text, though in Greek shows Semitic thinking and Aramaic turns of phrase. So we know he was named James and that he had some authority in the early Church. James (Iaacob in Hebrew) was a very common name among ancient Jews so we are not helped much by the name alone. Thus some of the following considerations are also necessary

1. Even if we assume that he appears elsewhere in the New Testament there are between three and five candidates for authorship.
  - a. There is James the son of Zebedee, called the greater (Mt 10:21 Lk 8:51; Acts 1:13; 12:2)
  - b. James the Son of Alphaeus, called the less (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:15; Acts 1:13)
  - c. James, the Lord’s “brother” (Gal 1:19; Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3)
  - d. James, the bishop of Jerusalem (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18. Gal

- 1:19)
- e. James to who the risen Lord appeared (1 Cor 15:17)
  2. Scholars are generally agreed that James the “brother of the Lord” and the James who was Bishop of Jerusalem are one and the same and the James to who the risen Lord appeared in some special way. This reduces the number of possible James to three.
    - a. James the Greater
    - b. James the Less
    - c. James the Bishop of Jerusalem and brother of the Lord.
  3. Now James the Greater was martyred by Herod Agrippa in 44 AD (Acts 12:12) and it seems he died too early to be the likely author of the letter (See dating below).
  4. We can likely reduce the number further to one since many scholars agree that James the Less and James the bishop of Jerusalem are one and the same. This is due to the fact that after the death of James the greater, Acts (St Luke) and Paul only refer to one James, the bishop of Jerusalem and the brother of the Lord.
  5. All this leaves James the Less (Son of Alphaeus) the “brother of the Lord” and Bishop of Jerusalem as the likely author.<sup>1</sup>

C. **Date of composition** - Three features suggest an early date. First, James described a large gap between the rich and the poor (5:1-6). When the war against Rome broke out in A.D. 66, the rich suffered great losses, and conflict between rich and poor ceased. Second, the church organization mentioned in James seems undeveloped as seen in the mention only of elders as church leaders (5:1-4). Third, Christians were fervently expecting the return of Christ (5:7-9). It is felt that such fervor would be more true of the initial generations of Christians. All of these features support the acceptance of an earlier date, prior to 66 A.D. There are two possible dates, depending on the relationship between James and Paul in their treatment of the topic of faith and good works and who depends on whom. Thus there are two theories

1. James was the first to speak about the relationship between faith and works and did so prior to the problems solved by the Council of Jerusalem (49-50 AD) According to this view James is the earliest New Testament text.
2. The second theory assumes that James was familiar with Paul’s Letters to the Galatians and the Romans (written in 54 & 58 respectively) and that, without making mention of them he wrote this letter to counter mistaken notions that some people were trying to draw from what St. Paul had said. In this case the date of composition would be about 60 AD shortly before he died a Martyr’s death.

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<sup>1</sup>The high sophistication of the Greek used in this letter might seem to lean against a Jewish author but can be explained by the common practice of the ancient world that letters were dictated to scribes who were expected to be knowledgeable in Greek and would be expected to write well in Greek. N.B. Not all scholars agree that James the Son of Alphaeus and James the “brother of the Lord” are the same individual. But for our purposes, there is a fairly wide consensus that James, Bishop of Jerusalem is the author even if he is not the same as James the son of Alphaeus.

- D. **Intended audience** - The letter is addressed to the “twelve tribes of the dispersion” (1:1). This expression was traditionally used to refer to the Jews who lived outside of Palestine. Other Christian writings refer to Christians as members of the dispersion (1 Pet 1:1; 2:1 Heb 11:13). Hence the audience seems clearly to be Jewish-Christians living outside Palestine but still under James authority or influence in some way. This also enables us to see why James uses expressions that would be familiar to people of Jewish background: (“hearers of the word,” Assembly (Synagogue), Mention of Old Testament characters, “Lord of Hosts” etc.)
- E. **Purpose** - This “letter” has more the character of a sermon that was written out perhaps by a disciple who heard it or dictated by James himself. Although there is an opening salutation there is not closing one. No specific occasion for the letter or sermon seems evident. The book consists largely of a series of brief and loosely connected exhortations on a variety of basic topics. The one common trait which gives the book its distinctive quality is a concern that the faith of the recipients be not merely theoretical or abstract but be implemented in action through every aspect of their lives. The purpose of the letter then is to meet the danger of the tendency toward an abstract, unfruitful practice of Christianity.
- F. **Theme and Tone** - The Epistle of James makes a unique contribution in the New Testament with its strong ethical emphasis. Its ethical teaching is scattered throughout the writing. James clearly taught that a faith that lacked works was empty, vain, and useless. His fiery words resemble those of an Old Testament prophet. He shared ethical commands that touched upon both person morality and social justice. Some students of James suggest that the book lacks doctrinal emphases. It is true that James assumed some doctrinal similarity between himself and his readers and did not elaborate on all his beliefs. The firm demands of the Book of James call wandering Christians back to obedience to God’s Word. It is especially useful in pointing out ethical application of the gospel of grace. With the concern of a pastor, James spoke to his readers in urging them to face trial with stamina (1:2-18). He also spoke with the firmness of a prophet in urging them to show evidence of their genuine faith (2:14-26).
- G. **Canonicity** - *James* is one of the books which had a very hard fight to get into the New Testament. In the Latin-speaking part of the Church it is not until the middle of the fourth century (mid 300s) that *James* emerges in the writings of the fathers. The first list of New Testament books ever to be compiled is the Muratorian Canon, which dates to about A.D. 170, and *James* is absent from it. The first appearance of *James* in Latin is in a Latin manuscript called the Codex Corbeiensis, which dates to about A.D. 350. If, then, *James* was so late in emerging how did it become integrated into the New Testament? The moving influence was that of Jerome, for he unhesitatingly included *James* in his Vulgate version of the New Testament. The doubt was finally set at rest by the fact that Augustine fully accepted *James*, in the early church no one really questioned the value of *James*; but in every branch of it it was late in emerging.

