

JAMES

An Introduction to the Book



A word cloud featuring various religious and biblical terms. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with some larger than others. The colors include shades of blue, green, purple, yellow, and red. The words are oriented in different directions, some horizontal, some vertical, and some diagonal.

brothers
faith
God
one
sisters
like
person
wisdom
deeds
world
take
mercy
coming
body
ask
know
sin
keep
without
clothes
way
comes
whole
among
Lord
evil
fire
anyone
law
show
poor
rich
even
listen
word
go
gives
away
save
good
come

INTRODUCTION BASICS

- **AUTHOR**
- **AUDIENCE**
- **PURPOSE**
- **DATE**
- **SOME TOPICS**

Author

1:1 “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ...”

But Which James?

- James son of Zebedee and brother of John
 - One of 12 disciples
 - One of Jesus' inner circle: Peter, James, and John
 - Often referred to as James the Elder

But Which James?

- James the brother of Jesus
 - Leader in the early church at Jerusalem
 - An apostle but not one of 12 disciples
 - Executed in 62 AD according to Josephus

But Which James?

- James the son of Alphaeus
 - One of 12 apostles
 - Often referred to as James the Less to distinguish him from James son of Zebedee

But Which James?

- Some consider James the Lord's brother and James son of Alphaeus to be the same person
 - Greek words may not distinguish between "brother" and "cousin"
- Others insist "son of Alphaeus" could not be the same as "brother of Jesus"

But Which James

- No one identifies James Son of Zebedee as the author
 - First of apostles to be martyred, AD 44 (Acts 12:1-2)

But Which James

- That leaves James Son of Alphaeus or James the Lord's Brother
- If they are the same person we could identify the author with either name
- If they are two different people most would identify the author with James the Lord's Brother

AUTHOR: James the Lord's Brother

- Identified as apostle
- Mentioned repeatedly in Paul's epistles
- Appears to be a person of authority in early church in Jerusalem

AUDIENCE

1:1 “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,
to the twelve tribes scattered among the nations.
Greetings.”

AUDIENCE

- “Twelve tribes scattered among the nations”
- Twelve Tribes = Jews
- Scattered among the nations = result of persecution
- READ Acts 8:1-3
- Jewish people persecuted by Jewish leaders and Romans because of their faith in Jesus

PURPOSE

- Patience in difficulties (scattered abroad)
- Ethical issues such as
 - Wealthy - poor
 - Status
 - Hypocrisy

PURPOSE

Interesting Considerations

- Judaism to Christianity transition
 - Not a word
- Paul's doctrinal statements
 - Writes as if these were not yet available in writing
- Teachings of Jesus
 - No formal quotations
 - But considered to have more than any other epistle

DATE

- No historical events or names of people included in the epistle of James -- thus difficult to accurately date
- Late enough that James was well established as the leader of the “mother” church at Jerusalem -- assumes hearers know him as just James

DATE

- Some relevant dates
 - 34 AD Persecution of church by Saul (Acts 7-8)
 - 44 AD Herod's persecution & execution of James son of Zebedee (Acts 12)
 - 49 AD Jerusalem Council (Acts 15)
 - 62 AD Execution of James according to Josephus

DATE

- I like the notion that it was between 44 AD and 62 AD but probably closer to 44 AD

SOME TOPICS

- Trials
- Temptations
- Faith
- Works
- Doing
- The Tongue
- Favoritism

SOME TOPICS

- Judgment
- Wisdom
- The World
- Arrogance
- Wealth
- Patience
- Healing

QUESTIONS and/or COMMENTS

NEXT WEEK

- READ James 1 and 5
- Focus on 1:2-4, 1:12-15, 5:7-12
- Trials, Temptations, Patience
- Each week look for parallels with Jesus' teachings; especially Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5