

*The Letter to the
12 Tribes*

James

Jas. 1:5-11



Jas 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

8 A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:

10 But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

11 For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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.



SPECIAL FEATURES

There are several unique features of this epistle:

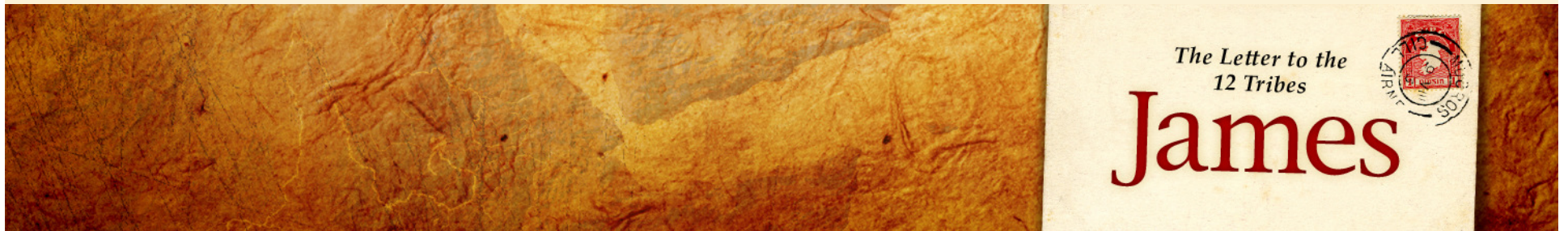
- It contains no references to any of the specific individuals among the original recipients.
- There is no concluding benediction.
- There are very many imperatives in the letter, about one for every two verses.
- There are many figures of speech and analogies, probably more than in all of Paul's epistles. 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.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this potent letter is to exhort the early believers to Christian maturity and holiness of life. This letter deals more with the practice of the Christian faith than with its precepts.

MESSAGE

The Book of James emphasizes that genuine faith in Christ affects the lifestyle of the believer, producing commitment to following the will of God, for His glory.



INTRODUCTION, 1:1

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

(1) To move us, 1:2

(2) To mellow us, 1:3

(3) To mature us, 1:4















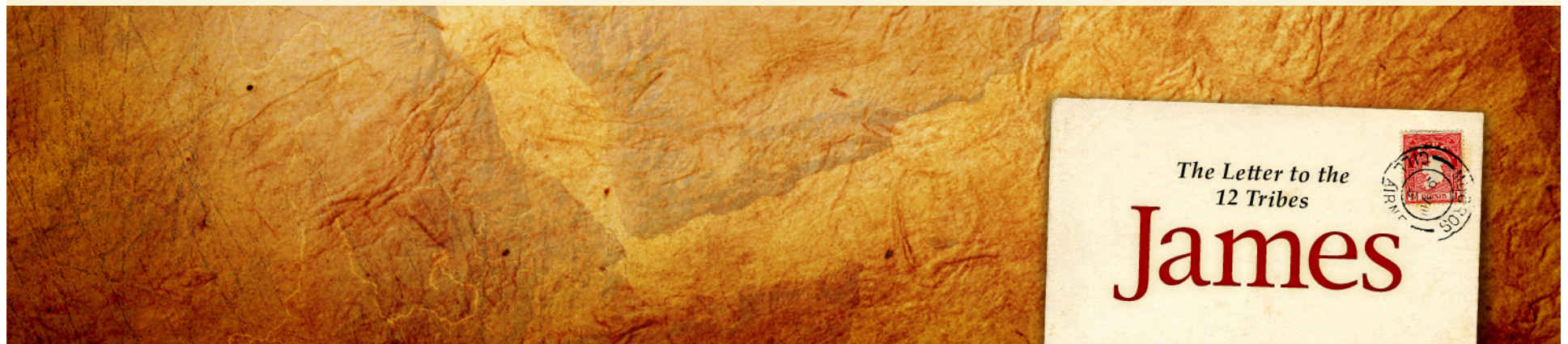
Jas. 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy **when ye fall into divers temptations;**

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.**

How do we get from falling into divers temptations to being perfect and wanting nothing?

b. For our enlightenment, 1:5-8



(1) Wisdom required, 1:5a – “If any of you lack wisdom...”

