

LESSON 42
“Pure Religion”
James

OVERVIEW: We should endure afflictions patiently. We should pray to God in faith. We should control our tongue and be slow to wrath. We should be doers of the word showing our faith by our works. This epistle was written to the saints of the last days. This epistle, being general in nature, is almost like a talk on several topics. Because it was written to us, it is very timely for us today.

It is probable that the epistle was written in Jerusalem around AD 50-51. It may be one of the first epistles written in the church.

Elder McConkie said: To have a book written by the Lord’s brother, is akin to having one penned by the Master himself.

SCRIPTURES:

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF
JAMES (Hebrew - Jacob)
CHAPTER 1

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God—Resist temptation—Be ye doers of the word—How to recognize pure religion.

This James is the Lord’s half-brother. Josephus so says and other sources outside of the Bible. James was a witness of Christ’s ascension.

1 JAMES, (or Jacob in the Hebrew, the father of the tribes of Israel.) a ^aservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are ^bscattered abroad, greeting. (To whom is the epistle written? Here’s a little play on words: The letter is to the twelve tribes. Who is the father of the twelve tribes? Israel. His name previously was? Jacob. The English version of Jacob is James. So here James is saying, I, Jacob, to the twelve tribes. James – religious by nature; schooled in the strict Judaism of the day; converted after our Lord’s resurrection; and said to have died a martyr’s death – took upon himself the awesome responsibility to write an epistle to the saints in the dispensation of the fullness of times. Paul wrote to the saints of his own day, and if his doctrine and counsel blesses us of later years, so much the better. But James addressed himself to those of the twelve scattered tribes of Israel who belonged to the Church; that is, to a people yet to be gathered, yet to receive the gospel, yet to come into the fold of Christ; and if his words had import to the small cluster of saints in Judah and Benjamin who joined the Church in the meridian of time, so much the better. DNTC, 3:243.)

2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into ^adivers^{*}-^btemptations (many afflictions);

3 Knowing *this*, that **the ^atrying^{*} (approval by trial) of your faith worketh ^bpatience.**

4 But let patience have ~~her~~ (its) perfect work, that ye may be ^aperfect and entire, wanting nothing. (Elder Boyd K. Packer said: Some are tested by poor health, some by a body that is deformed or homely. Others are tested by handsome and healthy bodies, some by the passion of youth, others by the erosions of old age. Some suffer disappointment in marriage, family problems, others live in poverty and obscurity. Some (perhaps this is the hardest test) find ease and luxury. All are part of the test, and there is more equality in this testing than sometimes we suspect. Ensign, November 1980, p. 21. Elder Orson F. Whitney said: No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude and humility. All that we

suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, and makes us more tender and charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God. Quoted in Spencer W. Kimball, Faith Precedes the Miracle, p. 98. The Lord has reminded us that he will have a tried people. D&C 136: 31 My people must be tried in all things, that they may be prepared to receive the glory that I have for them, even the glory of Zion; and he that will not bear chastisement is not worthy of my kingdom. D&C 98: 12 For he will give unto the faithful line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith. 13 And whoso layeth down his life in my cause, for my name's sake, shall find it again, even life eternal. 14 Therefore, be not afraid of your enemies, for I have decreed in my heart, saith the Lord, that I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant, even unto death, that you may be found worthy. D&C 101:4 Therefore, they must needs be chastened and tried, even as Abraham, who was commanded to offer up his only son. 5 For all those who will not endure chastening, but deny me, cannot be sanctified.)

