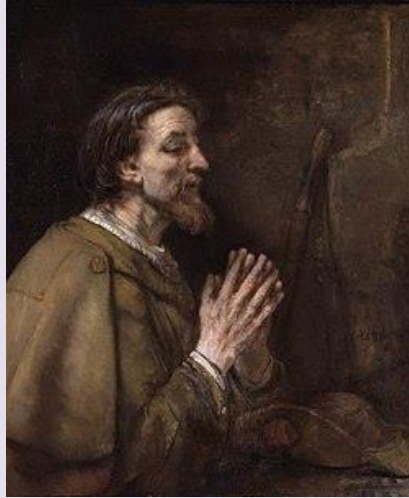


## FATHER OF LIGHTS ( Book of James )



James son of Zebedee

**“Every good gift comes down from above... from the Father of Lights”** James 1 v 17

### INTRODUCTION

We present in these pages a commentary on the Book of James. James has been deeply misunderstood and unappreciated by church authorities from the Jerusalem apostles to the present day. The message of James is to live a simple Christian life based on the foundation of personal communion with God the Father. Organized religion is nowhere found in this letter.

The Book of James is full of prophecy. We are in the Last Days. James provides us with specific signs of the times to look for in the Last Days so we can be certain **‘the Coming of the Lord is at hand’**.

### AUTHORSHIP

James son of Zebedee, brother of John, followed Jesus from the earliest days of His ministry. As might be expected from a man steeped in the words of Jesus, the Book of James parallels the Sermon on the Mount in setting forth a higher standard for a life of faith. Merely keeping the Law of Moses and following traditions of religious men was rejected by James as it was by Jesus as incompatible with a spiritual life that pleased the Father. James son of Zebedee was martyred around 40 AD by Herod: a murder that **“pleased the Jews”** in Jerusalem (Acts 12 v 2). Authorship of James is traditionally ascribed to another James, the chief of the apostles in Jerusalem, a staunchly religious man who never walked with Jesus even one day during His ministry. Speaking to Paul, this James enthused: **“You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the Law”** (Acts 21 v 20). This James was fanatical about obeying the Law of Moses and did not raise the ire of Jerusalem Jews. This James was a natural brother of Jesus, another son of Mary. Jesus had no time for him (Matt. 12 v 46-50).

## AUDIENCE

Was the Book of James written to Jews, as many modern commentators suppose? (Hint: James is a letter written in Greek.) No. The Book of James is written to us, Gentile believers:

**“...to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad”** (Jas 1 v 1)

Jews present in the Holy Land in the time James were from the tribe of Judah, or priests and Levites. They descended from those who returned from captivity in Babylon (Neh 7 v 6). Long before that the other ten tribes had been carried off by the Assyrians. By the time of James they didn't exist.

It is clear James is writing to twelve tribes other than the descendants of Jacob. After the Cross, the Spirit departed from the Temple in Jerusalem. God was no longer dealing with Jews as a people to carry His testimony. Jesus commanded his Gospel be preached in all the world and to every creature. The message of salvation spread West to Greek and Roman lands. Christianity was adopted by nations across Europe. Christianity spread further West to North and South America. These nations and people groups became the new spiritual 'twelve tribes'<sup>1</sup>. Eventually faith in Christ declined in the West to the point that society became secular and rejected the council of God in public affairs.

We conclude, amazingly, the Book of James is written to Gentiles, more specifically, to Gentile believers in the Last Days: pilgrims who are scattered, strangers and foreigners in Christ rejecting lands.

## THE LAW OF LIBERTY

**“He who looks into the perfect Law of Liberty and continues in it – he is blessed ...”** (Jas 1 v 25)

The Law of Moses is by no means the 'Law of Liberty' James is referring to here. The Law of Moses served as a legal prison until the Messiah came. It was a yoke of bondage.

**“the Law says to those under the Law that every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty before God... for by the Law is the knowledge of sin”** (Romans 3 v 19-20)

But Messiah came and provided a sacrifice on the Cross for forgiveness of sin by Grace through faith. Believers in Christ no longer have religious obligations according to the Law of Moses or any other ecclesiastical regulations:

**“Stand fast then in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage”** (Galatians 5 v 1)

If so, what are the expectations and obligations of believers in Christ? How can we glorify the Lord? This is the precise question the Book of James addresses.

