

*The Letter to the
12 Tribes*

James

Jas. 1:1-4

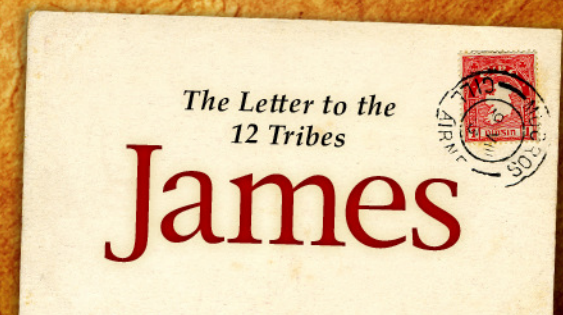


Jas 1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

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4 But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

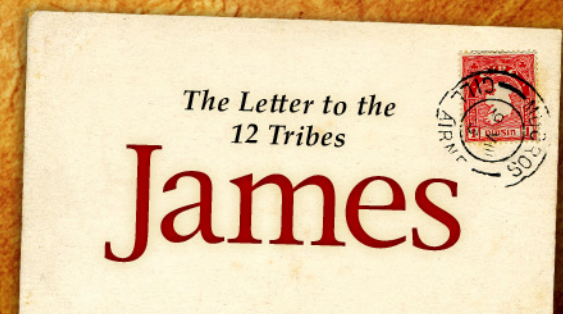


Mt. 13:55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, **James**, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

Gal. 1:19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save **James the Lord's brother**.

Mark 1:19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw **James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother**, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

Acts 12:2 And he killed **James the brother of John** with the sword.

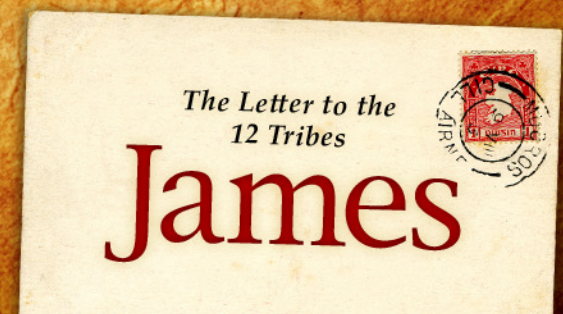


Mark 3:18 And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and **James the son of Alphaeus**, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite,

Lu. 6:16 And **Judas the brother of James**, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

Acts 15:13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men [and] brethren, hearken unto me:

Acts 12:17 But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, **Go shew these things unto James**, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.



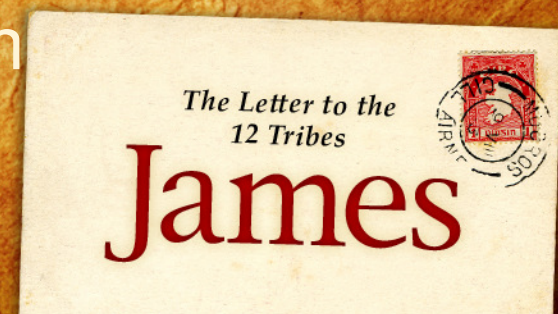
Acts 21:18 And the *day* following Paul went in with us **unto James**; and all the elders were present.

1 Cor. 15:7 After that, **he was seen of James**; then of all the apostles.

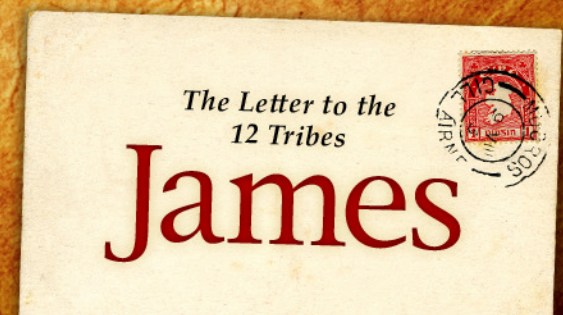
SPECIAL FEATURES

There are several unique features of this epistle:

- It contains no references to any of the specific individuals among the original recipients.
- There is no concluding benediction.
- There are very many imperatives in the letter, about one for every two verses.