5 ^aIf any of you lack ^bwisdom, let him ask of God, that ^cgiveth to all men liberally, and ^dupbraideth (reproaches, censures) not; and it shall be given him. (Written to Joseph Smith, and to all of us. This scripture launched the dispensation of the fullness of times. President Spencer W. Kimball said: Because the fourteen year-old boy went out in the woods to pray, having read in the scriptures...because he did live the revelations from on high, we have the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We have all of the blessings that can make us the happiest people in the whole world, because a boy of fourteen went out into the woods to pray. CR, Melbourne Australia Area Conference 1976, p. 23. JS-H 1:12-13, 26: 12 Never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine. It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart. I reflected on it again and again, knowing that if any person needed wisdom from God, I did; for how to act I did not know, and unless I could get more wisdom than I then had, I would never know; for the teachers of religion of the different sects understood the same passages of scripture so differently as to destroy all confidence in settling the question by an appeal to the Bible. 13 At length I came to the conclusion that I must either remain in darkness and confusion, or else I must do as James directs, that is, ask of God. I at length came to the determination to "ask of God," concluding that if he gave wisdom to them that lacked wisdom, and would give liberally, and not upbraid, I might venture. 26 I had found the testimony of James to be true—that a man who lacked wisdom might ask of God, and obtain, and not be upbraided. This single verse of scripture has had a greater impact and a more far reaching effect upon mankind than any other single sentence ever recorded by any prophet in any age. It might well be said that the crowning act of the ministry of James was not his martyrdom for the testimony of Jesus, but his recitation, as guided by the Holy Ghost, of these simple words which led to the opening of the heavens in modern times. And it might well be added that every investigator of revealed truth stands, at some time in the course of his search, in the place where Joseph Smith stood. He must turn to the Almighty and gain wisdom from God by revelation if he is to gain a place on that strait and narrow path. DNTC, 3:246-7.)

6 But let him ^aask in ^bfaith, nothing ^cwavering (doubting, hesitating). 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 ^adouble minded man is unstable in all his ways.

9 Let the brother of ^alow degree rejoice in that he is exalted:

10 But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the ^agrass 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 ^agrace (beauty of its appearance) of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the ^brich man fade away in his ways.

12 ^aBlessed is the man that ^bendureth (resisteth) temptation: for when he is ^ctried, he shall receive the ^dcrown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. (Overcoming temptation is an essential and necessary part of working out one's salvation. DNTC, 3:248)

13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be ^atempted with ^bevil, neither tempteth he any man: (God permits temptation to occur but does not cause it. DNTC, 3: 249)

14 But every man is ^atempted, when he is **drawn away** (The word translated as *drawn out* was used in hunting and was the word which described what the hunter did when he lured wild game out of the safety of the thick brush into an area set with snares. The word *entice* came from fishing and meant, to bait or to catch with bait. The lusts of the flesh are designed to lure us out from the true safety of protective righteousness to become the victim of the evil hunter or fisherman. Institute Manual, p. 408.) of his own ^blust, and **enticed**.

15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth ^asin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17 Every ^agood^{*} ^bgift^{*} and every perfect ^cgift^{*} is from above, and ^dcometh^{*} down from the Father of ^elights^{*}, with whom is no ^fvariableness, neither shadow of turning. (God is the source of all that is good. The means used by Deity to send forth his gifts is the Spirit of Christ or the Light of Christ. DNTC, 3:250)

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

19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to ^aspeak^{*}, ^bslow to ^cwrath:

20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

21 Wherefore lay ~~apart~~ **(aside)** all ^afilthiness and ^bsuperfluity^{*} (overabundance of malice, trouble, evil) of naughtiness, and receive with ^cmeeekness the ^dengrafted^{*} (implanted, ingrafted) word, which is able to save your souls.

22 **But be ye ^adoers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.**

23 For if any be a ^ahearer^{*} of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a ^bglass^{*}:

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 ^alaw of ^bliberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his ^atongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is ^bvain^{*}. (useless, deceptive, erroneous)

27 **Pure ^areligion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To ^bvisit^{*} the ^cfatherless^{*} and ^dwidows in their ^eaffliction, and to keep himself ^funspotted^{*} from (the vices of) ^gthe ^hworld.** (This may be interpreted as meaning that a person who is religious is thoughtful to the unfortunate, and has an inner spirit that prompts to deeds of kindness and to the leading of a blameless life; who is just, truthful; who does not, as Paul says, think more highly of himself than he ought to think; who is affectionate, patient in tribulation, diligent, cheerful, fervent in spirit, hospitable, merciful; and who abhors evil and cleaves to that which is good. The possession of such a spirit and feeling is a true sign that a person is naturally religious. Joseph Fielding Smith, Gospel Doctrine, p. 121)

CHAPTER 2

God hath chosen the poor of this world rich in faith—Salvation gained by keeping the whole law—Faith without works is dead.

