

Expanded Analysis of

JAMES

"APPLIED CHRISTIANITY"

"For just as the body without *the* spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead." James 2:26

EXPANDED ANALYSIS OF JAMES

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Notes to the Reader:

(1) The footnotes in this analysis of James often include an Anglicized rendering of the Greek original word, plus a number. This number is the standardized Strong's Lexicon number. I include the Strong's number so that the reader may go to an online source and examine how the original writers used a particular Greek word in its various contexts. In other words, I believe it is important for us English speakers to know how Greek speakers and writers used a particular word in establishing the appropriate shades of meaning of that word.

One helpful online source in examining original words is StudyLight.org. Here is the direct link to StudyLight's Greek Lexicon: <http://studylight.org/lex/grk/>. If you type in the Strong's number in the appropriate dialogue box, you will be taken to the page where all the occurrences of that particular Greek word in the various New Testament books occurs. The reader will notice that he has the option of looking up verses in the King James Version or the New American Standard Bible. Happy studying God's Word!

(2) When I quote sources, I give a more or less complete identification in the first instance, followed in parentheses by the name or abbreviation by which that source will be identified in the future. Thereafter, that source will generally be identified by that shorter nomenclature.

JAMES

“APPLIED CHRISTIANITY”

“For just as the body without *the* spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.” James 2:26

A 1 HANDLING TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS 1:1-18

B 1 A Constituency Undergoing Trials / Temptations – Introduction 1:1

C 1 The author: {1} James,¹

D 1 a bond-servant² of God

D 2 and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

C 2 The recipients: to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad:³

¹ James: James was not the brother of John, both sons of Zebedee (Matt. 4:21; 10:2), for he had been wrongfully executed by Herod Agrippa I in the early days of the church, ca. A.D. 44 (Acts 12:1-2). This James is rather the half-brother of Jesus (Mark 6:3; Gal. 1:19) who, after his conversion to Christ following Jesus’ resurrection, became a leader of the early church (Acts 15:13-21; 21:18; 1 Cor. 15:7), as even Peter himself acknowledged (Acts 12:17). Of course, since Jesus is the half-brother of Jesus, it follows that the Roman Catholic Church’s (RCC) dogma of Mary’s perpetual virginity, often linked with the RCC’s dogma of the Assumption of Mary, is simply not true. (See the linkage, for example, in <http://www.calledto communion.com/2011/08/solemnity-of-the-assumption-of-the-virgin-mary-into-heaven/>). For another pro-RCC link to Mary’s perpetual virginity, see <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15448a.htm> .

James wrote this book between A.D. 45-48 or 50 (Thomas Constable, *Notes on James*, 2010 Edition, p. 1 [hereafter, Constable]; see also Charles C. Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible* (hereafter *RSB*), Introduction.)

² 1:1 - bond-servant: The word is *doulos*, 1401. The NASB translates it bond-servant(s) 23X; bonds slave(s) 11X; slave(s) 98X. The word means slave. Why not translate it that way here? Presumably, the translators must think, because it is a metaphorical usage. But James considered himself a common slave of both God and his Lord (lords were the masters of slaves), Jesus Christ. According to the Louw-Nida Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (henceforth Louw-Nida), *doulos* means “pertaining to a state of being completely controlled by someone or something - ‘subservient to, controlled by.’” James viewed himself as a slave of God and Jesus. We should translate it that way. And we Christians ought to view ourselves as slaves of God and Jesus. That means God and Jesus have the unquestioned right to control us completely.

³ 1:1 - to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: The NASB wording, “who are dispersed abroad,” translates *tais en te diaspora* – “the ones in the dispersion.” “The dispersion” is a technical term for “The Diaspora” – Israelis exiled from the land of Israel. (For a further discussion of Diaspora as well as Return (*Aliyah*), go to <http://wordexplain.com/glossarya.html#Aliyah>.)

With reference to the immediate theme, James is writing to Christian Jews who are undergoing trials and temptations. They are part of the Jewish Diaspora – they have been exiled from their homeland. They face additional difficulties in that they are perhaps, in many cases, also estranged from the Jewish synagogue that they might otherwise attend and from which they might ordinarily receive some support. So the trials of which they are partaking tempt them to become discouraged.

Here is a literal translation of what James wrote: Jacobus – of God and Master Jesus Christ a slave – to the twelve tribes – the ones in the diaspora – greetings.” James wrote to the “twelve tribes” (of the “sons of Israel,” the common Biblical – even NT – designation for Israelis – see Matt. 27:9; Luke 1:16; Acts 5:21; 7:23, 37; 9:15; 10:36; Rom. 9:27; 2 Cor. 3:7, 13; Heb. 11:22; Rev. 2:14; 7:4; 21:12) who were also Christians, but dispersed abroad, exiles from the land of Israel. Today we would call them Messianic Jews dispersed abroad from Israel,” or “Messianic Jewish Diaspora.” The fact that James wrote to Christian Jews (he calls them brothers in James 1:2; 5:7, etc.) belies

C 3 The greeting: Greetings.

B 2 Counting It Joy to Undergo Trials / Temptations 1:2

C 1 The command: {2} Consider it all joy,⁴ my brethren,⁵

C 2 The circumstance: when you encounter various trials,⁶

the view of most of Christianity that Israel's existence as a nation is passé, both now and in the future. Most of Christianity believes in Replacement Theology – that the Church forever replaces Israel in the economy of God. That belief is based on a misinterpretation of, for example, Ephesians 2:11-22 and Galatians 3:28. The truth of the matter is that, though the barrier that separates Jew and Gentile has been broken, and though Jew and Greek, slaves and free men, males and females are all one in Christ, those facts do not obliterate any of the respective roles of those societal genres in Christian living or in society, as even the rest of the New Testament acknowledges. Wives are still to submit to their husbands; husbands are to be the loving heads of their wives; men, not women serve as elders and deacons; slaves are to submit to their masters, even bad ones; and even throughout eternity, Israel will exist as a nation in union with, but also in distinction to both the Church, and Gentiles (Rev. 21:10-22:2). After all, nothing could possibly be more Jewish than the eternal existence of New Jerusalem as the capital city of New Earth! Obviously, James did not believe in Replacement Theology. (For a brief discussion of Replacement Theology go to http://www.wordexplain.com/glossary.html#Replacement_Theology.)

