

The General Epistle of James

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: greetings.

²Count it all joy, my brothers, when you fall into various temptations, ³knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴Now let patience have *its* complete effect, so that you may be mature and whole, lacking in nothing. ⁵But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all *men* generously and without finding fault, and it will be given to him. ⁶But let him ask in faith, doubting nothing, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed around by the wind. ⁷Indeed, do not let that man think that he will receive anything of the Lord. ⁸A double-minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

⁹Now let the brother in humble circumstances boast in his high position, ¹⁰and the rich in that he is made low, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. ¹¹For the sun rises with a burning heat and withers the grass, and its flower falls off, and the beauty of its face perishes. So also the rich man will wither away in the midst of his pursuits.

¹²Blessed is the man who endures temptation, for when he has been approved he will receive the crown of life, which *the Lord* promised to those who love him.

¹³No one should say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself does not tempt anyone. ¹⁴But each *person* is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desire, and enticed. ¹⁵Then the desire, when it has conceived, brings forth sin, and the sin when it is full grown gives birth to death. ¹⁶Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.

¹⁷Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, nor shadow cast by changing *conditions*.

¹⁸In accordance with his own plan he gave birth to us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

¹⁹You know *this*, my beloved brothers. But let every person be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, ²⁰for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. ²¹Therefore, putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. ²²But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves. ²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a

doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror,²⁴ for he looks at himself and goes away, and immediately forgets what he was like.²⁵ But he who looks into the perfect law, the *law* of liberty, and perseveres, not being a hearer who forgets but a doer who works, this person will be blessed in what he does.

²⁶If anyone thinks he is religious, *while* not bridling his tongue but deceiving his heart, this man's religion is worthless.

²⁷Religion *that is* pure and undefiled before our God and Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep oneself unstained from the world.

2 My brothers, do not have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons.² For if there comes into your synagogue a man with a gold ring, in fine clothing, and there also comes in a poor man in filthy clothing,³ and you have regard to the one who wears the fine clothing, and say, "Sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "Stand there, or sit under my footstool,"⁴ do you not make distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

⁵Listen, my beloved brothers, did not God choose the poor of the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he promised to

those who love him?⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you and drag you before the judgment seats?⁷ Do they not defame the honorable name by which you are called?

⁸Nevertheless, if you are fulfilling the royal law according to the scripture, **Love your neighbor as yourself**, you are doing well,⁹ but if you show favoritism you commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors.¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law, and yet stumbles in one *point*, he has become guilty of all.¹¹ For he who said, **Do not commit adultery**, also said, **Do not murder**. Now if you do not commit adultery, but commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

¹²So speak and so act as people who will be judged by *the* law of liberty.

¹³For judgment *is* without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

¹⁴What does it profit, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Is that faith able to save him?¹⁵ If a brother or sister is naked and in lack of daily food¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them what is necessary for the body, what does it profit?¹⁷ Even so faith, if it does not have works, is dead, *being* by itself.

¹⁸But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works."

Show me your faith apart from *your* works and I will show you *my* faith by my works. ¹⁹You believe that God is one. You do well. The demons also believe—and shudder. ²⁰But are you willing to recognize, O empty-headed man, that faith apart from works is barren? ²¹Was not Abraham our father made righteous by works, in that he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar? ²²You see that faith was working with his works, and by the works was faith made complete, ²³and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, **and Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness**, and he was called **the friend of God**. ²⁴You see that by works a man is declared righteous, and not only by faith. ²⁵And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute declared righteous by works, in that she received the messengers and sent them out another way? ²⁶For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead.

3 Not many *of you* should become teachers, my brothers, knowing that we will receive a stricter judgment. ²For we all stumble in many *ways*. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, the same is a mature man, able also to bridle his whole body. ³Now if we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole body

also. ⁴Look!, the ships also, though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, are guided by a very small rudder, wherever the impulse of the pilot directs.