II. This letter offers Christian insights into eleven practical themes:

- A. **TROUBLES** (James 1:1-18) - Believers are not to grumble when adversities come. These times of testing can produce fine spiritual qualities which could not develop if life were always smooth and unruffled. Troubles help make us mature people (v. 4), dependant upon God for wisdom (v. 5), grateful for unchanging values and the blessings of spiritual life (vv. 9-11), all the more appreciative of those promised treasures in store for us (v. 13), and assured of the gifts of an unchanging Father (vv. 13-18).
- B. **OBEDIENCE** (1:19-27) - Our words are sometimes destructive (1:19-21) but God's word is thoroughly and uniquely beneficial. Like a mirror, it exposes our need (vv. 23-24) and in addition it demands our response (v. 22). It must not be simply heard (vv. 22-23) it must be practiced. It's teaching, if obeyed, will control our speech (v.26), touch our hearts and sanctify our character (v. 27).
- C. **LOVE** (2:1-13) Like Jesus, James is concerned about the poor. There is no room for class-conscious favoritism in the Church (2:1-4). He economically deprived may be rich in faith and we may need their spiritual wealth if we are to mature in Christ. In today's world there is a need to hear the cry of the poor, especially the most desperately needy (v. 8).
- D. **DEEDS** (2:14-26) - The command to love can fall on deaf ears or be sentimentalized into merely compassionate thoughts that are not matched by sacrificial deeds. Words alone are not what God requires of us (v. 15). True faith is always expressed in consistent good works. Paul is opposed to ceremonial works (such as circumcision, (Gal 5:2-6) or moral works as *achieving* our salvation. But both Paul and James believe in the necessity of works for *expressing* our new life. Both Abraham the righteous (v. 21) and Rahab the sinner *acted* on what God had said (v. 25, Josh 2:8-11, 18, 21; 6:17; Heb 11:31)
- E. **TALK** (3:1-12) - James has a great deal to say about both appropriate and unfitting speech (1:25; 2:3, 16; 3:1-12; 4:13, 15; 5:9, 12). The tongue has astonishing power for good or evil. It is like the bit in the horse's mouth (v. 3:3), the rudder on a ship (v. 4), the few sparks which can ignite a forest fire (vv. 5-6). With the tongue, we can glorify God (v. 9), or create havoc in relationships.
- F. **RELATIONSHIPS** (3:13-4:12) Christians need the gifts of wisdom, knowledge and counsel promised by God (1:5-8); this is the knowledge of the best way to act in given circumstances (1:13-17). This is much more important in life than gathering huge quantities of academic information. God's wisdom will not make us proud but pure, not superior but submissive. It is clear that numerous problems are damaging relationships in the Church (or churches) to which James writes:
1. Evil (1:21)
  2. Disobedience (1:22-25)
  3. Favoritism (2:1-13)
  4. Insensitivity to other people's needs (2:14-17)
  5. Damaging conversation (3:2-12)

6. Envy (3:14)
7. A quarrelsome spirit (4:1-2)
8. Prayerlessness (4:2-3)
9. Worldliness (4:4)
10. Pride (4:5-10)
11. Slander (4:11-12)
12. It is a grim catalog of human failure and sin. All these things can destroy a sense of harmonious community.

