

THE LETTER OF JAMES

General Information: “Most magazine articles and newspaper columns proceed from point A to point B to point C to conclusion D. Our way of thinking, of reasoning from premises to conclusions, has come down to us from the ancient Greeks. It is typically Western in approach. As we read the Holy Scriptures, most of us tend to assume the writer will take this approach. Most of the holy writers came out of an Eastern, specifically Jewish, culture. Their reasoning was often different than what we are used to. In James, the brother of Jesus weaves doctrine and practice together. In Scripture doctrine and life-style are never divided by any sharp line. As a result, we see the intricate connections between “believing right” and “doing right.” Despite what false teachers have done, James is not creating new doctrine. Everything he writes to them in this letter is, or should be, familiar. It is the same

truth they have always heard from him. The truth has not changed, nor have the implications of that truth for their daily lives” (L. Study Bible, p. 2171).

READ AND DISCUSS EACH VERSE AND TRANSLATION ALONG WITH THE “ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.”

(Additional Translations may be read also, use them as you would a commentary to help gain understanding).

**JAMES CHAPTER 1
VERSE 1**

>>>> READ THE FOLLOWING: JAS 1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. (King James Version)

[1] From James (*the Lord's brother*), a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to God's people who are scattered everywhere (*because of persecution*), greetings. (TCV, NCV)

Addition Information: **James** is the brother of Jesus (Mk. 6:3; Acts 15:13; Gal. 1:19). James at first rejected Jesus as the Christ and Messiah but later believed on Him (Jn. 7:5; 1 Cor. 15:7). He became a key leader at the church of Jerusalem being called one of the "pillars" along with Peter and John (Acts 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 2:9). According to Josephus a first century Jewish historian, James was martyred in A.D. 62. The Letter of James can be dated A.D. 44-49, making it the earliest written book of the New Testament.

To the 12 tribes scattered abroad. James is saying that the Lord's followers are like the 12 tribes of Israel that were scattered everywhere by their enemies, probably due to the persecution under Herod Agrippa 1 (Acts 12, A.D. 44).

1. Share your insights from James 1:1 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice). <<<<< **STOP AND DISCUSS.**

**JAMES CHAPTER 1
VERSES 2-4**

[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. (KJV)

[2] My brothers, whatever trials and trouble you have to suffer, you should be happy and joyous, **[3]** for you know your faith is being put to a test. When this happens it will produce steadfastness (the strength to continue). **[4]** You must persevere to the very end so that you may be strong in character, men of integrity, and ready for anything. (TCV, TTNT, RSV, NLT)

Additional Information: Failure to persevere in the Christian faith means that one has “wandered away from the truth,” and requires being saved from death (See James 5:19-20).

2. Share your insights from James 1:2-4 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

3. Do you agree with the “additional information” provided on verses 2-4, why or why not? See James 5:19-20.

JAMES CHAPTER 1 VERSES 5-8

[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. (KJV)

[5] If any of you is deficient, coming short of wisdom, you should ask God for it.

God will give it generously and will never scold you for asking. **[6]** But let him ask with confidence, with never a doubt, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. **[7]** Such a man should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. **[8]** A man of two minds, divided in interest, is unstable in all he does. (TCV, TNTL, SE, JB)

Additional Information: The Greek translates, “Do not waver or doubt,” but the sense here is of divided interest between God and the world.

4.. Share your insights from James 1:5-8 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

JAMES CHAPTER 1 VERSES 9-11

[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. (KJV)

[9] The poor follower of Christ, who doesn't amount to much in this world should rejoice, he has been lifted to a high position (into God's family, through Christ). **[10-11]** The rich should rejoice when he loses his wealth: because like a flower he will soon disappear and pass from this life (that is his destined end). Just as surely will the rich and all his ways fall into decline and decay. (TCV, LD)

Additional Information: In the book of James the rich and the poor are recurring themes (Jas. 2:1-9, 14-16; 5:1-6). James does not promise riches to the righteous poor but announces a future reversal in the kingdom of God (See James 2:5; Luke 16:25).

