

# JAMES A PRAGMATIST...? WHO WAS JAMES...

I, James, am writing this letter. I serve God and the  
Lord Jesus Christ.

I am sending this letter to you, the 12 tribes that are  
scattered among the nations.

Greetings.

# Who was James?

It's believed that the James mentioned was the brother of Jesus...but why do people say that?

*Bible references to James*

## In Matthew 13

53 Jesus finished telling these stories. Then he moved on from there. 54 He came to his hometown of Nazareth. There he began teaching the people in their synagogue. They were amazed.

“Where did this man get this wisdom? Where did he get this power to do miracles?” they asked. 55 “Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t his mother’s name Mary? Aren’t his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? 56 Aren’t all his sisters with us? Then where did this man get all these things?” 57 They were not pleased with him at all.

But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not honored in his hometown. He doesn’t receive any honor in his own home.”

58 He did only a few miracles there because they had no faith.

# Who was James?

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Bible references to James

## In Mark 6 ...the same story

Jesus left there and went to his hometown of Nazareth. His disciples went with him.

<sup>2</sup> When the Sabbath day came, he began to teach in the synagogue. Many who heard him were amazed.

“Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given to him? He even does miracles! <sup>3</sup> Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son? Isn’t this the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” They were not pleased with him at all.

<sup>4</sup> Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not honored in his hometown. He doesn’t receive any honor among his relatives. And he doesn’t receive any in his own home.”

<sup>5</sup> Jesus laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. But he could not do any other miracles there. <sup>6</sup> He was amazed because they had no faith.

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Bible references to James

Similar things occur today today

*When people become Christians, often it is not immediately respected by people around them. Can you think of any examples?*

**Did they believe Jesus did miracles?**

**Did it make a difference to how they dealt with him?**

**Why did Jesus only do a few miracles?**

**How does belief influence Jesus being able to work?**

# Who was James?

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Bible references to James

Indirect bible reference...Matthew 12

<sup>46</sup> While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside. They wanted to speak to him. <sup>47</sup> Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside. They want to speak to you."

<sup>48</sup> Jesus replied to him, "Who is my mother? And who are my brothers?" <sup>49</sup> Jesus pointed to his disciples. He said, "Here is my mother! Here are my brothers!"

<sup>50</sup> Anyone who does what my Father in heaven wants is my brother or sister or mother."

**How do you think Mary and James felt?**

**Why would Jesus do such a thing?**

**Is following Jesus easy?**

**Should following Jesus be easy?**

**Why follow Jesus?**

# Who was James?

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Bible references to James

Indirect bible reference...John 2

After this, Jesus went down to Capernaum. His mother and brothers and disciples went with him. They all stayed there for a few days.

<sup>13</sup> It was almost time for the Jewish Passover Feast. So Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> In the temple courtyard he found people who were selling cattle, sheep and doves. Others were sitting at tables exchanging money.

<sup>15</sup> So Jesus made a whip out of ropes. He chased all the sheep and cattle from the temple area.

**How do you think Mary and James felt?**

**Why would Jesus do this in front of his family?**

**Is following Jesus easy?**

**How would people have viewed those with Jesus?**

**Was it easy to be Jesus brother?**

# Who was James?

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Bible references to James

Indirect bible reference...John 2

After this, Jesus went around in Galilee. He stayed away from Judea on purpose. He knew that the Jews there were waiting to kill him.

<sup>2</sup> The Jewish Feast of Booths was near. <sup>3</sup> Jesus' brothers said to him, "You should leave here and go to Judea. Then your disciples will see the kinds of things you do.

<sup>4</sup> No one who wants to be well known does things in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." <sup>5</sup> Even Jesus' own brothers did not believe in him.

<sup>6</sup> So Jesus told them, "The right time has not yet come for me. For you, any time is right. <sup>7</sup> The people of the world can't hate you. But they hate me. This is because I give witness that what they do is evil.

<sup>8</sup> "You go to the Feast. I am not yet going up to this Feast. For me, the right time has not yet come."

<sup>9</sup> After he said this, he stayed in Galilee.

