

INTRODUCTION.

TODAY, ~ WE RETURN TO OUR STUDY OF JAMES.

▶▶ Recall, ~ James is the only NT book ~ that falls into the form known as ~ wisdom literature.

▷▷ It is arranged mainly ~ into small units ~ but contains ~ some larger proverb clusters on a common theme.

↳↳ How we are approaching it. ⇔⇔ Tenuous connections at best.

WE ARE CURRENTLY IN ~ THE 1ST MAJOR SECTION OF JAMES, ~ 1:2-27.

▶▶ This section consists ~ of a collection of proverbs ~ on a wide range of subjects.

▶▶ It does not have the logical flow of an essay, ~ with a continuous line of argument.

▶▶ And we are taking the subjects ~ as James presents them.

▶▶ James' overall purpose ~ is to instill ~ correct thinking ~ and right behavior ~ in believers.

TODAY, ~ WE'LL STUDY JAMES 1:19-20, ~ THE NEXT TOPIC OF 1:2-27.

▶▶ These verses deal with the theme of ~ speech ethics, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ which James will return to throughout the letter. ¶¶ 1/11

WE CAN OUTLINE THIS BRIEF ¶ THIS WAY.

▶▶ James introduces the topic of speech ethics with an imperative, ~ vs 19a.

▷▷ Know this ~ or ~ Understand this.

▶▶ Then in vs 19b, ~ James explains exactly what it is ~ that we are to know/understand.

▷▷ Let every person [i.e., believer] be quick to hear ~ [or, ~ listen], ~ slow to speak, ~ slow to anger ~ [i.e., ~ slow to become angry].

▶▶ And in vs 20, ~ he adds a reason to be slow to anger.

▷▷ For the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

NOW DIG INTO THE DETAILS.

19a. ~ ~ KNOW THIS ~ OR ~ UNDERSTAND THIS.

THIS EXPRESSION ~ SERVES AS AN INTRODUCTORY FORMULA ~ for what James goes on to say next.

▷▷ Pay attention ~ to what I am going to say next.

▶▶ Imperative.

▷▷ Fuller idea here.

↪↪ Believers, ~ it is mandatory for you to know/understand ~ ¶¶

→→ what I am about to say. ¶¶ 2/11

ONCE AGAIN, ~ HE REFERS TO BELIEVERS AS "BELOVED."

BELOVED BROTHERS [I.E., ~ BROTHERS AND SISTERS].

▶▶ As noted, ~ beloved means ~ a person dearly loved and cherished.

▶▶ My dear brothers and sisters.

▷▷ Other ways to express, ~ prized, ~ valued.

▶▶ Again, ~ it is a term of affection ~ that helps to soften James' blow.

▶▶ James is very tough on his original readers and us.

▶▶ But that believers are dearly loved and cherished by James ~ tells us ~ ¶¶

▷▷ that he is writing out of love.

↪↪ And therefore, ~ has our best interests at heart.

→→ Holy Spirit also has our best interest at heart.

THEN IN VERSE 19b, ~~ JAMES EXPLAINS ~ EXACTLY WHAT IT IS ~ THAT believers are to know/understand.

LET EVERY PERSON BE ~ QUICK TO LISTEN, ~ SLOW TO SPEAK, ~ SLOW TO BECOME angry.

Let's break this down. ¶¶ 3/11

HE STARTS OFF WITH ANOTHER MANDATE, ~ VS 19c.

LET EVERY PERSON BE.

▶▶ 3 pers. impv.

▷▷ Every believer ~ must be ~ what James is about to list.

↳↳ The command is stated as a duty ~ incumbent upon ~ each ~ child of God.

▶▶ And the present tense underlines it ~ as a ~ continuing ~ duty.

▶▶ The idea here is this.

▷▷ Every believer ~ must always be what James notes.

JAMES FOLLOWS UP WITH A LIST OF THREE THINGS WE MUST BE.

Quick to listen, ~ slow to speak, ~ slow to become angry.