sophia: skill, wisdom

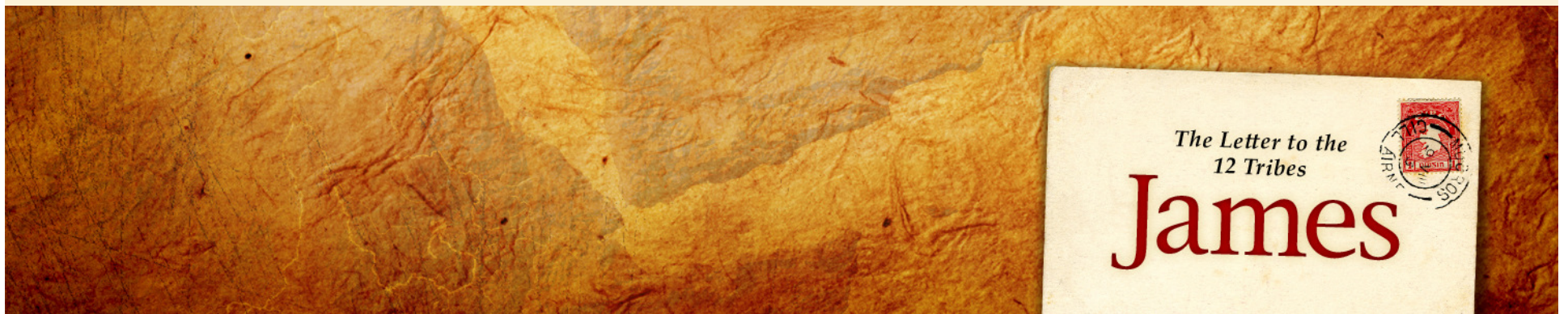
Original Word: σοφία

Transliteration: sophia

Definition: wisdom, insight, skill (human or divine), intelligence. (Sophistication, philosophy)

<http://biblehub.com/greek/4678.htm>

Wisdom is the ability to utilize one’s knowledge in a production manner, from a spiritual perspective.



Jas. 3:13 **Who is a wise man** and endued with knowledge among you? **let him shew** out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15 **This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.**

16 For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil work.

17 But **the wisdom that is from above** is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.



(2) Wisdom requested, 1:5b – “...let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not...”

aiteó: to ask, request

Original Word: αἰτέω

Transliteration: aiteó

Short Definition: I ask, request, beg, petition, demand.

<http://biblehub.com/greek/154.htm>



Mt. 7:7 Ask, [G154] and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:
8 For every one that asketh [G154] receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask [G154] bread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask [G154] a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask [G154] him?



Jn. 14:13 And whatsoever ye shall ask [G154] in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If ye shall ask [G154] any thing in my name, I will do *it*.

Jn. 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask [G154] what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

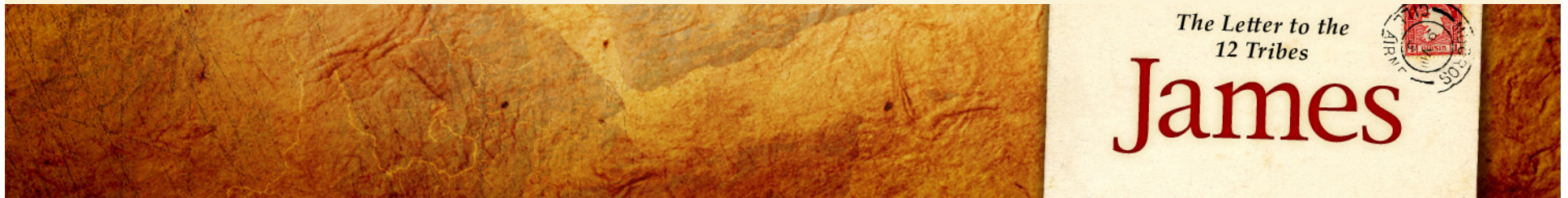
Jn. 16:23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask [G154] the Father in my name, he will give *it* you.

24 Hitherto have ye asked [G154] nothing in my name: ask, [G154] and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

(3) Wisdom received, 1:5c –
“...and it shall be given him.”

1 Cor. 2:6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet **not the wisdom of this world**, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:
7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

1 Cor. 3:19 For **the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God**. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.



2 Cor. 1:12 For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, **not with fleshly wisdom**, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

(4) Wisdom refused, 1:6-8

(a) Indecision, 1:6a – “But let him ask **in faith, nothing wavering...**”

Isa. 57:20- But **the wicked are like the troubled sea**, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.
21 **There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.**



James, as a fisherman, would have known all about the waves of a sea.

diakrinó: to distinguish, to judge

Original Word: διακρίνω

Transliteration: diakrinó

Definition: I separate, distinguish, discern one thing from another; I doubt, hesitate, waver.

