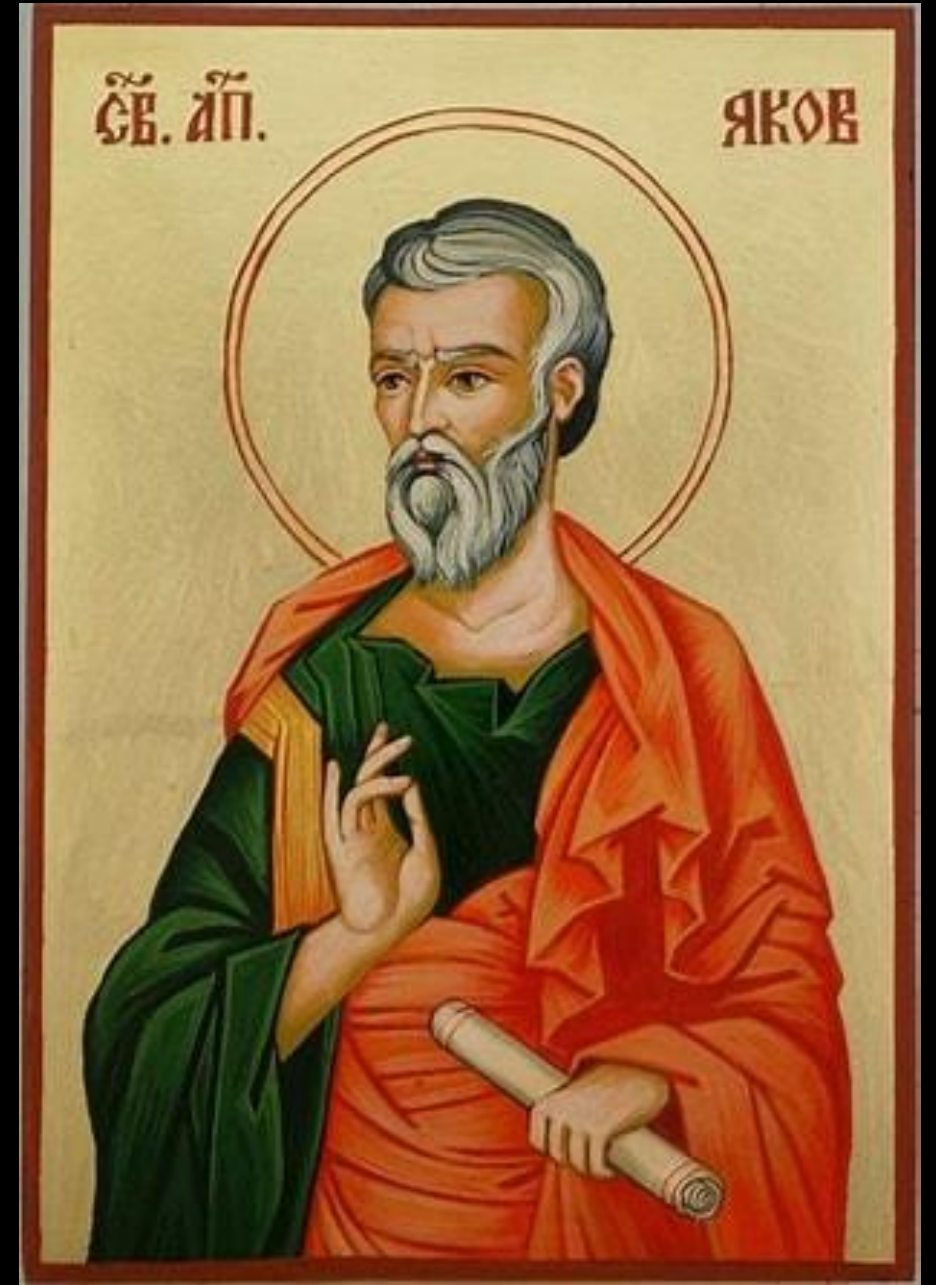


The Letter of James



General Epistles

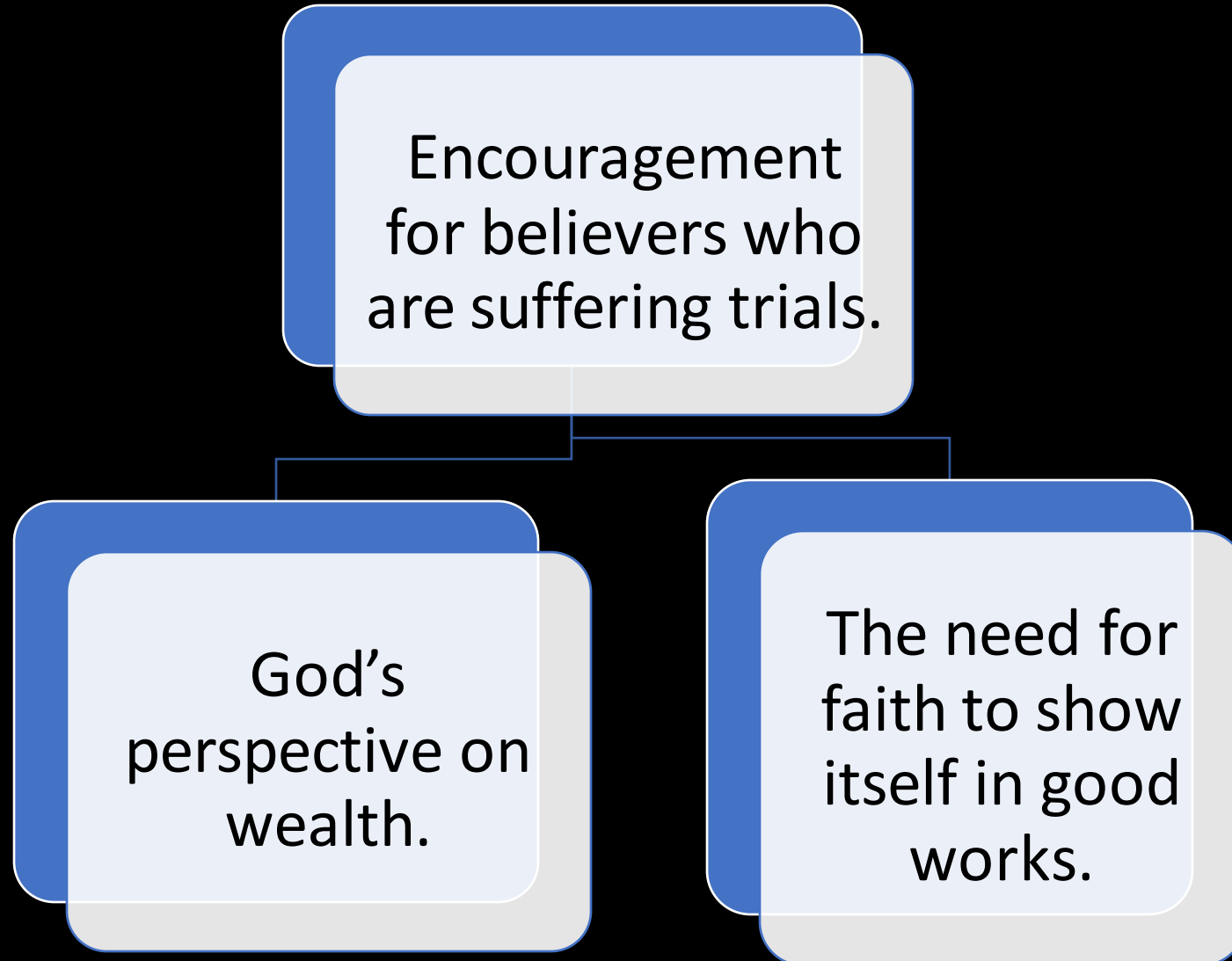
- James
- 1 & 2 Peter
- 1, 2, & 3 John
- Jude

Often referred to as the General Epistles, because they seem to speak to the Christian church in general, rather than to specific churches.