1 MY brethren, **(ye cannot)** ^ahave^{*} (not with partiality, have the faith of our Lord) ~~not~~ the faith of our ^bLord Jesus Christ, *the Lord of Glory*, **with** **(and yet have)** respect ~~of~~ **(to)** persons.

2 ~~For~~ **(Now)** if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a ^apoor man in ^bvile^{*} (dirty) raiment;

3 And ye have respect to him that weareth the ^agay^{*} (splendid) 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 ^aAre ye not then partial in yourselves (partial judges), and are become judges of evil (in your) thoughts?

5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the ^apoor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? (Riches are a curse and not a blessing when they lead men to live after the manner of the world and to treat others with partiality. DNTC, 3:255)

6 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men ^aoppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

7 Do not they blaspheme that worthy ^aname by the which ye are called?

8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt ^alove thy ^bneighbour as thyself, ye do well:

9 But if ye have ^arespect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

10 For whosoever shall (save in one point,) keep the ^awhole law, and yet ^boffend in one point, he is ^cguilty of all. (Any person who is exalted to the highest mansion has to abide a celestial law, and the whole law, too. I spoke to the people, showing them that to get salvation we must not only do some things, but everything which God has commanded. TPJS, 331-2. The fact is that one sin, without repentance, damns, whereas obedience to the whole law is required for salvation. DNTC, 3:256.)

11 For he that said, Do not commit ^aadultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of ^aliberty.

13 For he shall have ^ajudgment without ^bmercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

14 ^aWhat ~~doth it~~ profit (is it), my brethren, ~~though~~ (for) a man (to) say he hath ^bfaith, and have (hath) not works? can faith save him?

18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works (I will show thee I have faith without works; but I say,) She(o)w me thy faith without thy works, and I will she(o)w thee my ^afaith by my ^bworks. (If we say we have faith in Christ, but do not do the things he has asked to do, we do not really have faith in him. If he tells us to be baptized into his church and we choose not to do it, we are showing him that we do not have faith in him. Faith is demonstrated through our obedience to the principles and ordinances of the gospel.)

15 (For) if a brother or ^asister be naked, and destitute of daily ^bfood,

16 And one of you say ~~unto them~~, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye (he) ^agive them not those things which are needful to the body; what ~~doth it~~ profit (is your faith unto such)?

17 Even so ^afaith, if it hath (have) not ^bworks, is dead, being alone.

20 ~~But~~ (Therefore) wilt thou know, O vain man, that ^afaith without ^bworks is dead (and cannot save you)?

19 Thou believest ~~that~~ there is one God; thou doest well: the ^adevils also ^bbelieve, and tremble(; thou hast made thyself like unto them, not being justified).

21 Was not Abraham our father ^ajustified by works, when he had ^boffered Isaac his son upon the altar?

22 Seest thou how ~~faith~~ (works) wrought with his ~~works~~ (faith), and by ^aworks was faith made ^bperfect?

23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham ^abelieved God, and it was imputed unto him for ^brighteousness: and he was called the ^cFriend of God.

