

## Ya'akov (Ya'akov) ~ Part 2

In the workplace, you might be facing challenges that make you question your abilities or the fairness of your situation. According to James 1:1-15, trials are a part of life and can lead us to seek **God's** wisdom. If you're feeling stressed by a project or workplace dynamics, set aside time each day to dedicate in prayer and ask **God** for guidance. You can also seek out a trusted colleague to share your burdens with, fostering an environment of mutual support. This way, you will remain steadfast and encourage others to persevere through their own trials.

### Salutation

***<sup>1</sup> From: Ya'akov, a slave of God and of the Lord Yeshua the Messiah***

***To: The Twelve Tribes in the Diaspora: Shalom!***

"*The Twelve Tribes*" refers to **Jews** and is not merely a metaphor for **Gentiles**, as some commentators maintain. This is clear from the style of the letter generally, and particularly from the fact that they had synagogues (Ya'akov 2:2). Not that **Gentile Believers** were excluded from reading it, but that the leader of the **Messianic Jewish** community in **Yerushalayim** is addressing fellow **Jewish Believers in the Diaspora**, outside **Isra'el**; compare Yochanan 7:35, 1 Kefa 1:1. Possibly Ya'akov is writing **Messianic Jews** who knew him personally in **Yerushalayim** but fled **Sha'ul's** persecution (Acts 8:1–3) or the later one of Acts 12 (44 CE) But it seems more likely that these were **Jews** already living in the **Diaspora** when they came to faith, for whom **Ya'akov's** words carry his authority as the **Lord's** brother and leader of the **Yerushalayim** community.

### Preparation for Oppression

#### Trials Help Development

***<sup>2</sup> Regard it all as joy, my brothers, when you face various kinds of temptations;***

The phrase *when you face various kinds of temptations* assumes that trials are a normal part of the **Believer's** life. In fact, trials are a given for a faithful disciple (2 Timothy 3:12). The **Jewish** wisdom tradition held that the experience of "trials" was proof of a person's faithfulness. **Joy** suggests an eschatological (end times) hope of deliverance from trials. The joy with which a **Believer** endures trials in the present is a sign of their hope for future relief.

***<sup>3</sup> for you know that the testing of your trust produces perseverance.***

Knowledge *that the testing of your trust<sup>1</sup> produces endurance* is the basis for joy. "**Endurance**" is the ability to persevere through increasing levels of testing or suffering.

***<sup>4</sup> But let perseverance do its complete work; so that you may be complete and whole, lacking in nothing.***

**Perseverance** indicates that further work must be done for the purpose of making the **Believer** mature and complete, lacking nothing. Immaturity and incompleteness are not acceptable long-term states for the **Messianic Talmidim**.

### Seeking Wisdom

---

<sup>1</sup> Remember that Stern's always translates "faith" to "trust."

*<sup>5</sup> Now if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives to all generously and without reproach; and it will be given to him. <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in trust, doubting nothing; for the doubter is like a wave in the sea being tossed and driven by the wind. <sup>7</sup> Indeed that person should not think that he will receive anything from the Lord, <sup>8</sup> because he is double-minded, unstable in all his ways.*

The world's harsh treatment tempts us to withdraw and refuse to expose our lack of wisdom for fear of being shamed by our peers, but **God gives to all generously and without reproach**. Thus, he who **lacks wisdom** should **ask God** freely. A person should ask for wisdom **in faith without doubting**. The basis for confidence here is not just the fact that we exercise faith, but the person in whom we place our faith—**God**.

### Riches Will Fade

*<sup>9</sup> Let the brother in humble circumstances boast about his high position. <sup>10</sup> But let the rich brother boast about his being humbled; since, like a wildflower, he will pass away. <sup>11</sup> For just as the sun rises with the sharav and dries up the plant, so that its flower falls off and its beauty is destroyed, so too the rich person going about his business will wither away.*

**Ya'akov** has more to say about the poor and **the rich** in 2:1–9, 5:1–6; compare 1 Corinthians 7:22.

**The sharav** is the hot, dry wind which blows across **Isra'el** from the deserts east of the **Land** in the spring and (less often) in the fall. **The sun rises with the sharav**. Weather like this made **Jonah** faint and want to die (Jonah 4:8). Compare Isaiah 40:7 ( "**The grass withers, the flower fades when a wind from Adonai blows upon it**"); Psalm 102:4, 11.

### Temptation Comes From Within

*<sup>12</sup> How blessed is the man who perseveres through temptation! For after he has passed the test, he will receive as his crown the Life which God has promised to those who love him. <sup>13</sup> No one being tempted should say, "I am being tempted by God." For God cannot be tempted by evil, and God himself tempts no one.*

**Satan** tempted **Job** (Job 1–2) and **Yeshua** (Mt 4:1–11), but **God tempts no one**. Genesis 22:1 must be understood as **God's** means of strengthening **Avraham's** faith (compare Messianic Jews 11:17–19, 12:5–10; and see below, 2:17–24), not as tempting him to sin.

*<sup>14</sup> Rather, each person is being tempted whenever he is being dragged off and enticed by the bait of his own desire. <sup>15</sup> Then, having conceived, the desire gives birth to sin; and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death. <sup>2</sup>*

**Sin gives birth to death**, an example of **Ya'akov's** striking manner of expression.

In our next post, we continue to dig into the **Letter of Ya'akov**.

---

<sup>2</sup> Jamess 1:1-15.