EPISODE OF JAMES

CONSTITUTION OF THE TEXT

Canonicity

During the course of the first centuries of the common era, quotations from the epistle of James are scarce. Origen (d. 254) is the first writer clearly to cite James as Scripture and accept its apostolic authorship, though it is probable that Shepherd of Hermas (mid-2nd c.) alludes to it. Its canonicity was first accepted in the Alexandrian Church: Didymus the Blind (4th c.) wrote the first known commentary on James; Athanasius includes it in his famous canonical list in Festal Letter 39 (367); Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444) quotes James extensively.

Eusebius, writing in the early 4th century, lists James among the works whose canonicity was at times disputed (antilegomena: cf. Hist. eccl. 3,25,3), no doubt because of the book’s relatively late attestation (Hist. ecc. 2,23,25). Yet he also reports that it is “publicly used in most of the churches” and that it is “known and approved by many,” including Eusebius himself. However, Jerome (347-420) reports that some attributed it to an unknown author bearing the pseudonym of James the Just (Vir. Ill. 2). The letter is omitted in the canon list of the Council of Nicaea (325).

In the West, evidence of the epistle’s canonical status is later: it is omitted in the Muratorian Canon. The texts that cite the epistle as a book of Scripture appear at the end of the 4th century. Accepted by Rufinus, Hilary of Poitiers (mid-4th c.), Jerome, and Augustine, its canonical status was firmly established by the Councils of Hippo (393) and Carthage (397).

There is no evidence for James’ acceptance in pre-Peshitta Syriac Christianity. Theodore of Mopsuestia (350-428), educated at Antioch, reportedly rejected it. The Peshitta (early 5th c.) itself, however, does include James.

Traditional Importance

Among the early commentaries on James the following in particular are to be retained:

- in Greek: Didymus the Blind (Alexandria; 4th c.); (Pseudo-)Oecumenius (after the 6th c.); and Theophylact of Ohrid (modern Bulgaria; 11th c.);
- in Latin: Hilary of Arles (5th century); and Bede the Venerable (England; early 8th c.);
- in Syriac finally: Isho’dad of Merv (9th c.); and Dionysius Bar Salibi (12th c.).

The epistle was cited frequently by monastic writers: the Egyptian desert fathers, John Chrysostom (4th c.), and John Cassian (late 4th-early 5th c.).

Erasmus (in 1516) questioned the apostolic authorship of James. In Luther’s 1522 edition of the New Testament, he refers to James as a “strawy epistle” of questionable apostolic authority that contradicts Paul’s teaching on justification by faith alone. Luther thus relegated it to the end of his New Testament. Other Reformers, however, including Tyn- dale, Melanchthon, Calvin, and Zwingli, did not question the letter’s canonicity. In the Catholic Church, the Council of Trent asserted again its canonicity.
General Plan of the Book

Beyond the epistolary introduction, an overall structure of the work is not obvious. Certain themes, however, do emerge consistently: exhortations to bear suffering and testing with patience and humility, concern for the rights and dignity of the poor (and a concomitant criticism of the arrogance of the wealthy), a concern with honest and integral speech, the value of faithful prayer, the conflict between the “earthly” and the “heavenly” realms, and an overriding concern for wholeness and integrity, both within the individual and within the community.

This concern for wholeness is obvious at the level of James' word choices: the adjective teleios (“perfect, whole”) is found in Jas 1:4,17,25; 3:2 (a cognate noun and verbs in 1:15; 2:8,22; 5:11); the word holos (whole) occurs in 2:10; 3:2,6, (holoklēros in 1:4). James warns against the evils of division within one's self: a person should not be double-minded (1:8, 4:8) or be doubtful in prayer (1:6); the tongue should not both bless the Lord and curse humans (3:9-12). A person's action should be consistent with his faith (2:14–26). The ultimate source of this integrity and wholeness is God, who is one (2:19; 4:12).

Divisions in the community arise precisely out of divisions in the self (4:1); church members should thus not judge one another or make distinctions (2:1–4; 4:11). The integral, whole body of the individual (healthy both physically and spiritually) should mirror the integral, whole body of the community.

Historical Elements: Literary History

The consensus among ancient authors identifies the author as James the Just, the “brother of the Lord”, and head of the Jerusalem Church (ca. 40-62). The great majority of modern authors also agree that the “James” of the salutation refers ultimately to James the Just: no other “James” in early Christianity had the authority to identify himself solely by name without further identification. Already in ancient times, however, this identification was disputed (as noted by Jerome); both Erasmus and Luther also raised questions.