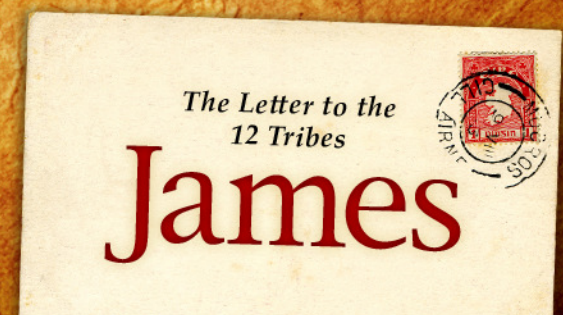


- There are many figures of speech and analogies, probably more than in all of Paul's epistles. J. Ronald Blue, "James," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, p. 816.
- James also alluded to over 20 Old Testament books. He referred to many Old Testament characters including Abraham, Rahab, Job, and Elijah—as well as to the Ten Commandments and the Law of Moses.
- There are many references to nature. This was characteristic of the Jewish rabbis' teaching in James' day, as well as to the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- There are also many allusions to Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount.



- There are only two references to Jesus (1:1; 2:1), which led Martin Luther to question whether this book was worthy of being in the New Testament. William Barclay, *The Letters of James and Peter*, p. 28.

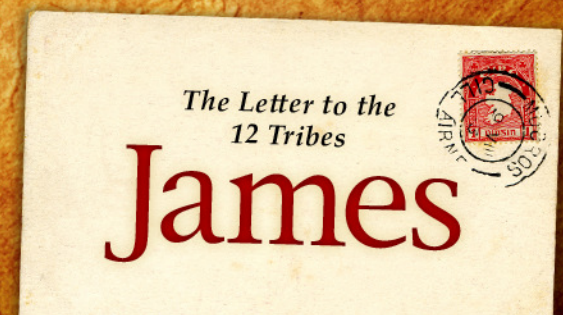
"... in his preface to the New Testament of 1522 James was stigmatized as 'an epistle of straw.' Once Luther remarked that he would give his doctor's beret to anyone who could reconcile James and Paul." Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand*, p. 259.



PURPOSE

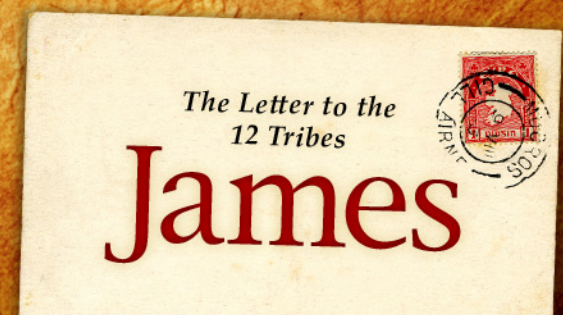
James told his readers how to achieve spiritual maturity:
through a

- confident stand
- compassionate service
- careful speech
- contrite submission
- concerned sharing



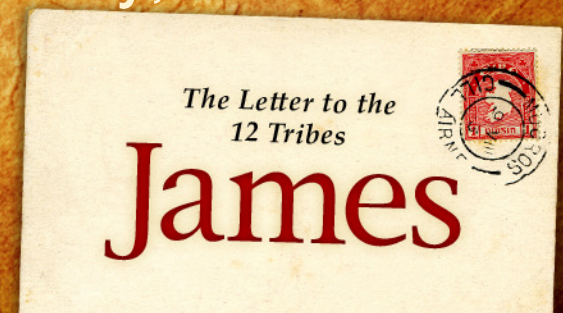
He dealt with every area of a Christian's life: what he is, what he does, what he says, what he feels, and what he has." J. Ronald Blue, "James," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, p. 818.

"The chief aim of the Epistle is to strengthen the faith and loyalty of the Jewish Christians in the face of persecution from rich and overbearing Jews who were defrauding and oppressing them." A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, 6:6.



