

- 4 Honour marriage with all, and the undefiled union; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers.
- 5 Let not your plan of life be avaricious.
Be helpful to your neighbours; for He has said, I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU NOR EVER FORSAKE YOU.¹ By which He encourages us to say,
THE LORD IS MY HELP, I WILL NOT FEAR;
WHAT CAN MAN DO TO ME?²
- 7 Remember your leaders who related the message of God to you; imitate their faith, after reflecting upon the result of their way of life.
- 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.
- 9 Turn not to different and strange teachings; for the heart is ennobled by goodness, not by foods which do not benefit their followers.
- 10 We have a little altar, from which those who serve the Tent are not allowed to eat; for the bodies of those animals sacrificed for sin, of whom the blood was carried by the High Priests into the Holies, were burnt outside the camp. And consequently Jesus, so that He might sanctify the people by His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Consequently, let us now go out to Him outside the walls, carrying His disgrace: for we have not a permanent city here; on the contrary, we are in search of a future one. Let us, therefore, always

¹ Deut. xxxi. 6.² Psa. cxviii. 6.

offer through Him a praiseworthy sacrifice to God, that is, a lip-fruit, confessing to His name. But do not neglect well-doing and neighbourliness; for God is well pleased with these sacrifices.

Be obedient to your leaders, and orderly; for they watch over your souls as having to give an account; so that they may do this joyfully, and not sorrowfully; for that injures yourselves.

Pray for us; for we are satisfied that we have a good conscience, wishing to bring benefits to all. And now, especially, I beseech you to do this, so that I may be restored to you the sooner.

But the God of peace, Who brought back our Lord Jesus from the dead, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, purify you with the blood of an eternal settlement, supporting you in every thing good to effect His will, doing in yourselves the best before Him, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be the majesty for ever and ever. Amen.

But I entreat you, brethren, accept this comforting discourse which I have written to you briefly. Understand that our brother Timothy has been set free; with whom, if he comes soon, I will see you.

Remembrances to all your leaders and all the holy. Those of Italy send kind regards. Grace be with you all. Amen.

(Written to the Hebrews, from Italy, probably about 68 A.D., and sent by Timothy.)

NOTE.—The Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and Hebrews, form what the old Greeks called a "Triology," and in them St. Paul showed to the World the Christian Faith, in its Intellectual, Social, and Spiritual aspects, so as to enable every class of mind to comprehend its Eternal and Universal nature. Persistent efforts have been made for centuries to upset the Pauline authorship of this Epistle to the Hebrews, but no man who has studied the mental peculiarities of St. Paul, and what I would call his idiom of thought, can doubt that he wrote it,—for no other man could have done it. Undoubtedly he originally wrote it in Hebrew, and had it translated by a Secretary into Greek for his edition of "Select Epistles," to which it forms a splendid crown. Origen, the most ancient Biblical Critic, corroborates that the Hebrew composition was the first issued.—F. F.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE JAMES.

1 JAMES, a servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Rejoice!
General Exhortations.

2 Consider it all pleasure, my
3 brethren, when you fall into various

trials; understanding that the proof of your faith produces patience. 4
Then let patience have a perfect effect, in order that you may be perfect and complete, defective in nothing.

But if any of you be deficient in 5

wisdom, let him ask it from God, Who gives to all freely and without reproach; and it will be granted to him.

6 Let him ask, however, with faith, never doubting; because the doubter is like a wave of the sea, blown about

7 and broken. Never let such a man imagine that he will receive anything

8 from the Lord; a hesitating man is irresolute in all his ways.

9 But let the brother of humble rank

10 rejoice in his elevation; and the rich in his humbling; because like the flower of grass he shall fade away.

11 For the sun rises with his scorching rays, and withers the grass; and its flower fades, and the beauty of its form disappears. In the same way also shall the rich man wither in his ways.

12 Happy is the man who endures temptation; because upon his resistance he will receive the crown of life, which He has promised to those

13 who love Him. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted from God;" for God is inexperienced in evils;

14 and He tempts no one. But every one is tempted by the longing and

15 seducing of his own lust. Then the passion, when it has conceived, produces sin; and the sin, having fully

16 developed, produces death. Do not, my dear brethren, be led astray.