5. Share your insights from James 1:9-11 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

6. Do you agree with the “additional information” provided on verses 9-11, why or why not? Read and discuss James 2:5 and Luke 16:25.

**JAMES CHAPTER 1
VERSES 12-16**

[12] Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. [13] Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: [14] But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. [15] Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. [16] Do not err, my beloved brethren. (KJV)

[12] God blesses the man who perseveres under trial and temptation. When

he has stood the test and still continues strong, he will receive the life (the victor's crown), that God has promised those who love Him. **[13]** When people are tempted, they should never say, "God is tempting me." God can never be tempted with evil, and He never tempts anyone else. **[14]** Every person is tempted when drawn away of their own desires of the flesh and mind. These evil desires lead us away and trap us. **[15]** When people yield to evil desire, conception takes place, what is brought forth is sin. When sin has finished its evil work (running its course) the result is death (temporal or eternal). **[16]** Do not be deceived my beloved brethren. (NIV, LD, NLT, TCV)

Additional Information: (v. 12) The Greek text has "the crown of life." In ancient times an athlete who had won a race was given a crown of flowers as a sign of victory. The "crown of life" is a symbol of eternal life with God.

(v. 15) When lust conceives, it gives birth to sin (personified as an infant). When the infant (sin) grows to

maturity, it gives birth to death, in opposition to the crown of (eternal life) found in verse 12.

7. Share your insights from James 1:12-16 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

JAMES CHAPTER 1 VERSES 17-18

[17] Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

[18] Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. (KJV)

[17] It is only good and perfect gifts that come from above. They proceed from the Father, Creator of the sun, moon, and stars (the source of all light). He is always the same with no shadow of change. **[18]** It was His deliberate plan that we should be born anew by

the word of truth. He did this so that we might become, a kind of firstfruits, the first specimens of a new creation. (TNTL, TCV, NCV, Phil)

8. Share your insights from James 1:17-18 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

**JAMES CHAPTER 1
VERSES 19-21**

[19] Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: [20] For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. [21] Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. (KJV)

[19] My dear friends, we must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. **[20]** Man's anger does not produce the righteousness of God. **[21]**

Therefore, put aside all that is filthy and wicked in your lives, and humbly receive the word which God has planted in your hearts, which is able to save your souls. (CEV,TCV)

9. Share your insights from James 1:19-21 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choosing).

**JAMES CHAPTER 1
VERSES 22-25**

[22] But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

[23] For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: [24] For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. [25] But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but

a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. (KJV)

[22] Obey God's Word! Don't be fooled by just listening to it. (It is a message to obey, and not just listen to). **[23]** Anyone who listens to the word but does not practice it is like a man looking in a mirror but does nothing to improve his appearance. **[24]** He sees himself, walks away, and forgets what he looks like. **[25]** But whosoever looks into God's perfect principles (law) that sets us free, and abides by it, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it – this man will be blessed in what he does. (CEV, NLT, TCV)

Additional Information: The public reading of scriptures was an important part of Jewish and New Testament Christian worship (See Col. 4:16; 1 Th. 5:27; 1 Tim. 4:13-16). Since many people could not read and copies of the Bible were not easily available, they listened to the public readings of scripture in their churches. James in his letter seems to be reflecting on the many teachings of Jesus. For example see Matt. 7:24-27 and Luke 6:46-49.

10. Share your insights from James 1:22-25 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choosing).

11. Do these verses (vv.22-25) in any way relate to the previous verses (vv. 19-21)?

12. In what way is James 1:22-25 similar to the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 7:24-27 and Luke 6:46-49?