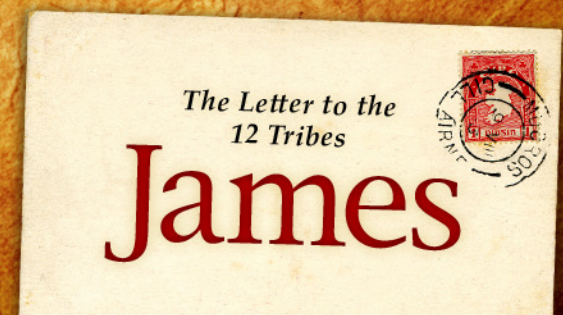
MESSAGE

- The Book of James teaches us that faith in God should result in behavior that is in harmony with God's will.
- The theme of the book is "living by faith" or "spiritual maturity."
- James' concern was Christian behavior (ethics) as expressive of Christian belief (doctrine).
- James hardly mentioned most of the fundamental Christian doctrines in this book. His preeminent concern was the practice of Christianity, the manifestation of salvation in shoe leather.



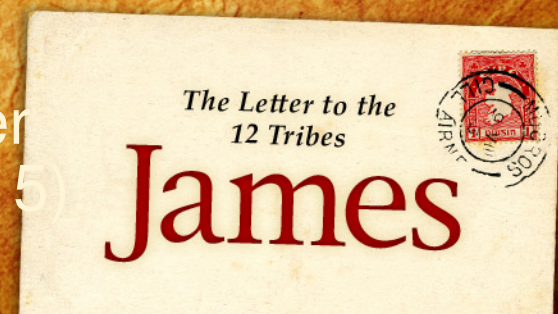
Here James was speaking of our *sinful human nature*.
The flesh says:

- Indulge yourself, and give in to the temptations that often accompany trials (ch. 1).
- Love yourself rather than others (ch. 2).
- Glorify yourself rather than promoting others and God (ch. 3).
- Assert yourself rather than submitting to God (ch. 4).
- Serve yourself rather than serving others (ch. 5).



James also cautioned us to "resist the devil," the third source of opposition to God's work of producing righteousness in our conduct.

- Satan says: God hates you, and your trials are an evidence of that (ch. 1).
- Satan says: God is withholding good things from you that you would surely receive if you showed favoritism to those who are able to favor you (ch. 2).
- Satan says: God has abandoned you, so you need to speak up for yourself (ch. 3).
- Satan says: God will not defend you, so you must be more self-assertive (ch. 4).
- Satan also says: God will not provide for you, so you must hoard your money rather than distributing it as a good steward (ch. 5).



Jas 1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

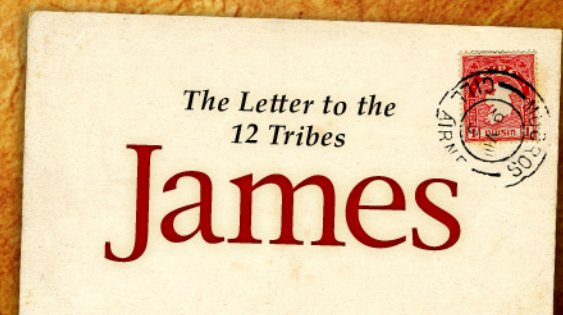
Original Word: Ἰάκωβος

Transliteration: Iakóbos (German: Jakobus)

Short Definition: James

Definition: James, (a) the Small, son of Alphaeus, and one of the Twelve, (b) half-brother of Jesus, (c) father (?) of Jude, (d) son of Zebedee, and brother of John, one of the Twelve, killed A.D. 44

<http://biblehub.com/greek/2385.htm>



Original Word: δούλος

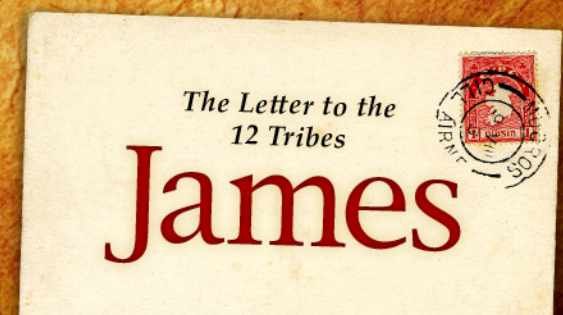
Transliteration: doulos

Short Definition: a male slave

1401 *doúlos* (a masculine noun of uncertain derivation) – properly, someone who belongs to another; a *bond-slave*, without *any ownership rights* of their own.