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<sup>1</sup> We have papers addressing the identity of the prophetic 'twelve tribes' on the PROPHECY page of our website.

## MY WORDS WILL NOT PASS AWAY

Jesus said “**Heaven and Earth will pass away. My Words will not pass away.**” (Matt 24 v 35)

The commands Jesus spoke to His disciples, e.g. Sermon on the Mount, are the obligations and expectations of His believers forever. They applied before the Cross. They apply after the Cross. They will apply when Christ returns. They will apply after Heaven and Earth pass away.

## AT STAKE ARE ETERNAL REWARDS

Whether a follower of Christ is faithful to the Law of Liberty in this life or not, eternal punishment is never a consequence for us. The virtue of the blood of Christ on the Cross has taken it away:

“**There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus**” (Romans 8 v 1)

That said, the working out of faith in the believer in this life will either be to the glory of God the Father or to His disgrace. A great host of angels are witnesses of all our words and deeds.

When we meet the LORD in the air at the Rapture we will be brought before Him to receive recognition and reward for our service in this life after we believed:

“**There is one glory of the Sun, another glory of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars; for one Star differs from another Star in glory. So also in the resurrection of the dead...**” (1 Cor 15 v 41)

If we put the shine into Jesus, Jesus will put the shine into us!

## JAMES IS THE EPISTLE FOR BELIEVERS IN THE LAST DAYS

The End of the Age of Grace will bring spiritual decay. James speaks of evils that fall on believers whose lives disgrace the Father at this time. James also clarifies God’s will in the context of events he prophesies in the Last Days. It is a stark picture in line with the warning to the seventh and last Church of Revelations:

“**I know your works that you are neither hot nor cold... because you are lukewarm... I will vomit you out of my mouth. Because you say ‘I am wealthy and have need of nothing – and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked – I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire that you may be rich... As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten... To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne...**” (Rev 3 v 14-22)

## RICH OPPRESSOR

James is the 59<sup>th</sup> Book of the Bible. Bible Number 59 means ‘Rich Oppressor’. Hoarding wealth in a time of widespread poverty is disgrace to the Father. The suffering of the saints who obey the commands of Jesus is ‘**gold refined in the fire**’ and brings glory to the Father. This is the central theme of James.

## JAMES CHAPTER 1

### (Verses 1 – 5) Blessedness of the Saints

*1 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.*

*9 Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation,*

*10 but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away.*

*11 For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.*

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus emphasized the blessing of those who faithfully follow Him (Matt. 5 v 3-12) no matter what the trials. James emphasizes the words of Christ to His disciples apply to us also.

Jews who followed Jesus instantly became 'poor'. They were pariahs in the Jewish culture. Their social standing in Jewish society was rock bottom. They were cut off from their families as heretics. They experienced difficulty trading and making a living.

Greeks and Romans who followed Jesus instantly became 'poor'. They were pariahs among the heathen. They no longer made sacrifices to local gods nor participated in festivals which glorified them. The dominant pagan culture vilified them and persecuted them.

Hebrews tells us that Jesus weighed the costs of living for the glory of the Father: "Look unto Jesus... who for the joy set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb 12 v 2)

### (Verses 6 – 11) Misery and Humiliation of the Doubters

Some believers in Jesus lived double lives. They kept their faith a secret and fully participated in high society as if to enjoy the best of both worlds. An example is Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin, the highest court of the Jews, who came to Jesus secretly.

It is not possible to enjoy the best of both worlds. "Let not that man suppose he will receive anything from the Lord" (v 7). Eternity is a long time. Hypocrites will not receive eternal rewards. Let that sink in.

If in your time on earth you bring disgrace to the Father, what do you expect will be your eternal reward? Nothing says James.

The 'rich' believers in this life will not prosper. Like Job, they will experience loss of all the worldly things they so greedily accumulate. In the process their faith will be perfected and they will come through their trials with glory to the Father and restoration of their reputation.

Jude puts it like this: 'others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating the garment defiled by the flesh' (v 23)

## JAMES CHAPTER 1

### (Verses 12) The Crown of Life

James is explicit in describing what the eternal reward will be for the saints who endure temptation in the Last Days: the Crown of Life.

In sacred art saints are portrayed with a glowing halo. This is not artistic imagination or invention. We who doggedly follow Jesus to the end of our days will receive eternal glory for our troubles.