- G. **HUMILITY** (4:13-17) - Some of James' readers were acting as though their human lives were within their own firm control. They failed to recognize that life is like a vanishing mist (4:14), or as he said earlier in the letter, a fading flower (1:10-11). With a true sense of humility and meekness, the believer ought to subject all his life to God's sovereign will, and not boast and brag about either his achievements or ambitions. It is better to use the opportunity of each day not simply to think about good things but to do them (4:17).
- H. **MONEY** (5:1-6) - Here James returns again to the "rich and poor" theme. Some rich people had amassed wealth (5:1-3), but at the expense of their poor employees (5:4). Wealth is not only useless ultimately, it can also be harmful if it is used unjustly (vv 1-3). The passage is reminiscent of the Eighth Century prophets like Isaiah (1:21-23; 3:13-26); Amos (2:6-7; 3:15; 4:1; 5:12; 6:4-6); and Micah (6:8-15); where oppression by the greedy citizens and landowners is exposed and condemned with righteous anger. Note that while the rich rob them the poor can only pray but their cries are heard by God. Still they must also be answered by us also. These are words for us who live in wealthy nation while much of the world cries out for help. We must avoid wasteful practices and pray and work for the poor, giving generously to them.
- I. **ENDURANCE** (5:7-13) - Whatever life's circumstances, God's servants need to develop qualities of endurance like a patient farmer (v. 7), a steadfast prophet (v. 10), or a patriarch severely tested and found true to God (v. 10). We are to remember the past faithfulness of God, his present compassion (v. 11) and promised return (vv. 7-9). If God is true to his word, we must certainly be true to ours (v. 13).
- J. **PRAYER** (5:14-18) - Prayer is not simply an exercise for moments of trouble. It is equally important when life is going well (v. 13). Here prayer is described as corporate (v. 14-15), powerful (v. 16-17), healing and necessary due to sin (v. 16).
- K. **FRATERNAL CORRECTION** (5:18-20) - It is necessary to correct erring and sinful brethren (v. 18). Our own salvation may well be impacted if we do so. (v.19).

I. James 1

A. Endurance in Trial - *James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greeting. <sup>2</sup>Count it all joy, my brethren, when you meet various trials, <sup>3</sup>for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup>And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

1. FACT OF TRIALS

- a. They are dispersed
- b. The text says “when” you meet trials not “if” you meet trials.

2. FORM OF TRIALS

- a. “Various trials”
- b. We all have different trials from one another and encounter different struggles at different time.
- c. Our life goes through seasons etc.
- d. There are temptations to sin
- e. There are trials to endure
- f. Trials cause us to stand
- g. Temptations want us to fall.

3. FORCE OF TRIALS -

- a. “Meet various Trials” is a weak translation
- b. ὁἰκνέομαι *per-ee-pip'-to* - to *fall* into something that is all *around*, that is, *light among* or *upon*, *be surrounded with*:—fall among (into).

4. FRUITS OF TRIALS

- a. Endurance - v.3 “Steadfastness”
- b. Enlargement - v. 4 perfect (ὀψέσθαι) and complete
- c. Enrichment - v. 4 lacking nothing

B. *<sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup> <sup>8</sup>For that person must not suppose that a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways, will receive anything from the Lord.*

1. What is Wisdom - v. 5

2. Ways of Wisdom -

- a. Surety - v. 6
- b. Stability v. 7

- C. The Tests of wealth - *<sup>9</sup>Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, <sup>10</sup>and the rich in his humiliation, because like the flower of the grass he will pass away. <sup>11</sup>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. <sup>12</sup>Blessed is the man who endures trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love him.*
1. Money is an important test of our character. Thus James goes right for the jugular here.
  2. EXALTATION OF THE POOR MAN - v. 9
    - a. No matter if you are poor, you are exalted in Christ
    - b. If you are a Christian you are rich
      - (1) Romans 8:16-17 : *<sup>16</sup>it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup>and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ,*
      - (2) 2 Cor 8:9 *<sup>9</sup>For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.*
      - (3) 1 Cor 1:5 *because of the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup>that in every way you were enriched in him with all speech and all knowledge—<sup>6</sup>even as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you—<sup>7</sup>so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ;*
    - c. No matter how poor you may be in the sight of this world you are rich in the sight of almighty God.
    - d. Can you pass the test of poverty?
  3. HUMILIATION OF THE PROSPEROUS MAN- v. 10
    - a. But there is another, harder test. The test of plenty
      - (1) Mat 19:23 *How hard it is for the rich man to inherit the kingdom of God.*
    - b. James says to the rich, rejoice because in spite of your riches you found Christ!
    - c. The richer man may have an easier time in life but he will have a harder time passing the test.
      - (1) For the rich are sore tempted to trust in their riches and disregard God
        - (a) Prov 30:7 *Give me neither poverty nor riches, lest in my riches I say, "Who is the Lord?" or in my poverty I steal and take the name of the Lord in vain.*
      - (2) Truth be told most of us have no more than God can trust us with.
    - d. James tell the rich to rejoice in two things
      - (1) You have a new position - the way up is down v. 10
        - (a) Humble yourself and you will be exalted

- (b) The greatest is the servant
- (2) You have a new perspective - that riches are transitory v. 11
  - (a) How rich are you? Add up everything you have that money cannot buy and death cannot take away

4. CORONATION - OF THE PURIFIED MAN

- a. V. 12
- b. What ever test is yours will you pass?
  - (1) Some folks get discouraged in poverty
  - (2) Or self
- c. Three things about this coronation.
  - (1) The Requirement - stood the test
  - (2) The Reward - a crown of life
  - (3) The Resource - which the Lord has promised to those who love him. Our Love of God, his love for us is the engine.
    - (a) Do you love the Lord
    - (b) or Do you love the World.
    - (c) Do you love the consolations of God
    - (d) or the God of Consolations.