⁴ 1:2 - consider it all joy: James calls upon his readers to consider (*hegeomai*, 2233) their encountering of various kinds of trials (*peirasmos*, 3986) as leading to all joy! His command (*hegeomai* is here an imperative) to view trials as a source of joy reminds us of Paul's perspective: "And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations (*thlipsis*, 2347), knowing that tribulation (*thlipsis*, 2347) brings about perseverance (*hupomone*, 5281);" etc. (Rom. 5:3).

⁵ 1:2 - my brothers: James calls his readers brothers (*adelphoi*, 80) in James 1:2, 9, 16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14, 15; 3:1, 10, 12; 4:11 (3X); 5:7, 9, 10, 12, 19. This means that, though he was writing to exiled Jewish people (the Diaspora – 1:1), he was specifying a subset within the Diaspora, namely Christian Jews.

⁶ 1:2 - trials: Trials translates the noun *peirasmos*, 3986, used in the book of James only here and in 1:12. The related verb *peiradzo* (3985) is used in the book of James four times – all in James 1:13-14. Both the noun and the verb convey both the sense of trial and the sense of temptation, though a particular context may seem to emphasize one aspect or the other. We often think of a trial as some sort of difficulty which we encounter without necessarily considering the temptation involved. It is hard, and difficult to endure. We don't think of it as being a temptation, that is, a solicitation to commit evil. However, if one keeps it in mind that Satan always tempts us to have the wrong reaction to any trial, then we can see that both *peirasmos* and *peiradzo* have the capacity to incorporate the idea of a **trial** in which we are **tempted** to react wrongly. Often the idea of **temptation**, a solicitation to commit evil, seems prominent (as in Luke 4:13, where Satan "finished every temptation" of Christ). At other times, however, the connotation of an extremely difficult time may seem more prominent (as in Acts 20:19, where Paul says that He served the Lord "with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews"). Jesus urged his disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane to watch and pray, lest they fall into *peirasmos* (Matt. 26:41), and in the "Lord's Prayer" the disciples are instructed to ask God not to lead them into *peirasmos* (Matt. 6:13). In both cases, what did Jesus mean? A trial or a temptation? My answer is, "Why not both?" Again, when we encounter a difficult trial, we are tempted to react the wrong way, are we not?

It would seem then that a *peirasmos* is a difficult situation which tends to influence us to distrust or disobey God. It might be a solicitation to evil or a difficult time during which we might be tempted to doubt or disobey God. The KJV translates all occurrences of *peirasmos* as "temptation", whereas the NASB distinguishes between solicitation to evil ("temptation") and a difficult time ("trial"), which may influence us to doubt God's love and goodness. To what does James allude in James 1:13-14? Most commentators say he there speaks of solicitation to do evil. Why can he not be referring to both trials and temptations? God never gives us a hard time and He never tempts us to sin. But God does allow in our lives hard times (trials) and He also allows us to be tempted, whether by Satan or some person or by our own evil desires, the point being made in James 1:13-14. So it is, that in my outline titles, I combine both ideas, as in the B2 title at James 1:2, "**Counting It Joy to Undergo Trials / Temptations.**"

Thomas Constable, *Notes on Matthew* (<http://www.soniclight.org/constable/notes/pdf/matthew.pdf>), 2010 Edition, p. 103, commenting on "Lead us not into temptation" in Matthew 6:13, states the following, in which he combines both meanings:

B 3 Gaining Endurance in Trials / Temptations 1:3-4

C 1 The awareness of endurance: {3} knowing that the testing ⁷ of your faith produces endurance.⁸ 1:3

C 2 The maturation of endurance 1:4

D 1 The caution: {4} And let endurance have *its* perfect result,⁹

D 2 The completion: so that you may be

E 1 perfect and complete,¹⁰

"Temptation" is the Greek *peirasmos* and means "testing." It refers not so much to solicitation to evil as to trials that test the character. God does not test (*peirasmos*) (sic; actually, *peiradzo*) anyone (James 1:13-14). Why then do we need to pray that He will not lead us into testing? Even though God is not the instrumental cause of our testing He does permit us to experience temptation from the world, the flesh, and the devil (cf. 4:1; Gen. 22:1; Deut. 8:2). Therefore this petition is a request that He minimize the occasions of our testing that may result in our sinning. It articulates the repentant disciple's felt weakness to stand up under severe trials in view of our sinfulness (cf. Prov. 30:7-9).

⁷ 1:3 - testing of your faith: "Testing" is *dokimion*, 1383. God doesn't send (James 1:13-14), but permits *peirasmos* (3986) – trials/temptations – in our lives for the purpose of testing or perhaps better, the *proof* (*dokimion*, 1383) of our faith. *Dokimion* is used only twice in the NT – here, and in 1 Peter 1:7. That is a very instructive passage.

