



Greek NT

3:1> Μὴ πολλοὶ διδάσκα-
λοι γίνεσθε, ἀδελφοί μου,
εἰδότες ὅτι μεῖζον κρίμα
λημψόμεθα. <3:2> πολλὰ
γὰρ πταίομεν ἅπαντες.
εἴ τις ἐν λόγῳ οὐ πταίει,
οὗτος τέλειος ἀνὴρ δυνατὸς
χαλιναγωγῆσαι καὶ ὄλον
τὸ σῶμα. <3:3> εἰ δὲ τῶν
ἵππων τοὺς χαλινοὺς εἰς
τὰ στόματα βάλλομεν εἰς
τὸ πείθεσθαι αὐτοὺς ἡμῖν,
καὶ ὄλον τὸ σῶμα αὐτῶν
μετάγομεν. <3:4> ἰδοὺ καὶ
τὰ πλοῖα τηλικαῦτα ὄντα
καὶ ὑπὸ ἀνέμων σκληρῶν
ἐλαυνόμενα, μέταγεται ὑπὸ
ἐλαχίστου πηδαλίου ὅπου ἡ
ὀρμὴ τοῦ εὐθύνοντος βου-
λεται, <3:5> οὕτως καὶ ἡ
γλῶσσα μικρὸν μέλος ἐστὶν
καὶ μεγάλα ἀυχεῖ.

Ἴδοὺ ἡλίκον πῦρ ἡλίκη
ῦλην ἀνάπτει. <3:6> καὶ ἡ
γλῶσσα πῦρ· ὁ κόσμος τῆς
ἀδικίας ἡ γλῶσσα καθι-
σταται ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν,
ἡ σπιλοῦσα ὄλον τὸ σῶμα
καὶ φλογίζουσα τὸν τροχὸν
τῆς γενέσεως καὶ ογιζομένη
ὑπὸ τῆς γεέννης. <3:7> πᾶσα
γὰρ φύσις θηρίων τε καὶ
πετεινῶν, ἐρπετῶν τε καὶ
ἐναλίων δαμάζεται καὶ δε-
δάμασαι τῇ φύσει τῇ ἀνθρ-
ωπίνῃ, <3:8> τὴν δὲ γλῶσσαν
οὐδεὶς δαμάσαι δύναται
ἀνθρώπων, ἀκατάστατον κα-
κόν, μεστή ἰοῦ θανατηφόρου.
<3:9> ἐν αὐτῇ εὐλογοῦμεν τὸν
κύριον καὶ πατέρα καὶ ἐν
αὐτῇ καταρώμεθα τοὺς ἀν-
θρώπους τοὺς καθ' ὁμοίωσιν
θεοῦ γεγονότας, <3:10> ἐκ
τοῦ αὐτοῦ στόματος ἐξέρχ-
εται εὐλογία καὶ κατάρα.
οὐ χρῆ, ἀδελφοί μου, ταῦτα
οὕτως γίνεσθαι. <3:11> μήτι ἡ
πηγὴ ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς ὀπῆς βρυ-
εῖ τὸ γλυκὺ καὶ τὸ πικρὸν;
<3:12> μὴ δύναται, ἀδελφοί
μου, σικκὴ ἐλαίας ποιῆσαι ἢ
ἄμπελος σῦκα; οὔτε ἀλυκὸν
γλυκὺ ποιῆσαι ὕδωρ.

The Letter of James

Bible Study Session 7

James 3:1-12

Hoffnung für Alle

¹Liebe Brüder und Schwest-
ern! Es sollten sich nicht so
viele in der Gemeinde danach
drängen, andere im Glauben
zu unterweisen. Denn
ihr wisst ja: Wer andere lehrt,
wird von Gott nach besonders
strengen Maßstäben beurteilt.
²Und machen wir nicht alle immer
wieder Fehler? Wem es
freilich gelingt, nie ein verkehr-
tes Wort zu sagen, den
kann man als vollkommen
bezeichnen. Denn wer seine
Zunge im Zaum hält, der kann
auch seinen ganzen Körper
beherrschen. ³So legen wir
zum Beispiel den Pferden
das Zaumzeug ins Maul und
beherrschen sie damit. ⁴Und
selbst die großen Schiffe,
die nur von starken Winden
vorangetrieben werden können,
lenkt der Steuermann mit
einem kleinen Ruder, wohin
er will. ⁵Genauso ist es mit un-
serer Zunge. So klein sie auch
ist, so groß ist ihre Wirkung!

Ein kleiner Funke setzt ein-
en ganzen Wald in Brand. ⁶Mit
einem solchen Feuer lässt sich
auch die Zunge vergleichen.
Sie kann eine ganze Welt
voller Ungerechtigkeit und
Bosheit sein. Sie vergiftet uns
und unser Leben, sie steckt
unsere ganze Umgebung
in Brand, und sie selbst ist
vom Feuer der Hölle entzün-
det. ⁷Die Menschen haben
es gelernt, wilde Tiere, Vögel,
Schlangen und Fische zu zäh-
men und unter ihre Gewalt zu
bringen. ⁸Aber seine Zunge
kann kein Mensch zähmen.
Ungebändigt verbreitet sie ihr
tödliches Gift. ⁹Mit unserer
Zunge loben wir Gott, unseren
Herrn und Vater, und mit der-
selben Zunge verfluchen wir
unsere Mitmenschen, die
doch nach Gottes Ebenbild
geschaffen sind. ¹⁰Segen und
Fluch kommen aus ein und
demselben Mund. Aber genau
das, meine lieben Brüder und
Schwestern, darf es bei euch
nicht geben! ¹¹Fließt denn
aus einer Quelle gleichzeitig
frisches und ungenießbares
Wasser? ¹²Kann man Oliven
von Feigenbäumen pflücken
oder Feigen vom Weinstock?
Ebenso wenig kann man aus
einer salzigen Quelle frisches
Wasser schöpfen.

