

- b. James, the Lord's brother couldn't have written the quality of Greek found in the book of James nor could he have been familiar with the Greek philosophical and religious concepts with which the author of James was obviously familiar.

The Greek in the book of James is idiomatic Hellenistic Greek with some literary flourishes. Occasionally language is used in the book that is derived from Greek philosophy and religion. This quality of Greek, it is alleged, can hardly be attributed to the son of a Galilean carpenter who was a conservative Jewish Christian and who, as far as we know, never left Palestine.

Responses to the argument:

- (1) While the Greek in the book of James is closer to the 'higher Koine' than most N.T. Greek, its quality shouldn't be exaggerated. It is semi-literary Greek, but it isn't the highest quality Greek.
- (2) It is impossible to determine whether or not James, the Lord's brother could have written idiomatic Hellenistic Greek. Why?
 - (a) Because Greek was widely used in Palestine (particularly in Galilee) and many Palestinians, even from poor families, grew up speaking it fluently. If this was true of James, he possibly could have written this kind of Greek.
 - (b) Because we don't know whether or not James was exposed to the kind of influences that would have enabled him to write this kind of Greek.

We don't have any details about his education, the extent of his travels, or the people with whom he was associated.

- (c) Because as the head of the Jerusalem church, we may suspect that James had the capacity to learn Greek well, and the Hellenistic element of that church (cf. Acts 6:1) would have given him both the opportunity and perhaps the motivation to do it.

Note: J.N. Sevenster, who uses James as a test case in his investigation of the use of Greek in Palestine, concludes that James, the Lord's brother, could have written the book.