

MTA JULY 2019

GENERAL EPISTLES

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- ▶ James-Faith
- ▶ 1-2 Peter-Hope
- ▶ 1-3 John-Love (Mike Covered)
- ▶ Jude-Scary

JAMES-AUTHOR

- ▶ 1:1 "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ"
James the son of Zebedee, brother of John, and one of the Twelve
- ▶ James the son of Alphaeus, also one of the Twelve (Mark 3:18, perhaps 15:40), is too obscure.
- ▶ James the father of Judas
- ▶ James the half-brother of Jesus

4 Choices of James

1-James son of Zebedee and brother of John

2-James the son of Alphaeus

3-James the lesser" or "younger"

4-James the half-brother of Jesus (Mk 6:3)

James the half-brother most likely. Who in the NT is so prominent to simply say James?

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James,

James-half brother most likely

JAMES-DATE: 45-47 AD

- ▶ James the brother of Jesus martyred in A.D. 62
- ▶ Is James responding to Paul's content, as he seems to be doing in 2:14-26? Paul's letters, Preaching, or in Person?
- ▶ Jerusalem Council in 48 or 49 (Acts 15)
- ▶ Stephen Martyred in 34-36 AD (Scattering Acts 8:1 & 11:19)
- ▶ The Greek term *synagoge* ("synagogue" or "meeting") is used to designate the meeting or meeting place of the church (2:2)

Acts 11:19 Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews.

Its distinctively Jewish nature suggests that it was composed when the church was still predominantly Jewish. It reflects a simple church order—officers of the church are called "elders" (5:14) and "teachers" (3:1). No reference is made to the controversy over Gentile circumcision.

JAMES-AUDIENCE

- ▶ 1:1 "To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations..."
- ▶ Potentially the predominantly Jewish Church scattered after Stephen's stoning around 34-36 AD



Adam Elsheimer
The Stoning of Saint Stephen

JAMES-DISTINCT CHARACTERISTICS

- ▶ Unmistakably Jewish nature
- ▶ Practical Christianity
- ▶ Proverbs of the NT
- ▶ Sermon on the Mount Parallels

Jewish Nature:

12 Tribes chapter 1

The Law in chapter 2

Abraham & Rahab in chapter

Quotes proverbs 3:34 in chapter 4

References Elijah in chapter 3

Practical Christianity

-speaks for itself. Little in depth theology like Paul's letters

-M.L. calling it an Epistle of Straw

Proverbs of the NT: short and sharp, covers a wide-range of topics from trials to favoritism, faith and deeds, tongue, wisdom fighting, boasting and business

SoM Parallels: next slide

JAMES-SERMON ON THE MOUNT PARALLELS

- ▶ James 1:4; Matthew 5:48 ("maturity/completeness" as the goal of discipleship)
- ▶ James 1:5; Matthew 7:7 (God gives generously to those who ask: "ask ... and it will be given to you")
- ▶ James 1:22; Matthew 7:24-27 (the importance of doing, not merely hearing, the "word")
- ▶ James 2:5; Luke 6:20 (the poor will be heirs of the kingdom of God)
- ▶ James 2:13; Matthew 5:7 (the merciful will be shown mercy)
- ▶ James 2:14; Matthew 7:21 (doing the will of God [the "works" that spring from faith] is what matters)
- ▶ James 3:12; Matthew 7:16 (the fruits show the kind and quality of the tree)
- ▶ James 4:4; Matthew 6:24; John 15:18-19 (one cannot be a friend both to God and the world [or its treasures])
- ▶ James 4:10; Matthew 23:12; Luke 14:11 (those who humble themselves will be exalted by God)
- ▶ James 4:11-12; 5:9; Matthew 7:1 (against condemning one's neighbour, for fear of God's judgment)
- ▶ James 5:2-3; Matthew 6:19-21 (laying up treasures on earth where rust and moth destroy, and the consequences of laying up treasure rather than dealing justly with others)
- ▶ James 5:12; Matthew 5:34-37 (against swearing "either by heaven or by earth")

Interesting parallels

If James is dated very early, how does this potentially influence the dating of the gospels?

1-2 PETER—DATE

- ▶ The letter almost surely was written in A.D. 62-63.
- ▶ Later is unlikely because it would not leave time for Peter to write his second letter before his martyrdom in 64 AD



1-2 PETER—AUTHOR

- ▶ “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ” (1:1), and 2 Peter appears to refer to this first letter (2 Pet. 3:1).
- ▶ Most likely writing from Rome (Babylon 5:13)
- ▶ Possibly via scribe (1 Peter 5:1)



Early testimony of Peter’s authorship of this letter is strong, but many contemporary scholars deny that Peter wrote it.