There, Peter blesses God, who in His great mercy and through Jesus, caused us to be born again to a living hope (1:3). He did so in order that we might obtain an imperishable inheritance, reserved in heaven for us (1:4). We are the ones protected by God's power through faith for a salvation "ready to be revealed in the last time" (1:5). In this we rejoice, though now, if necessary, we are being distressed by various trials/temptations (*peirasmos*, 3986) (1:6), the purpose for which is the proof (*dokimion*, 1383) of our faith, which, "being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:7).

So one can readily see that, though God never *sends peirasmos* (trials/temptations) (see James 1:13-14), he definitely *permits* them so that our faith can be proven (by fire, which, as in a smelter, burns off all the impurities) to endure and result in praise and honor at the revelation (literally, unveiling, *apokalupsis*, 602) of Jesus (see the entire Book of Revelation, noting especially Rev. 1:1)!

⁸ 1:3 - the testing of your faith produces endurance: The proof (*dokimion*, 1383) of our faith produces endurance (*hupomone*, 5281). *Hupomone* is a compound word, combining *hupo*, under, and *meno*, to remain. It has the idea of *remaining under* a difficult situation instead of crumbling under it or fleeing from it. *Hupomone* is translated in the NASB as perseverance (21X), endurance (7X), steadfastness (3X), and patient enduring (1X). Much as one patiently endures the discomfort of getting one's tooth filled at the dentist's office, or much as an NFL player perseveres through an arduous training camp, the Christian is to realize that when he encounters *peirasmos* (trials/temptations) with a quiet joy, this is proving his faith. As his faith is being proven, so also his perseverance and patient endurance is being expanded. As Peter noted, this will result in praise and glory and honor at the unveiling of Jesus (1 Pet. 1:7)!

⁹ 1:4 - perfect result: Steadfast endurance (*hupomone*, 5281), is like yeast in bread dough, which quietly, but steadily and inexorably transforms our Christian character. The purpose or end result of steadfast endurance is a perfect or completely mature (*teleios*, 5046) Christian. For example, Paul exhorted the Corinthians not to be children in their thinking, but rather to be mature (*teleios*, 5046) (1 Cor. 14:20). So also in Hebrews 5:13-14, the milk of the Word is for infants, but the solid food of the Word is for the mature (*teleios*, 5046).

¹⁰ 1:4 - perfect and complete: "Perfect" repeats the word *teleios*, 5046, meaning completely mature. "Complete" is *holokleros*, 3648, a compound word from *holos* (3650), meaning whole, and *kleros* (2819), meaning, literally, a lot used in gambling. So, by extension, *kleros* means an allotment, or that which the lot secures. Sometimes *kleros* is translated "inheritance." In our context, this compound word, *holokleros* (3648), means that when endurance is finished in our lives, we are fully mature as Christians and God has the "whole allotment" of us which He had

E 2 lacking in nothing.

B 4 Asking for Wisdom in Trials / Temptations 1:5-8

C 1 The shortage of wisdom: {5} But if any of you lacks wisdom,¹¹ 1:5

C 2 The obtaining of wisdom: let him ask of God¹²

D 1 Giving to all men generously: who gives to all generously¹³

D 2 Not reproaching: and without reproach,¹⁴

C 3 The assurance of wisdom: and it will be given to him.¹⁵

planned on from the beginning. Thus we are “lacking in nothing” from His original design for our usefulness for His purpose.

¹¹ 1:5 - if any of you lacks wisdom: Wisdom is *sophia* (4680), almost universally translated as *wisdom*. Growing up, I was always instructed that this verse was grounds for asking God for wisdom in making decisions about any and all situations. While that policy is certainly commendable, even advisable, it really does not do justice to the context here. James has been discussing the trials/temptations which these Christian Jewish exiles faced. These trials/temptations would bring difficulties into their lives that might be expected to cause them to question God’s love for them or His fairness. When we are tempted to question God’s love or goodness, we need to ask God for wisdom so that we can understand why God is permitting us to struggle.

The first step in this equation is that one must recognize his own need – that of needing wisdom. The condition of needing wisdom is assumed as a matter of fact. “If” (ei) assumes the inevitability of needing wisdom. Still, one must recognize that need..

¹² 1:5 - let him ask of God: whose policies regarding dispensing wisdom include the following – generosity and non-reproach. In the context, James 1:5 encourages us to ask for wisdom in understanding our trials/tribulations. This is the second step in the equation. The human being must ask of God. This is not optional – it is an imperative – he is commanded to ask of God. Furthermore it is an ongoing imperative – present tense. The first two steps involve human responsibility: (1) recognition of need; (2) asking for wisdom from God. The remainder of 1:5 deals not with the human condition, but the Divine condition. God is more than willing to provide wisdom needed, for He is generous.

¹³ 1:5 - who gives to all generously: “Generously” translates *haplos* (574). The definition for *haplos* is “simply, openly, frankly, sincerely.” The difficulty is that *haplos* is used only once in the entire NT. It is used in the LXX in Proverbs 10:9, where it speaks of one who lives his life in *integrity*. Probably *haplos* here means that, when asked for wisdom in understanding and dealing with trials/temptations, God will give wisdom for that purpose sincerely and unstintingly. We should note that God is no respecter of persons. No matter what status one has as a Christian, whether mature or immature, a leader or a follower, it makes no difference to God. To each and every Christian who asks for wisdom to understand the trials/tribulations he is facing, God will grant him that request. God gives sincerely – He has no hidden agenda driving His response.

¹⁴ 1:5 - without reproach: *suneidzo* (3679) is a present participle here. When asked for wisdom to understand trials/temptations, God consistently is giving wisdom sincerely and unstintingly to all without insulting, reproaching, or denouncing them for having asked.

