

# James 3

Last time James was talking about faith. And because that is a topic that is often so clouded and misunderstood, we had to spend a lot of time explaining what James is trying to say, and dispelling false and heretical teachings that people get from this passage.

So I think that there are a few more things that are really worth discussing here. And so we're going to start today by looking some more at the same verses that we looked at last time, at the end of chapter 2.

We didn't really get to look in depth at how what James is saying here in these verses relates to his message as a whole. So we're going to look a little more at how this relates to the things he's said previously. Now that we have a basic understanding of what this passage is saying, we're going to put it back into the larger context of James's message, how it relates to, and builds on, what he said before. And then we'll also be ready to see what he has to say next.

And if you've noticed, James's style is different than what we're used to in Paul's epistles.

James is a little bit more clipped and short, and to the point.

And so James is sometimes difficult to understand, because he doesn't give a whole lot of background, and he speaks in wholly practical terms. He doesn't speak a lot in spiritual terms, and he doesn't go into all of the theological basis of what he says. He doesn't give a full theological or scriptural proof of every point that he makes. He expects his readers to already have some knowledge of these things. He expects us to have already read Paul's epistles and understand the basis of Christian theology.

And so he's said many things here that are similar to what Paul talked about in Hebrews. Except that Paul spent a lot of time quoting scripture, and going through all of the fine points of the theology. Whereas James is approaching it from the perspective of tangible things, of the daily experience. He's absolutely practical in what he says.

And so his style is a lot different, but what he is saying is actually very similar, in many of the overall points that he is making.

As we said at the start, Paul was writing to the Hebrews, and James is writing to them here, so there are going to be a lot of similarities. And as we've been going along here, I've been pointing some of those out.

And one that is worth noting in regard to what James said about faith, is that just as James told them that by works faith is made perfect, Paul also admonished them to go on unto perfection.

**Hebrews 6:1** Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto **perfection**; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of **faith** toward God,

2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

3 And this will we do, if God permit.

So Paul was also telling them not to just be hearers of the word, but to be doers. To not just keep laying the foundation of faith toward God, but to go on unto perfection. To come to a complete knowledge of the will of God, and to perfect their faith by wholly following that will, and doing his work, bringing forth fruit.

Not to just keep going over the things that they believe, but to justify that belief, by doing what God said.

So that was the same basic message.

And that isn't a message that James just started on here. James has been pushing that message from the beginning.

**James 1:4** But let patience have her **perfect** work, that ye may be **perfect** and entire, wanting nothing.

So he started out talking about how they should joy in their temptations, because it would work patience in them, and if they let patience have its perfect work it would make them perfect. It would increase their faith and hope, their longing for Christ's return and his kingdom, so that they would live for his kingdom, and not for those of this world.

And so they would be made perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

And looking back, note how he didn't say it would cleanse them from something. He didn't say it would cleanse them from sin. But that it would make them perfect, make them complete, so that they weren't lacking anything.

He didn't say that it would get rid of whatever was superfluous. In fact, he went on to specifically warn them against picking up filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness because of their temptations.

So it wasn't that patience would get rid of superfluous things. That it would cleanse them from sin. But it would perfect that which was lacking. It would make them perfect and entire.

In other words, it would perfect their faith. They'd no longer be lacking anything, no longer be lacking any work. But they'd be made perfect, they'd be made complete, and their faith would be made perfect, be manifested.

So this was the core of James's message, that he stated right at the start. And now he's expounding on it.

And as a side note I think it is interesting to see again how this contradicts a lot of teaching in regard to temptations and tribulations.

Many people have grabbed on to this oriental idea that suffering helps to cleanse us from sin. That it helps remove all of the impurities from us, and make us holy. And we've repeatedly seen the scripture say something different.

And so here James actually is saying the exact opposite. That suffering actually naturally causes the opposite, causes superfluity of naughtiness and filthiness.

But what it does, the reason to rejoice in temptations, is not because they purify us, but because they complete us. Not because they take away something, but because when we ask God for wisdom, and let patience have its perfect work, it can make us perfect and entire, it adds something. It induces us to show forth our faith, in works.

And so the idea that suffering helps us become holy and escape sin, that's an idea that originates from the world's religions. That's not an idea that comes from scripture. It's an idea that comes from oriental teaching, and pagan ideas that underpin the Roman Catholic system.

And so what James is teaching here is naturally the opposite of that. He's basically been inspired to put together a polemic against religion, but in favor of the simple, scriptural faith of Christ, where you hear the word of God in the Bible, and do it.

And so when you are suffering, and it drives you to even greater anticipation of God's promises, then you frame your life more and more in accordance with those promises, and not with this world. And so your faith is perfected, it becomes more and more obvious, it's given a chance to shine. And you become perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Not lacking any sign, any work, any word or deed, that indicates that you are a follower of Jesus Christ.

So your faith will be perfected, it will be accompanied by works, that justify it before men.

But what exactly is he talking about here when he says “works”? Let’s see if we can clarify that, by looking at what he’s said here so far.

Now, the first thing to notice is that he doesn’t just give us a list.

He doesn’t give a list of works that you have to do to be saved, because that isn’t what he’s talking about.

But he does give us two examples of working faith. Remember, Abraham and Rahab. He said that Abraham and Rahab were both justified by their works.

So what were those works?

Well first, think about Abraham. What was it that Abraham did?

