

The Letter of James¹
Bible Study Session One
Introduction and James 1:1

Overview of the Contents of the book:

STRUCTURAL OUTLINE OF TEXT
Of James²

HEADING:	STATEMENT:	REFERENCE:
PRAESCRIPTIO		1.1
BODY	1-194	1.2-5.20
Facing Trials	1-15	1.2-12
God and Temptation	16-24	1.13-18
The Word and Piety	25-37	1.19-27
Faith and Partiality	38-55	2.1-13
Faith and Works	56-72	2.14-26
Controlling the Tongue	73-93	3.1-12
True and False Wisdom	94-102	3.13-18
Solving Divisions	103-133	4.1-10
Criticism	134-140	4.11-12
Leaving God Out	141-146	4.13-17
Danger in Wealth	147-161	5.1-6
Persevering under Trial	162-171	5.7-11
Swearing	172-174	5.12
Reaching Out to God	175-193	5.13-18
Reclaiming the Wayward	194	5.19-20

For Note Taking:³

¹For a deeper study of the Book of James, see my internet based study of James at <http://cranfordville.com/DSLIRJamesframe.htm>.

For the Lesson 01 study of James 1:1, see <http://cranfordville.com/JasLess01.html>

²Taken from Lorin L. Cranford, *A Study Manual of James: Greek Text* (Fort Worth: Scripta Publications, Inc., 1988), 285. **Statements** indicate core thought expressions in the text as a basis for schematizing the rhetorical structure of the text. These are found in the Study Manual and also at the James Study internet site.

³Everyone is encouraged to take notes during the study for future reference and deeper study

James 1:1

Greek NT	Elberfelder	NRSV	NLT
Ἰακωβὸν κούριον τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ δούλου τῆς δωδεκάφυλλης ἐκκλησίας τῆς διασπορᾶς cairein.	Jakobus, Knecht Gottes und des Herrn Jesus Christus, den zwölf Stämmen, die in der Zerstreuung sind, [seinen] Gruß!	1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.	1 This letter is from James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is written to Jewish Christians scattered among the nations. Greetings!

A Word about the Scripture Texts:⁴

The scripture texts above are listed beginning with the Greek New Testament, which is the language that the New Testament was written in originally. The Greek NT represents the original wording of the text of the New Testament. Next is the Elberfelder Bibel German translation. This is a solid translation of the biblical text and is presented for the benefit of those who may be more comfortable with German, than with English. In the third column is the New Revised Standard Version, which represents one of the finest global English translations in print today. In the last column is the New Living Translation, which is an excellent “dynamic equivalent” translation of the biblical text done by an international team of evangelical scholars.

The objective for you as a Bible student is to read the different translations so that you can focus on the ideas being presented in each translation of the original Greek text. The wording may vary, but the ideas are the same.

The Study of the Text:⁵

1. What did the text mean to the first readers?

a) The Reporter Questions:

Who wrote it? When was it written? Where was it written? To whom was it written? Why was it written?

b) How letters were written in the ancient world:⁶

General Structure:

Praescriptio (Introduction)

2. What does the text mean to us today?

⁴For the Lesson 01 study of James 1:1, see <http://cranfordville.com/JasLess01.html>. Use the blank space under the questions to write down notes. Also the back side of each sheet can be used for notes.

⁵With each study we will ask two basic questions. First, what was the most likely meaning that the first readers of this text understood? This is called the ‘historical meaning’ of the text. That must be determined, because it becomes the foundation for the second question, “What does the text mean to us today?” For any applicational meaning of the text for modern life to be valid it must grow out of the historical meaning of the text. Otherwise, the perceived meaning becomes false and easily leads to wrong belief.

⁶For more details, see <http://cranfordville.com/JamesStudyhis.html#Ancient%20Letters>