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*James*

*Read. Reflect. Respond.*



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**JAMES**

### *Greeting*

**1** James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ:  
To the twelve tribes dispersed abroad.  
Greetings.

### *Trials and Maturity*

<sup>2</sup>Consider it a great joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you experience various trials, <sup>3</sup>because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. <sup>4</sup>And let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing.

<sup>5</sup>Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God — who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly — and it will be given to him. <sup>6</sup>But let him ask in faith without doubting. For the doubter is like the surging sea, driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup>That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord, <sup>8</sup>being double-minded and unstable in all his ways.

<sup>9</sup>Let the brother of humble circumstances boast in his exaltation, <sup>10</sup>but let the rich boast in his humiliation because he will pass away like a flower of the field. <sup>11</sup>For the sun rises and, together with the scorching wind, dries up the grass; its flower falls off, and its beautiful appearance perishes. In the same way, the rich person will wither away while pursuing his activities.

<sup>12</sup>Blessed is the one who endures trials, because when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

<sup>13</sup>No one undergoing a trial should say, “I am being tempted by God,” since God is not tempted by evil, and he himself doesn’t tempt anyone. <sup>14</sup>But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desire. <sup>15</sup>Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.



<sup>16</sup>Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. <sup>17</sup>Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. <sup>18</sup>By his own choice, he gave us birth by the word of truth so that we would be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

### *Hearing and Doing the Word*

<sup>19</sup>My dear brothers and sisters, understand this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger, <sup>20</sup>for human anger does not accomplish God's righteousness. <sup>21</sup>Therefore, ridding yourselves of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, humbly receive the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

<sup>22</sup>But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup>Because if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like someone looking at his own face in a mirror. <sup>24</sup>For he looks at himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of person he was. <sup>25</sup>But the one who looks intently into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer who works — this person will be blessed in what he does.

<sup>26</sup>If anyone thinks he is religious without controlling his tongue, his religion is useless and he deceives himself. <sup>27</sup>Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

### *The Sin of Favoritism*

**2** My brothers and sisters, do not show favoritism as you hold on to the faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>2</sup>For if someone comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and a poor person dressed in filthy clothes also comes in, <sup>3</sup>if you look with favor on



the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Sit here in a good place," and yet you say to the poor person, "Stand over there," or "Sit here on the floor by my footstool," <sup>4</sup> haven't you made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

<sup>5</sup> Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Didn't God choose the poor in this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? <sup>6</sup> Yet you have dishonored the poor. Don't the rich oppress you and drag you into court? <sup>7</sup> Don't they blaspheme the good name that was invoked over you?

<sup>8</sup> Indeed, if you fulfill the royal law prescribed in the Scripture, **Love your neighbor as yourself**, you are doing well. <sup>9</sup> If, however, you show favoritism, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. <sup>10</sup> For whoever keeps the entire law, and yet stumbles at one point, is guilty of breaking it all. <sup>11</sup> For he who said, **Do not commit adultery**, also said, **Do not murder**. So if you do not commit adultery, but you murder, you are a lawbreaker.

<sup>12</sup> Speak and act as those who are to be judged by the law of freedom. <sup>13</sup> For judgment is without mercy to the one who has not shown mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

### *Faith and Works*

<sup>14</sup> What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but does not have works? Can such faith save him?

<sup>15</sup> If a brother or sister is without clothes and lacks daily food <sup>16</sup> and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, stay warm, and be well fed," but you don't give them what the body needs, what good is it? <sup>17</sup> In the same way faith, if it does not have works, is dead by itself.

<sup>18</sup> But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without works, and I will show you faith



by my works. <sup>19</sup>You believe that God is one. Good! Even the demons believe — and they shudder.

<sup>20</sup>Senseless person! Are you willing to learn that faith without works is useless? <sup>21</sup>Wasn't Abraham our father justified by works in offering Isaac his son on the altar? <sup>22</sup>You see that faith was active together with his works, and by works, faith was made complete, <sup>23</sup>and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, **Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness**, and he was called God's friend. <sup>24</sup>You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. <sup>25</sup>In the same way, wasn't Rahab the prostitute also justified by works in receiving the messengers and sending them out by a different route? <sup>26</sup>For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

### *Controlling the Tongue*

**3** Not many should become teachers, my brothers, because you know that we will receive a stricter judgment. <sup>2</sup>For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is mature, able also to control the whole body. <sup>3</sup>Now if we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we direct their whole bodies. <sup>4</sup>And consider ships: Though very large and driven by fierce winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. <sup>5</sup>So too, though the tongue is a small part of the body, it boasts great things. Consider how a small fire sets ablaze a large forest. <sup>6</sup>And the tongue is a fire. The tongue, a world of unrighteousness, is placed among our members. It stains the whole body, sets the course of life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. <sup>7</sup>Every kind of animal, bird, reptile, and fish is tamed and has been tamed by humankind, <sup>8</sup>but no one can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. <sup>9</sup>With the tongue we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made