Jesus has sat down at the right hand of the Majesty. Jesus is Emperor of the Universe. Saints in the Last Days who glorify the Father will rise to the status of royal princes who rule and reign with Him.

### (Verses 13 - 16) Spiritual Death in Last Days

In the Parable of the Sower Jesus described different kinds of soil onto which the precious Seed of the Word fell: (Luke 8)

*“Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.”* (v 12)

*“But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away.”* (v 13)

*“Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.”* (v 14)

Is it possible for Satan to deceive hearers of the Word into discarding the articles of our precious faith? Yes!

Is it possible for believers to initially experience a joyful conversion but later to fall away from the faith (stop following Jesus)? Yes!

Is it possible to become so engrossed in cares, riches, and pleasures of life a believer never reaches spiritual maturity? Yes!

Is it possible for a believer in Jesus to lose their salvation? No!

But they can lose their faith and become spiritually ‘dead’ – unresponsive and uncommunicative to the Holy Spirit.

*12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

*13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.*

*14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.*

*15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.*

*16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.*

## JAMES CHAPTER 1

(Verse 17 – 21) The Way, The Truth, The Life

*17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.*

*18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of His creatures.*

*19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;*

*20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.*

*21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.*

There is a terrible struggle between Good and Evil in the Universe. A believer will not succeed in the pilgrimage of faith unless they establish and maintain a direct relationship and personal communion with God the Father through faith in Jesus Christ.

God is the 'Father of Lights'. God is the author and finisher of our faith. God is our Father – he 'brought us forth'. As Father, in Biblical culture, God has final authority in the family. God determines our portion of inheritance and our blessing in eternity.

Christendom has become perverted by religions of men. These all usurp the Devine prerogative and draw believers away from direct communion with the Father into subservience to 'priests' and 'shepherds' on earth.

Sadly, believers are drawn to man's religion like moths to a flame. It is hypocrisy: a means to obtain social status and worldly privilege. But Christ was crucified outside the city. All pilgrims of the faith are invited to commune with Him there:

**"Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come."** (Heb 13 v 12-13)

Man's Religion is a faith killer. Believers ensnared in religion and subservient to religious custom resist the Holy Spirit. Inevitably it leads to spiritual death and loss of eternal rewards.

Man's Religion is a persecutor of the saints. Try to follow Jesus as a Free Christian, without loyalty to any of the Christian assemblies in town that gather around paid pastors and priests, and feel the fury of their wrath. Truly they will hate you with a passion.

## JAMES CHAPTER 1

### (Verse 22 – 25) Doers of the Word

*22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

*23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;*

*24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.*

*25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.*

*26 If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless.*

*27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.*

Disciples don't need a pastor. We can read the Words of Jesus for ourselves: we can "**look into the perfect Law of Liberty**" (v 25)

As we meditate on the Word of Jesus, the Holy Spirit enlivens our hearts to instruct us how to glorify the Father. We obey. This is what it means to be spiritually alive.

Once a week religious folk will go to an assembly, hear the Word, then immediately forget it.

Not so with us. As we continue in our spiritual walk our faith grows stronger, our knowledge of the Lord grows deeper, our wisdom more weighty, and our acts of charity more practical.

The Christian life in a nutshell: our devotion is private, we pray to the Father in our closet, we unobtrusively meet with other Free Christians in our homes. The scene is low key and quiet not loud, boisterous, and public as we see in the popular religious settings.

In our gatherings there are extended times of quiet contemplation and prayer. We grant room for the Holy Spirit to minister.

Once instructed and uplifted we go into the world to live the Christian life with humility, grace, longsuffering, and patience.

God is not looking for talkers. God is looking for doers who will be His hands and His feet reaching out to suffering humanity.

In the Last Days what do we see? In the rich, historically Christian nations, we see poor and blighted migrants flooding the borders. They flee war, famine, and anarchy. They are homeless, defenseless, and helpless. We see a perpetual shortage of foster parents. We see squalid homeless tent camps in our cities. In distant lands millions have lost their homes to strong earthquakes, floods, and famines. Prophecy: '**orphans and widows**' everywhere!

God does not ask us merely to give to charities that help the poor. God says '**visit orphans and widows in their trouble**'. Our calling is to be on the front line of the ministry. God will bless us for this.