¹⁵ 1:5 - and it will be given him: Up to this point, the process has described the human responsibility: (1) recognition of need; (2) asking for help. In the next portion of 1:5 James discussed the generous character of God. Now, James states very simply, “It will be given to him.” It is a future passive statement of fact. D. Edmond Hiebert (*James*, p. 70.), quotes John Blanchard (*Not Hearers Only. Bible Studies in the Epistle of James*, p. 44) as saying, “it is characteristic of the unbeliever to see God with a clenched fist; it is characteristic of the believer to see Him with an open hand.”

- C 4 The condition for wisdom: 1:6-8
- D 1 The content of the condition 1:6
- E 1 {6} But he must ask in faith ¹⁶
- E 2 without any doubting,¹⁷
- D 2 The reason for the condition
- E 1 The exclusion: for the one who doubts ¹⁸
- E 2 The simile: is like the surf of the sea,¹⁹
- G 1 driven ²⁰
- G 2 and tossed by the wind.²¹
- D 3 The non-fulfillment of the condition 1:7-8

¹⁶ 1:6 - But he must ask in faith: There is one qualification for receiving wisdom from God to understand trials/temptations. That qualification is that he who asks must be asking (present tense imperative) in faith. Hebrews 11:6 states that it is impossible to please God without faith. He who comes to God must believe that He exists, but also that He is a rewarder of those who really seek Him. The one who asks God for wisdom to understand must believe that God will reward Him with wisdom.

¹⁷ 1:6 -without any doubting: James qualifies faith even further. There can be no doubting. “Doubting” translates the present participle of *diakrino* (1252). It has here the idea of someone debating within himself – will God give me wisdom or won’t He? We might say, “without debating” or “without misgivings.”

¹⁸ 1:6 - the one who doubts: Once again, the present participle of *diakrino* (1252) appears here. The one engaging in this inner debate about whether or not God will really give him wisdom to understand trials/temptations is like the billows in the ocean, tossed here and there by circumstances, unguided by rock solid faith.

¹⁹ 1:6 - is like the surf of the sea: Better, “is like a wave at sea.” The word translated “surf” is *kludōn* (2830). “Surf” is not the best translation, for it calls to mind the very regular surf that rolls in upon an ocean shore. The idea is more a billow far out at sea that is whipped about by the wind. A sea billow is irregular, inconsistent, and completely dominated by the wind around it. The person who engages in inner debate about whether or not God will or won’t provide wisdom to understand trials/temptations bases his misgivings upon outward circumstances, not the character of God. Having no fixed point of reference, he is as unreliable in his attitude toward God as a sea billow is in relation to the fixed shoreline. That kind of person will have a tumultuous life, and he cannot expect that God will grant him wisdom to understand his trials/temptations. The fault is his, not God’s. He wavers in his faith in God, and so God will not come to the rescue and provide perspective for someone who doesn’t really trust Him.

²⁰ 1:6 - driven: translates *anemidzō* (416), a “*hapax legomenon*,” meaning it appears only here in the Greek NT. *anemidzō* (416) appears as a present passive participle. It’s noun, *anemos* (417) means simply “wind.” So *anemidzō* means, literally, “wind-driven” or “wind-blown.”

²¹ 1:6 - and tossed by the wind: This phrase translates the two words “and” (*kai*) plus the word “tossed” (*hripidzō*, 4494). The verb is a present passive participle. It is a synonym for *anemidzō*. For the sake of differentiation, *anemidzō* could be translated “wind-driven” and *hripidzō* “wind-tossed.” In either case, they describe a person who is like a nameless wave out at sea, completely at the mercy of the elements. This condition describes the one who debates within himself whether or not he should trust God to give him wisdom to understand his trials/temptations. Since he doubts God, he will never receive the wisdom for which he seeks.

- E 1 The disappointment: {7} For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord,²² 1:7
- E 2 The character flaw 1:8
- G 1 {8} *being* a double-minded man,²³
- G 2 unstable in all his ways.²⁴

²² 1:7 - anything from the Lord: “The negative *mē* with the present imperative demands that he must stop entertaining any thought of receiving an answer to his prayer” (Hiebert, p. 74). “Faith unlocks the divine storehouse, but unbelief bars its doors” (Curtis Vaughan, *James, A Study Guide*, p. 24, quoted by Hiebert, p. 74). If a man will not trust God, he has no hope whatever of establishing any kind of relationship with Him. “Without faith, it is impossible to please Him...” (Heb. 11:6a).

²³ 1:8 *being* a double-minded man: A man who vacillates back and forth – “Will God provide me with wisdom or not?” – “Does it make any difference if I pray or not?” – is a double-minded man. “Double-minded” is a good translation of *dipsuchos*, 1374, coming from *dis* (twice or doubly) and *psuche* (5590), from which we derive our English word “psyche.” A double-minded man has two different psyches which battle one another. We are to have the single-minded focus of faith in God, not the divided psyches of trust and misgiving.

²⁴ 1:8 - unstable in all his ways: Unstable (*akatastatos*, 182) is used only twice in the NT, here, and in James 3:8: “But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless (*akatastatos*, 182) evil and full of deadly poison.” The man who cannot trust God to supply him with wisdom to understand his trials and temptations is double-minded, and he is *unstable* and *restless* in all his ways. He will not receive anything from the Lord.

B 5 Maintaining Perspective in Light of Trials / Temptations 1:9-11

- C 1 The brother of humble circumstances: {9} But the brother ²⁵ of humble circumstances ²⁶ is to glory in his high position; ²⁷ 1:9
- C 2 The rich man: {10} and the rich man ²⁸ 1:10-11
- D 1 The instruction: *is to glory* in his humiliation, ²⁹

²⁵ 1:9 - brother: James speaks here of the Christian brother who finds himself in humble circumstances. Presumably this means that he has little wealth (see the context), and perhaps is poverty stricken. It may mean also that he has little power and little influence. He is simply one of the “unwashed masses”, but he is a Christian man among the masses.