Ironically, 1401 /*doúlos* ("bond-slave") is used with the *highest dignity* in the NT – namely, of believers who *willingly* live under Christ's authority as His devoted followers.

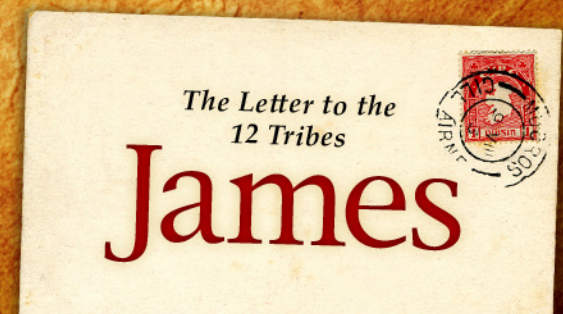
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"It is only his servanthood to the Lord Jesus Christ that matters to him here, for this is the theme of his letter: How shall we live as servants of the Lord Jesus Christ?"
George M. Stulac, *James*, p. 30.

Mt. 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging **the twelve tribes of Israel.**

Acts 26:7 Unto which *promise* **our twelve tribes**, instantly serving *God* day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.



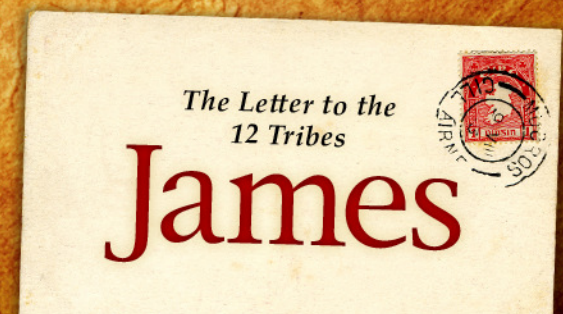
Jn. 11:51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God **that were scattered abroad.** (Isa. 43:6, 56:5)

I. THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS BATTLES, 1:2-16

A. The Testings of the Christian Life, 1:2-12

1. Testings are for a purpose, 1:2-11



a. For our enlargement, 1:2-4

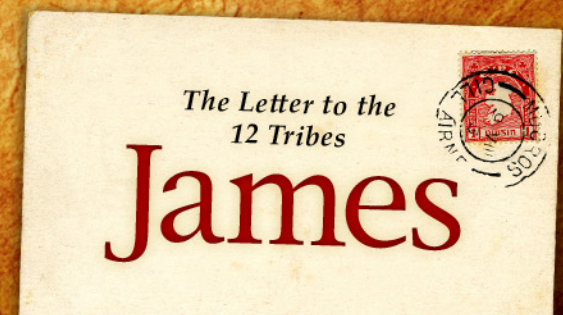
Jas 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

3 Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

4 But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

(1) To move us, 1:2

Jas 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;



Wrap your brain around this - "Count" it all joy!

Original Word: ἡγέομαι

Transliteration: hēgeomai

Short Definition: I lead, think

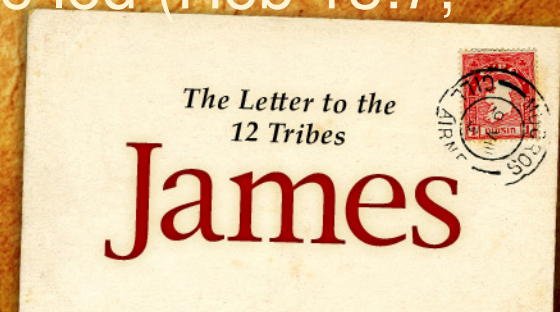
Definition: (a) I lead, (b) I think, am of opinion, suppose, consider

2233 *hēgéomai* (from 71 /*ágō*, "to lead") – properly, to lead the way (going before as a *chief*) – cognate with 2232 /*hēgemón* ("a governor or official who leads others").

