

# Workbook On The Epistle Of James



The Sea of Galilee from the shores of Capernaum, looking towards the Decapolis

“James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings” (James 1:1)

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# Outline Of The Book

<b>I. Salutation .....</b>	<b>1:1</b>
<b>II. The Nature of True Religion.....</b>	<b>1:2–27</b>
Stability .....	1:2–11
Endurance .....	1:12–18
Action.....	1:19–27
<b>III. The Nature of True Faith .....</b>	<b>2:1–3:12</b>
Avoidance of Discrimination.....	2:1–13
Avoidance of Inactive Profession.....	2:14–26
Avoidance of Boastful Officiousness .....	3:1–12
<b>IV. The Nature of True Wisdom .....</b>	<b>3:13–5:18</b>
Wisdom Defined.....	3:13–18
Wisdom in Spiritual Life .....	4:1–10
Wisdom in Legal Relationships .....	4:11–12
Wisdom in Commercial Plans .....	4:13–17
Wisdom in Labor Problems .....	5:1–6
Wisdom in Waiting for the Lord .....	5:7–11
Wisdom in Language.....	5:12
Wisdom in Affliction.....	5:13–18
<b>V. Conclusion: The Purpose of Wisdom—     An Effective Testimony .....</b>	<b>5:19–20</b>

(Outline by Merrill C. Tenney, *New Testament Survey*, pp. 263–264)

# The Dispersion Of The Jews

“James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, *To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings...*” (James 1:1)

By the first century A.D., Jews had settled in almost every country of the civilized world.

“Strabo, speaking of the time of Sulla, says (about 85 B.C.), that the Jewish people had already come into every city, and that it was not easy to find a place in the world which had not received this race, and was not occupied by them” (Emil Schurer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, Second Division, Vol. II, pp. 221–222)

“For these were the Jews of the Diaspora: a people scattered throughout the Roman cities in small, well-organized colonies. Commercially adroit and religiously aloof, their presence was something of an irritation to the administration, though on the whole they were tolerated and in some places even afforded certain privileges and exemptions. Their ranks, as we have said, had been strengthened by the accession of a certain number of converts, fugitives from the bewilderment of a restless age who sought consolation in the exalted monotheism of the Jewish synagogue. Their number has been estimated at approximately seven per cent of the whole population of the Empire.” (Seton Lloyd, *Ancient Turkey*, pp. 218–219)

“The flight or enslavement of a million Jews so accelerated their spread through the Mediterranean that their scholars came to date the *Diaspora* from the destruction of Herod’s Temple. We have seen that this Dispersion had begun six centuries before in the Babylonian Captivity, and had been renewed in the settling of Alexandria. Since fertility was commanded and infanticide sternly forbidden by Jewish piety and law, the expansion of the Jews was due to biological as well as economic causes; Hebrews still played a very minor role in the commerce of the world. Fifty years before the fall of Jerusalem, Strabo, with anti-Semitic exaggeration, reported that ‘it is hard to find a single place on the habitable earth that has not admitted this tribe of men, and is not possessed by it.’ Philo, twenty years before the Dispersion, described ‘the continents... full of Jewish settlements, and likewise the... islands, and nearly all Babylonia.’ By A.D. 70 there were thousands of Jews in Seleucia on the Tigris, and in other Parthian cities; they were numerous in Arabia, and crossed thence into Ethiopia; they abounded in Syria and Phoenicia; they had large colonies in Tarsus, Antioch, Miletus, Ephesus, Sardis, Smyrna; they were only less numerous in Delos, Corinth, Athens, Philippi, Patrae, Thessalonica. In the west there were Jewish communities in Carthage, Syracuse, Puteoli, Capua, Pompeii, Rome, even in Horace’s native Venusia. All in all we reckon 7,000,000 Jews in the Empire—some seven per cent of the population, twice their proportion in the United States of America today.” (Will Durant, *Caesar And Christ*, pp. 545–546)