D. ANATOMY OF A SIN AND REDEEMING GRACE - <sup>13</sup>*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; <sup>14</sup>but each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. <sup>15</sup>Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin; and sin when it is full-grown brings forth death.*

1. DEFINITE POSSIBILITY of Temptation -

- a. the text says, WHEN he is tempted not if he is tempted. Every one (including Jesus) is tempted toward sin.
- b. As we grow in holiness, some temptations diminish, but in other ways temptations increase. This is because, in some ways, the devil increases his temptations. He goes after the living, not those dead in sin.

2. DIVINE IMPOSSIBILITY -

- a. The text says, "Let no one say....I am tempted by God (to do evil).
- b. Notice Adam's response to God.... "The woman you gave me tempted me...."
- c. God cannot be tempted to do evil, neither does he tempt anyone to do evil.
- d. We usually don't directly blame God. We do it indirectly
  - (1) It was my environment
  - (2) It is my passions (glands)
  - (3) It was my bad upbringing.
  - (4) I'm not depraved, I'm deprived
  - (5) It's just another way of saying, "It was the woman you gave me....It was something you did God.

- (6) We always make excuses
  - (a) A man says, “Why do I drink?! I drink because my wife nags me all the time....nag, nag, nag, nag, nag!”
  - (b) The wife says, “Why do I nag him?! I nag him because all he does is drink....drink, drink, drink, drink, drink!”
- (7) Any thing but “It’s me, it’s me, it’s me O Lord Standing in the need of prayer!”

3. DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY - *<sup>14</sup>but each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. <sup>15</sup>Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin; and sin when it is full-grown brings forth death.*

- a. Sin is an inside Job. It is not something that happens outside of us it is something that happens primarily inside of us.
- b. Notice the word “enticed” It is a fisherman’s term.
- c. What are the stages listed here?
  - (1) **Courtship** - the devil draws us to sin by luring us, by stimulating our desires many of which are either inappropriate or over the top it may be lust, pride envy, dishonesty, envy, revenge, it may be excessive desires toward sex, food, drink. There is no sin yet, the lure is merely dangled in front of us. Satan is courting, luring, tempting.
    - (a) The lure is not always evil in itself. Even good things in excess can tempt and lead to death. Here it is not the good thing that is evil, the excess of a good thing that tempts, it is our excessive desire that is stimulated
      - i) Prov 23:31 *Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly. <sup>32</sup>At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder. <sup>33</sup>Thine eyes see strange women, And thy heart speaketh perverse things.*
  - (2) **Consent** - notice the next step is that we are “*enticed by our own desire.*” Now our own will, our side of the equation comes into play. We allow our desires to have authority and we give consent. Satan proposes and we, due to our wrongful or excessive desires accept the proposal. We say yes, yes to an “unholy marriage”
  - (3) **Conception** - This “unholy Marriage” produces an “unholy child” *<sup>15</sup>Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin*
    - (a) Notice the image here of a child. When a child is conceived, he or she grows to maturity, first in the womb then outside the womb. So it is with sin. It grows, compounds, comes to a perverted kind of

maturity.

(4) **Completion - and sin when it is full-grown brings forth death.**

(a) Sin often seems pleasurable but it's end is death

(b) Rom 6:<sup>20</sup>*When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. <sup>21</sup>But then what return did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. <sup>22</sup>But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life. <sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

(c) The devil doesn't want to show the finished product

i) Fun! Not Addiction

ii) Pleasure! not STD's

iii) Prosperity (at any cost)! Not failed marriages, children in day care etc, misplaced priorities.

iv) Do what you want! Not And then you die.

4. **DEFINED PERFECTIBILITY - <sup>16</sup>Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>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.**

a. Everything which god does is good and perfect

b. He is not moody or changeable

c. He is always working for our good

d. As he is perfect he can bring us to perfection as the first fruits of his saving work toward all creation.

E. **Tune in to tone down - <sup>19</sup>Know this, my beloved brethren. Let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger, <sup>20</sup>for the anger of man does not work the righteousness of God.**

1. Often we react too quickly, without all the evidence being in

2. Reflect rather than react. Listen rather than lunge. Ponder rather than pounce.

F. Ways of Welcoming the Word - *<sup>21</sup>Therefore put away all filthiness and rank growth of wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. <sup>22</sup>But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup>For if 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; <sup>24</sup>for he observes himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. <sup>25</sup>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. <sup>26</sup>If any one thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this man's religion is vain. <sup>27</sup>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.*

1. Repentance

- a. *<sup>21</sup>Therefore put away all filthiness and rank growth of wickedness*
- b. Our biggest obstacle to understanding God's word is our sin.
- c. Rank growth of wickedness? Better translated as "Superabundance of depravity"

2. Readiness

- a. Verse 21 - *receive with meekness*
  - (1) Compliant
  - (2) Teachable
  - (3) Not so stubborn and angry at the glaring light of truth

3. Responsiveness -

- a. *<sup>22</sup>But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*
- b. Deceiving yourselves?
  - (1) To say we have faith without the works that are the fruit of that faith is a form of self deception. Like saying a person has life without a pulse. It is a sad failure to grasp reality.