Major modern positions regarding authorship and date include:

1. For some, James is pseudonymous, dating to the late 1st or early 2nd c. of our era. Major arguments for this position are the good quality of the epistle's Greek and its Hellenistic (rather than Jewish) form and thought-world (both characteristics unlikely to be found in an epistle written by a Galilean relative of the Lord), as well as its late attestation and its perceived reaction against Pauline doctrine in 2:14-26 (both indicating a date later than James the Just).

2. For others on the contrary, James the Just is the author. Against the first two arguments above, supporters point out that Hellenistic/Semitic opposition is a false dichotomy for first-century Palestine; James (or perhaps a secretary) might easily have commanded the Hellenistic culture necessary to write the epistle. On the other hand, the epistle's text includes undeniable Semitisms. Finally, even if it is possible to establish that the letter's author has knowledge of the Pauline teaching, this conclusion would require a date only slightly later than the writing and circulation of the epistle to the Galatians.

3. Still others believe that texts originating from James the Just were recorded or edited by a secretary shortly after his death.

4. Others finally could consider the epistle of James to be an originally Jewish work that was then taken up and enriched with Christian interpolations.

The late attestation of the epistle remains a puzzle for any of these positions: if the letter is considered to be...
a work emanating from the authority of James the Just, its late attestation remains unexplained; if on the contrary, the text is considered to be pseudonymous and late, we do not know how it could have gained acceptance later by the Church as a whole.

Theories regarding the place where the letter was written cover quite a varied range of regions: Egypt, Rome, and Palestine-Syria. The letter addresses Diaspora Jewish-Christians in general (without necessarily excluding Gentile-Christians). Not only is it addressed to “the twelve tribes in the Dispersion,” but it presupposes familiarity with both the Scriptures and certain ethical traditions in the Hellenistic world.

**Presentation of the pericope Jas 5:13-18**

This passage forms part of the closing exhortations of the letter. It is loosely attached to the preceding exhortation (5:12: “Do not swear”, theme of honesty of speech) and to the following passage, which speaks of the help given to the lost sinner in view of saving him (5:19-20). It also gives a precious insight into the rituals and beliefs of the early Church.
SUGGESTIONS FOR READING  

Themes: The passage focuses on prayer, illustrating the epistle's teaching that a person who prays should ask God in faith, not doubting (1:5-8) and without asking God for something that can lead to our being lost (4:2-3).

Doctrine: The passage presents a holistic view of illness and healing; here, these two elements are closely associated: physical illness and "spiritual illness" (sin) on the one hand, and physical healing and forgiveness of sin, on the other, are closely linked. There is also a strong link between understanding the ritual as providing healing (both spiritual and physical) in this life, and understanding the anointing and prayer as preparation for ultimate healing in the resurrection and eternal life. This holistic emphasis reflects the theme of wholeness and integrity found throughout the letter.

Intro

Catholic tradition has drawn out the meaning of the passage in various ways, primarily through the development of the teaching on the sacrament of the anointing of the sick. The tradition has at various times emphasized the different aspects of James' integral vision: spiritual healing (Origen, Chrysostom, Council of Trent), physical healing (Caesarius, Vatican II's emphasis on a broader vision: spiritual healing (Origen, Chrysostom, Council of Trent), and the eschatological dimension (the traditional emphasis on "last rites" as preparation for eternal life).

CHR lit

13a sick: The verb astheneô ("being sick") refers generally to physical illness or weakness (e.g., Mt 25:36), in contrast to the broader range of physical, mental, or emotional suffering denoted by the term "suffering" (kakopathê) (V tristatur: being gloomy, dismal), used in v. 13. *chr lit

14b Presbyters A recognizable, official group of Church leaders elsewhere in the NT, (e.g., Acts 14:23; 15:2; Tit 1:5; see especially the same phrase "presbyters of the Church" in Acts 20:17). The presbuteroi are ministers of the Church, who have been appointed to this office by the Apostles (Acts 14:23) or their direct successors (Tit 1:5) through the laying on of hands (1 Tim 5:22), which confers upon them a special and lasting grace (to charisma tou Theou ho estin en sor: 2 Tim 1:6; cf. 1 Tim 4:14). During Christianity's first two centuries, the word presbuteroi was used as the hyperonym (generic name) of episkopos. The term presbuteroi, which connotes dignity, was used to designate both the local Church ministers and the Apostles (cf. 2 Jn 1; 3 Jn 1; Eusebius Hist. Eccl. 3.39, 2-5) or their successors (Eusebius Hist. Eccl. 5.20.4-7; 5.24.16f.). *theo14b