24 Ye see then how that by ^aworks a man is ^bjustified, (Lesson 36 included information about justification: To be justified is to be pronounced innocent. Justification is a legal term that means to become acquitted from sin. It is the act by which a sinner is freed from the penalty of sin and is accepted by God as righteous. Justification does not come from the works that we do. It can only come through the grace of Jesus Christ. However, one must qualify for justification. It requires the sinner to

exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repent of their sinful acts, and enter into a covenant with God through the ordinance of baptism. The Lord declared: "That as many as would believe and be baptized in his holy name, and endure in faith to the end, should be saved" (D&C 20:25). The Book of Mormon emphasizes the necessity of repentance to appease the demands of justice as part of the justification process. Because Christ suffered the eternal consequences of our sins, repentance will release man from the grips of justice. Alma explained: "according to justice, the plan of redemption could not be brought about, only on conditions of repentance of men . . . for except it were for these conditions, mercy could not take effect except it should destroy the work of justice" (Alma 42:13). "Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah," said Lehi, "Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered" (2 Nephi 2:6-7). Because of his sacrifice, Christ stands "betwixt them and justice" having "satisfied the demands of justice" (Mosiah 15:9). Thus, Amulek stated: "And thus he shall bring salvation to all those who shall believe on his name; this being the intent of this last sacrifice, to bring about the bowels of mercy, which overpowereth justice, and bringeth about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance. And thus mercy can satisfy the demands of justice, and encircles them in the arms of safety, while he that exercises no faith unto repentance is exposed to the whole law of the demands of justice; therefore only unto him that has faith unto repentance is brought about the great and eternal plan of redemption." (Alma 34:8,15-16) The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: "To be justified before God we must love one another; we must overcome evil; we must visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and we must keep ourselves unspotted from the world; for such virtues flow from the great fountain of pure religion, strengthening our faith by adding every good quality that adorns the children of the blessed Jesus. We can pray in the season of prayer; we can love our neighbor as ourselves, and be faithful in tribulation, knowing that the reward of such is greater in the kingdom of heaven. What a consolation! What a joy! TPJS, p. 76) and not by faith only.

25 Likewise also ~~was not~~ ^aRahab^{*} the harlot (was) ^bjustified^{*} by works, when she had received the messengers, and ~~had~~ sent *them* out another way?

26 For as the body without the ^aspirit is ^bdead, so faith without ^cworks is dead also.

CHAPTER 3

By governing the tongue we gain perfection—Heavenly wisdom is pure, peaceable, and full of mercy.

1 MY brethren, ^abe^{*} not many ^bmasters^{*}; (strive not for the mastery,) knowing that (in so doing) we shall ^creceive^{*} the greater condemnation.

2 For in many things we ^aoffend^{*} (stumble, err) all. If any man ^boffend^{*} not in ^cword^{*}, the same is a ^dperfect 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 ^agovernor^{*} (helmsman, pilot) listeth.

5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and ^aboasteth^{*} great things. Behold, how great a ^bmatter^{*} (forest) a little fire kindleth! (Behold, how great a forest fire a tiny spark can start.)

6 And the ^atongue^{*} 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.

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 ^atongue^{*} can no man tame; *it is* an ^bunruly^{*} (untameable, uncontrollable) evil, full of deadly poison.

9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith ^acurse^{*} we men, which are made after the

^bsimilitude of God.

10 Out of the same ^amouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. (Our ability and willingness to control our tongues is directly related to how much revelation the Lord is willing to give us. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: The reason we do not have the secrets of the Lord revealed unto us, is because we do not keep them but reveal them; we do not keep our own secrets, but reveal our difficulties to the world, even to our enemies, then how would we keep the secrets of the Lord? TPJS, p. 195. President Brigham Young said: Should you receive a vision or revelation from the Almighty, one that the Lord gave you concerning yourselves, or this people, but which you are not to reveal on account of your not being the proper person, or because it ought not to be known by the people at present, you should shut it up and seal it as close, and lock it as tight as heaven is to you, and make it as secret as the grave. The Lord has no confidence in those who reveal secrets, for He cannot safely reveal Himself to such persons. That man who cannot know things without telling any other living being upon the earth, who cannot keep his secrets and those that God reveals to him, never can receive the voice of his Lord to dictate him and the people on this earth. JD, 4:288)

11 Doth a ^afountain (spring, well) 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.

13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good ^aconversation his works with ^bmeekness of wisdom.

