

Chippewa Valley General Assembly



# Daily Devotions

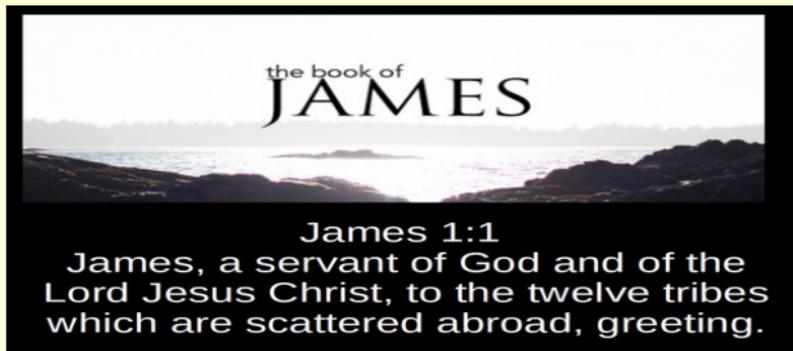
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## Introduction to the Book Of James

### The First Written Testimony of Apostolic Doctrine and Beliefs



**The book of James is the earliest New Testament Epistle.**

**EPIS'TLE**, *noun* epis'tl. [Latin epistola; Gr. to send to; to send.]

A writing, directed or sent, communicating intelligence to a distant person; a letter; a letter missive. It is rarely used in familiar conversation or writings, but chiefly in solemn or formal transactions. It is used particularly in speaking of the letters of the Apostles, as the epistles of Paul; and of other letters written by the ancients, as the epistles of Pliny or of Cicero.

Written about 15 years after the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord Jesus the book of James was circulated throughout all of the Christian churches and ought to be considered to be the prima fascia document of the teachings and beliefs of the 12 apostles who so revered the teaching of James that he was elected to be the chief Elder of the church in Jerusalem. The official Apostolic church. James ought to be considered the basis for understanding Christian doctrine and yet it has been relegated to virtual obscurity because of the influence of the Anti-Nomians.

The author of the book of James is the half-brother of the Lord Jesus. The apostle Paul relates meeting with him in his personal testimony recorded in Galatians chapter one. How Jesus appeared to him and taught him in the Wilderness of Arabia for three years and after that time he went to Jerusalem and stayed with the apostle Peter for two weeks and met with the apostle James before he began his own ministry. Paul identifies this James as the Lord's brother although he is really a half brother as Christ was conceived of the Holy Ghost and James by Joseph their earthly father.

## **JAMES – Half brother of Jesus**



- **Galatians 1:18**  
Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.
- **19** But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

James knew the teachings of Jesus but was not one of the disciples chosen and called by Jesus into his ministry. He was not one of the 12 or even one of the 70. Perhaps this alienation by Jesus of his brother by not choosing him is part of the reason that the family of Jesus attempted some sort of intervention early in Christ's ministry.

His mother and brothers and sisters came to see him and Jesus refused to meet with them and made a stern separation between his allegiance. His family were those who follow, understand and believe. The ministry of Christ did not have time to be undermined by extended family expectations. They had to learn to respect Jesus, not as a sibling, but as their Lord.

### **- Jesus had Siblings -**

- **Matthew 12:46** While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.
- **47** Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.
- **48** But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?
- **49** And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!
- **50** For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Even though Jesus did not choose any of his siblings, not even James, to be among his official disciples I think it was necessary so that Jesus could minister without the complications that close family bring. I don't think Jesus wanted family members telling everyone about Jesus as they knew him. He wanted his disciples to be preaching the gospel kingdom, adoring him as the Messiah not as their big brother. These are my assumptions. The Bible does not go into any detail about what this family meeting was to be about or why Jesus did not bring James on at the onset of his ministry.

It was not because James did not believe Jesus was the Messiah as some contend. Jesus allowed his mother to accompany him during his ministry and his brothers eagerly wanted to accompany Jesus to festivals in Jerusalem (Just like old times) but Christ could not be distracted from his ministry to the people.

## Jesus Turns Water into Wine

- Appears in John 1:2-10 in the Bible.
- Jesus attends a wedding in Cana, when they run out of wine.
- He instructs the servants to fill the empty containers with water.
- When they dip out the water to serve it, it has become fine wine.
- This is the first miracle that Jesus does.



It had to be difficult for James to be set aside like this but I assume he was the second oldest male in the family and the family business and affairs would have been on his shoulders.

I think James believed with his whole heart and that it was his earnest desire to be one of the chosen disciples. The home base for Christ's ministry was at the Synagogue in Capernaum not too far from Nazareth where his family lived.

At the start of his ministry Jesus attended a family wedding in Cana which is between Nazareth and Capernaum. This is when Jesus turned the water into wine. James would have been involved in this. When the wedding was over Jesus' entire family followed him to Capernaum where Jesus taught in the Synagogue.

John 2:12

**After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples:**

James was a popular name and there were at least two James among the disciples, one, James the brother of John, son of Zebedee. was one of the 12. There is another James, the son of Alphaus.

Jesus made a special appearance after his resurrection to his half brother James. 1 Corinthians 15:7



**After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.**

How do we know that this James was the brother of Jesus? Because Paul had only met Peter and James. He also specifies which James by separating James from the rest of the apostles. James was not one of the 12 apostles although he is considered to be an apostle in the sense that James was well taught by his older brother and Jesus appeared to him physically after the resurrection. The schooling Jesus gave his brother was so superior to the understanding of even the 12 who followed him throughout his ministry as the inner circle that they appointed James to be the Bishop of the church, the chief elder.

So it is a big mistake to write off the family of Jesus as being unsupportive of his ministry. Whatever was going on when Jesus refused to meet with them I suspect it was more a matter of them needing Jesus too much and attempting to place expectations on him that would be interruptive of his ministry. They had to accept that things were different now.

I believe we need to hold the book of James in the highest regard. The writings of Paul need to be processed through the words of Christ and balanced on the scale of James.

*Tomorrow we will study why the antinomian crowd wishes James was not in the Bible.* **This study taken from Sermon preached 2/28/21**