

James Overview Notes

1:1 –

Written to Jews meeting in Synagogues around the Middle East and Mediterranean World

1:2-4 –

TRIALS!

These trials test your faith to produce STEADFASTNESS!

Steadfastness leads you to being:

PERFECT viewpoint,

COMPLETE,

LACKING NOTHING

As a mature believer in Christ.

BE JOYFUL IN TRIALS!

1:5-8 –

If being “joyful in trials” doesn’t make sense to your worldly viewpoint, then

ASK GOD FOR WISDOM to understand with the divine viewpoint!

God will give you generously the divine viewpoint.

But, you have to be willing to accept the divine viewpoint.

If you waiver between the human, worldly viewpoint and the divine viewpoint you should plan on never receiving this wisdom to understand trials.

You are wavering between two viewpoints.

Nothing will make sense.

You will not be steadfast.

You will not mature.

You will not be perfect in your wisdom.

You will not be complete.

You will always be lacking understanding.

1:9-11 –

Divine Viewpoint:

Lowly on earth is EXALTATION in God’s kingdom.

Rich on earth is humiliation when God’s kingdom comes.

Why?

Worldly riches, power, positions fade like flowers when God’s glory appears

1:12 –

TRIALS → STEADFAST in test of life → CROWN OF LIFE

1:13-18 –

DO NOT BE DECEIVED!

God's good things come from above (things like wisdom)

Worldly things are not temptations from God because "worldly things" can't come from God.

You are tempted by worldly things because you are:

- Lured by your lust
- Enticed by your desire for the world
- This gives birth to sin
- Sin leads to death

From ABOVE God offers you:

- Good gifts
- Perfect gifts
- From Father of Lights

(not light of this world with shadows and variation
due to constant movement of sun, moon, planets)

- For example:

the WORD OF TRUTH brought you forth
out of this creation into his Kingdom as a firstfruits of this creation

1:19-21 –

OK, so, it comes down to this to produce RIGHTEOUSNESS in this unstable age:

Here's how you live in God's WISDOM in this WORLD –

- BE QUICK TO HEAR when there is a trial, conflict, irritation
- BE SLOW TO SPEAK when there is a trial, conflict, irritation
- BE SLOW TO ANGER when there is a trial, conflict, irritation
- IN MEEKNESS RECEIVE THE IMPLANTED WORD!!

This will save your souls!

Becoming instantly angry produces worldly filthiness and rampant wickedness! NO!!

If you do you have not received the implanted word given to the believer.

1:22-26 –

DO THE WORD!

Those who hear the Word, but do not do it are deceiving themselves concerning religion.

AGAIN: If you HEAR the WORD and PERSERVERE in trials YOU ARE BLESSED!

But, if your RELIGION allows you to shoot-off-your-mouth (unbridled tongue) in the world during trials
your religion is worthless. You have listened to the Word, but not humbly. You have not changed.

BREAKDOWN CHART

	CONTRASTS between worldly believers and wise believers when facing TRIALS and opposition from the world	
ZEALOTS ("patriots", worldly)		BELIEVERS (humble, wisdom)
Anger		Quick to Listen
Filthiness		Slow to Speak
Wickedness		Slow to Anger
= WORTHLESS RELIGION - tongue creates conflict - deceived heart makes strife		= RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD, - Unstained by world - Visit afflicted

Chapter 2

In the Synagogue there are "Hearers Only" and "Hearers and Doers" (Faith in Messiah)

2:1-7 –

As a believer in God Jesus the Messiah show no partiality in your synagogue service, for example.

If you distinguish people according to their worldly appearance and do not take into account their standing in the Kingdom of God:

- 1) You have already failed to have wisdom from above
- 2) You are acting like judges evaluating people
- 3) You do not realize the humble, poor can be the exalted, glorified in the Kingdom of God
- 4) You are worldly honoring those who are worldly and powerful in the world.
- 5) FOOLS! These are the same people who are persecuting you for not being worldly:
 - a. They use the court system to cancel you and shut you down
 - b. They blaspheme the Messiah, that the nation rejected!

