

# The Letter of James

## *A better way of Living*

### **Session Six: Overall Review and Impressions**

Throughout his letter we have a strong impression of James' faith in the teaching of Jesus. He describes situations where some of this teaching should be applied practically in life. Running through the letter is the message that the foundation of life should be prayer. According to the historian Hegesippus and passed on to us by Eusebius in his Church History (2.23.6), James was a Nazirite (Numbers 4:1-5) and his long periods of prayer, which made his knees so leathery, were spent in, "Beseeching forgiveness for the people". In 1:4 he writes of developing perseverance. This applies to perseverance through the trials of life, but also in prayer, to become "mature and complete". Wisdom is the knowledge and understanding of God, as we saw in Session Three. James wants us to draw closer to God through prayer.

1. Look at James' teaching on prayer in 1:5-7; 4:2-3 and in 5:13-18.  
What does he say about asking God for things and what is his overall message in those final verses.
2. Why does James' use Elijah as his example?
3. What do make of the final two verses as an ending to a letter? In what way does it differ from the other letters in the New Testament? Why do you think James has closed in this way?
4. What are your impressions of the letter as a whole.
5. In Session One you chose a verse that spoke particularly to you. Now you have studied the letter and hopefully feel familiar with it, are there other verses you will remember and call to mind when you need them?

I hope you have been remembering to apply our three principles, as recommended by Rev Stephen, to each of the study sessions. Why not conclude your time with James by thinking about them in connection to the letter as a whole and keep them in mind.

1. What does this say about God?
2. How does this relate to the rest of the Bible, especially Jesus' teaching in the Gospels?
3. What does this text tell me I need to do?

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