

The Right Attitude in the Midst of Trials

James 1:1–8

James 1:1–8 (NKJV)

James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad:
Greetings.

² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Introduction:

The longer the Lord allows you to live, the more likely you will experience trials. And in some cases the trials and difficulties of life can seem overwhelming and all consuming. What is common to all mankind is that he is destined for Trials. From the beginning of time, since the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden, men have had few days but full of trouble (Job 14:1)

†רָגַזְתִּי S7267 TWOT2112a GK8075 n.m. Jb 3:26 **agitation, excitement,**

raging;—'רָ abs. Hb 3:2 +, cstr. Jb 37:2; sf. רָגַזְתִּי Is 14:3;—*raging* Jb 3:17;

disquiet, turmoil Is 14:3 Jb 3:26; 14:1; *raging, wrath* Hb 3:2; רָ קלוֹ Jb 37:2 *rumbling of his voice* (i.e. thunder); of *excitement of warhorse*, 39:24 רָגַזְתִּי וְרָגַזְתִּי.

Brown, F., Driver, S. R., & Briggs, C. A. (1977). In [Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon](#) (p. 919). Clarendon Press.

Humanity, it seems has been set adrift in the midst of a raging tempest that seems to never end.

For the unbeliever, it is a meaningless maze of maneuvering from one disaster to another with no purpose or reason for the madness. According to their world view what happens to you is just a matter of bad luck or chance. You are born...you live... you die....and maybe, just maybe you are lucky enough that you can escape the worst of what you witness around you.

Thankfully for the believer, this is not the case. No trial is meaningless, no trouble is useless and not difficulty is design-less.

Your Creator and Savior and Sovereign Lord, as a purpose and plan for every tribulation, and every trial in your life. NOTHING goes unplanned and unseen by our God.

Romans 8:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.

One of the major reasons for the trouble ordained in our lives is for the purpose of showing the genuine nature of our faith.

There are many who have a superficial, surface relationship with God. It is in name only, but it is not real. So many in and outside the church are fake and faithless. They profess to know God but deny Him by their works, as Titus 1:16 says.

This has been a plague on the body of Christ for a very long time. Men and women who claim to be followers of Jesus Christ, but really are lost.

Jesus dealt with them in his ministry
John 8:31–32 (NKJV)

³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

He taught about them too.

Matthew 13:20–22 (NKJV)

²⁰ But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. ²² Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

Matthew 7:21–23 (NKJV)

²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

Based on the teaching of Jesus there are far more that are fake than there are real christians. There will be many who will be surprised that they didn't make it. They think they are saved and they are not. They think they are real but they are fake.

God will sort is all in the end as he separates the sheep from the goats.

But while we are here God has purposed that our faith be proven genuine. God knows whether you are real or not. He doesn't need a test to see. He is omniscience. But we need it.

We need it for our our confidence in our faith and we need it as a means of sanctification.

James is that kind of book. It is a series of test to verify the validity of your faith. You can find our for sure if you are a real Christian by how you respond to the test given in James.

This is not unusual. The Bible offend calls on the believe to test himself, to check the genuine nature of his faith.

2 Corinthians 13:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Examine yourselves *as to* whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. ...

Psalm 26:2 (NKJV)

² Examine me, O Lord, and prove me;
Try my mind and my heart.

Psalm 139:23–24 (NKJV)

²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me, and know my anxieties;
²⁴ And see if *there is any* wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

Lamentations 3:40 (NKJV)

⁴⁰ Let us search out and examine our ways,
And turn back to the Lord;

1 Corinthians 11:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat
of the bread and drink of the cup.

Galatians 6:4 (NKJV)

⁴ But let each one examine his own work, and then
he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in
another.

There are a number of things that can be used to evaluate the genuine nature of your faith.... like
your love for Christ
your love for His Word.
your hatred of sin
your progression in sanctification.
your love for the fellowship of believers.
your compassion for the those in need.
etc.....

but there is another one that we would rather do without. And this one is one that is often out of our control. We can cause it, but most of the time, it just happens.....Trials, Trouble, difficulties.....