4. Reflectiveness -

- a. *<sup>23</sup>For if 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; <sup>24</sup>for he observes himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. <sup>25</sup>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.*
- b.
- c. Observe the difference: observes vs. looks into
  - (1) ἐὰν ἴδῃ - katanoëō [kat-an-o-eh'-o] - perceive
  - (2) ἄν ἰδῆται - parakuptō [par-ak-ooop'-to] to *bend beside*, that is, *lean over* (so as to *peer within*):—look (into), stoop down.

5. Reality

- a. ***<sup>26</sup>If any one thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this man's religion is vain. <sup>27</sup>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.***
- b. A reality based claim to have faith
- c. James does not give a laundry list but rather a few examples by way of illustration
  - (1) You say you have faith but cannot bridle your tongue, think again!
  - (2) You say you have faith but do not care for the poor, think again!
  - (3) You say you have faith but are worldly. Think again!

## II. James 2 - Sins in reference to Faith

### A. INSENSITIVITY -

1. Prohibition of Prejudice -
  - a. ***<sup>1</sup>My brethren, show no partiality as you hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.***
  
2. Problem of Partiality -
  - a. ***<sup>2</sup>For if a man with gold rings and in fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, <sup>3</sup>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," <sup>4</sup>have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?***
    - (1) The Appearance (of the people) - v. 2
      - (a) gold rings and fine clothing
      - (b) shabby clothing
      - (c) Man sees the appearance but God looks in
    - (2) The Attitude (of the Usher) v. 3
    - (3) The Appraisal (of the Lord) v. 4
      - (a) There are some distinctions
        - i) For example there is authority
        - ii) But no superiority
  
3. Position of the Poor -
  - a. ***<sup>5</sup>Listen, 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? <sup>6</sup>But you have dishonored the poor man.***
    - (1) Chosen of God
      - (a) 1 Cor 1:26 <sup>26</sup>For consider your call, brethren; not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth; <sup>27</sup>but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong, <sup>28</sup>God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, <sup>29</sup>so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.
    - (2) Rich in Faith
    - (3) Heirs of the Kingdom
  
4. Persecution by the Prosperous -
  - a. ***Is it not the rich who oppress you, is it not they who drag you into court? <sup>7</sup>Is it not they who blaspheme the honorable name which was invoked over you?***
    - (1) The wealthy or ruling class persecuted the early Christians

- (a) Position - Gospel said everyone is equal
- (b) Pocketbook - Call to generosity

(2) Still don't look down on the rich either. We are not to condemn any class. Yet we should understand too that prosperity is often the basis of persecution. Notice how, the more prosperous we become the more hostile the environment becomes regarding our faith.

- (a) Not any or not many ?

5. Precepts for Proper Practice -

a. ***<sup>8</sup>If you really fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well. <sup>9</sup>But if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.***

- (1) This is the King of all Laws toward each other

B. INTEGRITY - <sup>10</sup>*For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.* <sup>11</sup>*For he who said, “Do not commit adultery,” said also, “Do not kill.” If you do not commit adultery but do kill, you have become a transgressor of the law.* <sup>12</sup>*So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty.* <sup>13</sup>*For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy; yet mercy triumphs over judgment.* <sup>14</sup>*What does it profit, my brethren, if a man says he has faith but has not works? Can his faith save him?* <sup>15</sup>*If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, <sup>16</sup>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?* <sup>17</sup>*So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.* <sup>18</sup>*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.* <sup>19</sup>*You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder.*

1. Principles - vv. 10-11
  - a. Fulness vv. 10-11
  - b. Freedom - v. 12
  - c. Finality - v. 13
  
2. Portrayal of the Point
  - a. Faith is Fruitful - v. 14
  - b. Picture the Problem v. 15-16
  - c. Clear Conclusion v. 17
  - d. Dismissing the Disagreeable vv. 18-19

C. ILLUSTRATION - <sup>20</sup>*Do you want to be shown, you shallow man, that faith apart from works is barren?* <sup>21</sup>*Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered his son Isaac upon the altar?* <sup>22</sup>*You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by works, <sup>23</sup>and the scripture was fulfilled which says, “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness”; and he was called the friend of God.* <sup>24</sup>*You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.* <sup>25</sup>*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?* <sup>26</sup>*For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so faith apart from works is dead.*

1. Outline
  - a. Rhetorical Inquiry vv. 20-21
  - b. Reality Illustrated vv. 22-23, 25
  - c. Required Ingredient vv. 24, 26
  