²⁶ 1:9 - humble circumstances: These two words translate the one Greek word *tapeinos* (5011). Jesus uses this Greek word of Himself “... I am ... **humble** in heart” (Matt. 11:29). The virgin Mary used of God’s having blessed her with the honor of becoming the mother of the Messiah, “He has brought down rulers from their thrones, and has exalted those who were **humble**” (Lk. 1:52). Paul urged Roman Christians not to “be haughty in mind, but associate with the **lowly**” (Rom. 12:16). Paul spoke of God comforting the **depressed** (2 Cor. 7:6), and he spoke of himself as the Corinthians had caricatured him, “I who am **meek** when face to face with you, but bold toward you when absent” (2 Cor. 10:1). James used it twice, once here, “the brother of **humble circumstances**” (1:9) and also in 4:6, quoting loosely from Ps. 138:6 and perhaps Prov. 3:34, “God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the **humble**.” Peter also quoted the same text from the same passage(s) (1 Pet. 5:5). (All emphases are mine.) As one can see, James did not mean someone who exhibited a mousy, cringing, self-deprecating demeanor. Rather he spoke of a Christian brother without the trappings of wealth and power.

²⁷ 1:9 - is to glory in his high position: The verb “is to glory” translates the third person singular imperative of *kauchaomai* (2744). This Christian brother in humble circumstances is commanded continually to be glorying in his high position in Christ. He has little of this world’s goods; he lacks power and influence, yet he is to glory in his spiritual position – he has been blessed with incalculable spiritual blessings; he was chosen before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before God; he was lovingly predestined to become a son of God through Jesus; he has been redeemed through Jesus’ blood; he has a personal relationship with the most important human in the universe – the Anointed King; due to His position in Jesus he has an enormous inheritance coming (Eph. 1:3-12). In these, which are all acts of grace, accessed by trusting in Jesus, this humble Christian is commanded to glory and exult!

²⁸ 1:10 - and the rich man: Literally, “moreover, the rich [one] in his humiliation. “Rich man” translates the single word *plousios* (4145), nominative masc. singular. There are those who argue that James is speaking of a wealthy unbeliever, absent the presence of the term *adelphos* (80), brother. But James is merely writing good Greek. He means the wealthy Christian brother, omitting the term “brother,” just as he omits the parallel verb, “let him glory” (*kauchaomai*, 2744). While it may be imprecise English, it is good Greek. D. Edmond Hiebert (p. 78) quotes Lenski’s very literal rendering: “Now let him boast, the brother, the lowly one, in his high position; on the other hand, the rich one, in his lowly position!” R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews and of the Epistle of James*, p. 541.) “The word ‘rich’ (*plousios*) denotes ‘one who does not need to work for a living’” (Hiebert, quoting William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, p. 679).

²⁹ 1:10 - is to glory in his humiliation: In what was the Christian rich man to boast? In his humble position, as defined in the remainder of James 1:10-11. NASB’s “humiliation” (translating the noun *tapeinōsis*, 5014) is, in my judgment, not the best translation, for it carries a negative connotation. *Tapeinōsis* (5014) is easily identifiable as being related to the word *tapeinos* (5011), “humble circumstances,” in James 1:9. As *tapeinos* had no negative connotation, neither can *tapeinōsis*. A more appropriate translation would be simply, “humble state,” as it is so translated in Luke 1:48 and Philippians 3:21. Just as the Christian brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position in Christ, so this Christian brother who has been blessed with wealth in the physical, material realm is to glory in the reality of his own mortality. In that regard he is just like his brother of humble circumstances. Both will die, and neither of them can take anything with them into the life hereafter. Death, after all, is the great Leveler, and realizing that helps the wealthy brother maintain his proper spiritual equilibrium.

- D 2 The reason: because like flowering grass he will pass away.³⁰
- D 3 The analogy 1:11
- E 1 {11} For the sun rises with a scorching wind, and withers the grass;
- E 2 and its flower falls off
- E 3 and the beauty of its appearance³¹ is destroyed;³²
- D 4 The point: so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away.³³ 1:11

B 6 Anticipating Reward from Trials / Temptations 1:12

- C 1 The qualification for being blessed – persevering under trial: {12} Blessed

³⁰ 1:10 - like flowering grass he will pass away: James begins to spell out the truly humble circumstances of even the well-to-do Christian. He is just as mortal as anyone else. Glorifying in this fact keeps the well-to-do Christian humble and grateful, fending off the debilitating temptation of pride. Here and in the next few verses, James's soliloquy reminds one of Isaiah 40:6-8:

⁶A voice says, "Call out." Then he answered, "What shall I call out?" All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.

Peter echoes the same thoughts (1 Pet. 2:24).

³¹ 1:11 - appearance: Literally, "face" (*prosopon*, 4383).

³² 1:11 - destroyed: *apollumi*, 622, used in such verses as John 3:16, "...whoever believes in Him shall not **perish**, but have eternal life." John 10:10 "The thief comes only to steal and kill and **destroy**" John 10:28 "and I give eternal life to them, and they will never **perish**" James 1:11, "...and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed" James 4:12, "There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy" 1 Pet. 1:7, "so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is **perishable**, even though tested by fire" (all emphases mine).

³³ 1:11 - so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away: Just yesterday, October 5, 2011, Steve Jobs, co-founder (with Steve Wozniak) of Apple Computer, died. In March of 2011 Jobs was said to be worth \$8.3 billion. But his wealth could not prevent neither his pancreatic cancer surgery in 2004, nor his liver transplant in 2009, nor his death in 2011. Steve Jobs caught a bit of the spirit of James' advice, but not the right conclusion. Here is what he said at a commencement speech at Stanford University in June, 2005, about 18 months after he had been diagnosed with cancer: "Remembering that I'll be dead soon ... is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything - all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure - these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important.... Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart." James would agree almost with every word Steve Jobs spoke, but not his conclusion. "There is no reason not to follow Jesus."