**JAMES CHAPTER 1
VERSES 26-27**

[26] If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. [27] Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. (KJV)

[26] If any one among you gives the impression of being a God fearing worshiper of God but doesn't control his tongue, he deceives his own heart, this man's religion isn't worth much. (His mouth exposes his heart, and his religion is worthless). **[27]** Religion which is genuine and undefiled before God the Father is this: to care for the orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself uncontaminated by the world. (KJVP, TCV)

13. Share your insights from James 1:26-27 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

JAMES CHAPTER 2 VERSES 1-7

JAS 2:1 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. [2] For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there

come in also a poor man in vile raiment; [3] And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: [4] Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? [5] Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? [6] But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? [7] Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? (KJV)

[1] My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, never make distinctions between classes of people (such as the rich and the poor) or think some people are more important than others by showing favoritism. **[2]** For instance, if someone comes

into your congregation with expensive jewelry and fine clothes and there also comes in a poor man wearing dirty or worn-out clothes: **[3]** You must not pay special attention to the one wearing fine clothes by saying “Sit here in a good place,” and say to the poor man, “Stand over there, or sit on the floor.” **[4]** Have you not discriminated by having evil thoughts that decide that one person is better than another? **[5]** Listen to me, dear brothers: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promised to them that love Him? **[6]** But you have looked down upon and treat with contempt those that are poor. Isn't it the rich who oppress you and take you to court? **[7]** Are they not the ones who mock the noble name of our God, the God who called you? (TCV, CEV, NCV)

14. Share your insights from James 2:1-7 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

**JAMES CHAPTER 2
VERSES 8-11**

[8] If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: [9] But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. [10] For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. [11] For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. (KJV)

[8] The right thing to do is to keep the supreme law of the King found in scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18). **[9]** But you are breaking the law of the Lord when you show partiality, you are sinning

and are shown by the law to be transgressors. **[10]** The person who keeps every law of God, but makes just one slip, is as guilty of being a law breaker as the person who has broken every law. **[11]** For the God who said, “Thou shall not commit adultery” (Ex. 20:14) also said, “Thou shall not murder” (Ex. 20:13). If you stay clear of adultery but murder a man you still have broken God’s law and are liable to all its penalties. (JB,TCV, KJVP)

15. Share your insights from James 2:8-11 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

16. What form of law are we under? Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 9:20-22.

JAMES CHAPTER 2 VERSES 12-13

[12] So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. [13]

For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shown no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment. (KJV)

[12] You will be judged on whether or not you are doing what Christ wants you to. So watch what you do and what you think, so whenever you speak, or whatever you do, remember that you will be judged by the law of love, the law that set you free. **[13]** For there will be no mercy to those who have shown no mercy. But if you have been merciful, then God's mercy toward you will win out over his judgment against you. The man who makes no allowances for others will find none made for him. (LB, NLT, Phil)

17. Share your insights from James 2:12-13 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

18. In verses 12-13 James correlates divine mercy with human mercy. See Matt.6:14-15 and Eph. 4:32 and then discuss.

**JAMES CHAPTER 2
VERSES 14-17**

[14] What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? [15] If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, [16] And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? [17] Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. (KJV)

[14] Dear brothers and sisters, what's the use of saying you have faith if you don't prove it by your actions? If people say they have faith, but do nothing, their faith is worth nothing. That kind of faith can't save anyone. **[15]** Suppose a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, **[16]** you shouldn't just say, "I hope all goes well for you. I hope you will be warm and have plenty to

eat." What good is it to say this, unless you do something to help? **[17]** So you see, it isn't enough just to have faith. You must also do good to prove that you have it. Faith that doesn't show itself by good works is no faith at all-it is dead and useless. Isn't it obvious that God-talk without God-acts is outrageous nonsense? (NLT, NCV, NASV, CEV, LB, TM)

19. Share your insights from James 2:14-17 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

20. Both James and the Apostle Paul ask for evidence of a person's faith. Read James 2:17 and Acts 26:19-20 and discuss this among your group.

JAMES CHAPTER 2 VERSES 18-20

[18] Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by

my works. [19] Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. [20] But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? (KJV)

[18] Suppose someone disagrees and says, "It is possible to have faith without doing kind deeds." I would answer, "Prove that you have faith without doing kind deeds, and I will prove that I have faith by doing them. One person has faith, another has actions. Show me how anyone can have faith without actions. I will show you my faith by my actions." **[19]** You believe that God is one; you do well. So do the demons believe and shudder [in terror and horror such as make a man's hair stand on end and contract the surface of his skin]! **[20]** You foolish person! Must you be shown that faith that does nothing is worth nothing? (CEV, TEV, AMP, NCV)