These are a tremendous gauge on the genuine nature of faith.

These trials come in all sizes, shapes and colors. They are as varied as much as the people they afflict.

They can affect your health, your wealth, and your life. They can be small, and large, long and short, life transforming and life ending.

It can be the diagnoses of terminal cancer or the prognosis of a lifelong medical condition.

It can be the loss of a job or the bankruptcy of your business.

It can be a season of seemingly endless troubles from mechanical to physical breakdowns.

It can be persecution and hatred for your faith or moral stand against the evils of the day.

It can be a marriage that ends in divorce or a child that runs away.

It can be the death of a family member that you loved so very much and the difficult management of grief for the years that follow.

God can and does use all of these things to grow us, strengthen us, and prove the genuine nature of our faith.

Jesus said

John 16:33 (NKJV)

33..... **In the world you will have tribulation;.....**

1 Peter 1:6–7 (NKJV)

⁶ now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

James is written for this purpose, to test your faith. To show the nature of saving faith. and in that process to grow in the process of being more holy.

Before we look at the text, A few words about the Book of James.

One author wrote

“I admired the literary simplicity and theological depth in James. From the first, I also saw the practical value of James”

Doriani, D. M. (2007). [James](#) (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Doriani, Eds.; p. xiii). P&R Publishing.

James has had another kind of double status in the life of the church—beloved by ordinary Christians, but suspect among scholarly and critical communities. Critical studies of James owe much to Martin Luther, who, in one long paragraph in “Table Talk,” enumerates the issues that have occupied critical scholars for centuries.

First, Luther says, James contains almost nothing of Christ and the gospel. By this he meant that he found none of Paul’s gospel of justification by faith. Instead he found an insistence on works that, so he thought, supported the Roman Catholic position on faith and works. Second, Luther says, James does not appear to be written by an apostle. Third, scholars say that the clear, confident style of James’s Greek, the large vocabulary, and dense syntax, are too refined to come from the hand of a

Galilean Jew. Fourth, in a criticism that might contradict the previous one, Luther and others charge that James is disorderly, flitting from topic to topic without any proper connection of the thoughts. Finally, the early church did not immediately receive James as part of the New Testament canon.

Few books of the Bible have been more maligned than the little Book of James. Controversy has waged over its authorship, its date, its recipients, its canonicity, and its unity.

It is well known that Martin Luther had problems with this book. He called it a “right strawy epistle.” But it is only “strawy” to the degree it is “sticky.” There are enough needles in this haystack to prick the conscience of every dull, defeated, and degenerated Christian in the world

Blue, J. R. (1985). [James](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 814–815). Victor Books.

For many believers, James is a beloved book. Eminently practical, it is full of vivid exhortations to godly living. In short compass it offers concrete counsel on an array of issues that confront Christians every day: trials, poverty and riches,

favoritism, social justice, the tongue, worldliness, boasting, planning, prayer, illness, and more.

Dorioni, D. M. (2007). [James](#) (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Dorioni, Eds.; p. 3). P&R Publishing.

like the Sermon on the Mount and penetrating—almost too penetrating. Its piercing assessment of our failures proves we cannot achieve holiness by our striving. James stirs us to action, but as it reveals our sins, we doubt our ability to do what the writer commands. Yet James often declares that obedience is a hallmark of living faith: “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says” (1:22).

Dorioni, D. M. (2007). [James](#) (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Dorioni, Eds.; pp. 3–4). P&R Publishing.

With 59 commands in 108 verses, the epistle of James has an obvious zeal for law. In his imperatives, James directly communicates the royal law, the law of King Jesus (2:8).

Dorioni, D. M. (2007). [James](#) (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Dorioni, Eds.; p. 6). P&R Publishing.

James is a rich book recalling a lot of the principles of the Wisdom literature of the OT. and the Prophetic literature of

Isaiah and Amos while showing support of the teaching of Jesus, particularly the Sermon on the Mt.