14c anointing: The verb for anointing with oil (aleipô) is commonly used for physical healing (Mk 6:13) or as a sign of good health (Mt 6:17) in contrast with chrôô, the usual Greek term for the ritual anointing of the kings or the prophets in the OT. *anc *bib *ptes *jew *chr

TEXT

13 Is anyone among you suffering *sad? He should pray.

Is anyone serene *cheerful? He should sing a song of praise.

14 Is anyone among you sick? He should summon *bring in the presbyters of the Church, and they should pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the *our Lord.

13-18 pray, prayer, plea Isotopy of prayer Every verse in this passage refers to prayer; however, the words used are not simple synonyms. The noun euchê (prayer, v. 15) and the corresponding verb euchomai (to pray, v. 16) are generic terms. The verb expressing the prayer of petition is proseuchêma (v. 13, 14, 17,18) or proseuchê (v. 17). More concretely, the noun deêsis (v. 16) stands for a supplication or a particular request. As for psallô (to sing a hymn, v. 13), it applies to prayer in the form of a hymn, in particular in the liturgical context.

13 sufferers / is... serene Antithesis The first two questions establish an antithesis between interior suffering and serenity. V, which translates kakopathei with the verb tristatur (evoking affliction or discouragement) only makes this antithesis more precise. Far from focusing on a contrast between sadness and cheerfulness, as is often thought, the phrase evokes rather the opposition between interior grief and appeasement, frames of mind that each lead to a different form of prayer.

13f. The three opening questions may also be translated as indicators, e.g., "The one among you who is suffering," or (as S does) as conditional clauses: "If someone among you is suffering." 14b over him (ep' *auton). This phrase has the sense of prayers for the sick person said during the anointing. They may include the action of placing hands on the patient. *chr

LITERARY DEVICES

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ANCIENT CULTURES

14c oil: In ancient Greco-Roman cultures, olive oil was associated with strength, cleanliness, and good health. Athletes rubbed themselves with it in the gymnasium to prepare for exercise (Pliny Nat. 15.19) and anointing after bathing was common (e.g., Hippocrates Acut. 65). Olive oil was a major export item in the Roman Empire, and
was commonly used in daily life for cooking and for illumination in oil lamps. Its medicinal value was specifically recognized (Celsus Med. 2,14,4; Seneca Ep. 53,5; Pliny Nat. 15,19; 23,79). Oil was used in cultic worship (Pausanias Descr. 8,42,11; 10,24,6), especially in burial rituals or the honoring of the dead (Plutarch Arist. 21; Virgil. Aen. 6,212–234). “p'tes *chr *lit

~ Ancient Texts ~

14c oil Pliny Nat. 15,7–8: "Nature…did not desire us to be sparing in the use of oil, and she has made it universal even among common people."

14c.15 anointing, saving Two passages from the Iliad echo James’ allusions to eschatological salvation: "Immediately then he [Apollo] lifted up noble Sarpedon out of the range of the missiles, and carrying him far away, bathed him in the streams of the river, and anointed him with ambrosia, and gave him to swift conveyors, to the twin brothers, Sleep and Death, to bring with them, and they set him down speedily in the rich land of wide Lycia" (Il.16,677–680).

“So he [Achilles] spoke threatening, but no dogs were busy with Hector [i.e., his body], but the daughter of Zeus, Aphrodite, kept dogs from him by day and by night alike, and with oil she anointed him, rose-sweet, ambrosial, so that Achilles might not tear him as he dragged him” (Il. 23,184–187).

~ Biblical Intertextuality ~

14b They should pray Prayers for healing 1K 17:20–22; 2K 20:2–6; Sir 38:9,14. The Psalmist often prays for healing: Ps 6:2; 30:2; 41:4.