2:8-13 –

You have failed the "Royal Law" of the Messiah, or the Jesus Creed:

- Deuteronomy 6:4-5 – *"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."*
- Leviticus 19:18 – *"You shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord."*

2:14-26 –

- Someone has faith, but no works = "a hearer only"
 - o Zealots had faith in Messiah for this age, this world. But, so do demons (2:19)
 - o Zealots lived like the kingdom was now, of this world, a worldly power.
 - o Zealots would honor the Law, but they would murder the Roman opposition and anyone they considered a weak link in their agenda (but, they would not commit adultery, etc.)
 - o Zealots favored the rich, powerful, influential, but shun the weak, poor, insignificant

- Hear the Law of Liberty (Gospel), but showed no mercy.
- Someone has works = “a hearer and doer”
 - Hear the Law of Liberty (Gospel):
 - Showed mercy
 - Mercy triumphs over judgment
 - Forgiving
 - They live for the coming kingdom like Abraham and Rahab did

Chapter 3 and 4

Summary so far:

1:4 – “let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be **perfect** and complete, lacking in nothing.”

1:19 – “be quick to hear, **slow to speak**, slow to anger”

1:26 – “**bridle the tongue**”

3:3 – If anyone **does not stumble in what he says**, he is **a perfect man**, able also to bridle his whole body.”

3:1-12 –

Teachers, Words, Tongue

We all stumble in many ways

If you can avoid stumbling in what you say, then you will be able to bridle your whole body.

Like:

Bits in a horse

Rudder on a ship

Small fire in a forest.

Tongue sets whole course of life on fire

Tongue is set on fire by hell.

Animals can be tamed, but tongue cannot be trained.

Naturally, fresh spring gives fresh water

Fig tree gives figs

Grapevine gives grapes

Olive tree gives olives

Salt pond gives salt

Tongue is unnatural it can give both cursing and blessing!

3:13-18-4:1-17 –

So, what do we do? Ask God for Wisdom from Above! (1:5). Ask for spiritual growth, maturity!

Without Wisdom	TONGUE	With Wisdom
Mind is earthly		From Above (asked for 1:5)
Mind is unspiritual		Understanding
Mind is demonic		Good conduct
Speaking or boasting of Bitter Jealousy		Works
Speaking or boasting of Selfish Ambition		Meekness (opposite of “boasting”)
Speaking False truth		Pure
Producing Quarrels		Peaceable
Producing Fights		Gentle
From Passions warring inside		Open to Reason
Murder from unfulfilled desire		Full of Mercy
Fights from coveting		Full of Good Fruits
Quarrels from coveting		Impartial
• So, you need WISDOM!		Sincere
• ASK GOD (as 1:5) - “who gives generously!”		HARVEST OF RIGHTEOUSNESS sown in peace by those who make peace

- But, you ask with **WRONG MOTIVES** (4:3)
- because of **YOUR PASSIONS!** (4:3) – go back up to “From Passions warring inside” to repeat!
- **ADULTEROUS PEOPLE** (4:4) – people wanting God to help them get the world and be worldly
- You are an **ENEMY OF GOD** (4:4)

----- **“BUT HE GIVES MORE GRACE”** (4:6) -----

- “Submit yourselves to God” (4:7)
- “Resist the devil. He will flee” (4:7)
- “Draw near to God. He will draw near to you!” (4:8)
- “Cleanse your hands, sinners” (4:8)
- “Purify your hearts, you double-minded” (4:8)
“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. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.” – 1:6-8
- Concerning your rejection of **your place in the world**:
 - “be wretched” (4:9)
 - “mourn” (4:9)
 - “weep” (4:9)
 - “laughter to mourning” (4:9)
 - “joy to gloom” (4:9)
- “Humble yourself before the Lord!” (4:10)
- “He will exalt you!” (4:10) to **your place in the KINGDOM**
- Now, concerning “speaking” and the tongue:
 - “Do not speak evil against one another brothers” (4:11)
 - Judging a brother is speaking evil against the Law and judging the Law (4:11)

- Do not say...(4:13)
 - Today or tomorrow (4:14)
 - This or that town (4:14)
 - This amount of time (4:14)
 - Trade and profit (4:14)
- Remember, “YOU DO NOT KNOW”...”YOU ARE A MIST” (4:14)
- “You boast in your arrogance...it is evil” (4:16)
- “DO SAY”
 - “IF THE LORD WILLS, WE WILL....” (4:15)

Chapter 5

Closing Summary

5:1-6 –

Call for repentance to the worldly rich people

5:7-12 –

Encouragement and reminder to the wise believer:

- Concerning being patient in trials (as in chapter 1)
- Remain humble in speaking. Do not boast with confidence like the world

5:13-18 –

Pray if suffering.
Sing praise if cheerful.
Call for prayer if sick.

5:19-20 –

If someone wanders from this TRUTH bring the SINNER back.
Save his soul from death
Cover a multitude of sins.