

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

Trinity Bible Church

October 4, 2005

The Outline

The epistle can be read slowly and thoughtfully and prayerfully in twenty minutes.

It may be that this was the first book of the NT to be written. The date given by A. T. Robertson is before A.D. 49 in the light of the details in the epistle.

I. The Writer and the Recipients of the Epistle (James 1:1).

It is generally agreed that it was James, the Lord's half-brother, mentioned in Matthew 13:55, probably the first child that Joseph and Mary had together. He became very prominent in the early church, the head of the council in Jerusalem which is mentioned in Acts 15. But he was not an apostle.

II. The Brethren Under Trials and Temptations (James 1:2-16).

Trials and Temptations in God's Family

The word "brethren," or *brothers*, is used by James fifteen times throughout the epistle: 4x "brethren," 8x, "my brethren," 3x, "my beloved brethren." Thus he was addressing them as a brother in the same family, and on the same level as they were, in the family of God.

The note of trials and testings runs through the epistle, as well as the need for faith and patience, and for continued obedience to the Lord.

III. The Brethren and the Word of God (James 1:17-27).

The Father - His will and His Word (James 1:17-27).

The key verse of the epistle: James 1:22 (read verses 23-25 with it).

IV. The Brethren and Their Neighbors (James 2:1-13).

Verse 8 is the theme of this section.

V. The Brethren and Salvation – the Relationship between Faith and Works (James 2:14-26).

The Relationship between Faith and Works in God's Family

In this section we have the first of five references to OT saints: Abraham (vv. 21-23) and Rahab (v. 25). The other three are in chapter 5: the OT prophets (v. 10), Job (v. 11), Elijah (vv. 17-18).

VI. The Brethren and Their Tongues (James 3:1-12).

VII. Who Are Wise Brethren? (James 3:13-18).

Identifying a wise man

VIII. The Life of the Brethren – what it is not, and what it is (James 4:1-17).

Worldliness and how to deal with it.

IX. An Indictment of the Rich (James 5:1-6).

X. An Appeal for Patience (James 5:7-11).

XI. Closing Exhortations (James 5:12-20).