14 But if ye have bitter envying and ^astrife in your hearts, ^bglory (do not assume superiority over) not, and lie not against the truth.

15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

16 For where ^aenvying and ^bstrife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

17 But the ^awisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and ^beasy (pliant, easily persuaded) to be intreated, full of ^cmercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without ^dhypocrisy.

18 And the fruit of ^arighteousness is sown in ^bpeace of them that make ^cpeace.

CHAPTER 4

Wars are born of lusts—The friends of the world are the enemies of God—Sin is failure to walk in the light we have received.

1 FROM whence come ^awars and ^bfightings among you? come they not hence, even of your ^clusts (pleasures, gratifications, passions) 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 ^aask, and receive not, because ye ^bask ^camiss (wickedly, wrongly), that ye may ^dconsume (waste, expend) it upon your ^elusts.

4 Ye ^aadulterers and adulteresses (covenant breakers), know ye not that the friendship of the ^bworld is ^cenmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the ^denemy of God.

5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to ^aenvy?

6 But he giveth more ^agrace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the ^bproud, but giveth grace unto the ^chumble.

7 ^aSubmit yourselves therefore to God. ^bResist the ^cdevil, and he will flee from you. (It is not until men dwell in celestial burnings that the devil, unable to stand the glory of such a world, flees from them in the true and ultimate sense of the word. DNTC, 3:266)

8 ^aDraw ^bnigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. ^cCleanse your hands, ye sinners; and ^dpurify your

hearts, ye double minded.

9 ^aBe afflicted (endure hardship, suffer harassment), and mourn, and ^bweep: let your laughter be turned to ^cmourning, and your joy to heaviness.

10 ^aHumble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

11 ^aSpeak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the ^blaw, 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 ^ajudgest another?

13 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to ^amorrow 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 ^avapour, 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 rejoice in your ^aboastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

17 **Therefore to him that ^aknoweth to do good, and ^bdoeth it not, to him it is ^csin.** (Sin is the transgression of divine law, as made known through the conscience or by revelation. A man sins when he violates his conscience, going contrary to light and knowledge – not the light and knowledge that has come to his neighbor, but that which has come to himself. He sins when he does the opposite of what he knows to be right. Up to that point he only blunders. One may suffer painful consequences for only blundering, but he cannot commit sin unless he knows better than to do the thing in which the sin consists. One must have a conscience before he can violate it. Orson F. Whitney, Saturday Night Thoughts, p. 239. Where there is no law given there is no punishment; and where there is no punishment there is no condemnation. 2 Ne. 9:25- Wherefore, he has given a law; and where there is no law given there is no punishment; and where there is no punishment there is no condemnation; and where there is no condemnation the mercies of the Holy One of Israel have claim upon them, because of the atonement; for they are delivered by the power of him He that knoweth not good from evil is blameless. Alma 29:5- Yea, and I know that good and evil have come before all men; he that knoweth not good from evil is blameless; but he that knoweth good and evil, to him it is given according to his desires, whether he desireth good or evil, life or death, joy or remorse of conscience. Hel 14:19 Therefore repent ye, repent ye, lest by knowing these things and not doing them ye shall suffer yourselves to come under condemnation, and ye are brought down unto this second death. 2 Ne 9: 26 For the atonement satisfieth the demands of his justice upon all those who have not the law given to them, that they are delivered from that awful monster, death and hell, and the devil, and the lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment; and they are restored to that God who gave them breath, which is the Holy One of Israel. 27 But wo unto him that has the law given, yea, that has all the commandments of God, like unto us, and that transgresseth them, and that wasteth the days of his probation, for awful is his state!)

CHAPTER 5

Misery awaits the wanton rich—Await the Lord's coming with patience—The elders are to anoint and heal the sick.