James said “he offered his son Isaac upon the altar.”

So does that mean that in order to have a working faith, in order to be saved, that we all need to go out and offer our kids upon an altar?

No. Of course not.

That was a unique work there, that was specific to Abraham’s life and circumstances.

It wasn’t some magic thing that Abraham did, that justifies our faith. It wasn’t the specific act that was so important.

The key was that God told Abraham to do that, and he did it.

If God hadn’t told Abraham to do that, and he did it, would that have justified Abraham? Would that have justified his faith?

No. It would have shown that Abraham was deluded. Here’s this nut thinks he’s going to sacrifice his son to God and that God is going to raise him again. “Why does he think that?”

Because he’s just crazy, that’s why.

Same thing everyone would think about you if you did the same thing today.

If it wasn’t him believing God, and doing what God said, then it wouldn’t have been faith. It wouldn’t have justified his faith.

And in the same way, if God had told him to do something else instead, and Abraham had done that other thing, then that would have also been a demonstration of Abraham’s faith, just as this was.

The only reason that God chose this specifically is because it made for the best test, the best demonstration of Abraham’s faith. Because it was the hardest thing for him to do. It was contrary to his feelings, his love for his son. It was probably contrary to his sense of right, that he shouldn’t be slaying this innocent person, he shouldn’t be offering child sacrifice, that was what the heathens did. It was even seemingly contrary to the promise of God itself, that God had said would be fulfilled through that same child. It was the hardest possible thing that God could ask Abraham to do. And he did it. He put aside his own feelings, to serve God. He put aside his own sense of right, and accepted God’s sense of right. He kept believing God’s word, all of it, put aside his own understanding, and trusted that what God had promised, he was able to perform. And so that was why it was such a great demonstration of faith.

But it was only a demonstration of faith because it was what God had told Abraham to do, and it required Abraham to believe God and do it. To hear and do the word.

And what about the harlot Rahab?

What was it that she did, what was her work that justified her faith? Was it the same thing?

No, it was different.

This time, “she received the spies with peace, and sent them out another way,” James said.

And so once again this is something that we can’t do, we can’t go to a city that the Israelites are surrounding and getting ready to destroy, and receive the spies with peace, and hide them. So there is not something super special, not something magical about this particular thing that Rahab did, that caused it to justify her faith. This isn’t the special faith justifying act that every person needs to do.

It was just another example of her hearing the word of God, that Israel would inherit the land and its inhabitants would be cast out, and believing it, and taking action in accordance with that belief.

She heard what God had commanded Israel, believed that he would perform it, and of her own fruition took action on it. She decided she wasn’t going to fight against these people, she was going to help them. And she did.

So it was once again about her hearing and doing the word. Acting in accordance with the promise of God.

So you can’t exactly draw out a particular action there, a particular work there, from those examples.

And I think that James did that on purpose.

Because James’s point here is not to lay down a law, a set of rules, a list of works that you need to do.

You’ll notice that James has been very general in almost everything that he has said. He hasn’t specifically mentioned any sins or any actions to do.

The only thing that he did say specifically that you’d call a work, was to visit the fatherless and widow in their affliction. And that was in response to religion, people who want to be religious, and he replied, “pure religion, and undefiled is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

So that’s the only specific thing he’s brought up here. But even then he presented it along with the general dictum, “and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

So he’s been speaking in general terms when it comes to works.

Because it’s not about a particular work. It’s not about a religion. It’s not about a law. It is the perfect law of liberty, the engrafted word. It is following the word of God.

And so what James is calling them to do here, is the same thing that Paul was calling them to do in Hebrews: to hear the word of the Son, and his apostles, and to go on unto perfection. To hear the whole word, the perfect law, and to do it.

That is what he means by works here. That is the examples that he gave.

And so if you want to know what you need to do, to justify your faith, if you want to know what you ought to be doing, then you need to read the Bible. You need to have the word of God, and hear it, and do it. That is the work.

And if you do that, you will find, in the other epistles, lists of particular sins, and particular instructions, as well as much other more general admonition. But you need to look into the perfect law of liberty, and continue therein, and be not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work. And you’ll be blessed in your deed. That will profit.

And remember, James is talking about justifying your faith before others. And in many cases what they are going to see, what is going to stand out, is what you are doing on an individual level in regard to your circumstances, your calling of God, and how you are relating to them.

Something that is specific to God's will for your life, that you're not going to find a specific command to do in the word of God.

Israel justified Rahab's faith because of the way that she helped them. There wasn't a specific command to aid the spies. But that was what made her faith obvious, because she did that difficult thing in response to the word of God.

And so you may be avoiding sin and doing lots of good things, but somebody is only going to justify your faith based on the things that they can see. With Rahab, and with Abraham, it was that critical event that people saw, that big thing that was a defining moment in their life, that people looked at.

So it is often going to be those things, that are bigger, unique to you, once in a lifetime events, that people will look at to justify your faith.

And so there are a lot of little things, that you should be doing, throughout your life. Specific commands from God, like the one that Abraham received from God's word. But many of those are things that most people won't see. And that's sometimes actually good, that's OK.

But it is the things that people can see, that are more obvious, that they're going to have to justify your faith on. The evidence that is before them. The things that they have seen you do. And so for most of us it is going to be one of those Rahab moments, where we take action in accordance with the word of God, that is us living our faith in a particular situation, not just following a specific command.