<sup>10</sup> When his brothers had left for the Feast, he went also. But he went secretly, not openly.

**What did his brother think Jesus wanted?**

**Did he really want that?**

**Did Jesus lie to them?**

# Who was James?

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Bible references to James

Indirect bible reference...Acts 1

<sup>12</sup> The apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. It is almost a mile from the city. <sup>13</sup> When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Peter, John, James and Andrew were there. Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew were there too. So were James, son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas, son of James. <sup>14</sup> They all came together regularly to pray. The women joined them too. So did Jesus' mother Mary and his brothers

**Was James a believer now?**



# Who was James?

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**Bible references to James**

Indirect bible reference...Acts 1..still the same location and time as the previous reference

<sup>21</sup> So we need to choose someone to take his place. It will have to be a man who was with us the whole time the Lord Jesus lived among us. <sup>22</sup> That time began when John was baptizing. It ended when Jesus was taken up from us. The one we choose must join us in giving witness that Jesus rose from the dead.”

<sup>23</sup> So they suggested two men. One was Joseph, who was called Barsabbas. He was also called Justus. The other man was Matthias. <sup>24</sup> Then they prayed. “Lord,” they said, “you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen. <sup>25</sup> Show us who should take the place of Judas as an apostle. He gave up being an apostle to go where he belongs.” <sup>26</sup> Then they cast lots. Matthias was chosen. So he was added to the 11 apostles.

**Was James an instrumental part of the early churches formation?**

# Who was James?

It's believed that the James mentioned was the brother of Jesus...but why do people say that?

**Bible references to James**

By 37 or 38 AD, James, "the Lord's brother" (Galatians 1:19), was still in Jerusalem

<sup>18</sup> Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem. I went there to get to know Peter. I stayed with him for 15 days. <sup>19</sup> I didn't see any of the other apostles. I only saw James, the Lord's brother. <sup>20</sup> Here is what you can be sure of. And God gives witness to it. What I am writing you is not a lie.

**Was James an instrumental part of the early churches formation?**

**Was it safe for James to be in Jerusalem at that time?**

**What does that tell us about James belief and character?**

# Who was James?

It's believed that the James mentioned was the brother of Jesus...but why do people say that?

**Bible references to James**

Around 51 AD James, “was an overseer of the Jerusalem church Acts 12:17

The church sent them on their way. As they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how those who weren't Jews had turned to God. This news made all the believers very glad.

<sup>4</sup> When they arrived in Jerusalem, the church welcomed them. The apostles and elders welcomed them too. Then Paul and Barnabas reported everything God had done through them. <sup>5</sup> Some of the believers were Pharisees. They stood up and said, “Those who aren't Jews must be circumcised. They must obey the law of Moses.”

<sup>6</sup> The apostles and elders met to consider this question. <sup>7</sup> After they had talked it over, Peter got up and spoke to them.

...

<sup>13</sup> When they finished, James spoke up. “Brothers,” he said, “listen to me.

**Was James an instrumental part of the early churches formation?**

**Was it safe for James to be in Jerusalem at that time?**

**What does this tell of the importance of James in Jerusalem at the time?**

# Who was James?

It's believed that the James mentioned was the brother of Jesus...but why do people say that?

Bible references to James

Around 44 AD James was still in Jerusalem

About this time, King Herod arrested some people who belonged to the church. He planned to make them suffer greatly. <sup>2</sup> He had James killed with a sword. James was John's brother. <sup>3</sup> Herod saw that the death of James pleased the Jews. So he arrested Peter also...<sup>6</sup> It was the night before Herod was going to bring him to trial. Peter was sleeping between two soldiers. Two chains held him there. Lookouts stood guard at the entrance. <sup>7</sup> Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared. ...<sup>11</sup> Then Peter realized what had happened. He said, "Now I know for sure that the Lord sent his angel. He set me free from Herod's power. He saved me from everything the Jewish people were hoping for." <sup>12</sup> When Peter understood what had happened, he went to Mary's house. ...<sup>16</sup> Peter kept on knocking. When they opened the door and saw him, they were amazed. <sup>17</sup> Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet. He explained how the Lord had brought him out of prison. "Tell James and the others about this," he said. Then he went to another place.