2233 /*hēgéomai* ("what goes before, in front") refers to *coming first in priority* such as: "the leading thought" in one's mind, i.e. to esteem (regard highly); or a leading authority, providing leadership in a local church (see Heb 13:7,17,24).

[2233 /*hēgéomai* ("an official who *leads*") carries important responsibility and hence "casts a heavy vote" (influence) – and hence deserve cooperation by those who are led (Heb 13:7; passive, "to esteem/reckon heavily" the person or influence who is leading).]

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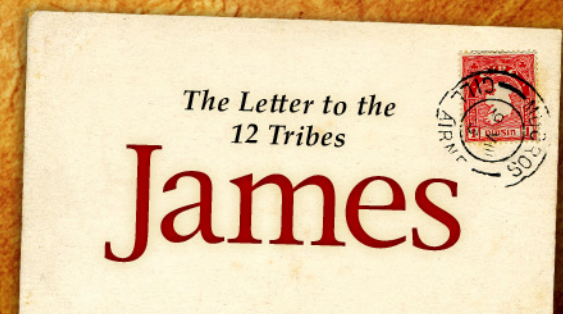


Having the right *mind-set* – Rom. 8:28, Phil. 4:4

Rom. 8:28 And we know that **all things work together for good to them that love God**, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

Phil. 4:4 **Rejoice in the Lord alway**: *and* again I say, Rejoice.

Having the right *perception*.



Original Word: χαρά, ἄς, ἡ

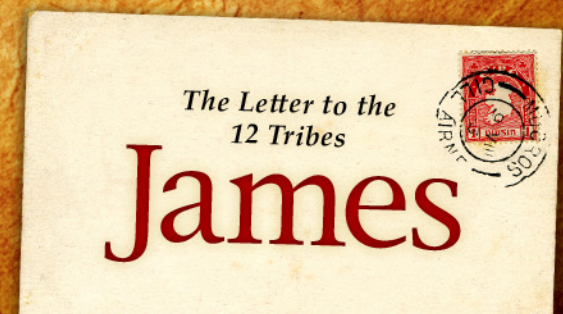
Transliteration: chara

Short Definition: joy, gladness

Definition: joy, gladness, a source of joy.

Cognate: 5479 *xará* (another feminine noun from the root *xar-*, "extend *favor*, lean towards, be favorably disposed") – properly, the awareness (of God's) *grace, favor; joy* ("grace recognized"). [The etymological link between 5463 /*xaírō* ("rejoice because of grace"), 5479 /*xará* ("joy because of grace") and 5485 /*xáris* ("grace") – i.e. that they are all cognates – is observed by *LS* (p 1,976), *Zod (Dict)*, *CBL*, *Wigram's Englishman's Greek Concordance* (Ed. Ralph Winters), *Word Study Greek-English NT* (Tyndale, Ed. Paul McReynolds) – see also *DNTT* (2,356) and *TDNT* (9; 359,60).

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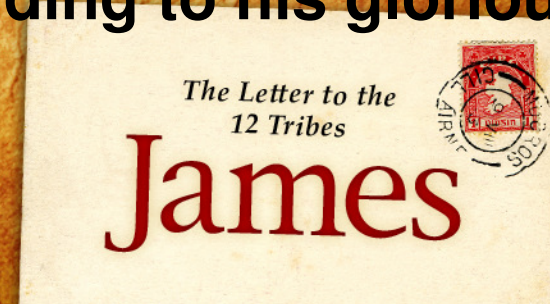
Jn. 16:24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that **your joy may be full.**

Acts 20:24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that **I might finish my course with joy,** and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Rom. 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and **joy in the Holy Ghost.**