And that's the beauty of faith, with the perfect law of liberty. Without just a law, just rules. And so Rahab was justified, not just because she kept some rules, but because she believed God, and acted on it.

And of course, that faith should start with keeping any specific general commands that God has given us in the engrafted word, of works that we should be doing.

So here has what the word has told them to do so far, in the book of James. Here's a list of all of the things that he's told them that they need to do. Just the works that he's told them to do, not the sins he's told them to avoid:

- count it joy when they fall into temptations
- let patience have her perfect work
- ask God for wisdom, if you lack
- be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath
- receive with meekness the engrafted word
- be doers of the word
- look into the perfect law of liberty, and continue therein
- be a doer of the work
- visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction
- keep himself unspotted from the world
- love thy neighbor as thyself
- give food and clothing to those in need

So very little specific there, beside helping the afflicted. Mostly he is pointing them to the word that has already been given. He's pointing them to the NT, and telling them to keep the word.

So James is aware of the existing epistles, Paul's epistles, and the gospels, that have been circulating. And he knows, and his readers know, that they are the word of God. The engrafted word. So he doesn't have to list them out, he just tells them to keep it. To do what they say.

So it was very clear, in the early church, what was God's word, what was NT scripture.

And James knows his audience. Remember, he's writing to people that he's spent several decades shepherding. So that's why he can point them to the things that they already know. That's why he can be so short here, and not go into a lot of background on everything that he says.

So he just directs them to do these things, and do the word.

And remember, he's writing to people that are brethren, that have been in the faith in many cases for many years.

This isn't "do this and you're a Christian," this is, "you're a Christian, do this."

He's giving them admonition based on their faith, to make that faith perfect. To be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. But prepared unto every good work.

And so now, in chapter 3, he's going to warn them against one particular thing that they might think is a work, but that he's going to tell them, "don't be hasty to do this." This isn't the work he's talking about.

*And what James was saying about working faith is also something that relates to the Jews during the tribulation.*

*And in particular this mention of Rahab the harlot.*

*Remember how in Hebrews Paul also gave them many examples of faith, in chapter 11. And the two examples that James gives here are also given there.*

*And so as we went through that we talked about how they were like Abraham, they've seen the son, the heir, offered as a sacrifice. And be raised again to still receive the inheritance.*

*And we also talked about how Israel, during the tribulation, is like Rahab.*

*Rahab was a harlot. And Israel is often compared to a woman in the Bible, but one who has gone a whoring after other gods. A harlot.*

*And in the time of the end two messengers are going to come, the two witnesses sent from God. And they are going to be received and hidden by Israel. By those of faith in Israel.*

*And that fact is going to be one demonstration of their faith, that they believe the message of God spoken by those witnesses, and so when the wicked are destroyed, they will be saved.*

*Just as Joshua saved Rahab.*

*And there are other ways in which their faith will be demonstrated by works during the tribulation.*

*For example we've looked at the parable of the sheep and the goats. And in that parable the difference between those that came into the kingdom, and those that didn't, was whether they had aided Jesus's brethren. Whether they had had compassion on the poor and afflicted Jews during their tribulation.*

*And so just as James said here, that to say "be warmed and filled" doesn't profit if you don't actually provide food and raiment, so in the tribulation it is only those that actually give the hungry meat, and the naked clothing, that will be justified by Christ. The King will justify their faith, because they had works to back it up.*

*You see, they aren't saved by works, they are saved by faith. But their faith must be justified by works, or it is a dead faith, and it won't save them.*

*At the end of the tribulation every eye shall see him, every knee bow, and every tongue confess. But by that point, it is too late. Like the devils, they will believe, and tremble. But that belief won't do them a bit of good.*

*Like we talked about the hypothetical of the harlot Rahab professing belief after failing to help the spies, had she done that, she wouldn't have been saved. And the wicked will not be either. If they haven't actually been living by faith, just professing it, just saying "I have faith" won't do them any good.*

*It is one of those critical points at which you have to have justified your faith before that. And if you didn't have a justified faith, a living faith, then whatever you had doesn't count.*

*If you say, "But I believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Redeemer of Israel," but you didn't help Israel during the tribulation, then that belief wasn't faith, and when Israel's Redeemer comes, he will judge you, not save you. His actions are going to be in accordance with your faith, not what you claim to believe.*

*And so we see that repeatedly in the parables about the tribulation and the coming of Christ's kingdom.*

*You have the parable of the talents, and the man who receives a talent, but doesn't do anything with it. Just hides it until that day. Hides his light under a bushel. And he's cast out into outer darkness.*

*You have the parable of the servant that the lord made ruler over his household, but who was wicked and smote his fellow servants. And so he was appointed his portion with the unbelievers.*

*Christ is not going to judge after the hearing of his ears, but in righteousness. He's going to condemn those who were wicked, and refused to obey the word of God.*

*Coming up with some flimsy excuse that you believed something, isn't going to do you any more good than it does the devil to believe the same thing.*

## Verse 1

**James 3:1** My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

So he's going to warn them against being many masters. Being a master, somebody in a leading role, within the church.

**Malachi 2:12** The LORD will cut off the man that doeth this, the **master** and the scholar...

So a master is somebody that gives instruction to others, who follow their direction.

Like there used to be a school master, or school mistress. They're the teacher, or instructor. And you are the one who is their follower, being instructed, and learning from them.