21. Share your insights from James 2:18-20 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

**JAMES CHAPTER 2
VERSES 21-24**

[21] Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? [22] Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? [23] And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. [24] Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. (KJV)

[21] Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? Wasn't it his action which really justified him in God's sight when his faith led him to offer his son Isaac on

the altar? **[22]** You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; He proved that his faith was real by what he did. The works are “works of faith.” **[23]** The full meaning of "believe" in the Scripture sentence, "Abraham believed God and was set right with God," includes his action. It's that mesh of believing and acting that got Abraham named "God's friend." **[24]** Is it not evident that a person is made right with God not by a barren faith but by faith fruitful in works? (NIV, Phi, NASV, CEV, TM)

22. Share your insights from James 2:21-24 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

23. Abraham was not justified by his actions alone; instead, his faith and his actions worked together. This describes the full scope of Abraham's faithful response to God throughout his life (Gen. 12:1-4; 18:1-27). Though some have thought that this teaching contradicts what Paul taught, it does not. Paul does not speak

against good works, but about trying to receive forgiveness of sins by good works (Rom. 3:28; Gal. 2:16). (NLT Study Bible, pgs. 2113-2114). **James emphasizes the nature of faith as a relationship of undivided loyalty** See James 1:5-8; 4:4; John 15:15, then discuss these scriptures.

JAMES CHAPTER 2 VERSES 25-26

[25] Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? [26] For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. (KJV)

[25] The same with Rahab, the Jericho harlot. Wasn't her action in hiding God's spies and helping them escape — that seamless unity of believing and doing — what counted with God? **[26]** The very moment you separate body and spirit, you end up with a corpse.

Separate faith and works and you get the same thing: a corpse. (TM)

24. Share your insights from James 2:25-26 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

25. James gives the relation between faith and works in the story of Rahab found in Joshua chapters 2 and 6. **Rahab's faith found expression in two things that she did.** First, when Joshua sent two men ahead of his army into Jericho, Rahab received these men into her home, hid them, and enabled them to escape again. In doing this, Rahab risked her own life. Later, in order to claim God's protection upon her home and family, she hung a line of scarlet from her window, to distinguish her house from all the others. As a result of these two acts, her house and family were saved from the destruction that came upon Jericho. **What lessons do we learn from this, if we profess faith in Christ?**

**JAMES CHAPTER 3
VERSES 1-6**

JAS 3:1 My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater

condemnation. [2] For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. [3] Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. [4] Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. [5] Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! [6] And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. (KJV)

[1] My Christian brothers, not many of you should become teachers. If we do wrong, it will be held against us more than other people who are not teachers. [2] We all make

mistakes, especially in our conversation. If people never said anything wrong, they would be perfect and able to control their entire selves. [3] We put bits into the mouths of horses, so that we can make them obey us. When we control their mouths, we can control their whole body. [4] Also a ship is very big, and it is pushed by strong winds. But a very small rudder controls that big ship, making it go on whatever course the helmsman chooses. [5] So the tongue is a small organ and can talk big. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. [6] The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person. It can turn the entire course of your life into a blazing flame of destruction, for it is set on fire by hell itself. (TNLT; NLT; NCV; SE; NEB; Ber; NIV)

Additional Information: Evil speech represents the unrighteous world opposed to God. The reference to “hell” (Gk. *Gehenna*) refers indirectly to the devil as the source of evil speech (Mt. 5:22).

26. Share your insights from James 3:1-6 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

27. In the light of James 3:1, what responsibility does a teacher carry? See Acts 20:26-30 and 1 Peter 4:11 and then discuss.

JAMES CHAPTER 3 VERSES 7-12

[7] For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: [8] But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. [9] Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. [10] Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. [11] Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?