Gal. 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, **joy,** peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Col. 1:11 Strengthened with all might, **according to his glorious power,** unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;



1 Thess. 1:6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, **with joy of the Holy Ghost:**

Heb. 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who **for the joy that was set before him** endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

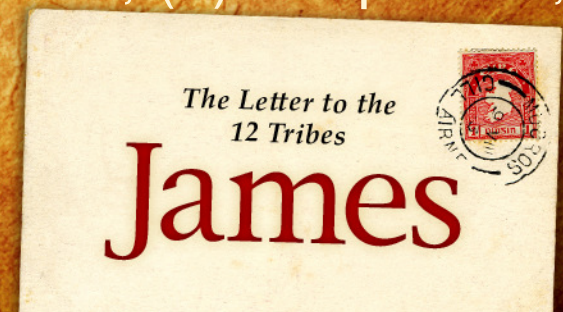
Having the *patience*.

Original Word: πειρασμός

Transliteration: peirasmos

Short Definition: trial, testing, temptation

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

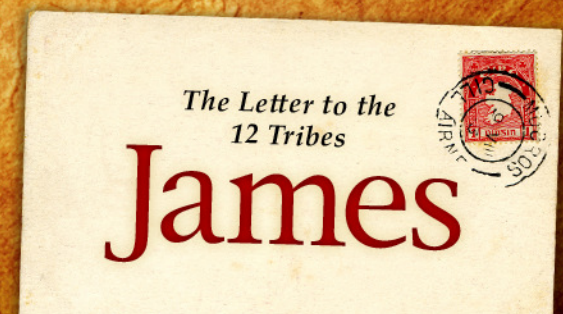


Cognate: 3986 *peirasmós* (from 3985 /*peirázō*) – *temptation* or *test* – both senses can apply *simultaneously* (depending on the context). The positive sense ("test") and negative sense ("temptation") are functions of the context (not merely the words themselves).

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Heb. 11:17 By faith Abraham, **when he was tried**, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*,

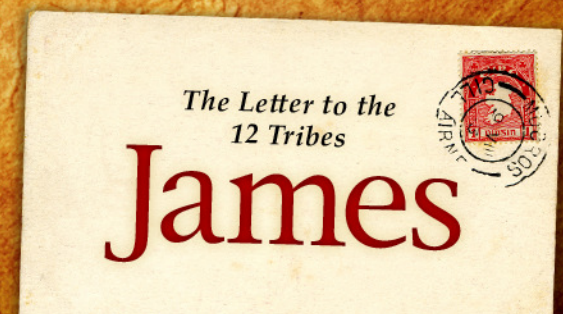
2 Sam. 24:1 And again the anger of **the LORD** was kindled against Israel, and **he moved David** against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.



Job 1:12 And **the LORD said unto Satan**, Behold, all that he hath *is* in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

Job 2:3 And **the LORD said unto Satan**, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

1 Cor. 5:5 To **deliver such an one unto Satan** for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

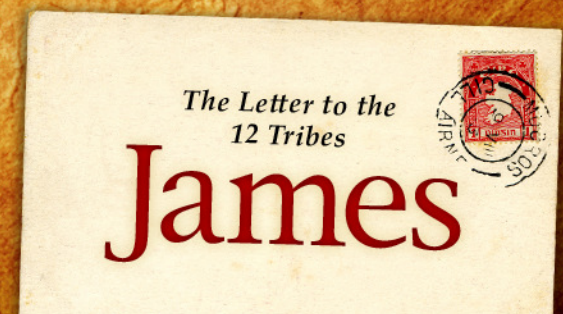


1 Tim. 1:20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom **I have delivered unto Satan**, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

1 Cor. 3:17 If any man defile the temple of God, him **shall God destroy**; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple ye are*.

Rom. 8:13 For if ye live after the flesh, **ye shall die**: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

2 Tim. 2:26 And *that* they may **recover themselves out of the snare of the devil**, who are taken captive by him at his will.