14c anointing him with oil The use of olive oil was well attested throughout the Scriptures. It was a general sign of wealth (Ezek 16:13), health (Ps 104:15: “oil to make their faces glow”) and happiness (Isa 61:3: the “oil of gladness”; cf. Ps 133:1–2). It was used in everyday cooking (1K 17:12), for lighting in homes (Mt 25:1) and in the Temple (Ex 27:20), and was an essential agricultural product (Deut 13:14). Anointing with oil was associated with cleanliness (Ruth 3:3) and with God’s blessing (Ps 23:5): “You prepare a table for me under the eyes of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup brims over.” *anc *p'tes *jew *chr *lit

Anointing was also used in specifically ritual contexts: the anointing of a king (e.g., 1Sam 10:1), a priest (Ex 28:41), and a prophet (1K 19:16); it also served for consecrating sacred objects (Gen 28:18; Lev 8:11). In these cultic contexts, however, the verb chriÔ (or “pour upon” epicheÔ) is regularly used, not the aleiphô used by James.

14c anointing him with oil. Natural elements combined with supernatural healing. Other Old Testament passages combine prayers for supernatural healing with a use of natural remedies: The Lord promises to heal Hezekiah in response to his prayers (Isa 38:5), but Isaiah also ordered “a poultice of figs to be taken and applied to the boil, that he might recover” (Isa 38:21). A similar combination is found in the wisdom literature: “My son, when you are ill, delay not, but pray to God, who will heal you… Then give the doctor his place lest he leave; for you need him too” (Sir 38:9–12).

In his own healings, Jesus occasionally makes use of natural elements: he uses salva (Mk 7:33; 8:23; Jn 9:6) and often physical touch (Mk 1:41; 3:10; 5:28–31,41; 6:56; Lk 6:19); his disciples employed olive oil in their healings ( Mk 6:13) and also employed physical touch (Acts 3:7; 5:15; 19:11–12).

~ Peritestamental Literature & Jewish Tradition ~

14c anointing him with oil The use of olive oil for medicinal purposes was very common among ancient Jews: Isa 1:6 (treating wounds); Paolo Somm. 2,58 (oil strengthens and firms muscles); Josephus Ant. 17,172 (B.1,1657) (Herod’s physicians bathe him in warm oil). Rabbinic traditions also recognize the medicinal properties of oil: anointing painful loins with oil (m. Šabb. 14,4); use of a compress made of old wine and oil (J. Ber. 1,2). "anc *bib *chr *lit

14c.15 anointing … save The link between the anointing ritual and eschatological salvation reflects the Second Temple Jewish connection between anointing with oil and final salvation. Adam, ill because of his sins, will receive a healing anointing (with oil from a tree in Paradise) at the final resurrection (Apoc. Mos., 9,3; 13,2–3; other references to an olive tree in Paradise: 2 En. 8,4 [shorter recension]; Gen. Rab. 33,6 on Gen 8:10). Enoch’s anointing marks his transition from his earthly existence into becoming “like one of the glorious ones” (2 En. 22,8–10; cf. 56,2). See also 3 Bar. 15 (Greek) (vases of oil as heavenly reward); Jos. Asen. 8,5; and 16,16 (anointing with an “ointment of incorruptibility”); Test. Adam 1,7. *voc *anc *chr *lit *isl

~ Reception ~

~ Christian Tradition ~

14b over him Origen reads “they will place their hands on him” in his quotation of this verse (Hom. Lev. 2,4,5). *gra

14b Presbyters Polycarp identifies caring for the sick as one of the duties of “presbyters” (Phil. 6,1).

14b Presbyters Non-sacramental use of healing oil by the laity Alongside the proper sacramental anointing by ordained presbyters, lay people also sometimes anointed the sick with consecrated oil. Innocent I declares that “in case of emergency, this anointing is permitted not only for priests but even for all Christians” (Ep. Dec. 8; cf. Bede Comm. Ias. and Caesarius of Arles Serm. 13,3: “a sick man should receive the Body and Blood of Christ, humbly and devoutly ask the presbyters for blessed oil, and anoint his body with it” [quotation of Jas 5:14-15 follows]). Ouen (Dado) Vita S. Elig. 2,16: “But let the invalid…ask the church faithfully for blessing and oil, with which he might anoint his body in the name of Christ and, according to the apostle, “the prayer of faith will save the
infirm and the Lord will relieve him." Healing non-sacramental anointments by holy lay people are attested elsewhere (e.g., Palladius Hist. Laus. 12). "theo14b

**14c anointing him with oil** Jesus' twelve disciples "anointed many sick people with oil and cured them" (Mk 6:13). Tertullian refers to the healing of a Roman emperor by a Christian: "Even Severus himself, the father of Antonine, was graciously mindful of the Christians; for he sought out the Christian Proclus, surnamed Tporcian, the steward of Euhodias, and in gratitude for his having once cured him by anointing, he kept him in his palace until the day of his death" (Scap. 4).