**Was James an instrumental part of the early churches formation?**

**Was it safe for James to be in Jerusalem at that time?**

**What does this tell of the importance of James in Jerusalem at the time?**

# Who was James?

It's believed that the James mentioned was the brother of Jesus...but why do people say that?

Bible references to James

After AD 51

AD James was still in Jerusalem

<sup>9</sup> James, Peter and John are considered to be pillars in the church. They recognized the special grace that was given to me. So they shook my hand and the hand of Barnabas. They wanted to show they accepted us. They agreed that we should go to the non-Jews. They would go to the Jews. <sup>10</sup> They asked only one thing. They wanted us to continue to remember poor people. That was what I really wanted to do anyway. Galatians 2:9

**Was James an core part of the early church in Jerusalem?**

**Was it safe for James to be in Jerusalem at that time?**

**What does this interaction with Paul tell of the importance of James in Jerusalem at the time?**

# Who was James?

It's believed that the James mentioned was the brother of Jesus...but why do people say that?

Bible references to James

After AD 51

AD James was still in Jerusalem

<sup>11</sup> When Peter came to Antioch, I told him to his face that I was against what he was doing. He was clearly wrong. <sup>12</sup> He used to eat with those who weren't Jews. But certain men came from the group that was led by James. When they arrived, Peter began to draw back. He separated himself from the non-Jews. He was afraid of the circumcision group.

<sup>13</sup> Peter's actions were not honest. The other Jews joined him. Even Barnabas was led down the wrong path.

<sup>14</sup> I saw what they were doing. It was not in line with the truth of the good news

**What group was James part of?**

**Was he doing what Peter was doing?**

**How can we describe the difference between Peter, Paul and James in this matter?**

# Who was James?

It's believed that the James mentioned was the brother of Jesus...but why do people say that?

Bible references to James

After AD 58

AD James was still in Jerusalem

- <sup>17</sup> When we arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers and sisters gave us a warm welcome.
- <sup>18</sup> The next day Paul and the rest of us went to see James. All the elders were there.
- <sup>19</sup> Paul greeted them. Then he reported everything God had done among the non-Jews through his work.
- <sup>20</sup> When they heard this, they praised God.

**What was the integrity and level of respect people had for James?**

# Who was James?

It's believed that the James mentioned was the brother of Jesus...but why do people say that?

*Apocryphal references to James*

Gnostic gospel of Thomas (less trustworthy)

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Haven't I seen Jesus our Lord? Aren't you the result of my work for the Lord? <sup>2</sup> Even though others may not think of me as an apostle, I am certainly one to you! You are the proof that I am the Lord's apostle. <sup>3</sup> That is what I say to stand up for myself when people judge me.  
<sup>4</sup> Don't we have the right to eat and drink? <sup>5</sup> Don't we have the right to take a believing wife with us when we travel? The other apostles do. The Lord's brothers do. Peter does.

**Was James married?**



# JAMES A PRAGMATIST...? WE KNOW A LITTLE ABOUT JAMES

I, James, am writing this letter. I serve God and the  
Lord Jesus Christ.

I am sending this letter to you, the 12 tribes that are  
scattered among the nations.

Greetings.

JAMES 1

<sup>1</sup> I, Jude, am writing this letter. I serve Jesus Christ. I  
am a brother of James.

JUDE 1

**Is there a similarity in these introductions?  
Why do you think this may be the case?**

# JAMES A PRAGMATIST...? WE KNOW A LITTLE ABOUT JAMES

I, James, am writing this letter. I serve God and the  
Lord Jesus Christ.

I am sending this letter to you, the 12 tribes that are  
scattered among the nations.

Greetings.

JAMES 1

**Who is the letter aimed at?**

**Why does he state he is serving God and the Lord Jesus Christ?**

**What have we learned in this investigation of James that would  
influence the way we live and do things?**

**Is integrity a core aspect of James life?**

**Should it be a core aspect of our lives?**

**In what way can we increase our integrity in our community?**