***Overall
theme of
this letter***

A call to believers
to commit themselves
wholeheartedly to God

Three subordinate themes might be:



Thematic Approach to The Letter of James

1:1-27 Perseverance

2:1-26 Faith

3:1-18 Restraint

4:1-17 Submission

5:1-20 Patience

Chapter 1: *Perseverance*

I. Greeting (1:1)

I. The Testing of Faith (1:2-18)

- A. Joy in trials (1:2-4)
- B. Wisdom from God's trials (1:5-8)
- C. The place of rich and poor before God (1:9-11)
- D. Reward for those who endure (1:12)
- E. The process of temptation (1:13-18)

II. Hearing and Doing the Word (1:19-27)

- A. Hearers of the Word (1:19-21)
- B. Doers of the Word (1:22-25)
- C. True, practical religion (1:26-27)

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings. **2** Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, **3** for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. **4** And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. **5** If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. **6** But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. **7** For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; **8** he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. **9** Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, **10** and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. **11** For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits. **12** Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

MESSAGE

1 I, James, am a slave of God and the Master Jesus, writing to the twelve tribes scattered to Kingdom Come: Hello! **2** Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. **3** You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. **4** So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work, so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way. **5** If you don't know what you're doing, pray to the Father. He loves to help. You'll get his help and won't be condescended to when you ask for it. **6** Ask boldly, believingly, without a second thought. People who "worry their prayers" are like wind-whipped waves. **7** Don't think you're going to get anything from the Master that way, **8** adrift at sea, keeping all your options open. **9** When down-and-outers get a break, cheer! **10** And when the arrogant rich are brought down to size, cheer! Prosperity is as short-lived as a wildflower, so don't ever count on it. **11** You know that as soon as the sun rises, pouring down its scorching heat, the flower withers. Its petals wilt and, before you know it, that beautiful face is a barren stem. Well, that's a picture of the "prosperous life." At the very moment everyone is looking on in admiration, it fades away to nothing. **12** Anyone who meets a testing challenge head-on and manages to stick it out is mighty fortunate. For such persons loyally in love with God, the reward is life and more life.

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The Setting of James

c. A.D. 40–45

The epistle of James was likely written to predominantly Jewish Christian house churches outside of Palestine, based on its mention of the “twelve tribes in the Dispersion” (1:1), its distinctly Jewish content, and its focus on persecution and poverty. This would mean it was sent throughout most of the ancient Mediterranean world. The author has traditionally been believed to be James the Just, the half-brother of Jesus and an early leader of the church in Jerusalem.



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ESV

13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. **14** But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. **15** Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. **16** Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. **17** Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. **18** Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

MESSAGE

13 Don't let anyone under pressure to give in to evil say, "God is trying to trip me up." God is impervious to evil, and puts evil in no one's way. **14** The temptation to give in to evil comes from us and only us. We have no one to blame but the leering, seducing flare-up of our own lust. **15** Lust gets pregnant, and has a baby: sin! Sin grows up to adulthood, and becomes a real killer. **16** So, my very dear friends, don't get thrown off course. **17** Every desirable and beneficial gift comes out of heaven. The gifts are rivers of light cascading down from the Father of Light. There is nothing deceitful in God, nothing two-faced, nothing fickle. **18** He brought us to life using the true Word, showing us off as the crown of all his creatures.

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ESV

19 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; **20** for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. **21** Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. **22** But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. **23** For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. **24** For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. **25** But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing. **26** If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. **27** Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

MESSAGE

19 Post this at all the intersections, dear friends: Lead with your ears, follow up with your tongue, and let anger straggle along in the rear. **20** God's righteousness doesn't grow from human anger. **21** So throw all spoiled virtue and cancerous evil in the garbage. In simple humility, let our gardener, God, landscape you with the Word, making a salvation-garden of your life. **22** Don't fool yourself into thinking that you are a listener when you are anything but, letting the Word go in one ear and out the other. Act on what you hear! **23** Those who hear and don't act are like those who glance in the mirror, **24** walk away, and two minutes later have no idea who they are, what they look like. **25** But whoever catches a glimpse of the revealed counsel of God - the free life! - even out of the corner of his eye, and sticks with it, is no distracted scatterbrain but a man or woman of action. That person will find delight and affirmation in the action. **26** Anyone who sets himself up as "religious" by talking a good game is self-deceived. This kind of religion is hot air and only hot air. **27** Real religion, the kind that passes muster before God the Father, is this: Reach out to the homeless and loveless in their plight, and guard against corruption from the godless world.

ESV

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Questions?
Comments?



See Ya!

Go In Peace