³⁴ is a man who perseveres under trial;³⁵

C 2 The reward for being approved: for once he has been approved,³⁶

D 1 The reward: he will receive the crown of life ³⁷

D 2 The promise: which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him.³⁸

B 7 Understanding the Source of Trials / Temptations 1:13-18

C 1 What is **not** the source of trials/temptations 1:13

D 1 The forbidden statement: {13} Let no one say when he is tempted,³⁹

³⁴ 1:12 - blessed is the man who perseveres under trial: Some underlying principles:
There are great blessings for the person who perseveres when facing trials and temptations.
To "persevere" is to "remain under" the trial / temptation instead of cutting and running.
Don't try to wriggle out of your trial / temptation.
Ask God to help you endure it.

³⁵ 1:12 - trial: *peirasmos*, 3986, the same word as that which James used in 1:2, "Count it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various **trials** ... (emphasis mine).

³⁶ 1:12 - approved: *dokimos*, 1384. In the ancient world there was no banking system as we know it today, and no paper money. All money was made from metal, heated until liquid, poured into moulds and allowed to cool. When the coins were cooled, it was necessary to smooth off the uneven edges. The coins were comparatively soft and of course many people shaved them closely. In one century, more than eighty laws were passed in Athens, to stop the practice of shaving down the coins then in circulation. But some money changers were men of integrity, who would accept no counterfeit money. They were men of honour who put only genuine full weighted money into circulation. Such men were called "*dokimos*" or "approved". Donald Barnhouse. (See <http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=1384>.) God is always looking to prove that we have endurance when we encounter trials / temptations. God always wants us to succeed, not fail when we encounter trials / temptations.

³⁷ 1:12 - crown of life: When I was a child, I used to think that we Christians would receive literal crowns of gold or silver. Later, I realized that this crown, for example, is not a crown of silver or gold or jewels. It is a crown that consists of life. It is true that we are promised eternal life when we trust in Jesus (John 3:16; 3:36; 5:24). But it is also true that we are rewarded with eternal life because we endure trials and temptations. (James 1:12). This is consistent with James' view that FAITH leads to WORKS (James 2:14, 26). We call this teaching "THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS." It means, true believers WILL PERSEVERE! We possess eternal life the moment we trust in Jesus (John 3:16; 3:36; 5:24). But we do not receive ULTIMATE eternal life until we are with God and Jesus in New Jerusalem (Rev. 21-22). By ultimate eternal life, I refer to the time when all of God's creation and His created beings function exactly as God has designed, absent any sin or its residual effects, such as death and decay.

³⁸ 1:12 - to those who love Him: In the present context, to love the Lord is to persevere amidst trials-and-temptations.

³⁹ 1:13 - when he is tempted: "Tempted" is the nominative present passive participle of *peiradzō*, 3985. Literally, "Let not the one being tried/tempted (*peiradzō*) say, "From God I am being tried/tempted (*peiradzō*)." Just as the one who encounters a trial (*peirasmos*, 3986) also encounters the temptation to react wrongly (James 1:2, 12), so when one is tried (*peiradzō*, 3985), he is also tempted to react wrongly (James 1:13, 13, 13, 14).

"I am being tempted by God"; ⁴⁰

D 2 The impossible situations

E 1 for God cannot be tempted by evil,⁴¹

E 2 and He Himself does not tempt anyone.⁴²

C 2 The real source of trials/temptations 1:14-15

D 1 The enticement of temptation: {14} But each one is tempted ⁴³ 1:14

E 1 when he is carried away ⁴⁴

⁴⁰ 1:13 - "I am being tempted by God": "tempted" is again *peiradzō*, 3985. The verb is first person singular present passive. When we encounter situations in which we are being tried/tempted, we are forbidden to state that we are being tried/tempted by God. The reasons that statement is a fallacy are given in the latter part of 1:13.

⁴¹ 1:13 - God cannot be tempted by evil: "Cannot be tempted" translates the one word *aspeirastos* (551), an adjective meaning, "not able to be tried/tempted." Literally, the text reads, "For God not able to be tried/tempted is by evil." Evil (*kakos*, 2556), can refer to morally evil people (e.g., Matt. 21:41; 24:48; Rev. 2:2), morally evil actions or thoughts (e.g., Matt. 27:23; Mark 7:21; 15:14; Luke 23:22; John 18:23, 30; Acts 9:13; Heb. 5:14; James 3:8), or bad things that happen (e.g., Luke 16:25; Acts 16:28; 28:5; Rev. 16:2). In this instance (James 1:13), it is impossible for God to be tried/tempted by any of the above – not by morally evil people, by morally evil actions or thoughts, or by bad things that happen. There is never any chance that God will be adversely affected or that He will react adversely to any kind of evil that occurs. He is sovereign over all.

⁴² 1:13 - and He Himself does not tempt anyone: Literally, "He Himself, moreover tries/tempts no one." "Tempt" here again is *peiradzō*, 3985. God never brings difficult circumstances into peoples' lives for the purpose of tempting them into reacting the wrong way. Furthermore, God does entice people to do morally wrong things. We must remember that when God first created the earth, there was nothing morally evil in it, nor was there anything in nature or man's environment that was injurious for man. In fact, God offered His verdict that it was all good (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 21, 25) and very good (Gen. 1:31). God did not bring Satan into the world to tempt man. But He did permit him to enter the world and tempt man. The bad things that happen in life are due to man's having sinned. Man was banned from the Garden of Eden because he chose to sin. The ground was cursed because man sinned. Child-bearing became difficult because Eve sinned. There are tornados, earthquakes, and tsunamis because man sinned. There is disease and aging and death because man sinned.

