

The Book of James

Jas. 1:1-8

Faith

IN

ACTION!

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

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.

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.

The Book of James is a controversial book for scholars. Martin Luther said that was an epistle full of straw. The authorship is debated whether it is the Lord Jesus' half-brother, His cousin, James the less, another James, and by such terms as the *Hieronymian* view (cousins,) *Epiphanian* view (Joseph's sons by a previous marriage, or *Helvidian* view, children of Joseph and Mary. We simply trust the believers' view – the Holy Spirit inspired it through “James.”

The Book of James is one that expresses *faith in action*. The greeting indicates that this “James” is “...a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ...” and that the audience intended was “...to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad...”. The immediate emphasis is “the trying of your faith.” The believer is saved by grace through faith, and after salvation, is to live by faith. This will include...

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

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

1. Testings are for a Purpose, 1:1-11

a. For Our Enlargement, 1:1-4

(1) To Move Us, 1:2

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

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

- ❖ Being a “servant” implies absolute obedience, absolute humility, and absolute loyalty.
- ❖ If a person is saved by grace through faith, and is walking by faith, then it includes having faith to face challenging times with a great attitude – “...count it all joy...” when you are tested.

Original Word: ἡγέομαι **Part of Speech:** Verb – Aorist Imperative

Transliteration: hēgeomai

Phonetic Spelling: (hayg-eh'-om-ahee) **Definition:** to lead, suppose (count)

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

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

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).

[*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).]

<https://biblehub.com/greek/2233.htm>

Acts 5:41 And they departed from the presence of the council, **rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.**

❖ This book begins with commanding the believer to esteem testings of faith to be something to view as “all joy” when falling into challenging situations.

Original Word: πειρασμός

Transliteration: peirasmos

Phonetic Spelling: (pi-ras-mos')

Definition: an experiment, a trial, temptation

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

peirasmós (from *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).

<https://biblehub.com/greek/3986.htm>

❖ The key word is not “if” but “when” you fall into a myriad of temptations.

Original Word: ποικίλος **Transliteration:** poikilos

Phonetic Spelling: (poy-kee'-los)

Definition: many colored **Usage:** various, of different colors, diverse, various.

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

<https://biblehub.com/greek/4164.htm>

(2) To Mellow Us, 1:3

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

- ❖ Faith so amazing is faith that is alive and life changing.
- ❖ Experiential knowledge gained by “trying...faith” produces “patience.”
- ❖ The “trying” is to prove what is genuine, like refining silver, eliminating impurities.

Original Word: κατεργάζομαι

Transliteration: katergazomai **Phonetic**

Spelling: (kat-er-gad'-zom-ahee)

Definition: to work out **Usage:** I effect by labor, achieve, work out, bring about.

katergázomai (from *katá*, "down, exactly according to," intensifying *ergázomai*, "work, accomplish") –

literally, "work *down* to the *end-point*," i.e. to an *exact*, definite conclusion (note the prefix, *katá*); bring to *decisive finality* (*end-conclusion*).

<https://biblehub.com/greek/2716.htm>

❖ Endurance to remain faithful in life is derived from facing various tests of faith.

Original Word: ὑπομονή **Transliteration:** hupomoné

Phonetic Spelling: (hoop-om-on-ay')

Definition: a remaining behind, **a patient enduring**

Usage: endurance, steadfastness, patient waiting for.

hypomoné (from *hypó*, "under" and *ménō*, "remain, endure") – properly, *remaining under*, endurance; steadfastness, **especially as God enables the believer to "remain (endure) under" the challenges He allots in life.**

<https://biblehub.com/greek/5281.htm>

- ❖ Faith of a believer is not stagnant – it is continually building spiritual character.

(3) To Mature Us, 1:4

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

- ❖ Believers are not to resist trials, but are commanded to “let” it produce spiritual maturity.
- ❖ The perfection gained from the testing should “complete” the believer.

Original Word: ὁλόκληρος

Transliteration: holokléros

Phonetic Spelling: (hol'-ok'-lay-ros)

Definition: complete, **entire** **Usage:** **complete in every part, sound, perfect, entire.**

holóklēros (from *hólos*, "whole" and *klēros*, "a lot, cast to better discern God's preferred-will") – properly, "all that is included (apportioned) through divine *lot*." *holóklēros* ("divinely-allotted wholeness") occurs twice in the NT: 1 Thess. 5:2; Jas. 1:4

<https://biblehub.com/greek/3648.htm>

- ❖ For a believer to be “perfect and entire, wanting nothing,” is to be well-rounded, deficient in nothing (like a decathlon athlete proficient in 10 different track-and-field events.)

b. For Our Enlightenment, 1:5-8

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

- ❖ Believers are to “be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” However, if a person thinks wisdom is deficient, “let him ask of God.”

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

- ❖ A believer is commanded to “ask” and is promised that God will answer, liberally, without bargaining, and will not “upbraid” or not reproach the one asking.

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

- ❖ The believer will receive wisdom to live a life pleasing to God, just as Solomon did.

(4) Wisdom Refused, 1:6-8

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

❖ Answered prayer is conditional, putting faith in operation as God desires.

Heb. 11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for **he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.**

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

- ❖ Faith that is solid and stable is needed when asking, not unstable vacillation.
- ❖ Indecision is the worst decision.

(c) Information, 1:7-8

i. Spiritual Law, 1:7

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

❖ No playing games with God. Be committed or be without Him and His blessings.

ii. Social Law, 1:8

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

Original Word: δίψυχος **Transliteration:** dipsuchos

Phonetic Spelling: (dip'-soo-khos)

Definition: of two minds, wavering

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

dípsyxos (an adjective, derived from *dís*, "two" and *psyxḗ*, "soul") – properly, "two souled"; (figuratively) "double-minded," i.e. a person "split in half," vacillating like a "spiritual schizophrenic." This term may have been coined in the NT (R. Lenski, P. Davids). <https://biblehub.com/greek/1374.htm>

❖ Divided loyalties = no true commitment. Torn between two paths leaves a person stranded at the fork.

Summary

- ❖ Faith so amazing is faith that is alive and life changing.
- ❖ Experiential knowledge gained by “trying...faith” produces “patience.”
- ❖ The “trying” is to prove what is genuine, like refining silver, eliminating impurities.
- ❖ Believers are not to resist trials but are commanded to “let” it produce spiritual maturity.

- ❖ The perfection gained from the testing should “complete” the believer.
- ❖ For a believer to be “perfect and entire, wanting nothing,” is to be well-rounded, deficient in nothing (like a decathlon athlete proficient in 10 different track-and-field events.)

Conclusion

Josh. 24:15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, **choose you this day whom ye will serve**; whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but **as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**

Hos. 10:12 Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for **it is time to seek the LORD**, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.

MAKE A DECISION!