## JAMES CHAPTER 2

### (Verse 1 – 9) Partiality

Post-Christian Western society has anchored its culture in the love of money. James has prophetically zeroed in on the besetting sin of the Last Days.

The level of wealth in the world today is unprecedented in the history of the world. The standard of living of large portions of Western society are beyond the wildest imagination of an early Christian writer. Imagine the ability to board a plane and fly from Jerusalem to Rome! Shop there and fly back in the same day!

Pleasure gratification and pursuit of wealth is socially approved in the West. Poverty is deemed a disgrace and a social sin.

The poor are blotches on our streets, blights in our public spaces, drains on our civic infrastructure. They pay few taxes and consume little. Society deems them to be worthless to the general good.

The poor are preyed upon by drug hustlers and banished to the most dangerous neighborhoods with the fewest amenities. Without transportation they discover their food choices are low quality processed products, not fit for promoting health.

Poor diet and stress lead to chronic diseases, obesity, and mental health breakdown. Narcotics, alcohol, and cigarettes pile more misery on the poor. They are trapped in addiction.

The so-called Christian churches are full of the people steeped in Western culture. Even pastors and priests constantly demand money from the laity to fuel their religious enterprise.

Mistreatment of poor is a disgrace to the Father according to the **“Royal Law of Scripture: ‘... Love Your Neighbor as Yourself’**”. It happens to be an Old Testament verse, but Jesus taught it to us, so it has passed from the Law of Moses and become God’s will for the followers of Jesus. We must love all equally: rich or poor.

Followers of Jesus have no obligation to the Law of Moses. Our obligation is to the commands of Jesus. Be careful to make the distinction. We live only to glorify the Father.

*1 My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality.*

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

*3 and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool,"*

*4 have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?*

*5 Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?*

*6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts?*

*7 Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?*

*8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;*

*9 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.*



## JAMES CHAPTER 2

### (Verse 10 – 12) The Law of Liberty

James is using an example from the Law of Moses to make a point that law keepers are required to obey all the laws. As followers of Jesus it is our duty to keep all the commands of Jesus.

The Law of Moses was given to the Jews to govern their walk with God until Messiah was crucified. It is not the rule for Christians.

Jesus said his disciples have a higher duty than the Law of Moses:

*“For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”* (Matt 5 v 20)

*“You heard it said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’”* (Matt 5 v 21)

*“But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.”* (Matt 5 v 22 a)

It is called ‘the Law of Liberty’ because our salvation is based on the virtue of Christ’s death on the Cross. We are free of religious duty. Out of gratefulness for God’s gift of eternal life we show appreciation by seeking to obey Christ’s commands and thereby glorify the Father. There is no compulsion. We are free. However for eternal reward the Law of Liberty will be our judge.

### (Verse 13 – 19) Faith Without Works is Dead

The commands of Christ are practical. For example, if we should be angry with our brother we are compelled to forgive our brother. If our brother has something against us we are compelled to make restitution and reconcile with him. If our brother is naked or hungry we are compelled to provide his needs. James stresses this.

Accepting Jesus as Savior is saving faith. Accepting Jesus as Lord is living faith. If we obey Him, we live in Him. If we stop obeying Him the Spirit will woo us to return to the Way. If we resist the Spirit, He will leave us alone. Without the Spirit we have no living faith. We are spiritually ‘dead’ even though we are saved. The Last Days will overflow with dead Christians - then the End will come.

*10 For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.*

*11 For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.*

*12 So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.*

*13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.*

*14 What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?*

*15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food,*

*16 and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?*

*17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

*18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.*

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

## JAMES CHAPTER 2

### (Verse 20 – 24) Faith of Abraham

James supports his thesis by the example of Abraham's sacrifice of his son Isaac. Here is a man with living faith obeying the Holy Spirit even if following the commandment comes at great personal cost.

Disciples in the Last Days will not consider Abraham's sacrifice that unusual. Haven't we all had to make sacrifices to follow Jesus?

*"And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life."* (Matt 19 v 29)

Every saint who leaves a house of religion to worship the Lord in the desert will experience the trials such a decision brings with it.

James writes *"Scripture was fulfilled"*. The legal standing of righteousness which Abraham obtained when he believed bore fruit in the living faith of Abraham. His heart passion was to glorify God. At a moment's notice he obeyed a hard task as the Spirit led him.