1 GO to now, ye rich men, ^aweep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. (As with all men, those who have riches will be judged according to their works and gain either salvation or damnation as they may chance to merit. But the nature of fallen man is such that in the overwhelming majority of cases riches are far more of a hindrance than a help in attaining peace in this world and eternal life in the world to come. DNTC, 3:268)

2 Your ^ariches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.

3 Your ^agold and silver is ^bcankered (rusted, tarnished); and the ^crust (venom, poison) 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 ^ahire of the ^blabourers 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. (Together with verse 7, James is equating Jehovah and Jesus Christ as the same person. DNTC, 3:270)

5 Ye have lived ^ain pleasure (luxuriously, delicately) 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.

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 ^apatient; ^bstablish your hearts: for the ^ccoming of the Lord draweth nigh.

9 ^aGrudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an ^aexample of ^bsuffering affliction, and of patience.

11 Behold, we count them ^ahappy which ^bendure. Ye have heard of the patience of ^cJob, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very ^dpitiful, and of tender ^emercy.

12 But above all things, my brethren, ^aswear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other ^boath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

13 Is any among you ^aafflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

14 Is any ^asick among you? let him call for the ^belders of the church; and let them ^cpray over him, ^danointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

15 And the ^aprayer of ^bfaith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be ^cforgiven him. (Joseph Fielding Smith said: If by the power of faith and through the administration by the elders the man is healed, it is evidence that his sins have been forgiven. It is hardly reasonable to think that the Lord will forgive the sins of a man who is healed if he has not repented. Naturally he would repent of his sins if he seeks for the blessing by the elders. Doctrines of Salvation, 3:177-8. James' instructions support the idea that a spirit of faith and repentance is present with such forgiveness – the sick person is to call for the elders, the prayer is to be a prayer of faith and contrition is suggested by the “confess your faults” passage. Forgiveness is predicated upon law as are all other blessings and must be assumed in this instance. But what a great comfort it is to those who are repentant to know that when hearts are right, anointings are given, and healings are granted, not only the body but also the soul is made well. Larry Dahl, Studies in the Scriptures, 6:222. This is part – indeed, the most glorious part – of the ordinance of administering to the sick. The following explanation sets forth how this principle operates: It is an axiomatic gospel verity that the Spirit of the Lord will not dwell in an unclean tabernacle. The Spirit will not come to a man unless and until he is prepared by personal righteousness to have the companionship of that member of the Godhead. Thus to be worthy of baptism men must witness before the church that they have truly repented of all their sins, and precisely the same thing is involved in their preparation to partake of the sacrament. In other words, as a result of worthy baptism men stand clean before him if they fulfil the full law involved in partaking of the sacrament, for in each instance they are rewarded with the companionship of the Spirit, which companionship they cannot have unless they are cleansed and purified from sin. DNTC, 3:275. It is the policy of the Church that administration to the sick should be done at the request of the sick person or someone vitally concerned, so that it will be done in answer to faith. Those called to perform the ordinance should encourage the sick person to rely on the Lord's promises, Whatsoever thing ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is good, in faith believing that ye shall receive, behold, it shall be done unto you. Moro 7:26. If need be the sick person should be encouraged to keep the commandments so that he can have faith and be entitled to the blessings of the

Lord. DNTC, 3:274.)

16 ^aConfess your faults one to another, and ^bpray one for another, that ye may be healed. **‘The’ effectual ^dfervent’ ^eprayer of a righteous man availeth much.** (This book begins with the admonition to pray. And here is the conclusion of that opening statement. Truly the Prophet Joseph Smith is proof that the prayer of a righteous man avails much. Men should, in wisdom, keep their own faults to themselves, in an organized system of confession as part of the law of forgiveness. DNTC, 3:276)

17 Elias (Elijah – 1 Kings 17:18) was a man subject to like ^apassions’ as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it ^brained 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.