**Matthew 10:24** The disciple is not above his **master**, nor the servant above his lord.

So again, that's like being a disciple of something, of someone. They instruct you, and you follow what they say. They're a master.

And James says "we," "in many things we offend all." So he's putting himself into that group. People like James, who is writing here to give them instruction, as the one that had been appointed by Christ to oversee the church in Judea.

But remember how he introduced himself. He introduced himself at the start of the book as James the *servant* of God. He didn't call himself a master, he didn't give himself that title.

Because Christ said:

**Matthew 23:8** But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your **Master**, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

10 Neither be ye called **masters**: for one is your **Master**, even Christ.

11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

So James didn't call himself a master, that wasn't a title that he was given or that he is giving to others. He called himself a servant.

But in the sense of being a teacher, an instructor, a director of the church, there are people within the body who like James are masters.

And James is telling them here, don't many of you try to do this. Don't think that this is what you should be do, what you should be working.

And he gives a reason. He says, "knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation."

Now here's another one of those words, "condemnation," that's got theological connotations. That means that God is going to condemn them more harshly, right?

No. It means that *somebody* is going to condemn them, yes. But in this case, it is men. And he's going to make that clear.

You see, he hasn't changed the subject here.

Remember what he was just talking about. He was talking about being justified before men.

And when you are judged, you can be justified, or, what is the alternative to that?

You can be condemned.

And so he's just told them that they need to justify their faith. But if they want to do that, here is something that they need to be avoid. Because this is something that will receive the greater condemnation, it is less likely that you'll be justified if you do this. People are more likely to question your faith, it is harder to justify it.

He said, "be not many masters."

Don't be a pastor or teacher or bishop or ruler in the church, if you want to justify your faith. If many of you try to do that, you won't be justified, you'll be condemned.

Why?

## Verse 2

**James 3:2** For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

He said, Because you are going to offend people.

In particular, they're not going to like what you have to say.

So James is still talking about your speech, as he's been doing all along here.

And about being justified before men in what you say and do.

Them justifying you, instead of counting you an offender, and condemning you.



And of course, that goes beyond them justifying your faith. Sometimes they are going to be offended and condemn you based on their own measure, not the measure of faith.

All different kinds of people will be offended for all sorts of reasons.

He says "in *many* things we offend *all*."

You'll offend those within the church, and those outside of it. Those who are Jews, those who are Gentiles, those who are religious, and those who are not. He said you'll offend them all. You'll have a difficult time displaying your faith, justifying your faith, and being counted a great man of faith in that case. If you become a master in the church, one that bridles the body.

And we can see that even in Christ's ministry, how different people were offended at what he had to say.

**Matthew 13:54** And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?

55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?

57 And they were **offended** in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.

58 And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

So in Christ's hometown they were offended at him, because he was a master. Because he was going around like a rabbi when they thought of him as the carpenter's son.

His brother James no doubt observed that.

Jesus offended them with his words, because he was a master.

**Matthew 15:10** And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

11 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

So Jesus starts teaching the people against the religious tradition of the day.

12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were **offended**, after they heard this saying?

And he offended the religious Pharisees, by what he said. Because he was a master, they were offended by what he was teaching.

13 But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

And he didn't seem bothered by it. He said that's the way it goes. If they are going to be offended at the word, that's their problem. Don't bother with them. Let them fall into the ditch. I'm going to keep teaching, so that maybe they won't lead others after them.

So even Christ offended people. Not intentionally, just for the purpose of stirring up strife. But he offended people because he was a master teaching folks the word of God, and simple faith, instead of religious tradition.

And so as James said, in many things we offend all.

He said if you don't offend in word, you are a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

He's being a little bit sarcastic. You're definitely going to offend in word. Even Jesus, the Master, offended in word.

So don't think that you are able to bridle the whole body. Be not many masters. Don't try to bridle the whole body

That's a way to get into trouble. That's a way to offend a lot of people. That's not what to do to justify yourself, justify your faith.

And do you realize how 100% opposite this is of what religion tells you?

Religion will tell you that if you want to put your faith on display, if you want everybody to know that you are a holy man, then you need to go into the ministry. You need to become a priest or rabbi or master. And everyone will respect you.

And that is how religion works. When you become a religious figure, like a priest, even the world will show you some respect, they'll justify you.

But when you are just a Bible teacher, preaching the word of God, they'll call you names, and persecute you, and make up things about you, and try to frame you, and undermine you, and destroy your credibility, and condemn you.

All kinds of people will get offended.

Because you see, this is fundamentally different than a religion. In a religion you're just an adherent who participates in all of this awe-inspiring ceremony, and religious rites, and ritual, and ceremonial cleanliness and holiness.

But that's not what it is to be a master in the body of Christ.

Because what a master of the body must teach is not his own philosophy, or some ritual practice. He has to teach the word of God. Lead people to follow the word of God. To hear it and do it.

And people don't like to be confronted head on with the word of a holy God. That offends them.

There's a lot of things that God says that they don't like.

And so in many things we offend all.

But James says that it is the job of a master not to give offense. That he should endeavor not to offend in word or deed. Yes, God's word will offend people sometimes. But don't offend them with *your* word. They, especially, need to be meek, need to be slow to speak and slow to wrath. But to speak God's word with meekness.