Let us look at an example. Job was a man who was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. God brought Him no trials/temptations. But Satan surely did.

Truth in Scripture typically exists in tension with other truth. Here are some other things we know about God. (1) God makes Himself responsible for deformities that certain humans have. In Exodus 4:11 Yahweh told Moses, ... "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes him mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?" (2) According to Isaiah 45:7, though Yahweh forms (*yatsar*, 3335) light, He also creates (*bara*, 1254) darkness. Though He causes (*asah*, 6213) well-being (*shalom*, 7965), He also creates (*bara*, 1254) calamity (*ra*, 7451). (3) We know that God punishes with great wrath (Rev. 6:16-17; 11:18; 14:10, 19; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 19; 19:15) evil people who have refused His grace (Revelation chapters 6-20).

Conclusion: In this context, when James says of God that He Himself does not **tempt** (*peiradzō*, 3985) anyone (James 1:13), we should take that to mean that God never brings tragedy into someone's life or permits tragedy for the purpose of seducing him into sinning. Nor does He ever solicit someone to do evil.

⁴³ 1:14 - But each one is tempted: "Tempted," once again, is *peiradzō*, 3985, a present passive verb.

⁴⁴ 1:14 - when he is carried away: *exelkō*, 1828 appears only here in the NT, as a present passive participle. It is used here in a "metaphorical sense – to lure forth: in hunting and fishing as game is lured from its hiding place, so man by lure is allured from the safety of self-restraint to sin. In Jas 1:14, the language of the hunting is transferred to the seduction of a harlot." <http://www.studyight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=1828>

- E 2 and enticed ⁴⁵ by his own lust.⁴⁶
- D 2 The progression of temptation 1:15
- E 1 Conception: {15} Then when lust ⁴⁷ has conceived,⁴⁸
- E 2 Birth: it gives birth to sin;⁴⁹
- E 3 Accomplishment
- G 1 and when sin is accomplished,⁵⁰

⁴⁵ 1:14 - and enticed: *deleadzō*, 1185, also is used here as a present passive participle. It means, “to bait, catch by a bait.” Metaphorically, it means “to beguile by blishments [sic], allure, entice, deceive.” New Testament Greek Lexicon: <http://www.studydrive.net/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=1185>. It occurs in the NT only three times. It is used twice by Peter of false teachers, described in 2 Pet. 2:14 in the midst of a lengthy series, “having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, **enticing** unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children.” In the same series these same false teachers are portrayed in 2 Pet. 2:18, “For speaking out words of arrogant vanity they **entice** by fleshly desires” “Carried away” (*exelkō*, 1828) and “enticed” (*deleadzō*, 1185) in combination, linked with the copula “and” (*kai*). They are used as synonyms. They can almost be translated, “lured and enticed.”

⁴⁶ 1:14 - by his own lust: “Lust” is *epithumia*, 1939, which means “strong desire.” The context must determine whether it is a negative or positive desire, but *epithumia* usually has a negative connotation. Only three of the 38 uses clearly have a positive connotation: Luke 22:15 – Jesus “**earnestly** desired to eat this Passover” with His disciples; Php. 1:23 – Paul has a “**desire**” to depart and be with Christ; 1 Thess. 2:17 – Paul and his associates had a “great **desire**” to see the Thessalonians. The rest of the occurrences are clearly negative, with Rev. 18:14 perhaps applying to the normal longing of human nature. Examples of the typical negative connotation include John 8:44, “You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the **desires** of your father” Romans 6:12, “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its **lusts**.” In Ephesians 2:3, “Among them we too all formerly lived in the **lusts** of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the others” (emphases mine). Here in James 1:14 and 15, “lust” clearly means an evil strong desire. In James 1:14 “lust” is in a more emphatic position than as translated in the NASB. Literally, it reads, “Each one of us, moreover, is being tried/tempted by his own strong desire, being lured and enticed.”

⁴⁷ 1:14 - lust: *epithumia*, 1939. See the preceding footnote.

⁴⁸ 1:15 - when lust has conceived: “Conceived” translates *sullambanō* (4815), which has a variety of meanings. Here, in combination with *tiktō* (5088), “gives birth” <http://www.studydrive.net/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=5088>, it is used metaphorically “of lust whose impulses a man indulges” <http://www.studydrive.net/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=4815>. The imagery is rather graphic. There are certain pleasures one might wish to indulge, but the unintended consequences are grim. King David certainly found that out (2 Sam. 11 - 20).

⁴⁹ 1:15 - sin: *hamartia* (266). Two definitions are especially helpful: “to miss the mark” and “to miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honour, to do or go wrong” <http://www.studydrive.net/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=266>. Strong desire (lust, *epithumia*) feels good, and we wish to indulge it. But evil desire followed results in an unwanted conception. Finally, the baby is born, and it is a devilish baby – it is sin! And sin always pays hideous wages, as James shortly points out.