James expresses the same themes in much the same language as Jesus. Consider these parallels:

- Love of neighbor is a great command (James 2:8 and Matt. 22:39).
- Self-exaltation leads to humiliation (James 4:6–10 and Matt. 23:12; cf. Luke 14:11; 18:9).
- Take no oaths (James 5:12 and Matt. 5:33–37).
- Do not judge (James 4:11–12 and Matt. 7:1–5).
- Moth and rust destroy riches (James 5:2 and Matt. 6:19).
- The Lord is coming; he is at the door (James 5:8–9 and Matt. 24:33).

As James meditates on Jesus' teaching, he also expresses similar themes in different language:

- Believers must rejoice in trials (James 1:2 and Matt. 5:11–12).
- The goal of the righteous is maturity (James 1:4 and Matt. 5:48).
- We ask God for good gifts (James 1:5 and Matt. 7:7).
- We are doers, not just hearers, of the word (James 1:22 and Matt. 7:24–27).

- Disciples must keep the whole law (James 2:10 and Matt. 5:19).
- We act upon our profession of faith (James 2:14–26 and Matt. 7:21–23).
- We are accountable for every word (James 3:2 and Matt. 12:36–37).
- Peacemakers are blessed (James 3:17–18 and Matt. 5:9).
- We cannot serve two friends or masters (James 4:4 and Matt. 6:24).

Dorioni, D. M. (2007). [James](#) (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Dorioni, Eds.; pp. 11–12). P&R Publishing.

James is a *letter*; it urges Christians to put their knowledge into practice by living out their professed devotion to Jesus. But James has the rhetorical texture of a sermon. We see that in James’s use of direct address. He often calls his readers “my brothers” (e.g., 1:2; 2:1; 3:12; 5:12) or “my dear brothers” (e.g., 1:16; 2:5). Yet he can also address his audience as “you adulterous people” (4:4) or “you rich” (5:1).

James constantly engages his readers with rhetorical questions, sometimes in rapid sequences (2:4–7; 2:14–21; 3:11–13; 4:1–5; 4:12–14). James raises and answers objections that he supposes his readers may have (1:13; 2:18; 4:13–14; 5:13–14). An imaginary figure speaks on four occasions, to

articulate a godless perspective toward poverty (2:3) or the needy (2:16) or business plans (4:13), or to object to James’s teaching (2:18). The use of imaginary objectors implies that James thinks his audience could be more receptive to his message. He shows a godly impatience with the church on occasion, as he charges them, “Do not be deceived” (1:16 esv), or “Come now” (4:3; 5:1 esv). Elsewhere he questions them, “Do you want evidence?” (2:20 niv), or “Do you not know?” (4:4 esv).

James also engages his people with abundant illustrations, using horses, springs of water, boats, fire, mirrors, farm work, flowers, mist, travel, and Old Testament heroes. He creates an array of vivid images: desire becomes pregnant and gives birth to sin (1:15); demons believe and shudder (2:18); the rich howl, riches rot, and corroding metals eat flesh like fire (5:1–3). Finally, James speaks in paradox: tests are a joy (1:2), and the rich should boast in their humiliation (1:10).

Doriani, D. M. (2007). [James](#) (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Doriani, Eds.; p. 13). P&R Publishing.

References to Nature in the Book of James	
1:6	“wave of the sea”
1:6	“tossed by the wind”
1:10	“wild flower”

1:11	“sun ... with scorching heat”
1:11	“the plant ... blossom falls”
1:17	“the heavenly lights”
1:17	“shifting shadows”
1:18	“firstfruits”
3:3	“bits into the mouths of horses”
3:4	“ships ... driven by strong winds”
3:5	“a great forest is set on fire by a small spark”
3:6	“a fire”
3:7	“animals, birds, reptiles, and creatures of the sea”
3:8	“deadly poison”
3:11	“fresh water and salt water”
3:12	“can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs?”
3:18	“sow in peace [and] raise a harvest of righteousness”
4:14	“you are a mist”
5:2	“moths have eaten your clothes”
5:3	“gold and silver are corroded”
5:4	“workmen who mowed your fields”

5:4	“the cries of the harvesters”
5:5	“fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter”
5:7	“the farmer waits for the ... crop”
5:7	“how patient he is for the fall and spring rains”
5:14	“anoint him with oil”
5:17	“prayed ... that it would not rain”
5:17	“it did not rain on the land”
5:18	“the heavens gave rain”
5:18	“the earth produced its crops”

Blue, J. R. (1985). [James](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 817). Victor Books.