17 Every beneficent gift, and each perfect endowment, comes from above; descending from the Father of lights, with Whom there is not a change of position or shadow of variation.

18 Having resolved, He brought us forth by a true message, in order that we might be a sample of what He created for Himself.

19 Stand fast, my dear brothers: but let every man be quick to listen, slow

20 to assert, slow to anger; because the anger of man is not conducive to

21 Divine righteousness. Therefore, stripping off all vicious filth and excess, accept with modesty the implanted Message, which is able to

22 save your souls. Become rational workers, however; and not merely listeners, thus deluding yourselves.

23 Because if any one is a hearer of reason, and is not a practiser, he is like a man contemplating his natural

24 face in a mirror; although he sees himself, yet on going away, he immediately forgets what he was like.

25 But he who examines into a perfect law—that of Liberty and steadfast-

ness—becomes not a forgetful listener, but an active worker; he will be happy through his own activity.

If any one imagines himself to be 26 religious, yet not bridling his own tongue, but deceiving even his own heart, the religion of that man is worthless. Pure and undefiled religion 27 in the presence of the God and Father is this, To care for the fatherless and widows in their distress; to preserve himself unspotted from the world.

On Partiality.

Do not, my brethren, regard the 2 rectifying faith of our Lord Jesus Christ as an instrument to flatter with! For should there enter your assembly 2 a man wearing gold rings and splendid clothing, and there should enter at the same time a poor man in ragged attire; and you pay attention to him who has 3 the splendid dress, saying, "Take a seat there in the place of honour," and to the poor man say, "You can stand there, or crouch under my footstool": does this not prove your 4 partiality, and a readiness to arbitrate with wicked bias?

Listen, my dear brethren: Has not 5 God chosen the poor from a worldly point of view, yet rich in faith, as inheritors of the Kingdom which He has promised to those who love Him? But 6 you have despised the poor. Do not the rich exceedingly oppress you, and themselves drag you to the law-courts? Do they not slander that 7 noble Name by which you are distinguished? If, however, you observe 8 the royal law, according to the scripture, **YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOUR OWN SELF,**¹ you will do well; but if you show 9 partiality you are guilty of sin, being convicted by that law as culprits. Because whoever may keep the whole 10 law, yet should transgress against one part, may become entangled with all; for He Who said, **DO NOT COMMIT 11 ADULTERY,** also said, **DO NOT MURDER.**² Now, although you do not commit adultery, but become a murderer, you thereby become a breaker of law. So speak, and so act, 12 then, as those about to be tried by means of a law of liberty. For justice 13 is merciless to him who has not practised mercy; but mercy triumphs over judgment.

¹ Lev. xix. 18.

² Exod. xx. 13, 14.

Biting Faith contrasted with Dead Faith.

14 What advantage is it, my brothers, if a man should say he has faith, but fails to bring it into practice? Such
 15 faith is not able to save him. For if to a brother or sister in distress, and
 16 destitute of daily food, any one of you should say, "Oh, I am so sorry for you! go away; I hope you will get warmed and fed"; but does not give to them what is necessary for the bodily needs, what is the advantage?
 17 In the same way, the faith which is not brought into practice, is in itself
 18 dead. But, on the other hand, some may say, "You have faith; I am myself a worker." "Let me see your faith apart from its results; and I will illustrate the faith to you by means of my actions."
 19 You believe that there is one God; you do right—the demons also
 20 believe, and shudder. But do you want to know, you vain man, that faith unaccompanied by results, is
 21 worthless? Was not our forefather Abraham approved as righteous from the fact that he offered up his own
 22 son Isaac upon the altar? Thus you see his faith co-operated with his actions; and from his actions his
 23 faith was perfected; and the scripture was fulfilled which says: ABRAHAM TRUSTED TO GOD, AND IT WAS PAID TO HIM IN RIGHTEOUSNESS;¹ and he was called a FRIEND OF GOD.²
 24 You see then that a man is made righteous by means of actions, and
 25 not merely by means of faith. And in the same way, was not Rahab the innkeeper also made righteous by actions, inasmuch as she welcomed the Messengers, and dispatched them
 26 by another road? Because, as the body without breath is lifeless, in the same way, the faith apart from action is also lifeless.