Their strongest argument is that the Greek of the letter is too smooth and competent for a fisherman with no formal education. A similar argument is made against James.

Fail to account to these two uneducated bogans...being influenced by Jesus...but also serving as primary leaders in a community of 10,000’s of people across the Roman empire. I’m sure there was a steep learning curve but they were robust learners

1 Peter 5:1 could be a hint of him using a scribe:

With the help of Silas,[a] whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.

2 Peter is not as polished greek and there is no mention of a scribe...

Rembrant-1632

1-2 PETER—AUDIENCE

- ▶ The opening calls Christians “God’s elect” and refers to them as scattered exiles in Asia minor (1:1-2).
- ▶ Gentiles (1:18; 2:10; 4:3)



1 PETER—DISTINCT CONTENT

- ▶ Hope & endurance amidst persecution (1:6-7; 2:18-20; 3:9, 13-17; 4:1-4, 12-19; 5:9)
- ▶ Other noteworthy topics covered:
 - ▶ Do Christians need a priesthood to intercede with God for them (2:5-9)?
 - ▶ What should be the Christian's attitude to secular government and civil disobedience (2:13-17)?
 - ▶ What should a Christian employee's attitude be toward a hostile employer (2:18)?
 - ▶ How should a Christian woman act (3:3-6)?
 - ▶ How can a believing wife win her unsaved husband to Christ (3:1-2)?

2 PETER—DISTINCT CONTENT

- ▶ Grace Produces Growth (1:2-11)
- ▶ Peter knows the end is near (1:12-15)
- ▶ How to deal with false teachers and evildoers who have come into the church (2:1; 3:3-4)
- ▶ “Knowledge” referenced in some form 16 times
- ▶ Noteworthy:
 - ▶ The divine origin of Scripture (1:20-21)
 - ▶ The future destruction of the world by fire (3:8-13)
 - ▶ The recognition of Paul’s letters as Scripture (3:15-16)

In his first letter Peter feeds Christ’s sheep by instructing them how to deal with persecution from outside the church (see 1Pe 4:12); in this second letter he warns them about dangers from within.

This book is the most graphic and penetrating exposé of false teachers in Scripture, comparable only to Jude.

The description of the false teachers is somewhat generic. Peter does not identify some specific false religion, cult, or system of teaching. In a general characterisation of false teachers, he informs that they teach destructive heresies. They deny Christ and twist the Scriptures. They bring true faith into disrepute. And they mock the second coming of Christ.

But Peter was just as concerned to show the immoral character of these teachers as he was to expose their teaching. Thus, he describes them in more detail than he describes their doctrines. Wickedness is not the product of sound doctrine, but of “destructive heresies” (2:1).

JUDE-AUTHOR

- ▶ Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James. (Jude 1)
- ▶ Excludes himself from the Apostles (v. 17)
- ▶ Attaches himself to James



Of those so named in the NT, the ones most likely to be author of this letter are:

- (1) Judas the apostle (see Lk 6:16; Ac 1:13 and note)—not Judas Iscariot—and
- (2) Judas the brother of the Lord (Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3).

The latter is more likely. For example, the author does not claim to be an apostle and even seems to separate himself from the apostles (v. 17). Furthermore, he describes himself as a “brother of James” (v. 1). Ordinarily a person in Jude’s day would describe himself as someone’s son rather than as someone’s brother. The reason for the exception here may have been James’s prominence in the church at Jerusalem

Although neither Jude nor James describes himself as a brother of the Lord, others did not hesitate to speak of them in this way (see Mt 13:55; Jn 7:3–10; Ac 1:14; 1Co 9:5; Gal 1:19). Apparently they themselves did not ask to be heard because of the special privilege they had as members of the household of Joseph and Mary.

JUDE-DATE & AUDIENCE

- ▶ Very similar content and purpose to 2 Peter with no mention of Peter's martyrdom
- ▶ 62-63 AD
- ▶ Similar to 2 Peter



The kind of heresy depicted in these two books was widespread

JUDE-DISTINCT CONTENT

- ▶ False teachers exist
- ▶ False teaching can be both attractive and dangerous
- ▶ BUT their condemnation is certain.

