

# An Introduction to The Epistle of James

GOREY CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY

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The *Author*

The *Audience*

The *Aim*

# The Author

Ch 1 v 1 - “James, a bondservant of God & of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad. Greetings”.

## Who was James?

# The Author

**Galatians 1 v 18-19** - “Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord’s brother”.

- James, the Lord’s brother, was already prominent in the church at Jerusalem.
- Around AD36, just 6 years after Day of Pentecost.

# The Author

**Mark 6 v 3** - “Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” So they were offended at Him”.

**John 7 v 5** - “For even His brothers did not believe in Him”.

# The Author

**Acts 1 v 14** - “These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers”.

What changed???

**1 Corinthians 15 v 7** - “After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles”.

# The Author

A McShane - *“The One who James had known as his brother became in a moment his Lord and Master”.*

**Acts 12 v 17** - “But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, “Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren.” And he departed and went to another place”. (c. AD43)

# The Author

**Acts 15 v 13** - “And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, “Men and brethren, listen to me””. (c. AD48-49)

- A half-brother of the Lord Jesus.
- Saved after the resurrection.
- Prominent leader in church at Jerusalem.
- Remained in Jerusalem when church persecuted and dispersed.



# The Audience

Ch 1 v 1 - “James, a bondservant of God & of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad. Greetings”.

## Who was James writing to?

# The Audience

**Acts 8 v 1** - “Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles”.

**Acts 11 v 19** - “Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen travelled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only”.

# The Audience

- Converted Jews, scattered due to persecution.
- Church, in Jerusalem and beyond, still very young.
- Church, in Jerusalem and beyond, still very Jewish.
- The doctrine of “the church” revealed to Paul (Ephesians).
- So, James more concerned with Christian living.

# The Aim

Ch 1 v 4 - “But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing”.

**What was James writing about?**

# The Aim

Irving L. Jensen - *“James’ practical, non-doctrinal emphasis reveals the kind of message that God wanted to share with the Christian community in written form very soon after Jesus ascended to heaven.*

*This letter was written to instruct Christians how to walk with God in this life. Thoughts, words and deeds are the ingredients of a person’s daily living. The important question here is - what KIND of thoughts, words and deeds should be part of the life of a Christian who walks with God?*

*James was written to give us God’s answers to that question”.*

# The Aim

Warren Wiersbe - *“Not everybody who grows old, grows up. There is a vast difference between age and maturity. Ideally, the older we are, the more mature we should be, but too often the ideal does not become the reality.*

*The result is problems, in personal lives, homes and churches. If Christians would just grow up, they would become victors instead of victims. The book of James was written to help us understand and attain spiritual maturity”.*

# The Aim

- How to live wisely.
- How to grow in maturity & become more godly.
- Practical issues that must be dealt with as believers.
- Not as scattered as first appears.
- A few observations...

# Some observations

## A Jewish letter?

34 x references to divine Persons.

32 x to God (in various forms).

Only 2 references to God the Son - “the / our Lord Jesus Christ”.

A McShane - *“Never once does James only use the Lord’s human name, Jesus. Christ’s resurrection had removed all trace of natural familiarity”.*



# Some observations

19 references to faith / believe - a BIG theme.

16 references to works - practical Christian living.

15 references to the Word/ truth / law.

18 references to brethren / brothers & sisters - often starts new section.

*G Waugh - “James wants to strengthen their daily witness, and to preserve and separate them from their evil surroundings. This is not difficult theology but survival advice that encourages faith to grow”.*

# Some observations

Multiple Old Testament “quotations”.

At least 4 Old Testament characters are referenced - Abraham, Rahab, Job & Elijah.

Multiple references to imagery & everyday objects or events his audience would be familiar with.

Some very obvious absences.

# Chapter 1 v 1

2 simple points:

- James knew his place.
- James cared for his readers.