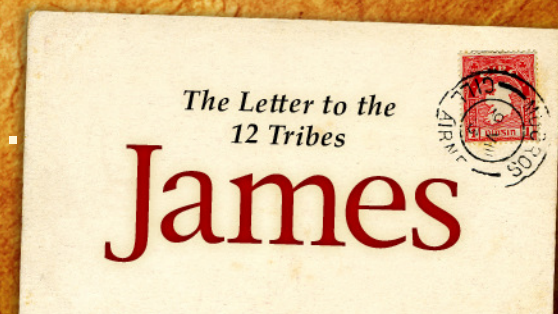


Heb. 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy **him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;**

(2) To mellow us, 1:3

Jas 1:3 Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

Rom. 5:3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;
4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:
5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.



(3) To mature, 1:4

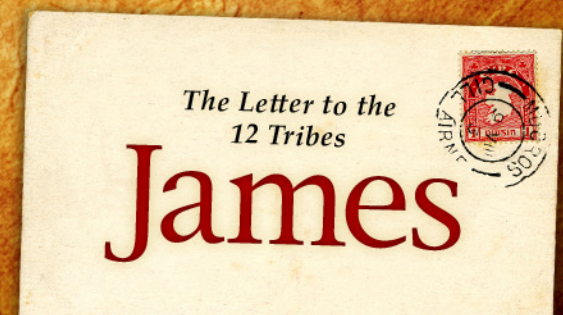
Jas 1:4 But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Original Word: τέλειος

Transliteration: teleios

Short Definition: perfect, full-grown

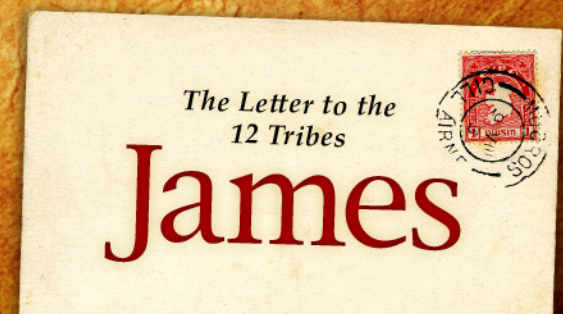
Definition: perfect, (a) complete in all its parts, (b) full grown, of full age, (c) specially of the completeness of Christian character.



Cognate: 5046 *téleios* (an adjective, derived from 5056 /*télos*, "consummated goal") – *mature* (consummated) from going through the necessary stages to reach the *end-goal*, i.e. *developed* into a consummating *completion* by fulfilling the necessary *process* (*spiritual journey*). See 5056 (*telos*).

[This root (*tel-*) means "reaching the *end* (*aim*)." It is well-illustrated with the old pirate's telescope, unfolding (extending out) one stage at a time to function at full-strength (capacity effectiveness).]

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Conclusion

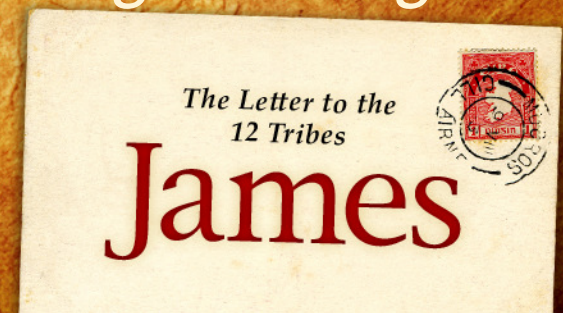
"Faith" is superior to the spirit (philosophy) of our world.

- It is stronger than the lusts of our flesh.
- It is stubborn against the attacks of the devil.

Therefore, we should continue to live by faith.

James' great theme is that we need to keep trusting and obeying God. As we began the Christian life by faith, so we need to continue to live by faith, day by day, rather than reverting to our former habit of trusting in ourselves and behaving like unbelievers.

Adapted from G. Campbell Morgan, *Living Messages of the Books of the Bible*, 2:2:123-40.



Eph. 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, [even] Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