And the apostle Paul talks about that, how he endeavored to not offend in his ministry:

**2 Corinthians 6:3** Giving no **offence** in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

And so Paul said that he tried not to offend people. Whether Jews or Gentiles, with all of their different cultures and taboos, he said, "I try not to offend them."

Because he didn't want the ministry to be blamed. He didn't want the word of God, the gospel, to be blamed for something that he did wrong, or said wrong, that offended somebody.

So he was careful not to offend people.  
And he encouraged all saints to do the same:

**1 Corinthians 10:31** Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

32 Give none **offence**, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

33 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

So Paul said don't eat or drink something, if it will offend someone. Yes, it might be profitable for your health to eat meat, but if it offends people, don't seek your own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Don't let the ministry be blamed for something, that is just a culture clash.

So Paul tried not to offend people in his deeds.  
But knew that he did offend people in word sometimes.

**Galatians 5:11** And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the **offence** of the cross ceased.

So Paul said, that because he preached the simple faith, because he preached the cross, not accompanied by religion, not accompanied by circumcision, by Judaism, he offended people. But he was appointed by Christ to be the apostle to the Gentiles, preaching the gospel to them. He didn't write the gospel, and he couldn't change it. He preached it just like it was. And it offended people. But that wasn't his fault. He did his best not to give offense, but when the word preached offended them, that was out of his control. When the essence of the message offended them, there was nothing he could do. He just taught the word of God.

And so in the OT it prophesied of how this would be a rock of offense, particularly to the Jews. And Peter talks about that:

**1 Peter 2:6** Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of **offence**, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

So he said they stumble at the word. The word of Christ is a rock of offense to them. And he said that's OK. That's not our fault. That's actually God's design. He prophesied about it before, that this word would offend people. He knows it, and that's the word he told us to preach, so we do. He appointed for the disobedient to stumble at it.

And so if you are a master, a teacher in the church, in many things you will offend all. Particularly in word. You can try not to offend in deed, and in what you say, but when it comes to teaching the word of God, you will offend people.

And you'll probably have a very hard time not offending them with your own words as well.

Which is what James is going to talk about. Above all others, a teacher in the church needs to be meek and slow to speak and slow to wrath. Because he is under the microscope, and you don't want the ministry to be blamed.

So James tells them not to be many masters, to only do that if you are a perfect man, that offends not in word.

## Verse 3

**James 3:3** Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

So he said it is the horse's mouth that is used to lead it about, to turn it this direction and that direction.

It is from its mouth that it is caused to obey us. So it follows whatever its mouth is told to do. It is its mouth that directs its whole body.

And he said, that's the way our mouths are. They try to direct our whole body.

And you know, that's what the mouth of the master it supposed to do. He's supposed to direct the whole body.

And so he needs to have a handle on his mouth. He needs to bridle his tongue, as James said before. He needs to have a bit in his mouth, to be someone whose mouth is directed by the word of God, he needs to be somebody who can control his mouth, because his mouth controls the whole body.

## Verse 4

**James 3:4** Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

And in the same way, a great ship, with all that are therein, is turned about of a very small helm, wherever the governor desires.

And so the tongue of the governor, the master or teacher in the church, directs all within it.

What he says determines what direction the church is going to go.

He said, "Though they are driven with fierce winds." So the winds of earthly events and earthly wisdom try to drive the church this or that direction. But the tongue of the teacher, like the master of a ship, can direct it whatever direction he pleases. It doesn't have just follow the direction the wind is blowing.

And so as James said before, we shouldn't just be driven with the wind and tossed. We should be holding fast to the anchor of our faith, and the word of God.

So as a master, a governor, a teacher within the church, your mouth has great power, just like a little helm drives a great ship.

And with great power comes great responsibility.

And so James says don't become many masters, because your tongue is going to have great power to direct the body, and if you aren't bridling it properly with the word of God, you'll offend many people, and lead the church astray.

If that's not your calling, if God hasn't made you for that, then don't pursue it as a work to try to justify your faith.

If you want to justify your faith, don't go that way. Because you're going to receive the greater condemnation. You're going to be called upon to speak. And when you speak, you will offend. Should a man full of words be justified? If any offend not in word, the same is a perfect man.

## Verse 5

**James 3:5** Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

So just like a ship is steered by a small helm, the body is steered by the tongue. He said it is a little member compared with the other parts of your body, but it boasts great things. It may be small, but it can talk a big talk. He said, don't let its size fool you. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! You can make a little fire, and it can kindle something huge. Many huge forest fires result from just a few coals that somebody left unattended. All that destruction, that whole great matter, caused by just a little flame. James said, that's how the tongue is.

## Verse 6

**James 3:6** And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

Just as a little flame can cause a great fire, the tongue can kindle a great matter. He said, it is a fire, that can set something off, a whole world of iniquity. It can be touched off just by a tongue. Sticks and stones may break your bones, but words can set the whole world on fire.

He said that so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body. Just that one little member, but it defiles the whole body. Just as a little fire will burn everything that it touches. And so if your tongue speaks evil, it defiles the whole body. You remember how Jesus said that not that which going into the mouth defileth the man, like so many religions teach, but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth the man. James says, it will defile your whole body. It will set on fire the course of nature. It will defile everything you touch, it will enflame everywhere you go, everything that you do. The tongue will set on fire the course, the path of your very nature itself. So that your whole body, your entire nature, is on fire, and enflames everything that it does, everything that it touches. He said, it's set on fire of hell. Just as hell is in the heart of the earth, so out of the heart of men, Jesus said, proceed these things. If that fire is coming out through your mouth, your heart must be hell, and your throat the bottomless pit. He said you must have let the devil kindle the fires of hell in your heart. And everything you do and everything you touch is defiled and set on fire by it. You're like the Midas of fire. Your tongue sets you on fire, and everything you do, and everyone who hears. Everything you touch is burnt, and turns to ashes.