NO DIRECT OBJECTS.

▶▶ General.

▶▶ Not specific areas.

▶▶ I.e., ~ in general, ~ every believer must continually be ~ quick to listen, ~ slow to speak, ~ slow to become angry. ↴↴ 4/11

1st, ~ ALL BELIEVERS ~ MUST CONTINUALLY ~ be quick ~ with regard to listening to people.

▶▶ Many people have observed ~ that we have two ears and one mouth, ~~ ¶¶

▷▷ which ought to remind us ~ to listen ~ twice as much as we speak.

▶▶ Being quick ~ with regard to listening ~ requires us ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to be eager to listen and attentive to what is said, ~ ¶¶

↪↪ and ~ to be ready to absorb what is being said.

→→ And not be thinking of what we're going to say as they're speaking.

▶▶ Be active listeners.

▶▶ Actually humorous that I'm the one talking.

2nd, ~ ALL BELIEVERS MUST CONTINUALLY BE ~ "slow to speak" ~ in a general sense.

IOW, ~ NEVER BE QUICK TO SPEAK WHEN TALKING WITH PEOPLE.

▶▶ Here "slow" indicates ~ a sense of ~ hesitation or delay.

▶▶ Most people behave as if the proverb were reversed ~ ¶¶

▷▷ quick to speak ~ and slow to listen!

▶▶ We need to always be more willing ~ to listen ~ than to speak. ¶¶ 5/11

NEVER BE QUICK TO SPEAK ~ IS A WARNING AGAINST AN ATTITUDE ~ ¶¶

▶▶ of being too ready and eager ~ to have something to say ~ without ~ due care and thought.

▶▶ The sort of person who acts like this ~ is worse than a fool.

▷▷ Prov. 29:20, CSB, Do you see someone who speaks too soon? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

▶▶ The modern proverb, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ "Better to keep your mouth shut ~ and be thought a fool ~ ¶¶

↳↳ than to open it ~ and remove all doubt," ~ ¶¶

→→ may be part of what James ~ has in mind here.

FURTHERMORE, ~ WHEN WE ~ TALK TOO MUCH ~ AND LISTEN TOO LITTLE, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ we communicate to others that we think ~ what we have to say ~ ¶¶

▷▷ is much more important ~ than what they have to say.

▶▶ James wisely advises us ~ to reverse this process.

▶▶ We need to put a mental stopwatch on our conversations ~ ¶¶

▷▷ and keep track ~ of how much we talk and how much we listen. ¶¶ 6/11

▶▶ And we should ask ourselves, ~ 77

▷▷ when people talk to us, ~ 77

↳↳ do they feel that their viewpoints and ideas have value?

▷▷ Do we respond appropriately, ~ i.e., ~ in a way a person will be encouraged?

↳↳ Or do we respond in a negative or contrary fashion?

WARNINGS ABOUT HASTY SPEECH ARE FOUND THROUGHOUT THE WISDOM BOOKS OF the OT.

▶▶ E.g., ~ Prov. 17:27-28.

▷▷ Whoever restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding. Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent.

▷▷ A wise man ~ is cautious in what he says.

↳↳ He thinks before he talks ~ and does not gab.

▷▷ This reveals ~ that he is even-tempered (cool spirit).

▷▷ Restraint in talking ~ may even cause a fool to be considered wise.

▶▶ And Proverbs 10:19, CSB.

▷▷ When there are many words, sin is unavoidable, but the one who controls his lips is prudent. 7/11

▷▷ The person who rattles on and chatters incessantly ~ 77

↳ ↳ will not be able to avoid sinning with those words.

▷▷ They will promise something they cannot keep; ~~ they will offend someone; ~~ 77

↳ ↳ they will embarrass themselves; ~~ they will reveal their ignorance.

▷▷ They will bore someone; ~~ 77

↳ ↳ they will selfishly reveal their pride ~ by speaking on and on about their own affairs.

▷▷ The possibilities ~ are endless.

AND 3rd IN LIST OF MUST BE ~ SLOW TO ANGER.

