

# The Sources and the Sequences of Salvation

## Chapter 4 New Testament Audio Lesson #76



Objective: To introduce the book of James and learn about the source of trials



*Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him... Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.*

—James 1:2-5, 12

With the book of James, we come to a new section in the New Testament classification of books: the general epistles or letters. The general epistles, written by more than one author, were not addressed to specific readers. Filled with practical application, the book of James has been called the Proverbs of the New Testament, because it contains seemingly unrelated nuggets of truth and wisdom. The author was very familiar with Jesus' teachings, and like Jesus, he was concerned with the source of things: the motive or attitude behind an act.

Many scholars think that the author of James was not a disciple but actually the younger brother of Jesus. Scripture notes that Jesus' brothers did not believe in Him. After the Resurrection, however, Jesus appeared to many people, including James, who was apparently converted then. An extremely devoted Jew, James' nickname was "camel knees," because he spent so much time praying on his knees that they had become calloused. He was highly respected by Jews and Christians alike. He rapidly became a major leader of the church in Jerusalem, along with Peter and John. He presided over the Council of Jerusalem, which ruled that Jewish Christians could retain their Jewishness but that Gentile believers did not have to become Jews in order to be Christians.

In his book, James tells us that life is made up of tests and trials. When storms come, we should not resent them but welcome them. James implies that storms come from God—or at least with his permission – to grow us. God wants us to realize that when we lack wisdom, we should turn to Him. If we ask God for wisdom, He will share it with us. When we apply wisdom, we discover that this trust of faith leads us to the triumph of faith, or the crown of life.



1. True or False: The author of James was a close friend and disciple of Jesus.
2. True or False: The epistle of James was written to a specific audience.
3. True or False: The book of James has been called the Proverbs of the New Testament.
4. True or False: James was not concerned with the source of things.

*Choose all answers that apply.*

5. What are some characteristics of James's epistle?
  - a. Practical application
  - b. Nuggets of truth
  - c. A commentary on the teachings of Jesus
  - d. Refers often to Paul's teaching
6. Why was this author saturated with the teachings of Jesus?
  - a. James was one of Jesus' disciples.
  - b. James was Jesus' brother.
  - c. Paul taught him everything he knew.
  - d. Jesus appeared to James individually after the Resurrection.
7. Why did James quickly become a great leader of the church in Jerusalem, along with Peter and John?
  - a. People were impressed that he was Jesus' brother.
  - b. The other leaders were martyred so he took over.
  - c. He was a well-respected Jew before converting.
  - d. He spent a lot of time praying.

8. James presided over the Council of Jerusalem. What issue did the Council rule upon?
  - a. Who would be the next leader of the church.
  - b. How the temple would be rebuilt.
  - c. Whether John or Peter were the greatest.
  - d. Whether Gentile believers had to convert to Judaism in order to be Christians.
  
9. All of the general epistles, including the book of James, address one issue of the early church that still applies today. What is that?
  - a. Apostasy
  - b. Jesus' identity
  - c. Suffering of Christians
  - d. Marriage
  
10. Consider James 1:2-5, 12 again. Why is perseverance important?
  - a. Impresses others
  - b. Leads to maturity
  - c. Shows you are a good Christian
  - d. Means you are stubborn
  
11. What does God promise to those who persevere in spite of trials?
  - a. No more trials
  - b. Revenge on those who hurt them
  - c. A quick resolution of the trial
  - d. The crown of life
  
12. Where does the temptation to sin originate?
  - a. Other people
  - b. God
  - c. Satan
  - d. Our own lustful desires



How do you think we should respond when we face trials?

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In James 1:2-5 and 12, how does the trust of faith lead us to the triumph of faith?

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Thank God for being with you always, even during trials. Ask God to help you to persevere and to trust Him in the difficulties you face. Thank Him that He is your heavenly Father and that you can come to Him with anything. Ask Him for wisdom. Thank Him for new life because of your salvation.



## Going Deeper

1. How would you explain and apply why the author of this letter was revered by followers of Jesus and devout Jews in the first century of the church? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. How do you explain and apply why James instructed us to count it all joy when we have many trials? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. How do you personally apply the way James instructed us to respond to trials when we are so overwhelmed that we don't know what to do? (1:5) \_\_\_\_\_

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4. How do you explain and personally apply what James teaches about the trial of faith, the test of faith, and the triumph of faith? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. How do you explain and personally apply what, according to James, is the source of our temptation to sin? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Explain and personally apply why, when Jesus was raised from the dead, one of the first people He appeared to was James? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. How do you explain and personally apply the parallels between the book of James and the Old Testament book of Proverbs? \_\_\_\_\_

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