Lesson:

The Author of the Text

The Audience to Teach

The Attitude in Trials

The Advantage of Trials

The Assistance with Trials

I. The Author of the Text

1 James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

James— —

The writer introduced himself modestly. He did not indicate his status in the church or that he was the Lord's brother. The lack of title suggests that he was well known and had the authority to send a letter of this kind.

Blue, J. R. (1985). [James](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 819). Victor Books.

Most scholars and commentaries agree that this is most likely the half-brother of Jesus. The biological son of Joseph and Mary.

The New Testament mentions at least four men named James: (1) the son of Zebedee and brother of John (Mark 1:19), (2) the son of Alphaeus (Mark 3:18), (3) the father of Judas (not Iscariot; Luke 6:16), and (4) the half brother of the Lord (Gal. 1:19). Which one wrote the epistle?

James, the son of Zebedee, could not be the author since he suffered martyrdom under Herod Agrippa I before this epistle was written (Acts 12:2).

It is unlikely that the little-known son of Alphaeus was the author though some, especially Roman Catholics, equate the son of Alphaeus with the Lord's brother. They claim that James was really Jesus' cousin through Mary of Cleopas (Alphaeus), the Virgin Mary's sister. This contention, however, violates a literal interpretation of "brother" and is clearly an attempt to support the invention of the perpetual virginity of Mary. It seems clear from Scripture that children were born to Joseph and Mary after the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is called "her firstborn" (Luke 2:7), implying that others were born thereafter. The Scriptures state that Joseph had no union with Mary, that is, no normal physical relationship, "until" (*heōs*) after the birth of Jesus (Matt. 1:25). Repeated references are made to the Lord's half brothers and half sisters and four of His brothers are named: James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas (Matt. 13:55).

James, the father of Judas (not Iscariot) did not figure as an important person in the early church. He could hardly be the author of this epistle.

It seems clear therefore that the author is James, the half brother of the Lord, who became the recognized leader in the Jerusalem church. This conclusion is supported by the authoritative tone of the letter and by the marked similarities in Greek

between this epistle and the speech by James recorded in Acts 15.

Blue, J. R. (1985). [James](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 814–815). Victor Books.

Early on, there is no evidence that his half brothers believed in Christ.

Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world.” John adds, “For even his own brothers did not believe in him” (John 7:3–5).

Doriani, D. M. (2007). [James](#) (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Doriani, Eds.; p. 5). P&R Publishing.

is impossible to determine when James came to faith. But Jesus, after his resurrection, graciously appeared to James, either to instill or to seal his faith

Doriani, D. M. (2007). [James](#) (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Doriani, Eds.; p. 5). P&R Publishing.

1 Corinthians 15:3–7 (NKJV)

³ For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. ⁶ After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. ⁷ After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.

As far as the date is concerned of the writing, it is most likely one of the earliest letters written to be canonized.

Flavius Josephus, first-century historian, records that James was martyred in a.d. 62, so the epistle must have been written prior to that date. Since no mention is made of the Jerusalem Council (a.d. 49) in which James took so active a role, it is likely that the letter was written between a.d. 45 and 48.

Blue, J. R. (1985). [James](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 816). Victor Books.

James was actually Jacob (*lakōbos*). It is not certain why the English translators chose “James” rather than “Jacob.” “James,” “Jake,” and “Jacob” all come from the same root. Bible translations in other languages tend to utilize the transliterated name from the actual Hebrew “Jacob” (*ya‘ăqōb*).

