

This dissertation explores the value system held by the author of the Epistle of James. Most likely, this interesting Epistle of a former Galilean peasant is a collection of his sermons or discourses gathered and edited by one of his followers. The Epistle does not relate to any specific problems of concrete communities or persons and, therefore, it may be viewed as an encyclical letter. The author's main tone is: «you must act in this way and only this way». Therefore this document is a type of «halakhah», a literary form used by the sages of Israel before the Common Era. «Halakhah», as well as the Greek literary form *paraenesis*, does not imply any discussion of the material, but rather calls the readers to submission. The author of this «halakhic» encyclical shifts the attention of his readers from their realities to his idealistic world. He omits many aspects of Second-Temple-Period Jewish life, focusing his attention instead on the rules of spiritual life common for both Judeans and Christians. This focus explains why the Epistle has only two brief and indirect references to Jesus Christ, who as the hero surprisingly does not play a distinctive role. for several reasons the Messiah is replaced by famous characters from the Tanakh (i. e., Abraham, Rahab, Job, and Elijah) as being the best examples for imitation.