[12] Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. (KJV)

[7] For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed, and has been tamed by the human race. **[8]** But the tongue no man or woman is able to tame. It is an ever-busy mischief, and is full of deadly poison. **[9]** With our tongue we give thanks to our Father in heaven. And with our tongue we speak bad words against men who are made in God's likeness. **[10]** How can it be that praises and curses come from the same mouth? No, my brothers, it shouldn't be like this! **[11]** Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? **[12]** Can you pick olives from a fig tree or figs from a grapevine? No, and you can't draw fresh water from a salty pool. (NASV, Wey, TNTL, SE, NIV, NLT)

28. Share your insights from James 3:7-12 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

**JAMES CHAPTER 3
VERSES 13-16**

[13] Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show 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. (KJV)

[13] Is there any person among you who is truly wise and understanding? Then he should show his wisdom by living right. He should do good things with humility. A wise person does not boast. **[14]** If you have jealousy in your heart and fight to have many

things, do not be proud (of your depraved state) and so lie against the truth. **[15]** That is not the wisdom which comes down from above: it belongs to earth, to the unspiritual nature, and to evil spirits. **[16]** Wherever you find jealousy and strife, you find disharmony, confusion and all other kinds of evil. (ETRV, NLST, ASV, Wey, JB, Phil)

Additional Information: (verse 14) The word “strife” refers to selfish ambition. The Greek word came to describe anyone who sought to achieve his agenda at any cost, that is, even if that meant trampling on others. (Mac. Commentary)

29. Share your insights from James 3:13-16 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

JAMES CHAPTER 3 VERSES 17-18

[17] But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, 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. (KJV)

[17] But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first pure, then peace-loving, gentle, approachable, full of merciful thoughts and kindly actions, straightforward, with no hint of hypocrisy. **[18]** When we work for peace, we sow (in peace) a seed that produces righteousness. (Phil, WBT)

Additional Information: (verse 18) James uses an agricultural image to emphasize the benefits of living by the wisdom from above: Those who plant seeds of peace in relationships will enjoy a luxuriant harvest of righteousness (or of good things, or of justice) in those relationships (NLT Study Bible).

30. Share your insights from James 3:17-18 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

**JAMES CHAPTER 4
VERSES 1-3**

JAS 4:1 From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? [2] Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. [3] Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. (KJV)

[1] What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? They come from the selfish desires that war within you. **[2]** You want things, but you do not have them. So you are ready to kill and are jealous of other people, but you still cannot get what you want. And yet the reason you don't have what you want is that you don't ask God for it. **[3]** And when you do ask God he doesn't give it to you, for you ask in quite the wrong spirit – you only

want to satisfy your own desires. (NASV, NCV, NLT, Phil)

31. Share your insights from James 4:1-3 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

**JAMES CHAPTER 4
VERSES 4-6**

[4] Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. [5] Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? [6] But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. (KJV)

[4] You adulterers and adulteresses, you are like an unfaithful wife who loves her husband's enemies. Don't you know that your

love affair with the world (which is revealed by your interest in the temporary pleasures and material things of the world) is revealing how much you really despise God? Whoever chooses to be a friend of the world takes his stand as God's enemy. **[5]** Do you think the Scripture means nothing that says, "The Spirit that God made to live in us wants us for himself alone"? (Ex. 20:5) **[6]** But he gives us more and more strength to stand against all such evil longings. As the Scripture says, "God gives strength to the humble but sets himself against the proud and haughty." (Prov. 3:34) (NASV, LB, LD, Ber, NCV)

32. Share your insights from James 4:4-6 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

33. The intimate alliance of God with the people of Israel was likened to a marriage, those who relapse into idolatry are said to commit adultery or play the harlot (Ezekiel 16), to commit spiritual adultery means to be

faithless to God, unclean or apostate – turning from the Christian faith. Look at and discuss Jam.4:1 & 1 Jn. 5:21.

34. In James 4:6 the Living Bible uses the word “strength” in place of the King James word “grace.” If available look up the word “grace” in the Strong’s concordance lexicon and discuss its meaning. The Strong’s number is 5485.