*So now we saw James go on in chapter three to talk about not being many masters, because in many things we offend all. You have to be able to control your tongue. And the tongue can no man tame.*

*He said that the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things.*

*And you know, that's how the antichrist is described:*

***Daniel 7:8*** *I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another **little** horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.*

*So this is the pattern of the antichrist. He is a little member that boasts great things. This is what his tongue is like.*

*His tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.*

*And it will indeed cause the whole world to commit iniquity.*

*And he will set on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell. Because he is called the son of perdition, who came up out of the bottomless pit. That is indeed where his tongue was set on fire.*

*And so you can see why James doesn't want them to be like that.*

*That's good admonition for people during the tribulation. Because this is what the antichrist and the masters of the church who follow him will be like. And the Jews will be tempted to participate in that.*

*And James tells them not to do that. Not to be the kind of ministers who have fallen away after the antichrist, speaking great things and defiling the whole body of those that follow them.*

*They're not to participate in that or follow that pattern.*

*That's of the antichrist, that's of the devil. That's wisdom from hell. They need to follow the wisdom from above.*

## **Verses 7 & 8**

**James 3:7** For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

He said, you can tame just about anything. Whether it is a beast, or a bird or a fish. Somebody has tamed it, and made a pet out of it.

But you can't do that to the tongue. It is unlike any other creature in this world. That's why he said it must be set on fire of hell. Because the creatures of this world can be tamed. But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

Don't think that you'll do this good work, you'll tame your tongue and become a master in the church. No, the tongue can't be tamed. You won't be able to do that. It has to be of God. You can't tame your tongue.

He said it is unruly, it won't be tamed, it won't be disciplined or ruled.

And Paul warned Titus about people who were trying to be teachers in the church, but who were unruly talkers.

And in fact this problem was the reason that he left Titus in Crete.

**Titus 1:5** For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

So he wants Titus to ordain elders as bishops, as teachers, as masters within the church, in accordance with Paul's instruction. Because some of their teachers now are a problem.

6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or **unruly**.

So he told Titus to choose people who had faithful children, not unruly children. Because, as it says in another place, if a man doesn't know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?

He's going to need to deal with unruly people, as Paul is about to say. And so he needs to be somebody who rules his own house well. Because if his own children are unruly, then he's not going to foster faithfulness, instead he's going to contribute to the problem.

7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

So he needs to be somebody sound in the faithful word, having been taught it, so that he can convince the gainsayers.

10 For there are many **unruly** and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:

So he said that there were many unruly and vain talkers, many people with unruly tongues.

And he wants these faithful men to put a stop to that.

And note that he said that this was especially among the circumcision.

And who is James writing to here? The twelve tribes scattered abroad. Possibly even some of the same people that Paul was talking about.

So this was particularly a problem with the Jews, who would try to be teachers, but would be unruly talkers, teaching vain religion.

11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

So they were teaching things which they ought not. The same thing that James is addressing here. Not to be many masters, because you can't have an unruly tongue, and the tongue is an unruly member.

12 One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.

13 This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;

14 Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

So again, they were teaching religion. Jewish fables and commandments of men. He said those things turn from the truth. They need to be rebuked so that they'll be sound in the faith.

And so that is what James is doing here.

15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

“so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature”

16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

So they profess to believe in one God, and know him. But they aren't justified. Their works deny it. In works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

And so Paul gives them the greater condemnation there. He doesn't justify them. He condemns and rebukes them.

So be not many masters. The tongue is an unruly creature.

It is full of deadly poison.

**Psalms 58:1** Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?

2 Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.

3 The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

4 Their **poison** is like the **poison** of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear;

5 Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.

So the wicked with their poison cannot be charmed, they cannot be tamed, as even a serpent can.

So be not many masters, be not many judges, lest ye be judged and condemned.

## Verse 9

**James 3:9** Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

He said on the one hand you'll bless God.

That's your job right, you're a teacher, a master in the church. You speak blessings to the Father.

But then you'll also use your tongue to curse men, which are made after the similitude of God. God made them in his own image, and you bless him and curse them.



You'll say, I believe there is one God. I'm a minister, a teacher, a master in the church. And yet even your words will condemn you. Your unruly tongue will curse men, and you will not be justified. People won't justify your faith.

## Verse 10

**James 3:10** Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

So you're inconsistent. You use your mouth for both blessing and cursing. That's not the way it ought to be. Certainly not for a master in the church.

## Verse 11

**James 3:11** Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?

No, you can't go to a fountain and get sweet and bitter water out of the same fountain. It is going to all be one.

In the same way, a master in the church should only be sending forth the sweet water of the word of God.

His mouth shouldn't also be sending forth the bitter water of filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness. It shouldn't also be bitter and filled with wrath and words against persecutors or other people.