1252 *diakrínō* - literally, judging "back-and-forth" which can either (positively) refer to close-reasoning (discrimination) or negatively "over-judging" (going too far, vacillating). Only the context indicates which sense is meant.

<http://biblehub.com/greek/1252.htm>

(b) Illustration, 1:6b – “...For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.”

Original Word: κλύδων

Transliteration: kludón

Definition: rough water, a wave, billow, surge

<http://biblehub.com/greek/2830.htm>

Lu. 8:24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and **the raging [G2830]** of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

James ⁹⁰

Mt. 16:3 And in the morning, *It will be* foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can **discern** [G1252] the face of the sky; but can ye not *discern* the signs of the times?

Rom. 4:20 He **staggered** [G1252] not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

Rom. 14:23 And he that **doubteth** [G1252] is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for **whatsoever is not of faith is sin.**



(c) Information, 1:7-8

i. Spiritual law, 1:7

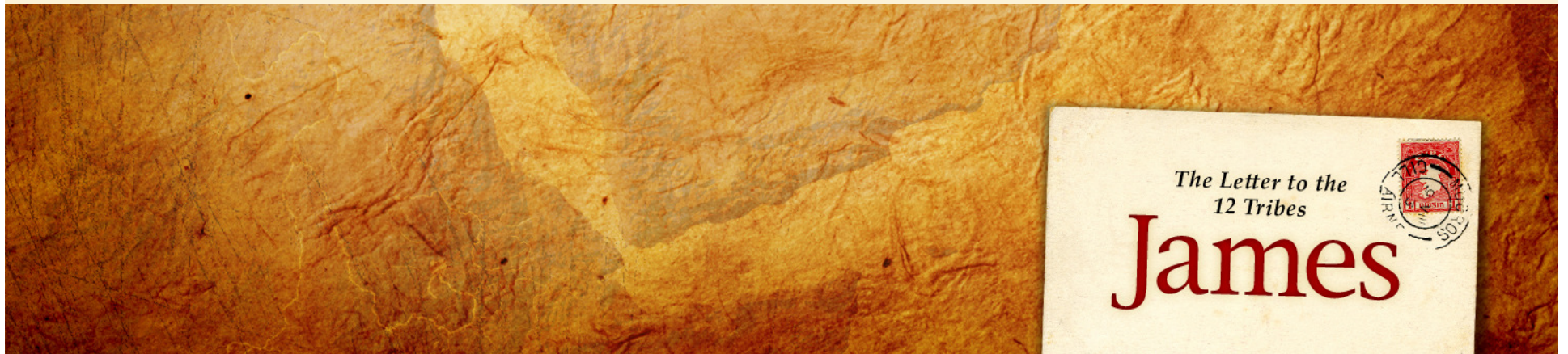
Jas. 1:7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

Original Word: οἶμαι

Transliteration: oiomai and oimai

Definition: I think, suppose, expect, imagine.

<http://biblehub.com/greek/3633.htm>



ii. Social law, 1:8

Jas. 1:8 A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

Original Word: δίψυχος

Transliteration: dipsuchos

Definition: (lit: of two souls, of two selves), double-minded, wavering.

1374 *dípsyxos* – properly, "two souled"; (figuratively) "double-minded," i.e. a person "split in half," vacillating like a "spiritual schizophrenic."

<http://biblehub.com/greek/1374.htm>

James ⁹⁰

Jas. 4:8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, ***ye double minded.***

c. For our ennoblement, 1:9-11

(1) Rejoice in advancement, 1:9

Jas. 1:9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:

(2) Rejoice in adversity, 1:10-11



(a) A vivid example, 1:10-11a

Jas. 1:10 But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

11 “For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth...”



1 Tim. 6:9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For **the love of money is the root of all evil**: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. ...

17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.



James

Lu. 12:21 So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Psa. 37:2 For they shall soon be **cut down like the grass, and wither** as the green herb.

Isa. 40:7 The **grass withereth, the flower fadeth**: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely **the people *is* grass**.
8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but **the word of our God shall stand for ever**.

1 Pet. 1:24 For **all flesh *is* as grass**, and all **the glory of man as the flower of grass**. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

(b) A valid expectation, 1:11b – “...so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.”



Conclusion

2 Cor. 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, **though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.**

Rev. 2:9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (**but thou art rich**) and *I know* the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan.

Prov. 10:22 **The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.**



James

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