⁵So also the tongue is a little member, and *yet* it boasts great things. Look!, how large a forest is set ablaze by how small a fire! ⁶And the tongue is a fire, the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the wheel of birth, and is being set on fire by Gehenna. ⁷For every kind of beast and bird, of creeping things and things in the sea, is subdued, and has been subdued by mankind. ⁸But the tongue no man is able to subdue. *It is* a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who are made after the likeness of God. ¹⁰Out of the same mouth comes forth blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be this way. ¹¹Does the spring send forth from the same opening sweet *water* and bitter? ¹²Is a fig tree, my brothers, able to yield olives, or a vine *yield* figs? Neither *can* salt water yield sweet.

¹³Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good way of life let him show his works in the meekness that comes from wisdom. ¹⁴But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not boast about it

and do not lie against the truth.

¹⁵This wisdom is not *a wisdom* that comes down from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. ¹⁶For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every kind of worthless practice. ¹⁷But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, reasonable, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruit, without partiality, without hypocrisy. ¹⁸And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

4 What is the source *of* wars and what is the source *of* fighting among you? *Is it* not from this, *even* from your *desires for* pleasure that are constantly campaigning in your members? ²You lust, and do not have. You murder and covet, and *in spite of that*, are not able to obtain. You fight and you war. You do not have because you do not ask. ³You ask, and do not receive because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend *it* in your pleasures.

⁴Adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore, whoever chooses to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵Or do you think that the Scripture speaks in vain *that* the spirit that he caused to dwell in us yearns enviously? ⁶But he gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, **God resists the proud, but gives grace to**

the humble. ⁷Therefore submit yourselves to God. Resist the Slanderer, and he will flee from you. ⁸Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹Be afflicted, and mourn, and cry. Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. ¹⁰Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will exalt you.

¹¹Do not speak against one another, brothers. He who speaks against a brother, or judges his brother, speaks against *the* law, and judges *the* law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge. ¹²*Only* one is the lawgiver and judge, *even* he who is able to save and to destroy. So who are you to judge your neighbor?

¹³Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such city, and spend a year there, and trade, and make a profit,” ¹⁴you who do not know what tomorrow *will bring*. What is your life? For you are a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. ¹⁵Instead, *you ought* to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live, and also do this or that.” ¹⁶But now you, in your arrogance, boast. All such boasting is evil.

¹⁷Therefore, to him who knows to do good, and does not do it, to him it is sin.

5 Come now, you rich, cry and howl for your miseries that are coming upon *you*. ²Your riches have rotted, and your garments are moth-eaten. ³Your gold and your silver have rusted, and their rust will be a testimony against you, and will eat your flesh as fire. You have treasured up *wrath* for the last days. ⁴Look!, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cries out, and the cries of those who reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of the Armies. ⁵You have lived in luxury on the earth, and taken your pleasure. You have nourished your hearts in a day of slaughter. ⁶You have condemned, you have murdered the righteous *person*; he does not resist you.

⁷Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. Look!, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it, until it receives the early and latter rain. ⁸You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. ⁹Do not murmur, brothers, against one another, in order that you may not be judged. Look!, the judge stands at the door. ¹⁰Brothers, as an example of suffering and of longsuffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹Take notice!, we consider those who endured to be blessed. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and have seen the

outcome from the Lord, that the Lord is full of compassion, and merciful.

¹²But above all things, my brothers, do not swear, not by heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath, but let your yes be yes, and your no, no, so that you do not fall under judgment.

¹³Is any among you suffering hardship? He should continue to pray! Is any cheerful? He should continue to sing praise! ¹⁴Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the congregation, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, ¹⁵and the prayer of faith will save him who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he have committed sins, it will be forgiven him.

¹⁶Therefore, confess your sins one to another, and pray one for another, in order that you may be healed. The supplication of a righteous *man* has much strength when it is exercised. ¹⁷Elijah was a man of the same nature as us, and with *fervent* prayer he prayed that it might not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. ¹⁸And he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

¹⁹My brothers, if any among you err from the truth, and someone turns him back, ²⁰let him know that he who turns back a sinner from the

error of his way will save a soul
from death, and will cover a
multitude of sins.