Paul warned them against the same thing in Hebrews. He encouraged them not to faint in their persecution, but to:

**Hebrews 12:14** Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of **bitterness** springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

He told them to follow peace with all men, and not allow a root of bitterness to spring up, lest many would be defiled.

And so James says don't send forth bitter water. Be slow to speak and slow to wrath. Because the tongue is a fire that will set on fire and defile the whole body.

## Verse 12

**James 3:12** Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

He said you don't get olives off of a fig tree, or figs off of a vine.

Jesus said something similar to his disciples in the sermon on the mount:

**Matthew 7:15** Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather *grapes* of thorns, or **figs** of thistles?  
17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.  
18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.  
19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.  
20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.  
21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

So he warned them about false prophets, who would come speaking some words that seemed right, but would not be doers of the word. They were false prophets. And they'd know them by their fruit. What they say and do ought to match up with what they are claiming to be, and it won't.

And so in the same way, James tells them not to be many masters, lest they be false prophets. Lest they bear the wrong kind of fruit. Lest their words don't match up with what they claim to be, a teacher in the church.

And so he says again, that no fountain can yield salt water and fresh. It has to be one or the other.  
So if you're going to be like that, you shouldn't be a master in the church. Be not many masters. But what should you be like?  
We'll see next time that he says in verse 13:

**James 3:13** Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

A wise man, endued with knowledge, whose fruit matches what the fruit of a teacher should. That's what you should be like, to be a master.

So you see, he's still talking about them being many masters. That's still his subject. That's what this whole chapter about.  
And we'll pick up there and talk more about what he says they *should* be like, next time.

*And in exhorting them to that effect, James uses a couple of figures here that have prophetic significance.*

*In verse 12 he said, "Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs?"*

*And each if these elements is used figuratively in Bible prophecy.*

*The vine, you recognize that right off, that represents Israel, the people of Israel.*

*And then you have the fig tree. And we've talked about that before, how the fig tree represents Judaism. The Jewish system, the temple system, the Jewish religion.*

*And if you look at what James said he used the term fig twice: "Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs?"*

*So his focus here is figs and the fig tree, he makes that a part of both of these analogies.*

*And first he asks, can the fig tree bear olive berries. And so I guess we have to ask what the olive berries represent.*

*Well, in prophecy the olive tree is used to represent anointed ones, those chosen of God.*

*You see, they made their oil out of olives. And they used that oil to anoint people ceremonially, like when they were made a priest. They would be anointed with olive oil.*

*So in asking if the fig tree can bear olive berries, he's asking if the fig tree can bear anointed ones.*

*And that's what he's talking about remember, is masters in the church, people who have a special anointing of wisdom from above.*

*So in asking if the fig tree can bear olive berries, remember what the fig tree represents, it represents Judaism, the Jewish system, the temple system.*

*And so he's asking if Judaism, if that system, if religion, participating in that, being a part of that, can make them as anointed ones to be teachers of the word.*

*And of course his answer is no. If you want to be an olive berry, then you need to be part of the olive tree, not the fig tree. You need to not be part of Judaism, or what the antichrist is doing when he takes over that system, that religion. You need to not be like them, or privy to that, part of that. If you want to be a true minister, then you need to be part of the olive tree, not of the fig tree.*

*So what is the olive tree?*

**Romans 11:16** *For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.*

*17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild **olive** tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the **olive** tree;*

*18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.*

*19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.*

*20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:*

*21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.*

*22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.*

*23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again.*

*24 For if thou wert cut out of the **olive** tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good **olive** tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own **olive** tree?*

*25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*

*26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:*

*27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.*

*So a lot of times we read that and we gloss over the fact that he's talking about an olive tree.*

*But what did he say the olive tree represents? He said, "because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith." The olive tree represents faith, those of faith, who have that true faith of Abraham, and so are the chosen and anointed of God.*

*The fig tree represents the Jewish religion. The olive tree represents true faith.*

*And Paul said, right now, Israel is not in faith, for the most part. But one day they will be. One day all Israel will be saved, when their Deliverer returns. They'll have been grafted back into the olive tree.*

*And so that is what James admonishes them to here. To walk by faith, and not by religion. To not be a part of the fig tree, but a part of the olive tree.*

*Because a fig tree cannot bear olive berries.*

*And a vine cannot bear figs.*

*The vine, the children of Israel, they shouldn't be bearing figs, that's not what they're supposed to bearing. They're supposed to be bearing grapes. So they shouldn't be trying to bear the same fruit as the Jewish religious system, as those that follow the antichrist. Because they can't. They should be bearing the true fruit that God has called them to.*

*And so remember that in Matthew 21 Christ cursed the fig tree, and it will never bear. Judaism will never bear fruit. It doesn't matter how hard the vine tires, it will never be able to bear figs. And the olive berries, the anointed ones, who the Spirit has given understanding, they do not come from the fig tree.*

*Nor are figs borne of the vine, so that Israel God's vine won't accomplish anything, they should not follow the pattern of antichrist's religion, where unruly tongues are exalted.*

*But Christ also prophesied that the fig tree would in the last days begin to spring forth, and look like it was going to bear fruit.*

**Matthew 24:32** *Now learn a parable of the **fig** tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:*

*33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.*

*And so when Judaism begins to grow leafy again, when it appears to be alive again, when the temple is erected, then know that it is near, even at the doors. That generation will not pass till all these things be fulfilled.*