Blue, J. R. (1985). [James](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 819). Victor Books.

1 James, a bondservant of God and
of the Lord Jesus Christ,

considered himself a bond-slave (*doulos*). He was the property of God and of the One he could have called his “Brother,” the Lord Jesus Christ.

1401. δοῦλος **dōulōs**, *doo'-los*; from 1210; a *slave* (lit. or fig., invol. or vol.; frequently therefore in a qualified sense of *subjection* or *subserviency*):

Strong, J. (2009). In [A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament and The Hebrew Bible](#) (Vol. 1, p. 24). Logos Bible Software.

James does not recognize himself as a servant like in the word deacon but rather a slave, fully owned by an subject to his master who is God and the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a consistent teaching throughout the New Testament that I have a saved person you are a slave of God, the slave to righteousness, a slave to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 1:1 (NKJV)

Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated to the gospel of God

Philippians 1:1 (NKJV)

Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ,
2 Peter 1:1 (NKJV)

Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

2 Corinthians 4:5 (NKJV)

⁵ For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake.

John F. MacArthur Jr., *Slave: The Hidden Truth about Your Identity in Christ*

“But the language of slavery does more than merely picture the gospel. In fact, it is central to the message of salvation. That is because the slavery metaphor points to the reality of Christ's lordship, and the lordship of Christ is essential to the biblical gospel.”

.....servants are hired, slaves are owned. Believers are not merely Christ's hired servants; they are His slaves, belonging to Him as His possession. He is their Owner and Master, worthy of their unquestioned allegiance and absolute obedience. His Word is their final authority; His will their ultimate mandate.

In reality, all of life should be viewed from that perspective. As Christians, we are slaves of Christ. What a radical difference that truth should make in our daily lives! We no longer live for ourselves.

Rather, we make it our aim to please the Master in everything.”

“To be a Christian is to be a slave of Christ.”

δοῦλος. In the O. T. “servant” (τὰυ, δοῦλος, θεράπων, παῖς) is regularly used for “worshipper” (e.g. Ps. 34:22)

Ropes, J. H. (1916). [A critical and exegetical commentary on the Epistle of St. James](#) (p. 117). C. Scribner’s Sons.

1 James, a bondservant of God and
of the Lord Jesus Christ,

Obviously James recognized the deity of Christ by placing Him coequal with God.

Matthew 6:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, “of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ

Ropes, J. H. (1916). [A critical and exegetical commentary on the Epistle of St. James](#) (p. 117). C. Scribner’s Sons.

2 Peter 1:1 (NKJV)

1 Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

Titus 2:13 (NKJV)

¹³ looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

Furthermore, James used His full name, “the Lord Jesus Christ.” “Jesus” means “Savior” and “Christ” is the Greek for “Messiah,” the “Anointed.” The eternal “Lord” became the Savior, “Jesus,” and rose again as everlasting Sovereign, “Christ.” The Lord of lords is King of kings (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14; 19:16).

Blue, J. R. (1985). [James](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 819). Victor Books.

Peter’s claim in his Day-of-Pentecost sermon: “God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). James’s view of his half-brother Jesus had undergone quite a transformation

since the days they grew up in the same household together!

Moo, D. J. (2000). [The letter of James](#) (p. 49). Eerdmans; Apollos.

1. The Author of the Text

2. The Audience to Teach

1 ...To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad:

James was writing to the Jews dispersed from their homeland. The technical term “scattered” (*diaspora*) occurs in only two other places in the New Testament

Blue, J. R. (1985). [James](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 819). Victor Books.