19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;

20 **Let him know, that he which ^aconverteth’ the sinner from the error of his way shall ^bsave’ a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.** (Every person who is beginning the long journey of emancipating himself from the thralldom of sin and evil will find comfort in the thought expressed by James. We could expand it somewhat and remind the transgressor that every testimony he bears, every prayer he offers, every sermon he preaches, every scripture he reads, every help he gives to stimulate and raise others – all these strengthen him and raise him to higher levels. The proper motivation for missionary work of any kind, as for all Church service, is of course love for fellowmen, but always such work has its by-product effect on one’s own life. Thus as we become instruments in God’s hands in changing the lives of others our own lives cannot help but be lifted. One can hardly help another to the top of the hill without climbing there himself. The Miracle of Forgiveness, p. 205. Truly a multitude of sins is hidden – not winked at or covered over, but dealt with, repented of, and forgiven, not to be mentioned again. Larry Dahl, Studies in the Scriptures, 6:222, By reclaiming an erring brother, we save both him and ourselves. Our sins are hidden (remitted) because we ministered for the salvation and blessing of another member of the kingdom. In principle this special reward for Christ’s ministers applies also to those who preach the gospel and bring souls into the kingdom. The minister is rewarded with salvation and, of necessity, in the process, is freed from his own sins. D&C 4:1-4.)

James was taken before the Sanhedrin, sentenced to death, and executed by stoning in AD 62.

Additional Reading:

BIBLE DICTIONARY JAMES

An English form of the Hebrew name Jacob. There are several persons of this name mentioned in the N.T.

(1) Son of Zebedee, one of the Twelve, brother of John. His call is given in [Matt. 4: 21](#); [Mark 1: 19-20](#), and [Luke 5: 10](#). He was given the name Boanerges ([Mark 3: 17](#)), and was one of the inner circle of three chosen to be with our Lord on certain special occasions: at the raising of the daughter of Jairus ([Mark 5: 37](#)); at the Transfiguration ([Matt. 17: 1](#); [Mark 9: 2](#); [Luke 9: 28](#)); and at Gethsemane ([Matt. 26: 37](#); [Mark 14: 33](#); see also [Mark 10: 30, 41](#); [Mark 13: 3](#); [Luke 8: 51](#); [Luke 9: 54](#)). He was beheaded by Herod ([Acts 12: 2](#)).

(2) Son of Alphaeus, also one of the Twelve ([Matt. 10: 3](#); [Mark 3: 18](#); [Luke 6: 15](#); [Acts 1: 13](#)).

(3) **Brother of the Lord ([Gal. 1: 19](#)) and of Joses, Simon, Jude, and some sisters ([Matt. 13: 55](#); [Mark 6: 3](#); [Jude 1: 1](#)); known as James the Just. He occupied an important position in the Church**

of Jerusalem ([Acts 12: 17](#); [Acts 15: 13](#); [Acts 21: 18](#); [Gal. 2: 9-12](#); [1 Cor. 15: 7](#)), and was probably the writer of the Epistle of James.

(4) James, called “the Less,” son of Mary and brother of Joses ([Matt. 27: 56](#); [Mark 15: 40](#); [Luke 24: 10](#)). Nothing further is known of him, unless he is, as some think the same as number 2 (above).

JAMES, EPISTLE OF

The writer is generally thought of as the Lord’s brother ([Gal. 1: 19](#)), the son of Mary, and is mentioned in [Acts 12: 17](#); [Acts 15: 13](#); [Gal. 2: 9](#). The epistle, which is addressed to the 12 tribes scattered abroad, was probably written from Jerusalem, but the date is not known. It may be one of the earlier epistles of the N.T. In the epistle are found some clearly stated items about practical religion, including the important advice of [James 1: 5-6](#) that if one lacks wisdom, he should ask of God for help. This instructive passage inspired Joseph Smith to inquire of the Lord in 1820 as to the true church, and as a consequence the Father and the Son appeared to him and the dispensation of the fulness of times was launched ([JS-H 1: 9-20](#)). Among other important teachings of James are those that have to do with faith and works ([ch. 2](#)); the need to control the unruly tongue ([ch. 3](#)); an exhortation to patience ([ch. 5](#)); calling the elders for a blessing when sick ([James 5: 14-16](#)); and the desirability of being an instrument of conversion in the life of even one other person ([James 5: 19-20](#)).