

TITLE: James (Lesson 1)

TEXT: James 1:1

INTRO: "...designed to exhort and encourage, to challenge and convict, to rebuke and revive, to describe practical holiness and drive believers toward the goal of a faith that works. James is severely ethical and refreshingly practical." *J. Ronald Blue*

I. James the author: the Biblical history

A. The traditional view is he was the half-brother of Jesus.

NOTE: There are four or five men in the N.T. named James. Matt. 13:53-58

1. "Why can't you be more like Jesus?"

B. Initially Jesus siblings rejected him as the Messiah.

NOTE: Mark 6:1-6; John 7:3-5;

C. At some point he became a believer.

NOTE: I Cor. 15:1-7; Acts 1:10-14

D. James became a leader in the church at Jerusalem.

NOTE: Acts 12:17; 15:13, 19; 21:17-18; Gal. 1:18-19; 2:9

II. James the author: the secular history.

A. "James the Just" and "Old Camel Knees".

NOTE: This was due to his moral character and prayer life.

B. Martyred for the cause of Christ.

NOTE: "According to tradition, he was first thrown from the pinnacle of the temple, but survived the fall. He was then stoned by the crowd and finally killed with a club."

III. James the book: fun facts.

A. The letter of James is possibly the earliest N.T. book written.

B. Some refer to James as the "N.T. book of Proverbs".

NOTE: Because of its Jewish flavor, O.T. wisdom, and practical teaching.

IV. Exposition of salutation and greeting.

A. The name of the writer.

NOTE: Common for N.T. writers to begin their letters by identifying the author.

B. The authority of the writer.

1. "a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ"

NOTE: **Doulos**: a bondservant. James didn't identify himself as Jesus brother.

2. He boldly proclaims the deity of Christ.

NOTE: James places *God* and the *Lord Jesus Christ* equally sharing the same authority. Our authority as Christians is based on our relationship and obedience to Christ and His Word. As *Lord Jesus* is our owner and master. As *Jesus* He is our Savior. As *Christ* He is the anointed One, the Messiah.

C. The recipients of the letter.

1. "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad"

NOTE: Addressed to Christian Jews scattered abroad (**Diaspora**) amongst the Gentiles.

2. "greeting" (**Chairo**): Sometimes translated "rejoice".