NRSV

1 Not many of you should
become teachers, my broth-
ers and sisters, for you know
that we who teach will be
judged with greater strict-
ness. 2 For all of us make
many mistakes. Anyone
who makes no mistakes in
speaking is perfect, able to
keep the whole body in
check with a bridle. 3 If we
put bits into the mouths of
horses to make them obey
us, we guide their whole
bodies. 4 Or look at ships:
though they are so large
that it takes strong winds
to drive them, yet they are
guided by a very small rud-
der wherever the will of the
pilot directs. 5 So also the
tongue is a small member,
yet it boasts of great ex-
ploits.

How great a forest is
set ablaze by a small
fire! 6 And the tongue is a
fire. The tongue is placed
among our members as a
world of iniquity; it stains
the whole body, sets on fire
the cycle of nature, and is
itself set on fire by hell. 7
For every species of beast
and bird, of reptile and sea
creature, can be tamed and
has been tamed by the hu-
man species, 8 but no one
can tame the tongue — a
restless evil, full of deadly
poison. 9 With it we bless
the Lord and Father, and
with it we curse those who
are made in the likeness
of God. 10 From the same
mouth come blessing and
cursing. My brothers and
sisters, this ought not to be
so. 11 Does a spring pour
forth from the same open-
ing both fresh and brackish
water? 12 Can a fig tree,
my brothers and sisters,
yield olives, or a grapevine
figs? No more can salt wa-
ter yield fresh.

Study By

Lorin L Cranford

NLT

1 Dear brothers and
sisters, not many of you
should become teachers
in the church, for we who
teach will be judged by God
with greater strictness. 2
We all make many mis-
takes, but those who con-
trol their tongues can also
control themselves in every
other way. 3 We can make
a large horse turn around
and go wherever we want
by means of a small bit in
its mouth. 4 And a tiny rud-
der makes a huge ship turn
wherever the pilot wants
it to go, even though the
winds are strong. 5 So also,
the tongue is a small thing,
but what enormous dam-
age it can do.

A tiny spark can set a
great forest on fire. 6 And
the tongue is a flame of fire.
It is full of wickedness that
can ruin your whole life. It
can turn the entire course
of your life into a blazing
flame of destruction, for it
is set on fire by hell itself. 7
People can tame all kinds
of animals and birds and
reptiles and fish, 8 but no
one can tame the tongue. It
is an uncontrollable evil, full
of deadly poison. 9 Some-
times it praises our Lord
and Father, and sometimes
it breaks out into curses
against those who have
been made in the image of
God. 10 And so blessing and
cursing come pouring out of
the same mouth. Surely, my
brothers and sisters, this is
not right! 11 Does a spring
of water bubble out with
both fresh water and bitter
water? 12 Can you pick ol-
ives from a fig tree or figs
from a grapevine? No, and
you can't draw fresh water
from a salty pool.

^{3.4} Note,
although very large
and
driven by fierce winds,
(77) **the ships are also guided**
by the smallest of rudders
wherever the will of the pilot chooses;

^{3.5} so also
(78) **the tongue is a small member**
and

(79) ----- **boasts great things.**

(80) **Notice how a small fire kindles a huge forest;**
and

The tongue's power to destroy, vv. 5b-12

(81) **the tongue is a fire.**

(82) **An iniquitous world the tongue proves itself among our members,**
which stains the entire body
and
sets on fire the wheel of our life,
and
is itself set on fire
by Gehenna.

^{3.7} For
(83) **every kind of wild animal...is being tamed**
and
bird
and
reptile
and
sea creature

and
(84) -----...**has been tamed**
by mankind.

^{3.8} but
(85) **the tongue no one of men can tame;**
an unruly evil,
full of deadly poison.

^{3.9} With it
(86) **we praise the Lord**
and Father,

and
(87) **we curse men,**
who are created in God's image;

^{3.10} out of the same mouth
(88) **comes praise**
and
curse.

My brothers,
(89) **these things ought not to be!**

^{3.11} Out of the same opening
(90) **the spring certainly does not pour forth both sweet and bitter water, does it?**

^{3.12} My brothers,
(91) **a fig tree is not able to produce olives, is it?**

Or
(92) **a grapevine figs?**

Neither
(93) **can a salt spring produce fresh water.**

Summary:

A couple of rhetorical issues are present in this pericope. Let's see if we can unpack them and then make clear sense out of what the text is trying to say.

First, the issue of statement 73 needs to be treated. One possibility is to see this as the topic sentence for the entire passage. If so taken, then the passage has to be understood as a warning to those in the community of faith