Innocent I (Ep. Dec. 8) understood James to refer to "the holy oil of chrism, which has been made by the Bishop." "theo14c

**14c in the name of the Lord** Invocation of the name of the Lord forms a regular part of Christian healing (cf. Acts 3:6; 4:10, exorcism (Mk 9:38; 16:17; Lk 10:17), and baptism (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48, 19:5). BEDE Comm. Jas.: "For what he [James] says, 'with oil in the name of the Lord,' means with oil consecrated in the name of the Lord or at least that when they anoint the sick person they ought to invoke the name of the Lord over him at the same time." 

**∼ Liturgy ∼**

**5,13-20 Use in lectionary** In the Roman lectionary for the Saturday of the seventh week of the year, Jas 5:13-20 is read along with Ps 141:1,2,3,8 and Mk 10:13-16. The inclusion of Jas 5:19-20 emphasizes the responsibility of Church members for one another, and the connection between sin, repentance, and final salvation. Ps 141 (on prayer) and the Markan passage (on Jesus blessing the children) reinforce James' focus on praying to God with a simple trust.

**14b they should pray over him Prayers and anointing** Many liturgical texts contain prayers for consecrating the oil for baptism and other rituals. **Before anointing:** Sacr. Scrap. 17: "Prayer for Oil of the Sick or for Bread or for Water": "Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, having all authority and power, the savior of all people, we call upon you and we implore you that healing power of your only-begotten may be sent out from heaven upon this oil. May it become to those who are anointed (or to those who receive of these your creatures) for a rejection of every disease and every sickness, for an amulet warding off every demon, for a departing of every unclean spirit, for a taking away of every evil spirit, for a driving away of all fever and shiverings and every weakness, for good grace and forgiveness of sins, for a medicine of life and salvation, for health and wholeness of soul, body, spirit, for perfect strength. Master, let every satanic energy, every demon, every plot of the opposing one, every blow, every lash, every pain, or every slap in the face, or shaking, or evil shadow, be afraid of your holy Name, which we have now called upon, and the name of the only-begotten; and let them depart from the inner and the outer parts of these your servants so that the name of Jesus Christ, the one who was crucified and risen for us, who took to himself our diseases and weaknesses, and is coming to judge the living and the dead, may be glorified. For through him (be) to you the glory and the power in the holy Spirit both now and to all the ages of ages. Amen."

Test. Dom. 1.24: "Christ... you are the healer of all who are ill and all who suffer. You who gave the gift of healing to those you deemed worthy of this [gift], send the deliverance of your compassion upon this oil which is a type of your richness, that it may deliver those who are diseased, and [that] it may heal the sick and sanctify those who return, as they draw near to your faith."

Apos. Trad. 5: "As, sanctifying this oil, you give, God, health to those using and receiving [it], whence you have anointed kings, priests, and prophets, so also may it afford strengthening to all tasting [it] and health to all using it."

Apos. Con. 8,29,1–3: "O Lord of hosts, the God of powers, creator of the waters and provider of the oil...the giver of water for drinking and for cleansing, and of oil that cheers [man's] countenance for joy and gladness; do you yourself now, through Christ, sanctify this water and this oil, in the name of him or her that has brought [them], and grant [them] the power to restore health, to drive away diseases, to put demons to flight, to protect the household, [and] to put to flight all snares [of the enemy], through Christ our hope..."

**Roman Rite Ritual of Anointing (revised) 75:** "God of all consolation, you chose and sent your Son to heal the world. Graciously listen to our prayer of faith: send the power of your Holy Spirit, the Consoler, into this precious oil, this soothing ointment, this rich gift, this fruit of the earth. Bless this oil [sign of the cross is made] and sanctify it for our use. Make this oil a remedy for all who are anointed with it; heal them in body, in soul, and in spirit, and deliver them from every affliction. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever."