JAMES CHAPTER 4 VERSES 7-10

[7] Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. [8] Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. [9] Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. [10] Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. (KJV)

[7] So give yourselves completely to God. Resist the Devil, and he will run away from you. **[8]** Come close to the one true God, and God will come close to you. You sinners, clean sin out of your lives. You who are trying to follow God and the world at the same time, make your thinking pure, you who have divided hearts. Your loyalty is divided: get your hearts made true once more. Quit playing the field. **[9]** Hit bottom, and cry your eyes out. The fun and games are over. Get serious, really serious. **[10]** Get down on your knees before the Master; it's the only way you'll get on your feet. (NCV, TEV, SE, Phil, TM)

35. Share your insights from James 4:7-10 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

36. All people are either under the lordship of Christ or the lordship of Satan; there is no middle ground. Those who transfer their allegiance from Satan to God will find

that Satan “will flee from” them (Jam.4:7). Read and discuss Acts 26:18-20.

37. See James 4:8. The Old Testament priests had to ceremonially wash their hands before approaching God. Cleansing the hands and purifying the heart symbolizes the inner thoughts, motives, and desires of the heart. When the heart is wrong, what should be done? See Acts 8:13, 18-22 and then discuss.

JAMES CHAPTER 4 VERSES 11-12

[11] Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. [12] There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another? (KJV)

[11] Don't criticize and speak evil about each other, dear brothers. If you do, you will be fighting against God's law of loving one

another, declaring it is wrong. But your job is not to decide whether this law is right or wrong, but to obey it. **[12]** Only he who made the law can rightly judge among us. He alone decides to save us or destroy. So what right do you have to judge or criticize others? (LB)

Additional Information: James does not forbid confronting those in sin, but rather condemns careless, derogatory, critical, slanderous accusations against others. God's law forbids slanderous condemnation (Ex. 23:1; Ps. 101:5; Prov. 10:18). God alone who gave the law has the authority to save those who repent and destroy those who refuse repentance. (Mac. Study Bible)

38. Share your insights from James 4:11-12 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

JAMES CHAPTER 4 VERSES 13-17

[13] Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and

get gain: [14] Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. [15] For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. [16] But now ye rejoyce in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. [17] Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. (KJV)

[13] Listen carefully, those of you *making your plans and promoting your agenda*, saying, “We are traveling to this city in the next few days. We’ll stay there for one year while our business explodes and revenue is up.”

[14] The reality is you have no idea where your life will take you tomorrow. You are like a mist that appears one moment and then vanishes another. **[15]** It would be best to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.”

[16] But your current speech indicates an arrogance *that does not acknowledge the One*

who controls the universe, and this kind of big-talking is the epitome of evil. **[17]** So, if you know the right way to live, and you ignore it, it is sin – *plain and simple*. (TV, NASV)

39. Share your insights from James 4:13-17 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

JAMES CHAPTER 5 VERSES 1-6

JAS 5:1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. **[2]** Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. **[3]** Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. **[4]** Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of

them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. [5] Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. [6] Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you. (KJV)

[1] Hey, you rich folk, misery is on its way. *Don't get too comfortable with your wealth and extravagance; cry and moan – you might as well start now.* **[2]** *You have banked your lives on accumulating things, and now your abundant wealth has rotted and is ruined, and your [many] garments have become moth-eaten.* **[3]** Your gold and silver are completely rusted through, and their rust will be testimony against you and it will devour your flesh as if it were fire. *This is the treasure you have treasured up for the last days! You have piled up wealth in an age that is near its close.* **[4]** For listen! Hear the cries of the field workers whom you have cheated of their pay. The

wages you held back cry out against you. The cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. **[5]** You have lived here on earth in luxury. You have enjoyed every pleasure. You have fattened your hearts for the day of slaughter. **[6]** You have condemned and murdered those who are righteous, who were not even opposing you. (TV, AMP, TNT, REB, NLT)

40. Share your insights from James 5:1-6 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

JAMES CHAPTER 5 VERSES 7-9

[7] Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. [8] Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for

the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. [9] Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. (KJV)

[7] Be patient, my brothers, as you wait for the Lord to come. Learn from the farmer. The farmer looking for the precious crop from his land can only wait in patience until the early and late rains have fallen. **[8]** Yes, be patient. And do not lose heart, for the coming of the Lord is near. **[9]** Don't make complaints against each other in the meantime, my brothers – you may be the one at fault yourself. The judge himself is already at the door. (Phil, NLST, LB, JB)

41. Share your insights from James 5:7-9 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

**JAMES CHAPTER 5
VERSES 10-11**

[10] Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. [11] Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. (KJV)

