

# **JAMES**

**GUIDELINES FOR A HAPPY CHRISTIAN LIFE**

# ABOUT JAMES

- Author

- James (Jacob) the half-brother of Jesus
  - Also known as James the Just
- He became a key leader in the Jerusalem church
  - Called one of the “pillars” of that church, along with Peter and John (Gal. 2:9)
- Written between 44-49 AD

# ABOUT JAMES

- Who was it written for?
  - Jewish believers that had been dispersed
    - Possibly as a result of Stephen's martyrdom (Acts 7, AD 31-24)
    - Most likely due to persecution under Herod Agrippa (Acts 12, AD 44)

# ABOUT JAMES

- Theological Themes

- Proverbs of the New Testament

- Devotion to direct, pungent statements on wise living, similar to the book of Proverbs.
    - Practical emphasis, stressing not theoretical knowledge but godly behavior.

- Uses at least 30 references to nature (ex: 1:6, 3:7, 5:18)

- This befits someone who spent a great deal of time outdoors.

- Complements Paul's emphasis on justification by faith with his own emphasis on spiritual fruitfulness.

# JAMES

- Interpretive Challenges

- At least 2 significant texts challenge the interpreter.
  - 1) 2:14-26, what is the relationship between faith and works? Does James's emphasis on works contradict Paul's focus on faith?
  - 2) 5:13-18, do the promises of healing refer to the spiritual or the physical realm?

# JAMES

- Jacob
  - Many scholars believe the name properly translated would be Jacob and not James.