On Bridling the Tongue.

3 Do not be all teachers, my brethren, because you know that we shall
 2 undergo a severe examination; for we all err in many ways. If any one can guard against slips in conversation, he is a perfect man, able also to
 3 restrain his whole body. When we put bits into the mouths of the horses, so as to render them obedient to us, we also control their whole body.

¹ Gen. xv. 6.

² Isa. xli. 8.

Observe also the ships, although they 4 are so large, and are tossed about by rough winds, are yet by means of a very small rudder turned in whatever direction the steersman may determine. So the tongue, although a 5 small organ, is nevertheless a great boaster! See also how the tiniest spark may kindle the mightiest forest!

And the tongue is a fire—a universe 6 of wickedness! The tongue encamps in the midst of our organs, plundering the whole body, and firing the course of creation, and is set on fire by hell! For every species of wild beasts, as 7 well as birds, with reptiles and fishes, has been tamed and can be tamed by the human genius; but no men have 8 ever been able to tame the tongue!—an undisciplined evil, full of deadly poison. With it we praise the Lord 9 and Father, and with it we curse men, created in the likeness of God. From 10 the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brethren, it is not right for these things to be so. Does the 11 fountain from the same cleft discharge both the sweet and the bitter? Can a 12 fig-tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine, figs? Neither can salt produce sweet water.

The Proof of Wisdom.

Who is wise and intelligent among 13 you? Let him exhibit it by the nobility of his conduct, with unobtrusive wisdom. But if you have 14 bitter emulation and rivalry in your hearts, however, do not boast nor lie against this truth. Such philosophy 15 is not that descending from above; but is, on the contrary, earthly, animal, demoniacal. For where 16 jealousy and rivalry exist, there are also discord, and all vile practices. But the wisdom which is from above 17 is first pure, then peaceable, decorous, docile, full of pity and fruits of beneficence; not censorious, unpretentious. And the fruit of 18 righteousness is sown in peace, for the benefit of those who cultivate peace.

The Origin of Dissensions.

Whence come wars? and whence 4 come contentions among you? Are they not from your vices fighting in your organs? You lust for, and possess 2 not; you murder, and quarrel; you fight and war, but cannot attain.

You do not possess, because you do not pray; you pray and do not receive, because you are praying wickedly, in order that you may expend upon your vices. You adulteresses! do you not know that the friendship of the world is hostility to God? Whoever therefore determines to become a friend of the world, renders himself an enemy of God.

Or, do you think that the scripture says unmeaningly—The spirit which has established itself within us is strongly inclined towards malice?

But He gives a more valuable gift; therefore He says, GOD REPELS THE HAUGHTY, BUT GIVES A GIFT TO THE LOWLY.¹

Subject yourselves therefore to God; but repel the Devil, and he will fly from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.

Wash your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you dissemblers.

Be distressed, and mourn, and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to dejection. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

Do not, brethren, speak against one another. The slanderer of his brother defames the law, and judges the law. But if you criticise the law, you are not a doer of law, but a critic. The Law-giver and Judge are the same—the One who is able to save and to destroy; but you—who are you, to condemn your neighbour?

A Warning against Presumption.

Come on now, you who say, "To-day or to-morrow we will go to that city, and stay there a year; and we will trade and become rich." You, however, are not certain where your life may be to-morrow. For you are a vapour, visible for awhile, and then disappearing. Instead of that, you ought to say, "If the Lord should decide it, we shall both live and do this, or that." But now you boast about your ambitions. All such boasting is wicked.

If you therefore know how to do well, and fail to do it, that itself is sin.

Warning to the Rich.