[10] Brothers, as an example of patience (endurance, steadfastness, perseverance) in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. **[11]** We can be sure that those who remained faithful to the Lord then are happy now. You've heard about how Job endured all that happened to him, and how blessed he was by the Lord after those trials. You know how the Lord worked out the culmination of that story,

showing Himself compassionate and merciful.
(NIV, TCV, LD, TNTL)

42. Share your insights from James 5:10-11 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

43. Reflect on James 5:10-11 and Jesus words in Matthew 5:11 and Luke 6:23 and then discuss.

JAMES CHAPTER 5 VERSES 12

[12] But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation. (KJV)

[12] And above all, my brothers and sisters, you must stop using oaths when you make a promise. Stop swearing “by heaven” or “by the earth,” or using any other kind of oath. Instead, when you want to say “yes,” say

“Yes,” and when you want to say “no,” say “No,” for fear that you expose yourselves to judgment. (NTiAL, NEB)

44. Share your insights from James 5:12 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

45. Discuss James 5:12 along with Jesus words of Matthew 5:33-37.

JAMES CHAPTER 5 VERSES 13-15

**[13] Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.
[14] Is any sick among you? 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 shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. (KJV)**

[13] Is any among you suffering evils, hardships or troubles? let him pray. Anyone who is happy should sing praises. **[14]** Is anyone sick? He should call for the elders of the church and they should pray over him and pour a little oil upon him, calling on the Lord to heal him. **[15]** And their prayer, if offered in faith, will heal him, for the Lord will make him well; and if his sickness was caused by some sin, the Lord will forgive him. (TCV, NCV, CEV, LB)

46. Share your insights from James 5:13-15 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

JAMES CHAPTER 5 VERSES 16-18

[16] Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. [17] Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he

prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. [18] And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. (KJV)

[16] Make this your common practice: Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you can live together whole and healed. The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with. **[17]** Elijah was a human being like ourselves – he prayed hard for it not to rain, and no rain fell for three and a half years; **[18]** then he prayed again and the sky gave rain and the earth gave crops. (TM, JB)

47. Share your insights from James 5:16-18 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

48. Read and discuss 1 Kings 17:1, 18:41-46 and Luke 4:25-26.

**JAMES CHAPTER 5
VERSES 19-20**

[19] Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; [20] Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. (KJV)

[19] My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth, and one turns him back, **[20]** let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins. (NASV)

Additional Information: The writers of the New Testament speak to four groups of people within the church: the saved, the lost, those who say they are saved but are not, and those that have turned toward Christ and then turned away. The New Testament writers never distinguish between these groups, but gives a general warning to all, even including themselves (Hebrews 2:3; Col. 1:21-23; 1 cor. 15:1-2; etc.)

49. Share your insights from James 5:19-20 with each other. (Use the translations provided and any other translations of your choice).

50. Read and discuss also Galatians 6:1, 2 Peter 3:17-18 and 2 Peter 2:20-22.

Translations & Abbreviations

KJV	King James Version
NCV	New Century Version
TCV	Today's Commentary Version
KJVP	King James Version Paraphrased
TTNT	The Translator's New Testament
RSV	Revised Standard Version
NLT	New Living Translation
TNTL	The New Testament Letters
SE	Simple English Version
JB	Jerusalem Bible
LD	Last Days New Testament
NIV	New International Version
Phil	Phillips Translation
CEV	Contemporary English Version
TEV	Today's English Version
LB	Living Bible
NASV	New American Standard Version

TB	The Message
AMP	Amplified New Testament
NEB	New English Bible
Ber	Berkeley Version
Wey	Weymouth Translation
ETRV	Easy-to-Read-Version
NLST	New Life Study Testament
ASV	American Standard Version
TV	The Voice New Testament
TCNT	Twentieth Century New Testament
REB	Revised English Bible
TNTL	The New Testament Letters
WBT	William Beck Translation
NTiAL	New Testament in American Language

Over 800 of the best scholars of the last 100 years were drawn upon in preparing this work. Special thanks to the translators and their translations.

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