

## Questions for the Book of James, introduction, and chapter 1:1-2

This type of study is for when one desires to learn about a book through the eyes of its author. This is only one type. As a contrast, a study about a particular topic or how a specific word is used in the Tanakh would be approached very differently, although there is usually some overlap.

The following questions (with perhaps some modification on a case by case basis) are geared toward learning about what was written in this letter by understanding the author.

These questions and their answers will allow us to transcend whatever current paradigm we are operating in.

There are many more questions here than one would probably have time for and that is OK. Some questions are easy and others require more knowledge and resources. When in doubt, try uncle Google. I'll give an example later on. Read through all the questions and choose those that you feel you can handle and have the time for. It is my hope that we will answer all of them in attempting to get to verse two of chapter one.

I look forward to the interaction in the main session.

Note: Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT) are invalid assignments to the biblical record. Nevertheless, I will use these from time to time because some of whom we desire to reach will have a clear understanding of what texts we are referring to when they see these abbreviations.

### Questions

1. There are many James in the NT.

a) James son of Zebedee and Salome

b) James son of Alphaeus, one of the Twelve

c) James the Lord's brother

d) James "the less". His mother was Mary, and he had a brother Joses

e) James father (or, very improbably, brother) of Judas, the latter being one of the Twelve

f) James, by whom the Epistle of James claims to have been written

g) James brother of the Judas by whom the Epistle of Jude claims to have been written.

What would be a satisfactory **Weight of Evidence** that the writer of this letter is the brother of Yeshua?

2. If this is James, the brother of Yeshua, Mark 3 states that he did not believe Yeshua was the messiah. What happened to him that brought him to James 1:1?

3. There are records outside the NT that speak about the death of James. From the record of Josephus (Antiquities), what do we learn?

4. When learning about an author, consider the following as aspects of how that man was made.

Birth, family (father, mother, siblings, other close relatives), quotes by others, jobs that he has held, contemporaries, heritage, past influences, and culture. Make your list concerning each of these

5. What is Halakah? What is Haggadah? What was their role in the first century when the letter of James was written? What happened in Nehemiah 8, Acts 8 and 15 that helps to understand the role of James letter?

6. 1:1 First word in the English is "James". Using the underlying Greek root, search the LXX and find the passage in Torah that tells us his name in Hebrew.

7. 1:1 In Greek "doulos" is the title he takes. What does this mean? What does it not mean? What famous men of Israel of the past had this title associated with them (give name and passage from the LXX)? What might this mean to the readers of this letter?

8. This letter comes to us in Greek. Taking the position that this letter was originally written in Hebrew, re-engineer the first 7 words of verse 1 back into its Hebrew volage. (This is important for when we get to chapter 2)

Hint: Be sure your Hebrew aligns with Psalm 110:1 and Matthew 22:44)

9. James is writing to the "12 tribes". Explain this in light of the "10 lost tribes" theory.

10. Concerning the 12 tribes, discuss the theory that the Jews in the first century universally denied Yeshua as the Messiah.

11. It is propagated by some that these Jewish believers who accepted Yeshua as the appointed one to be sent were asked to give up their community and their code of conduct. They were also asked to stop meeting in the synagogue. What impression does this letter give you and why?

12. 1:2 Breakdown the following words from their underlying Greek: "all", "joy", "fall", "test". What is James trying to communicate to the readers of his letter about his position concerning the active role of God in the world and in the believers lives?