Further prayers for blessing of healing oil are in Can. Hipp. 3; Sacr. Gel. 1.40; the Gregorian Lib. Sacr. 269, and in various Orthodox (euchelaiotic), Coptic, and Eastern traditions. "chr theo14c

**During anointing:** The traditional Catholic anointing ritual was accompanied by the prayer, "Through this holy unction, and His most tender mercy, may the Lord pardon you whatever sins you have committed" (cf. Thomas STh Suppl. Q. 29 a. 8; Thomas connects the prayer with Jas 5:15). The phrasing of the revised Roman Ritual is more directly based on Jas 5:15: [While anointing the forehead]: "Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit." [While anointing the hands]: "May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.

**After anointing:** Roman Ritual Rite of Anointing (revised) 77a: "Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, by the grace of your Holy Spirit cure the weakness of your servant N. Heal his / her sickness and forgive his / her sins; expel all afflictions of mind and body; mercifully restore him / her to full health, and enable him / her to resume his / her former duties, for you are Lord for ever and ever." "chr

The Roman rite also provides another prayer to be used in cases of extreme or terminal illness: **"extreme unction*** Roman Ritual Rite of Anointing (revised) 77b: "Lord Jesus Christ, you chose to share..."
our human nature, to redeem all people, and to heal the sick. Look with compassion upon your servant N., whom we have anointed in your name with this holy oil for the healing of his / her body and spirit. Support him / her with your power, comfort him / her with your protection, and give him / her the strength to fight against evil. Since you have given him / her a share in your own passion, help him / her to find hope in suffering, for you are Lord for ever and ever.”

14c anointing him with oil

Method of anointing By medieval times, the sick were typically anointed five times, one for each of the senses (cf. THOMAS STh Suppl. Q. 32 a. 6; Council of Florence; DS 1324). In the revised Roman ritual, the sick person is anointed on the forehead and hands; the Eastern rite still includes anointing on other parts of the body.

Anointing with oil and other Christian rituals Anointing with oil plays an essential role in several Christian rituals. It forms part of the pre-baptismal ritual (Apos. Con. 7.22; Cyril of Jerusalem Myst. 2.3; Acts Thom. 120–21; Ps.Lem. Rec. 3.67); anointing with scented oil (chrisma) became a post-baptismal ritual (Apos. Con. 7.22; Cyril of Jerusalem Myst. 3.1; Tertullian Bapt. 7; Gos. Phil. 74–75; CCC 1241); it also became part of the ritual for confirmation and holy orders (CCC 1294). The close connection between anointing for healing of the sick and the healing power of other rituals is shown in Ignatius of Antioch’s characterization of the “breaking of the bread” as a “medicine that brings immortality” (Eph. 20.2). *chr

Theology

14f. Sacramentology: Promulgation of the anointing of the sick. Erasmus (1516) questioned whether the passage supported the sacraments of penance and extreme unction (Annot. Ep. Jac. 1038) and Cajetan (1529) denied that Jas 5:14 supported extreme unction (Ep. Pauli et al. Ap.) *chr. Roman Catholic doctrine, however, understands Jas 5:14–15 as the “promulgation” by the apostle James of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick (previously known as “Extreme Unction”). CCC 1510: “Tradition has recognized in this rite (i.e., Jas 5:14–15) one of the seven sacraments.” (cf. 1499–1532). Council of Trent (DS 1695 and 1716): “This sacred unction for the sick, however, was instituted by Christ our Lord as truly and properly a sacrament of the New Testament, alluded to by Mark [6:13], indeed, but recommended to the faithful and promulgated by James the apostle and brother of the Lord.” [Quotation of Jas 5:14–15].

14c.15b Is any among you sick? the Lord will raise him up Sacramentology: essence of the sacrament: anointing of the sick or extreme unction? By the Middle Ages, there was at times a tendency in the Roman Catholic Church to understand this passage as referring exclusively to those who were dying; the sacrament based on this passage in James was thus known as “Extreme Unction” (e.g., Thomas STh Suppl. Q. 32 a. 2). LUTHER (Bab.Capt.) and CALVIN (Inst. 4.19,21), in rejecting this interpretation, insisted that James refers to general sickness.