### (Verse 25 – 26) Faith of Rahab

Rahab feared the LORD. She believed before the spies arrived:

*"I know that the LORD had given you the land..."* (Josh 2 v 1)

*"dried up the Red Sea... when you came out of Egypt..."* (Josh 2 v 9)

*"He is God in Heaven above and on the Earth beneath"* (Josh 2 v 11)

Rahab's faith granted her favor and saving grace with the LORD. She escaped death from the destruction of Jericho because of it.

Rahab's heroic obedience to hide the spies and guide them to safety won her eternal reward. Her saving faith was justified, or manifested, by her living faith.

Hebrews supports James in this: *"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* (Heb 11 v 1)

James is wary of hypocrisy. Faith that is not lived out is Faith that is denied. Faith that is lived out is Faith that is verified (or justified).

*20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

*21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?*

*22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?*

*23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.*

*24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.*

*25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?*

*26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

## JAMES CHAPTER 3

(Verse 1 – 3) Mass Delusion in the Last Days

James could not have anticipated how the internet and telecommunications have allowed news, opinion, propaganda, and hate speech to be published and consumed everywhere instantly.

Celebrities have millions of followers on social media. They serve as pilots of public opinion: **'we put [electronic] bits in horses' mouths that they [the masses] may obey us'**. (v 3)

But public opinion is fickle and vengeful. If anyone says the wrong word they are torched and all their influence evaporates:

**'...knowing that we receive a stricter judgment'** (v 1)

(Verse 4 – 8) Mass Destruction in the Last Days

Prophetic signs tell us we are in the Last Days.

Trading companies are colossal and span the whole earth:

**'Look also at ships... they are so large...'** (v 4)

Global warming makes trees tinder dry and easily ignited:

**'See how great a forest a little fire kindles!'** (v 5)

Human obsession with physical passions, sex, pornography:

**'a fire, a world of iniquity... it defiles the whole body...'** (v 6 a)

Unhindered human appetites induce climate change:

**'...and sets on fire the course of nature'** (v 6 b)

With natural disasters the space for wildlife shrinks to nothing:

**'Every kind of beast, bird, reptile and sea creature is tamed...'** (v 7)

Pestilences and toxins fill our environment:

**'...unruly evil, full of deadly poison'** (v 8)

*1 My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.*

*2 For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.*

*3 Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body.*

*4 Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires.*

*5 Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!*

*6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.*

*7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind.*

*8 But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*

## JAMES CHAPTER 3

### (Verse 9 – 11) Dismal Leadership in the Last Days

James laments the deficiency of leaders who might guide people in the Last Days. They uphold the historic Christian faith:

*'...bless our God and Father'* (v 9 a)

...but they can't play nice with others:

*'curse men who have been made in the similitude of God'* (v 9 b)

Today leaders who uphold traditional family values and the worship of God act like the Devil. They mistreat and abuse everyone who varies from their viewpoint even slightly. They subvert democracy / eldership and approve of authoritarianism / pastorate.

Disciples following Jesus know better than to pay attention to them:

*'Does a spring [Prophet of God] send forth fresh and bitter?'* (v 11)

### (Verse 12 – 18) Test Every Tree By Its Fruit

In a day of Mass Delusion it will be difficult to find a godly man:

*'Who is wise and understanding among you?'* (v 13 a)

James advises us to test men by their works not their words:

*'Let him show by good conduct his works are done in the meekness of wisdom'* (v 13 b)

Men seeking to advance a faction by boasting while at the same time denigrating other factions are excluded:

*'If you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts do not boast and lie against the truth'* (v 14)

Disciples should seek out godly men as examples of the faith:

*'...pure, peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy'* (17)

Seek out such men. Search hard because they aren't the ones with ambition to gather disciples around themselves.

*9 With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God.*

*10 Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.*

*11 Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening?*

*12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.*

*13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.*

*14 But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.*

*15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.*

*16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.*

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

*18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*

## JAMES CHAPTER 4

### (Verse 1 – 3) Dead Christianity in the Last Days

The spiritual condition of the West in the Last Days is rock bottom.

Official churches are in decline and widely unpopular. The interest of the remnant of saints has moved from spiritual matters to worldly matters and carnal pursuits. They are deeply discontented.

Politics is a blood sport. Extremism is the norm. The streets are increasingly violent with civil protests and counter-demonstrations clashing. The remnant of Christianity is radicalizing.

