

READING THE NEW TESTAMENT IN 2021 Week 3 (January 18-22)

("Let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly" ... and bear fruit in our lives) – Colossians 3:16.

Historical Context

33 AD Persecution breaks out against the church in Jerusalem. The Jewish believers are scattered throughout Judaea and Samaria, and flee to Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch in Syria. Paul is part of this prior to his conversion.

Saul (Paul) travels to Damascus to persecute the believers. On the way, the risen Lord Jesus appears to him and he is converted. He spends some time away from the city, then returns to Damascus for three years.

35 AD The book of James appears to be written about this time, making it the earliest book written in the New Testament (Acts is written much later than this; and we are simply using it as a way to keep track of events.) It is written to Jewish Christians, apparently prior to the conferences in Jerusalem about the Spirit's inclusion of Gentile Christians.

36 AD Paul visits Peter and James, the leaders of the church in Jerusalem.

Dates synthesized from: www.datingtheoldtestament.com, www.thebiblejourney.org, the [Chronological Study Bible](#), the [IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament](#), [Paul Apostle of the Heart Set Free](#), and [Word Pictures of the New Testament](#)

Who is James?

He is thought to be one of the four brothers of Jesus (Mark 6:3), to whom Jesus appeared (I Corinthians 15:7), was in the upper room as part of the 120 (Acts 1:14-15), became the head of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 12:17), and was killed by order of the High Priest in 62 A.D. [Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*].

<u>Day</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Clarification from the Greek (the original language)</u>
Mon.	James 1	(:5) <i>Wisdom</i> = ability, discernment, and knowledge – cf. Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes: all in the Old Testament.
Tues.	2	(:17) <i>Works</i> = productive actions. In light of this, how do you interpret John 6:28-29? – cf. John 3:20-21, and 9:1-12.
Wed.	3	(:6) <i>Hell</i> = "Gehenna." This was the name of the garbage dump, outside Jerusalem, where they also burned the garbage.
Thur.	4	(:16) <i>Evil</i> = of little value, laden with toil and suffering, unfortunate, to be pitied, unfit, and miserable, bad, worthless – cf. Jeremiah 24:3. How does it relate to Gehenna?
Fri.	5	(:13) <i>Pray</i> = ask, entreat, request.

Primary references: [Dictionary of New Testament Theology](#), Vol. 1-3; the [Analytical Greek Lexicon, Revised](#), [The Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament](#), and [The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament](#).

© DFN (May be printed, but not used for profit).