James addresses his readers in terms both of their status and location; they are “the twelve tribes” “scattered among the nations.” “The twelve tribes,” of course, reflects the historical origins of Israel, made up originally of the people descended from the twelve patriarchs. As a result of the Assyrian and Babylonian victories, most of the “tribes” were exiled and scattered. Yet the Lord, through the prophets, promised that he would regather the exiled people of Israel and so

reconstitute the twelve tribes once again (Isa. 11:11–12; Jer. 31:8–14; Ezek. 37:21–22; Zech. 10:6–12; cf. also *Pss. Sol.* 17:26–28). This was common expectation; see especially *T. Benjamin* 9:2: “But in your allotted place will be the temple of God, and the latter temple will exceed the former in glory. The twelve tribes shall be gathered there and all the nations, until such time as the Most High shall send forth his salvation through the ministration of

the unique prophet.” Jesus’ choice of twelve apostles suggests that his mission was to bring into being this eschatological Israel. See especially Matt. 19:28 (par. Luke 22:30): “Jesus said to them, ‘I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’” The book of Revelation similarly pictures the people of God of the last days in terms of 12,000 people drawn from each of the twelve tribes (Rev. 7:5–8) and of the heavenly Jerusalem, with twelve gates on which “were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel” (Rev. 21:12). By calling his readers “the twelve tribes,” then, James claims that they constitute the true people of God of the “last days.”

Moo, D. J. (2000). *The letter of James* (pp. 49–50). Eerdmans; Apollos.

“Diaspora,” or “Dispersion” (NRSV), became a technical name for all the nations outside of Palestine where Jewish people had come to live (2 Macc. 1:27; John 7:35)

2 Maccabees 1:27 (NRSV)

²⁷ Gather together our scattered people, set free those who are slaves among the Gentiles, look on those who are rejected and despised, and let the Gentiles know that you are our God.

John 7:35 (NKJV)

³⁵ Then the Jews said among themselves, “Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?”

. In his first letter, Peter uses this term to address his readers, who are almost certainly Gentiles (1:1).

Here the word probably has a figurative meaning, characterizing Christians as people who live in this world, apart from their true, heavenly, “homeland.”

But the early date and Jewish audience of James

suggest a more literal meaning for the term here. As we argued in the Introduction, James writes to Jewish Christians who have been “dispersed” as a result of persecution (Acts 11:19).

Moo, D. J. (2000). [The letter of James](#) (p. 50). Eerdmans; Apollos.

Acts 11:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only.

Over the previous several hundred years, various conquerors (including the Romans in 63 b.c.) had deported Jews from their homeland and spread them throughout the known world. In addition, many other Jews had voluntarily moved to other countries for business or other reasons (cf. Acts 2:5–11). By New Testament times, many Jews lived **abroad**. The Greek word *diaspora* (“scattering”) became a technical term to identify Jews living outside Palestine (cf. 1 Pet. 1:1).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). [James](#) (p. 13). Moody Press.

There is a clear Jewish nature to the Letter also.

James 2:2 (NKJV)

² For if there should come into your assembly (synagogue) a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes,

The references to the Commandments of Old Testament

The taking care of the Poor, orphans and Widows.

The discussion of faith and works relationship.

The obvious reference to the Shema of Israel.

James 2:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

Greetings

25.125 χαίρω^a: to enjoy a state of happiness and well-being — ‘to rejoice, to be glad.’ χαίρω ἐν τοῖς παθήμασιν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ‘I rejoice as I suffer for you’ Col 1:24; ὡς λυπούμενοι ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες ‘although saddened, we are always rejoicing’ 2 Cor 6:10.

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 302). United Bible Societies.

Greeting (χαίρειν). Lit., *rejoice*. The ordinary Greek salutation, *hail! welcome!* Also used at parting: *joy be with you*

Vincent, M. R. (1887). [Word studies in the New Testament](#) (Vol. 1, p. 723). Charles Scribner’s Sons.

to hail (greet) v. — to greet with a wish of health and happiness (whether sincere or as a formula).

The Author of the Text

The Audience to Teach

The Attitude in Trials

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience

My brethren

James’s favorite address of his readers is “my brothers” (see also 2:1, 14; 3:1, 10, 12; 4:11; 5:7, 9–10, 12, 19) or the variant “my dear brothers” (1:16, 19; 2:5). Both Jews and pagans broadened the word “brother” to describe fellow members of the same religion (in the NT, see, e.g., Matt. 5:22; Acts 3:22; 13:15). When used in this spiritual sense, the word included both men and women; hence the rendering “brothers and sisters” (NRSV; NLT) in modern English is justified

Moo, D. J. (2000). [The letter of James](#) (p. 53). Eerdmans; Apollos.