2. Regarding the faith of Abraham it is important not to oversimplify what that faith was. Again, many fundamentalist do oversimplify the matter since they project their own concept of faith on to the citation of Paul. Since they see faith as an event wherein one accepts God as their personal Lord and savior, they figure the same is true of Abraham and that this is all that Paul means and all that the phrase in Genesis means. But the story

of Abraham's faith is much richer than the description of Gen 15:6 which serves more to describe a whole life of loving trust rather than merely a specific event. Remember or principle, when Paul quotes from the Old Testament, it is not merely the isolated line he means, but the whole context, in this case the whole story. Thus he wishes us to consider the whole story of Abraham. So, let's look at the story of Abraham! Go back to Gen 12:1ff. The Lord said to a 75 year old Abraham, *Go forth from the Land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land that I will show you.* . He was not going to show it to him right away. He had to trust God, to have faith in God. Hebrews 11:8-9 declares, *By faith Abraham obeyed when he set out to a country that he was to receive...he went out not knowing where he was to go.* This is well before Chapter 15:6. So he leaves. Gen 12:4 *Abram went as the Lord directed him and Lot went with him. Abram was 75 years old when he departed from Haran.* He goes to the land and what does God do? Welcome him? Is there a big party and a wonderful land to behold? No, there is a famine that is so bad he goes to Egypt. Then he comes back out of Egypt (in Gen 13) and his own nephew, Lot, turns on him. They both realized that the land could not support them both so Abraham in a humble trusting sort of way asks Lot which part of the land he wants. Lot chooses all of the choicest lands leaving Abraham with the barren land. All through this Abraham is building Altars and praying to the Lord publicly to show forth his faith. In Genesis 14 Lot is captured by 5 foreign kings in a war and Abraham goes to claim him back and in the process defeats the 5 kings and becomes King of kings. But, in humility and despite his huge victory he submits to the King of Salem, Melchizedech who is called the priest of God most high. He pays tithes to Melchizedech. (Gen 14:17). Thus, the phrase in Gen 15:6 *Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness* is so much richer than one mere event or the answering of an "altar call." See therefore how many fundamentalists project their own view of what it means to have faith (faith=at some particular moment I accepted Jesus as my personal Lord and savior) on to this text which is really so much richer given the context of Gen 12-15? There are a few of conclusions to be drawn from this analysis of Abraham's life.

- a. The faith described in 15:6 is not an event but the description of a life-disposition. It is not a legal act in a courtroom.
- b. The description of Gen 12-15 shows how faith and works are quite intertwined, works being always the fruit of justification and the sign of faith.
- c. Again, deeds did not merit Abraham justification. The point here is that the phrase "Abraham believed God" is richer than many first realize. This is not surprising since God's grace is usually much richer than most initially realize. Remember all of Abraham's fidelity was God's work in him and it was not an event, it was a life.
- d. Thus it is also true that faith is not some static quality in a person it can grow and diminish, wax and wane. Nor is faith just an event it is a life.

- e. Thus we see that Abraham had his ups and downs. Abraham had lapses of his faith even after scripture describes him as justified. He doubted God would fulfill his promise of numerous offspring and so he turned to his slave-girl Hagar and fathered a child, Ishmael, by her. In so doing he sinned against faith and this prompted a strong reaction from God and led to later trouble in Abraham's family. Then Abraham repented and re-embraced the promise of the Lord. But see how God continued to demand faith from Abraham. Again, this belies the fundamentalist notion of faith as an event of acceptance. God works an on-going work of faith in us and bids that we walk by faith and persevere in his ways. **Note this very important point as well**, although God made the promise of a numerous progeny to Abraham in both Gen 15 and 17 it was not until Gen 22 that he entered into an oath with him. It was at that moment that Abraham's faith can be said to have come to a fruition. What had just happened that brought the oath about? Abraham, obedient to God's word, went forth with the command that he offer Isaac in sacrifice on Mt. Moriah at Salem. His faith is evident not only by his obedience but also by his answer to Isaac's inquiry, *Where is the Lamb for the holocaust? Son, Abraham responded, God will provide the Lamb.* (Gen 22:7-8) Here is strong faith and in the aftermath of this event God enters into a oath (not just a promise) with Abraham. In Gen 15:6 God promises Abraham numerous progeny in Gen 22:16 he swears it to him.
- f. Now read James Chapter 2:14 again. In the light of this reflection see particularly how these lines have special significance.
- (1) *Show me your faith without works and I will demonstrate my faith to you from my works.* (v. 18b)
  - (2) *Even Demons believe and tremble* (v. 19b)<sup>2</sup>
  - (3) *Do you want proof that faith without works is useless? 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 completed by the works.* (vv. 21-22)
  - (4) *See how a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.*<sup>3</sup> (v. 24)
  - (5) *Just as a body with a spirit is dead so also faith without*

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<sup>2</sup>Paul makes a similar point regarding the inadequacy of faith alone in I Cor 13:2b *If I have all faith so as to move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing.* In the next verse he also shows forth the inadequacy of works alone: *If I give away everything I own and hand my body over to be burned but do not have love, I gain nothing.* Thus love is essential for salvation. How often does this fact get mentioned in the great faith-works debate? The greatest commandment thus gets overlooked in all the fighting: that we should Love the Lord our God with our whole mind, heart and strength and soul and our neighbor as ourself.