### (Verse 4 – 10) Raising the Dead in the Last Days

James' advice on renewing the Faith:

- (1) Detach from Loving the World
- (2) Re-attach to Loving the LORD
- (3) Detach from Loyalty to Man's Religion
- (4) Re-attach to Personal Devotion with the LORD
- (5) Put away Personal Ambition in this Life
- (6) Resist the Temptation to Serve Former Lusts and Loves
- (7) Endure the Testing of your Faith
- (8) Lament the Loss of Eternal Rewards from Wasted Years
- (9) Wait Patiently for the Spirit to Restore Your Soul

There is no quick way to learn discipline and live a Life of Faith pleasing to God, one that consistently glorifies the Father.

Even the Lord himself was tested by the Devil forty days and forty nights in the wilderness. Growth in the faith is a long process.

We can expect that once we set our hearts on glorifying the Father our path will be strewn with pitfalls, snares, and wicked schemes.

Gradually our ears will become more open to the Spirit, our hearts less cluttered by distractions, our hands more familiar with practical ministry to others, our spirits filled with joy of the Lord.

We will witness victories, even miracles, as God works alongside us His wonderful works to perform. Our Living Faith will re-establish and others will see our life and be encouraged to follow the Way.

*1 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?*

*2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.*

*3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

*4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

*5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?*

*6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."*

*7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*

*8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*

*9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.*

*10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.*

## JAMES CHAPTER 4

### (Verse 11 – 12) One Lawgiver and Judge

Jesus is Lord. This is at the heart of the soul of a Disciple.

James described himself as ‘**bondservant of Jesus Christ**’. A bondservant is personally accountable to his Master. It matters nothing what others think of him. It matters nothing what he might think of the other bondservants.

He seeks to know the will of the Master. Of course this requires meditation in God’s Word and reflection on the viewpoint of other Disciples. Two can’t walk together unless they agree. Dialogue and sharing are needed so mutual understanding can be reached and fruitful ministry can be arranged to the glory of the Father.

In the event of dispute and disagreement the matter returns to God’s hands. There is no place for judgment of others. Joint ministry might have to be suspended for a time.

### (Verse 13 – 18) Temptation of Ambition

James has already made it clear that accumulation of wealth is not appropriate at a time when the needs of the poor are so great.

However, practicality dictates that believers dedicate some of their time to earning a living so they can provide for their own needs and have enough time and resources to help others.

James does not condemn buying and selling for a profit. Selling services and trading goods is a necessity that permits workers to be productive and make a profit it so they can purchase necessities.

His warning is to reign in the temptation to formulate long term business plans. A human designed plan, whatever its form, becomes a limitation on the Holy Spirit to guide the Disciple.

Business success holds with it the risk of pride. Pride puffs up and leaks out of the heart in the form of boasting. How deceitful is the heart of man. How prone we are to the temptation of ambition.

Jesus said “**Every day has enough trouble of its own. Do not worry about tomorrow.**” (Matt 6 v 34)

*11 Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.*

*12 There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?*

*13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit";*

*14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.*

*15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."*

*16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.*

*17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.*



## JAMES CHAPTER 5

### (Verse 1 – 6) Last Days Prophecy

James provides us with more signs of the Last Days being fulfilled before our eyes in the West. America is the richest country in the West, so many of these prophecies apply to her.

**‘You rich, weep and howl... miseries are coming upon you!’ (v 1)**

Extinction of wealth is coming to the West. We have recently witnessed natural disasters sweep homes into the raging waters of swollen rivers in Europe, America, and Australia. More is on its way.

**‘Your riches are corrupted and your garments are moth-eaten’ (v 2)**

Inflation has risen to levels not seen in a generation. Supply chain issues have caused store shelves to be empty of essential goods for extended periods. Example: baby formula in the United States.

**‘Your gold and silver are corroded... will eat your flesh like fire’ (v 3)**

High cost of prescriptions and hospital stays is now a leading cause of bankruptcy in the U.S. Over 300,000 people in the U.S. died of Covid-19 because of inadequate medical insurance.

**‘The wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out...’ (v 4)**

Poor nations are devastated by climate change. Example: floods in Pakistan, famine in Africa. Workers are crying out. They have lost their fields and have no means to grow food for export to the U.S.