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

Count it (ἡγησασθε [*hēgēsasthe*]). First orist middle imperative of ἡγεομαι [*hēgeomai*], old verb to consider. Do it now and once for all

Robertson, A. T. (1933). [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (Jas 1:2). Broadman Press.

All joy (πᾶσαν χαρὰν). *Joy* follows up the *rejoice* of the greeting. The *all* has the sense of *wholly*. Count it a thing *wholly joyful*, without admixture of sorrow.

Perhaps, as Bengel suggests, the *all* applies to *all* kinds of temptations.

Vincent, M. R. (1887). [Word studies in the New Testament](#) (Vol. 1, p. 723). Charles Scribner's Sons.

James 1:2 (NA28)

ἡ Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγάσασθε, ἀδελφοί μου,
ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις,*

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you
fall into various trials,

periptó: to fall around

Original Word: περιπίπτω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: periptó

Usage: I fall into the midst of, am involved in, happen upon a place.

4045 peripíptō (from 4012 /perí, "all-around" and 4098 /píptō, "fall") – properly, fall around, i.e. totally surrounded by.

James 1:2 (NASB95)

2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,

James 1:2 (ESV)

² Count it all joy, my brothers, when **you meet trials** of various kinds,

poikilos: many colored

Original Word: ποικίλος, η, ον

Part of Speech: Adjective

Transliteration: poikilos

Phonetic Spelling: (poy-kee'-los)

Definition: many colored

Usage: various, of different colors, diverse, various.

4164 poikílos – properly, of various kinds, diversified ("manifold").

[This is the same meaning 4164 (poikílos) has in Pindar, Josephus, Philo, etc. cf. BAGD.]

peirasmos: an experiment, a trial, temptation

Original Word: πειρασμός, οὔ, ὄ

Part of Speech: Noun, Masculine

Transliteration: peirasmos

Phonetic Spelling: (pi-ras-mos')

Usage: (a) trial, probation, testing, being tried, (b) temptation, (c) calamity, affliction.

Cognate: 3986 peirasmós (from 3985 /peirázō) – temptation or test – both senses can apply simultaneously (depending on the context). The

positive sense ("test") and negative sense ("temptation") are functions of the context (not merely the words themselves).

1 Peter 1:6 (NKJV)

⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

This theme of Rejoicing in the midst of Trials and Troubles is a consistent teaching in the Bible

Matthew 5:10–12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. ¹² Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Luke 6:22–23 (NKJV)

²² Blessed are you when men hate you,
And when they exclude you,
And revile *you*, and cast out your name as evil,

For the Son of Man's sake.

²³ Rejoice in that day and leap for joy!

For indeed your reward *is* great in heaven,
For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

Acts 5:40–41 (NKJV)

⁴⁰ And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹ So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

2 Corinthians 12:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹ And He said to me, “**My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.**”

Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Philippians 2:17–18 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Yes, and if I am being poured out *as a drink offering* on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I

am glad and rejoice with you all. ¹⁸ For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.

Colossians 1:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,

Hebrews 10:32–34 (NKJV)

³² But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: ³³ partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; ³⁴ for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.

1 Peter 4:13–16 (NKJV)

¹³ but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. ¹⁴ If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed *are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your

part He is glorified. ¹⁵ But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. ¹⁶ Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.

Philippians 1:29 (NKJV)

²⁹ For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

From our vantage point, most trials seem like tragic accidents. Yet James says we should rejoice, for trials have a purpose. They can strengthen our faith.

Humanly speaking, trials seem like random evils that fall on us. But our Sovereign oversees the trial itself and oversees us in the trial

Doriani, D. M. (2007). [James](#) (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Doriani, Eds.; p. 21). P&R Publishing.

Romans 8:28–29 (NKJV)

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be conformed to*

the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.