<sup>3</sup>The phrase "faith alone" is used only one in all of Holy Scripture, here and the concept is condemned. Hence Luther's conception of justification by faith alone, as he understood the phrase is not only unbiblical, it is condemned by the bible.

*works is dead.* (v. 26)

- g. Thus, the whole distinction between faith and works is quite delicate and must be understood not as an "either-or" situation but a "both-and" Works are an essential fruit and part of faith and justification though not its cause.

### III. James 3

- A. Influence of the Tongue - *Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, for you know that we who teach shall be judged with greater strictness. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>If we put bits into the mouths of horses that they may obey us, we guide their whole bodies. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>So the tongue is a little member and boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire!*
1. Serious Power of words -
    - a. Vv. 1-2
    - b. Those who teach have a serious obligation. What they utter can
  2. Subtle power of words -
    - a. Vv. 3-4 one little word can set everything right or wrong.
    - b. One story, one phrase can move people to war or to holiness.
    - c. Words can warm a heart or inflame hatred.
- B. Iniquity of the Tongue - *<sup>6</sup>And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is an unrighteous world among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the cycle of nature, and set on fire by hell. <sup>7</sup>For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by humankind, <sup>8</sup>but no human being can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison.*
1. It **Defiles** - v. 6 staining the whole body
  2. It **Destroys** - v. 6 the tongue is a fire
  3. It **Devours** - vv. 7-8 a beast difficult to tame
    - a. Gal 5:<sup>15</sup>*But if you bite and devour one another take heed that you are not consumed by one another.*
  4. It **Deadens** - v. 8 Full of deadly poison
- C. Inconsistency of the Tongue - *<sup>9</sup>With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who are made in the likeness of God. <sup>10</sup>From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brethren, this ought not to be so. <sup>11</sup>Does a spring pour forth from the same opening fresh water and brackish? <sup>12</sup>Can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.*
1. We have an inconsistency that is impossible in the physical world.
- D. Integrity to Which we are Summoned - *<sup>13</sup>Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good life let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. <sup>14</sup>But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. <sup>15</sup>This wisdom is not such as comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. <sup>16</sup>For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. <sup>17</sup>But the wisdom from above is*

*first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity.* <sup>18</sup>*And the harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*

1. Wisdom has its works - v. 13
2. World has its works vv. 14-15
3. What comes from What vv. 16-17
  - a. Principle - The fruit does not fall far from the tree
  - b. Pride punishes - v. 16
  - c. Purity Produces - v. 17
  - d. Peace is Purposeful - v. 18

IV. James 4 - Passions and The Problems Thereof

A. The Problem of Passion - *What causes wars, and what causes fightings among you? Is it not your passions that are at war in your members? <sup>2</sup>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, because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup>You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>Or do you suppose it is in vain that the scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit which he has made to dwell in us"?*

1. We have many wars within our self and among ourselves due to our passions.
  - a. Within - the modern assertion "You can have it all!" creates unreasonable cravings and inner conflicts. We cannot have it all. We have to choose. We need to set priorities and accept opportunity costs and loses.
  - b. Without - James shortens the path by saying "you kill." Most of us do not literally kill (at least not at first!). But we are willing to make compromises. We are willing to sin, either by omission or commission in order to satisfy our cravings. We are willing that others suffer so that we will be safe or comfortable. Our insensitivities to others can grow until we are even willing that others should die so that we can satisfy our passions.
2. One way to satisfy our needs is merely to ask - v. 3 James probably has in mind primarily God here but this is not to exclude asking one another. Many people simply omit this step and go on to struggle.
3. But our biggest problem is that we are worldly. Thus our priorities are inappropriate and we ask God for things that are either wrong or just not helpful. Again, our desires are worldly and out of control. Should God give an addict what they crave. Should I buy a drink for an alcoholic. Is this loving? The problem is that our passions are misplaced and out of control. This is what we should ask for: proper priorities and power over our passions.

