

# The Epistles



## What is It?

**James and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter** are three New Testament epistles (letters) written to believers of the early Church.

## Who, What, When, Where and WHY

**Who** – James was written by Jesus’ half-brother, James, who became a believer and Church leader after seeing Jesus risen from the dead. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter was written by the apostle Simon Peter. James was written to all Jewish believers: both Peters were written to early believers mostly in Anatolia (present day Turkey).

**What** – James was writing to new Jewish Christians to call on them to stay faithful even through the trials and temptations they faced. In 1<sup>st</sup> Peter, the apostle was also calling on believers to remain faithful in the face of trials and persecutions. Peter addressed false teachings in his second epistle.

**When** – James was written sometime in the 40s AD – some place it as early as only 10 years after Jesus’ ascension. 1<sup>st</sup> Peter was probably written in the early 60s and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter was written in the mid 60s AD.

**Where** – James was written in Israel/Palestine, probably Jerusalem, to Jews throughout the Roman Empire. We are not sure, but both 1<sup>st</sup> Peter and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter were probably written from Rome. We do know they were written to the churches in Anatolia.

**Why** – Though these epistles are short, they are filled with valuable insights and advice for both early Christians, the Church, and for us today. Today, as then, Christians face suffering, false teachings, trials, and pressures from a mostly secular (or pagan) society – we need God’s Word to guide us through these issues.

## Reading Advice

To read James and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter in one week you will need to read about 2 chapters a day (13 chapters/6 days = 2.2 per day). We recommend at least 10 minutes a day (the chapters are short too), Monday through Saturday. If you include a Sunday reading, then you can reduce the chapters and/or minutes per day a little.