The Second Vatican Council recalled the broad scope of the sacrament, avoiding the name “Extreme Unction” in favour of the more traditional “Anointing of the Sick,” although the recipient is still anyone who “begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age.” “Extreme unction,” which may also and more fittingly be called ‘anointing of the sick,’ is not a sacrament for those only who are at the point of death. Hence, as soon as any one of the faithful begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age, the fitting time for him to receive this sacrament has certainly already arrived” (SC 73). *lit

14b Presbyters Sacramentology: ministers Thomas recognizes lay healings “*chr, but holds that they are not sacramental, attributing them to the “grace of healing” as found in 1Cor 12:9 (STh Suppl. Q. 31 a. 1). LUTHER (Bab. Capt.) held that James’ presbyters (presbuterus) were not necessarily priests or ministers: “We may suspect that the apostle desired the older, graver men in the church to visit the sick”; CALVIN rejects the contemporary Roman Catholic belief that the presbyters are priests (Inst. 4.19,21). However, the Council of Trent (DS 1697) stated that: “the proper ministers of this sacrament are the presbyters of the Church, under which name in that place are to be understood not the elders by age or the foremost in rank among the people, but either bishops or priests duly ordained” (cf. CCC 1516).

14c.15 prayer over him, […] in the name of the Lord Sacramentology: form of the sacrament. The traditional prayer accompanying the Extreme Unction focused on spiritual healing: “Through this holy unction, and His most tender mercy, may the Lord pardon you whatsoever sins you have committed” (cf. Thomas STh Suppl. Q. 29 a. 8). Thomas calls this prayer the “form” of the sacrament, and relates it to Jas 5:15. *chr

14c anointing him with oil Sacramentology: Natural elements combined with supernatural healing. The Catechism links Jesus’ use of “signs of healing” (use of saliva and touch) with the physical aspect of the sacraments: “And so in the sacraments Christ continues to ‘touch’ us in order to heal us” (CCC 1504).

14c anointing him with oil Sacramentology: matter of the anointing. Thomas calls this anointing with chrism, which in the context of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick represents the grace of the Holy Spirit, with which the soul of the sick person is anointed (DS 1695). *chr

Islam

14c.15 anointing … save The tradition of the olive tree in Paradise appears also in Muslim tradition: *Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of his light is as if there were a niche and within it a lamp; the lamp enclosed in glass: the glass as it were a brilliant star: lit from a blessed tree, an olive, neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil is well-nigh luminous, though fires scarce touch it: light upon light! (Qur’an sur. 24,35). *ptes
And the prayer of faith will save $heal$ the suffering person, and the $our$ Lord will raise him up. And if he happens to have committed any sins, it $v$ they will be forgiven him.

Confess $v$ your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. Powerful indeed is the effective $v$ persistent plea of a righteous person.

Elijah was a human, a mortal man like us, and in his prayer he prayed that it would not rain $v$ upon the earth, and it did not rain upon the earth for three years and six months.

And he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.
Jas 5:13-18

15a faith and healing: Mk 2:5; 5:34, 36; 6:5–6; 9:23–29 //

15b raising the sick: Mk 5:41

15c-16 Sin, illness and healing: Mt 9:1–8 //; Ps 103:3

17-18 Elijah’s prayer: I K 17:1; 18:41–45; Sir 48,3

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Christian Tradition ~

15b the Lord will raise him up Oil and eschatological salvation / resurrection Gos. Phil. 92: “But the tree of life stands in the midst of paradise. And indeed (it is) the olive-tree. From it came the chrism. Through it <came> the resurrection”; cf. Origen Cels. 6,27: report of a group whose members profess, “I have been anointed with white ointment from the tree of life.” Ps.-Clem. Rec. 1,45: “Him [Christ] first God anointed with oil which was taken from the wood of the tree of life: from that anointing therefore He is called Christ. Thence, moreover, He Himself also, according to the appointment of His Father, anoints with similar oil every one of the pious when they come to His kingdom, for their refreshment after their labours, as having got over the difficulties of the way; so that their light may shine, and being filled with the Holy Spirit, they may be endowed with immortality.” Cf. Gos. Nic. 19: Christ will anoint Adam in Hades with oil from the tree in paradise. “pes14c.15-16. “theol15c 15c sins...will be forgiven Emphasis on forgiveness of sin. In the earliest known quotation of our passage, Origen comments only on spiritual healing, referring to the passage as an example of forgiveness of sin: “And there is still a seventh remission of sins through penance...when he is not ashamed to make known his sin to the priest of the Lord and to seek a cure...What the Apostle James said is fulfilled in this [quotation of Jas 5:14-15, including the addition “they will place their hands on him”] (Hom. Lev. 2,4,5).