**‘You have lived on earth in pleasure and luxury. You have fattened your heart in the Day of Slaughter’.** (v 5)

America has 40 million people living at the poverty line or below. While the poor struggle for daily existence the rich enjoy savory delicacies and indulge in pleasures and entertainment.

**‘You have murdered the just; he does not resist you’ (v 6)**

Gun violence is spiralling upwards. Police are killing citizens in broad daylight. Mass casualty events occur daily. Victims include school children and innocent bystanders.

*1 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you!*

*2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.*

*3 Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days.*

*4 Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.*

*5 You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter.*

*6 You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.*

## JAMES CHAPTER 5

(Verse 7 – 12) The Patience of the Saints

*'See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently... until it receives the early and latter rain.'* (v 7)

The 'farmer' is Noah (Savior [Jesus]). The precious fruit of the earth are the Saints asleep in graves. Rain is judgment of the wicked. We propose 'early rain' was the destruction of (Christ rejecting) Jerusalem by the Romans and 'latter rain' will be the destruction of (Christ rejecting) Western nations by Last Days events.

*'You also be patient... the Coming of the Lord is at hand.'* (v 8)

Jesus was raised early on the third day. 2030 will mark the third prophetic 'Day' of 1,000 years since Jesus was crucified. Believers in Christ could rise from the dead to meet the Lord in our lifetime.

*'Do not grumble... Behold! The Judge is standing at the Door'* (v 9)

The 'Door' is the entrance to the sheepfold as pictured in the constellation Bootes. In this sign the Good Shepherd is standing over the prone body of Virgo, prophetic of dead Christianity. Believers are the Sheep of His Pasture who will be raised from the dead to meet the Lord and receive Judgment for eternal rewards.

*'Take the prophets, who spoke in the Name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience.'* (v 10)

Many were martyred. Blessed are they! Eternal glory awaits them.

*'You have heard of the patience of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord – the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.'* (v 11)

The Lord gives and the Lord takes away. Blessed be His Name.

*'do not swear by heaven or by earth or any other oath... let your 'Yes' be 'Yes'... your 'No' be 'No'. Lest you fall into Judgment'* (v 6)

God forbid that we take a pledge to become members of a man-made religious system and disgrace the Father in Heaven! Oh LORD may we be devoted only to You!

*7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.*

*8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.*

*9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!*

*10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience.*

*11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord-- that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.*

*12 But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes," be "Yes," and your "No," "No," lest you fall into judgment.*

## JAMES CHAPTER 5

### (Verse 13 – 16) The Body of Christ

Discipleship is a personal journey which ideally is not taken alone. Although eternal reward is judged individual by individual, the community of faith is valuable for spiritual growth and glorifies the Father. We are commanded to love one another.

Spiritual community includes prayer, singing psalms, the ministry of elders, and public testimony. All the servants of the Lord are voluntary. There are no tithes or offerings collected from the saints because a Free Christian is under no religion obligation. There is no priest or pastor in the picture. Jesus is our High Priest and every Disciple has direct access to the Father through Jesus the Son. There is no church charter or official statement of faith or any of the other trappings of Man's Religion. The Head of the Body of Christ is Jesus. We are the members of the Body of Christ and as such we belong to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, not to a religion or to a paid pastor or to a parish priest.

### (Verse 17 – 18) Example of Elijah

In the Last Days we don't find the Body of Christ expressed in spiritual community as in the time of James. We find Elijah: a spiritual man alone in a world that utterly despises him. The Promised Land has become an apocalyptic ghost town. Citizens have become the walking dead. They have been snared in Man's Religion so long they have no spiritual life. Their leaders are the Baal priests, who adore the Bull god, who grants them authority to rule over church members, subdue them and delude them.

Elijah walked with God. The prayer of Elijah was powerful and effectual. Yet without a spiritual community he was vulnerable.

Elijah called for the Baal priests to be murdered. For this sin the Holy Spirit was grieved. Without the power of the Holy Spirit Elijah retreated into a cave – fearing his enemies all around.

The message of James is for Disciples to accept suffering and trials in the horrible Last Days. Look to the example of Elijah and never radicalize. Never hate your enemies. Never resort to violence.

*13 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.*

*14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.*

*15 And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.*

*16 Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*

*17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.*

*18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.*

*19 Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back,*

*20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.*