

two reasons: 1) Would a Christian interpolater have restrained himself to only two mentions of Jesus? 2) Could any of the teachings found in James only have been written by a non-Christian Jew?

Other scholars, going to the other extreme, say that James was written as a late Christian homily (c. AD 70-130). The gospel message is underplayed, so goes the theory, because the churches to which it was addressed were well-established and evangelism was no longer the pressing issue that it had been in Paul's time. It was pseudonymously attributed to James to ensure its acceptance by the church. Its primitive ecclesiology (see 5:14; elders were the only church office) and the known tendency of pseudepigraphists to be specific about the alleged authors of their works argue against this interpretation (a salutation from "James the brother of the Lord Jesus Christ" would be more likely).

If, as seems likely, James was written by the Lord's brother, it was probably written before the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). There is no hint of the Jewish-Gentile controversy that led to that meeting, nor is it necessary to see James 2:14-26 as a response to Paul's doctrine of Christian liberty (and therefore later than Romans or Galatians). The Jerusalem Council convened c. AD 49-50. James was therefore probably written late in the fourth decade.

James was probably addressed to Jewish believers. The salutation "to the 12 tribes scattered among the nations" (1:1) is probably symbolic--the church as the new Israel sojourning on the earth. Clues suggesting that it was written to Jewish believers include: 1) "glorious" (2:1), a reference to the shekinah glory of the Old Testament; 2) pride in montheism (2:19); 3) "you adulterous people" (4:4) is feminine although addressed to men and women, suggesting the Old Testament pictures of the Lord as the husband of Israel.

Outline:

Due to the rather disjointed nature of much of James, outlines of this book usually consist of a list of the topics covered in it.

- I. Salutations 1:1
- II. Trials and Temptations 1:2-18
- III. Hearing and Obeying 1:19-27
- IV. Favoritism outlawed 2:1-13
- V. Faith and works 2:14-26
- VI. The Tongue 3:1-12
- VII. Two wisdoms 3:13-18