B. Prescriptions for Peace - *<sup>6</sup>But he gives more grace; therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." <sup>7</sup>Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup>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. <sup>9</sup>Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to dejection. <sup>10</sup>Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you.*

1. Take seriously your real problem.
2. Our real problem is not financial etc it is sin and disorder. We are double minded and slaves to passion and the world.
3. Draw near to God
4. Pray about *this* just as fervently as about worldly matters. Mourn and weep about this like you might worldly lossess

- C. Presumptive Perceptions - ***"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. <sup>12</sup>There is one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you that you judge your neighbor?"***
1. A distinction is in order here. To correct the sinner (something we are commanded to do by scripture) is not the same as judging the sinner.
  2. The Judgement forbidden here is the Judgement of Condemnation.
    - a. Luke 6:<sup>37</sup>*Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned;*
    - b. James here is clear that he means the judgement of condemnation when he refers to the fact that only one (God) has the power to save and destroy (v.12)
  3. Balancing texts which instruct us to correct the sinner:
    - a. James 5:<sup>19</sup>*My brethren, if any one among you wanders from the truth and some one brings him back, <sup>20</sup>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.*
    - b. Lev 19:17 *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.*
    - c. 1 Thess 5:<sup>14</sup>*And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.*
    - d. Col 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom*
    - e. <sup>2</sup> Tim 3:<sup>6</sup>*All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*
    - f. Gal 6:<sup>1</sup>*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any sin, you who are spiritual should recall him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted. <sup>2</sup>Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*

D. Perilous Pride - <sup>13</sup>*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";* <sup>14</sup>*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.* <sup>15</sup>*Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and we shall do this or that."* <sup>16</sup>*As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.* <sup>17</sup>*Whoever knows what is right to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.*

1. Another appeal to the passing and uncertain quality of this world.
2. Why are we so preoccupied by it and why do we invest so much concern as to its details which are so uncertain.
3. It is humility to realize that our lives are caught up in God.
4. It is sinful for us to persist in our attempts to control things
5. It is sinful to remain so intensely pre-occupied with worldly matters and at the same time so uninterested in spiritual matters.

V. James 5

A. Peril of Riches -

1. ***Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. <sup>2</sup>Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. <sup>3</sup>Your gold 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. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>You have lived on the earth in luxury and in pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. <sup>6</sup>You have condemned, you have killed the righteous man; he does not resist you.***
  
2. Other texts:
  - a. *1 Tim 6:9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and hurtful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all evils; it is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced their hearts with many pangs. But as for you, man of God, shun all this; aim at righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.*
  - b. *Matt 19:<sup>23</sup>And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, it will be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>24</sup>Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." <sup>25</sup>When the disciples heard this they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?"*
  - c. *1 Tim 6:<sup>17</sup>As for the rich in this world, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on uncertain riches but on God who richly furnishes us with everything to enjoy. <sup>18</sup>They are to do good, to be rich in good deeds, liberal and generous, <sup>19</sup>thus laying up for themselves a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life which is life indeed.*

B. Patience -

1. ***7Be 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. 8You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. 9Do not grumble, brethren, against one another, that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the doors. 10As an example of suffering and patience, brethren, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11Behold, we call those happy who were steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.***
2. Patient = willing to suffer
3. Ways of Waiting
  - a. Establish your heart - Sterizo - to turn your heart in a resolute direction.
  - b. Do not grumble
  - c. Steadfast - hupomeno - to *stay under (behind)*, that is, *remain*; figuratively to *undergo*, that is, *bear (trials)*, *have fortitude*, *persevere*:—abide, endure, (take) patient (-ly), suffer, tarry behind.

C. Personal Integrity -

1. ***12But 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.***
2. Be a person of your word.
3. Matt 5:<sup>33</sup>“Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’ <sup>34</sup>But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, <sup>35</sup>or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. <sup>36</sup>And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup>Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.

D. Penance -

1. ***14Is 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; 15and 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. 16Therefore confess<sup>4</sup> your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.***

2. Sacrament of the Sick

- a. Mark 6:<sup>12</sup>So they went out and preached that men should repent.  
<sup>13</sup>And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them.

3. Sacrament of Confession

E. Prayer -

1. ***<sup>13</sup>Is any one among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise.... The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects. <sup>17</sup>Elijah 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. <sup>18</sup>Then he prayed again and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth its fruit.***
  
2. Elijah - 1 Kings 18:<sup>41</sup>And Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of the rushing of rain." <sup>42</sup>So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he bowed himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees. <sup>43</sup>And he said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." And he went up and looked, and said, "There is nothing." And he said, "Go again seven times." <sup>44</sup>And at the seventh time he said, "Behold, a little cloud like a man's hand is rising out of the sea." And he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot and go down, lest the rain stop you.'" <sup>45</sup>And in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. <sup>46</sup>And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.
  
3. Power of Prayer
  - a. 1 John 3:21 Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God <sup>22</sup> and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.
  - b. Matt 21:22 If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."
  - c. John 15:7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.
  
4. Sins clouds our prayer
  - a. Prov 15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.
  - b. Psalm 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:
  - c. Is 59:1 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: <sup>2</sup> But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

F. Perfection -

1. ***19 My brethren, if any one among you wanders from the truth and some one brings him back, <sup>20</sup>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.***
2. <sup>2</sup> Tim <sup>3:6</sup>All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
3. Col 3:16<sup>16</sup>Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom
4. 1 Thess 5:<sup>14</sup>And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.
5. Lev 19:17 Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.
6. Gal 6:<sup>1</sup>Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any sin, you who are spiritual should recall him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted. <sup>2</sup>Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.