I.E., ~ ALL BELIEVERS ~ MUST CONTINUALLY ~ NOT GET ANGRY EASILY.

▶▶ To phrase it differently, ~ Believers must continually control their anger.

▶▶ What James prohibits ~ is the ~ thoughtless, ~ unrestrained temper ~ 77

▷▷ that often leads to ~ rash, ~ harmful, ~ and irretrievable ~ words.

▶▶ Simply put, ~ James is banning ~ uncontrolled anger in conversing with others.

▶▶ To look at it in a different way, ~ he wants us ~ to practice self-control in dealing with others. 8/11

PROVERBS SPEAKS FREQUENTLY ~ OF THE WISDOM OF SELF-CONTROL.

▶▶E.g., ~ Prov. 14:17a. ~ Short-tempered people do foolish things (NLT).

▷▷Flying off the handle," ~ not controlling one's temper, ~ ¶¶

↳↳causes a person to do and say ridiculous things, ~ which they may later regret and be unable to undo.

▶▶Also, ~ Prov. 14:29.

▷▷Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.

▷▷The one who is slow to anger ~ proves ~ that he possesses great understanding.

↳↳In the flash of the moment, ~ the wisdom of reserve ~ may not seem evident as one is rebuffed.

↳↳But time proves ~ that such a person ~ saw more than the others standing around.

↳↳The word understanding ~ describes the ability ~ ¶¶

→→to examine two seemingly opposite lines of thinking ~ and choose the correct one.

↳↳The light of a new day reveals that, ~ in the heat of rising emotions, ~ ¶¶

→→the person who controls their anger ~ has chosen wisely. ¶¶ 9/11

▷▷ The contrast ~ is the quick-tempered man.

↳↳ His fuse is short ~ and he is quick to prove it ~ at the slightest snub.

↳↳ Time reveals that this person ~ promotes foolishness.

▶▶ And Prov. 15:1. ~~ A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

▷▷ Another way trans.: ⇔⇔ A gentle answer ~ deflects anger, ~~ but harsh words ~ make tempers flare.

▷▷ A gentle/soft answer can dispel a potentially tense situation ~ by dissolving a person's anger.

▷▷ Being conciliatory in such a situation ~ 77

↳↳ requires ~ forethought, ~ patience, ~ self control, ~ and kindness.

▷▷ In contrast, ~ a harsh word ~ arouses ~ rather than dissolves ~ anger.

IN ADDITION, ~ THE BIBLE SHOWS US THAT NOT GETTING ANGRY EASILY ~ reflects God's character.

▶▶ Ps. 145:8 (NLT), ~ The Lord is ~ merciful and compassionate, ~ slow to get angry ~ and filled with unfailing love.

ONE MORE POINT BEFORE MOVING ON TO VS 20.

▶▶ Warning in Prov. 22:24-25 (NIV). 11 10/11

▷▷ "Do not make friends with a hot-tempered person, do not associate with one easily angered, ~ [why:] ~ or you may learn their ways and get yourself ensnared."

↳↳ This proverb warns us ~ not to associate with such a person ~ 77

→→ because we are liable ~ to develop a similar problem with anger.

↳↳ Hot-tempered people ~ lead others ~ to become hot-tempered people.

IN VS 20, ~ JAMES ADDS A REASON FOR US TO CONTINUALLY CONTROL OUR ANGER.

FOR THE ANGER OF MAN DOES ~ NOT PRODUCE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

▶▶ NIV helps make the sense here a little clearer. ⇔⇔ Human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

▶▶ Right living. ⇔⇔ Not righteousness in regard to salvation.

▶▶ James' simple point here.

▷▷ Having a short fuse ~ does not help us live the way God wants.

↳↳ And by way of application, ~ neither do ~ not listening well and hasty speech.

▶▶ TPID, ~ Failure to listen well, ~ hasty speech, ~ & being hot-tempered ~ do not please God.

CONCLUSION.

Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: We must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. 11/11