*And so it will look like Judaism can bear fruit, it is alive and putting forth leaves. But James tells the Jews not to be fooled. The fig tree won't bear anything, it will cast her fruit. And it certainly won't bear olive berries.*

*If they want to be the anointed of God, then they need to have faith, and speak the word of God, and the wisdom from above. Not participate and Judaism and follow the unruly talk of the antichrist and his ministers.*

*And so this talk of the olive tree, and of the vine, is something that is found in OT prophecy of the time of end.*

**Isaiah 24:13** *When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an **olive** tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done.*

*14 They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD, they shall cry aloud from the sea.*

*15 Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires, even the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea.*

*And so there will be a few gleaning grapes of Israel, in the outermost branches. They'll have fled to the uttermost part of the earth, even to the isles of the sea.*

*And so there will be a few olives left, as after the tree has been shaken, and a few gleaning grapes.*

*The vine won't bear figs, but there will be a few gleaning grapes left in it, after the harvest.*

*Do you remember how we talked about the 144,000, and how God said that they were the harvest of the clusters of the vine of the earth?*

*But after they are harvested there will still be a few gleaned grapes left, a few children of Israel that remain, and they will glorify the God of Israel. He will come with vengeance, and pour out the wine of his wrath without mixture, once the vintage is done. And the gleaned grapes, the shaking of the olive tree, will be saved.*

*And in Hosea he speaks of what will happen to them in that time:*

**Hosea 14:1** *O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.  
2 Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.  
3 Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.  
4 I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.  
5 I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.*

*Remember how we talked about the dew, how the word of God would be like the dew upon the grass, and would sustain them, and the fruit of that grass would shake like Lebanon?*

*6 His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the **olive** tree, and his smell as Lebanon.*

*So their beauty will be as the olive tree, they will send forth oil to anoint kings and priests.*

*7 They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.*

*And so they will be as the corn, a handful of corn in the top of the mountains. And they will also be as the vine, and their scent as the wine of Lebanon. So they will be a vine that grows among the cedars. Israel will supply the great men of the earth.*

*8 Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.*

*So Ephraim, even the rebellious northern kingdom, shall turn from their religion, turn from their idolatry. They will no more worship a green fir tree, nor deck it with silver and gold. It is from God that they will find their fruit. Not the fig tree, not religion, but God. They will not walk by religion, but by faith. The fig tree will not bear olive berries, nor the vine figs, but they will be the anointed of the LORD, and the people of their God.*

*And how is it going to happen, that Israel will turn to God, turn to faith, turn to partaking in the olive tree once again, rather than the fig tree?*

*Well, in Hebrews Paul said, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race set before us."*

*Like Rahab, they are going to receive two messengers, two witnesses.*

**Revelation 11:3** *And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.*

4 These are the two **olive** trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

And so these are the two olive trees, which are described in Zechariah 4, standing before the God of the earth.

And they will return, with the anointing of the LORD, to graft his people back in.

5 And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

And I thought it was interesting to note, their tongue is a fire indeed. James called the tongue a fire here, and that's what the antichrist will be like, but these men speak the word of the LORD, which is indeed consuming fire, to devour the wicked.

And so those two witnesses, the two olive trees, will exhort Israel to be restored unto faith, to be grafted back into the olive tree, and not partake in the fig tree, that can bear no fruit.

They will tell them that the fig tree cannot bear olive berries, either the vine figs. That that system can no longer bear fruit, and that Israel can no longer bear fruit through that system.

James says also that no fountain can yield both salt water and fresh.

Now, Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth." So salt is something that the Bible uses to represent something good.

But here, that doesn't make sense. Because if the salt water is good, then the fresh water would be bad, right? And there doesn't seem to be any sense to that.

But you see, remember what Jesus said about the salt. He said that the salt would lose its savor, and be cast out, and trodden under feet of men.

And at the time of the antichrist, those who claim to be the church, who claim to be disciples, will be following the antichrist. The salt will have lost its savor.

And so the salt water will be good for nothing. It will have lost its savor. Who wants to drink brine water? Blah.

But instead, there will be fresh water. A fresh work of God, with Israel.

And so they shouldn't be continuing to follow the salty words, unsavory, but "salty" words, of those who follow the antichrist. That isn't the kind of words that they should be speaking.

Unsavory words that are called "salt."

They need to avoid being like that at all, and instead speak fresh water. The fresh message from God for his people Israel, not the old unsavory brine of the so-called "church."

And so it is fitting that the first work of the Elisha, filled with the spirit and power of Elijah, who is one of the two witnesses, was to do a very strange miracle. He made some water fresh, by adding salt to it:

**2 Kings 2:19** And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the **water** is naught, and the ground barren.

20 And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put **salt** therein. And they brought it to him.

Now, when you put salt in water, that makes salt-water, doesn't it? How could that heal the waters? Well, that's the miracle.

And that's the same miracle that will happen to Israel. The salt of the earth will have lost its savor, and Israel will be a water that is naught. But God will take a new cruse, a new message for his people, and put salt therein.

*And by the way, guess what city this was?  
The same one the harlot Rahab lived in. Jericho.*

*21 And he went forth unto the spring of the **waters**, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land.*

*And so shall the fountain of Israel be healed, and their waters made fresh.  
No more shall they die of the pestilence, or their land be made barren in judgement.  
For God will have healed their backslidings.*

*22 So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.*

*And so shall they ever be, with the LORD. Amen.*