Now, come on, you rich! weep and howl over your hastening miseries! Your hoarded wealth is rotten; and

your mantles have become moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver are rusted through; and their rust shall become an evidence against you, and will consume your flesh. You have heaped up as for a fire at the end of your days. Listen! the wages of the workmen who have cultivated your estates, fraudulently detained by you, cries; and the complaints of the reapers have entered the ears of the LORD OF HOSTS.

You have luxuriated, and taken your ease upon the earth; you have nursed your hearts in a time of festivity. You have convicted, you have murdered the Just One. He did not resist you!

The near Approach of the Lord Jesus.

However, have patience, brethren, until the appearance of the Lord. Look at the farmer, expecting the precious produce of the earth, waiting for it patiently, until he may receive both the early and the late. Be you also patient; fortify your hearts: because the appearance of the Lord approaches. Do not, brethren, complain against one another; so that you may not be condemned. See! the Judge has already stationed Himself at the gates! Take, brethren, as a model of suffering, and of patience, the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. We consider them happy for having borne miseries. You have heard of suffering Job; and you see the object of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and merciful.

On False-swearing.

But before all, my brethren, do not swear, neither by the heavens, nor by the earth, nor any other kind of oath: but let your yes be yes; and your no, no; so that you may not fall under a sentence.

Sundry Personal Exhortations.

Is any one among you in distress? Let him pray. Is any one happy? Let him sing praise. Is any one among you sick? Let him summon the elders of the assembly; and they will pray over him, applying to him oil with the power of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him; and if he should have committed sin, it shall be removed from him.

Confess therefore your faults to one another, and plead for one another;

¹ Prov. iii. 34.

in order that you may be cured. Very powerfully productive is the prayer of a righteous man. Elijah was a man who was suffering like us, and with a prayer he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and no rain fell upon the land for the space of three years and six months. And he earnestly

prayed again; when the sky gave rain and the land yielded its produce.

My brethren, if any of you should stray from the truth, and one can turn him back; let him know that he who turns a sinner from his wandering way will save that soul from death, and prevent a multitude of sins.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PETER.

General Greeting.

1 **P**ETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the chosen strangers of the Dispersion, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the predetermination of a Father God, for a purification of spirit through obedience and a sprinkling of blood of Jesus Christ: May blessing and peace be abundant to you!

The Ministry of the Prophets.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!—Who, with His boundless pity, has caused us to be born again into a living hope—by means of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from among the dead—of an inheritance incorruptible, and spotless, and unfading, guarded in the heavens for you, by the power of God,—you who look out through faith to a salvation ready to be revealed at the end of time.

6 On which account you should be exceedingly glad; although now, if need be, for a short space of time you are grieved by numerous trials: so that the testing of your faith, far more precious than gold which perishes, although tested by fire, may be found in approval, rectification, and honour and distinction at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

8 Whom having not seen you love; upon Whom although not yet having looked, you believe, and rejoice with unspeakable and anticipating delight, looking out for the object of your faith—salvation of souls. Concerning which salvation, the prophets, prophesying of this gift to you, diligently searched as to Whom, or what period of time, the

Spirit of Christ within them pointed, when He testified beforehand the sufferings surrounding the Messiah, and the glories after them; to whom it was revealed that not for themselves, but for you, they were messengers of things, which are now proclaimed to you, by those who evangelize you by a Holy Spirit sent from heaven, into which the angels desired to examine.

Incitement to Holiness of Life.

Therefore, girding up the loins of your understanding, perfectly sober, hope for the gift that is to be presented to you at the revealing of Jesus Christ. As children of obedience, not conforming yourselves to your lusts, as you formerly did in your ignorance; but rather as your Commander is holy, you also should become holy in all your conduct. Because it is written, **BECOME HOLY, FOR I MYSELF AM HOLY.**¹ If then you are commanded by a Father, Who without flattery judges according to the work of each, conduct yourselves for the time of your service in reverence. Knowing that you were not redeemed from the slavery of your ancestral follies by means of corruptible silver or gold; but by means of the precious blood of Christ, like of an unblemished and spotless lamb; provided, indeed, before the foundation of the world, but manifested at the extremity of the ages for the sake of you, who through Him are believers in God, Who raised Him from the dead and

¹ Lev. xi. 44.