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GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Living Faith: Introduction to the Book of James (James 1:1)

TEACHING SUMMARY

This teaching introduces the Book of James by examining its author, date, recipients, and major themes. It presents the letter as instruction for living out authentic faith in Yeshua.

The teaching identifies James, the brother of Yeshua, as the most likely author. His leadership in the Jerusalem community and linguistic similarities with Acts support this conclusion.

James was martyred around 62 AD, so the letter could not have been written later. The teaching adopts a likely date of 42–44 AD during persecution under Herod Agrippa I.

The recipients are addressed as the twelve tribes in the Dispersion. The teaching understands this as referring primarily to dispersed Messianic Jews, while allowing that Gentile believers were also included.

James is presented as a prominent Jerusalem leader known as James the Just. His reputation is connected with virtue, Torah commitment, and his insistence that believers be doers of the perfect law of liberty.

The teaching concludes that James calls followers of Yeshua to active faith, obedience, and good works. Studying the letter should encourage believers to live as doers of God's law.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The letter is addressed to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion.
- James is identified with the Hebrew name Jacob.
- James the brother of Yeshua is the most likely author.
- James was a leader of the Jerusalem believing community.
- The teaching adopts a likely date of 42–44 AD.

- The recipients were primarily Messianic Jews.
- Gentile believers may also have been among the recipients.
- James was known as James the Just.
- James strongly affirmed the ongoing validity of Torah.
- The letter calls believers to be doers, not hearers only.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

Basic

1. The letter is addressed to the twelve _____ in the Dispersion.
2. James is the brother of _____.
3. James was a prominent leader in the church of _____.
4. The teaching dates the letter approximately to _____–44 AD.
5. James was also known as James the _____.
6. James calls the Torah the perfect law of _____.

Challenging

1. The Greek name translated James corresponds to the Hebrew name _____.
2. James was martyred around _____ AD.
3. The Roman governor who preceded Albinus was _____.
4. James's speech and letter are compared with Acts chapter _____.
5. The Greek word for synagogue is _____.
6. Paul called James a _____ of the early believing community.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does the teaching identify James the brother of Yeshua as the most likely author?
2. What evidence supports the proposed early date of the letter?
3. How does the phrase twelve tribes in the Dispersion connect with the restoration of Israel?
4. Why does the teaching include both Messianic Jews and possible Gentile believers among the recipients?
5. How is James's reputation as James the Just connected with Torah obedience?

6. What does it mean in this teaching to be a doer rather than merely a hearer?

ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

Basic

1. tribes
2. Yeshua
3. Jerusalem
4. 42
5. Just
6. liberty

Challenging

1. Jacob
2. 62
3. Festus
4. 15
5. synagōgē
6. pillar