⁵⁰ 1:15 - when sin is accomplished: “Accomplished” translates *apoteleō* (658), used only here in the NT. It comes from two words, *teleō*, meaning “to bring to an end,” and the preposition *apo*, “from.” So *apoteleō* means to bring to a complete end. *Apoteleō* appears here as an aorist passive participle. That means I don’t accomplish anything, but some powerful force outside of me accomplishes a destructive end that I am utterly powerless to stop! By dabbling in my lust, I have started a deadly chain reaction that keeps exploding, and I am powerless to stop it. It eventually kills me. The aorist tense means action that occurs at a point in time. So my lust that I dabbled in begins a chain reaction. It results in an unwanted pregnancy. An undesired conception has taken place. It may take some time, but there is finally a birth that takes place. That birth is sin. I am powerless to stop this deadly chain reaction that

- G 2 it brings forth death.⁵¹
- C 3 The source of all good: God, whose goal was to give birth 1:16-18
- D 1 The warning against deception: {16} Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. 1:16
- D 2 The description of good 1:17
- E 1 {17} Every good thing given
- E 2 and every perfect gift
- D 3 The description of the source of good 1:17
- E 1 The location
- G 1 is from above,
- G 2 coming down from
- E 2 The description of God: the Father of lights,
- E 3 The immutability of God: with whom there is no
- G 1 variation or
- G 2 shifting shadow.
- D 4 The goal of the good God with respect to believers 1:18
- E 1 His Divine prerogative: {18} In the exercise of His will ⁵²

now is consuming me and my life. There will come a time when sin is fully completed. It will bear yet another unwanted, deadly child – death!

⁵¹ 1:15 - it brings forth death: “Brings forth” is *apokueō* (616). This is another child-birth word, and it means “to bring forth from the womb” or “give birth to.” <http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=616>. It is used only twice, both instances here in James. Here (1:15) it is used of a deadly child-birth – “Sin, when it is fully completed, gives birth to death” (my translation). It is used in a contrasting, supremely positive sense in James 1:18, of God, where it says, “In the exercise of His will He brought us forth (*apokueō*, 616) by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures. Praise God that there is this Divine kind of a child-birth, rather than merely the deadly “lust-and-sin-and-death” child-birth, which is the only kind of birth of which we humans are capable!

⁵² 1:18 - in the exercise of His will: The Bible is more concerned to present the Free Moral Will of God than it is the so-called free moral will of man. Adam and Eve, prior to their sin, were, indeed, free. Since the fall, no man has been free. According to Ephesians 2, fallen man is bound – he is dead in trespasses and sins (2:1); he is dominated by the world (2:2); he is dominated by Satan (2:2); he is dominated by his flesh and mind (2:3). Under total bondage, he is by nature the offspring of God's wrath (2:3), to which he is doomed apart from the active mercy and love of God (2:4)! God is free. Fallen man is not. God is free – fallen man is responsible (Romans 1:18-20).

Observe that God is so powerful He does not have to use any mechanical apparatus such as arms or legs or armies to accomplish anything. He simply wills things into existence! The one adaptation to human frailty he makes is conversation! -- Exercising His will, He employs the words that we need (“the word of truth”) to enable us to

- E 2 His Divine begetting: He brought us forth
- E 3 His means of begetting: by the word of truth,
- E 4 His objective for us believers: so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.⁵³

A 2 USING GOD'S WORD 1:19-27

B 1 Avoiding A Pitfall – Wrathful Speech 1:19-20

- C 1 The common knowledge about wrath: {19} *This* you know, my beloved brethren. 1:19
- C 2 The directives concerning wrath: But everyone must be 1:19
 - D 1 Understanding: quick to hear,
 - D 2 Cautious: slow to speak⁵⁴
 - D 3 Patient: *and* slow to anger;⁵⁵
- C 3 The reason for the directives about wrath: {20} for the anger⁵⁶ of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.⁵⁷ 1:20

respond to His powerful begetting impetus.

⁵³ 1:18 - first fruits among His creatures: This means either that God wanted the Church to be a kind of down-payment on the masses of humanity who would ultimately be ushered into His family, or else a down-payment on the redemption of all His Creatures (cf. Rev. 5:13).

⁵⁴ 1:19 - slow to speak: “Speak” is *laleō* (2980). The idea of communicating is linked to 1:18, where James states that God brought us forth by the word (*logos*, 3056) of truth. 1:19 begins a whole section on using God’s Word properly, as expressed in each of the B-level section headings in the Outline. Our problem as humans, and I include myself, that we tend to react in speech before we have clearly considered all the facts. Only God knows all the facts, for example, another person’s heart or motives. So often we respond indignantly to what we have heard without knowing anything of the motives and background from which the other person spoke. I for one, need to be quicker to hear, and slower to speak.

⁵⁵ 1:19 - slow to anger: The word is *οργη* (*orgē*, 3706), meaning wrath. Most of its 34 usages describe God’s wrath against sin and sinners as displayed in judgment (John 3:36; Rom. 1:18), and could be translated as “righteous indignation culminating in coming judgment.” In Romans 12:18-19 Christians are instructed to live peaceably with all men and thus forbidden to take vengeance for themselves. They are rather to “leave room for God’s wrath” (NIV) [lit., “the wrath”. “God’s” is not in the original, but supplied, probably correctly, by the NIV. Murray agrees, *Romans*, p. 143, as does *TBKC*, II, 490.], for vengeance belongs to God (Rom. 12:18-19). The Christian is to put wrath away (Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8). Men are to pray without wrath (1 Tim. 2:8), and here, to be slow to wrath because man’s wrath “does not bring about the righteous life that God desires” (NIV) (Jas. 1:19-20).

⁵⁶ 1:20 - anger: The word is the same as in 1:19 – *οργη* (*orgē*, 3706), meaning wrath.

⁵⁷ 1:20 - for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God: “Man’s anger” is contrasted with “God’s righteousness.” This is precisely why we should be quick to hear but slow to speak. Human anger is flawed, and can never accomplish God’s righteousness. As we are told in Isaiah 55:8-9, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” declares the LORD. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

B 2 Receiving the Word 1:21

- C 1 That which must be put aside to receive God's Word
- D 1 {21} Therefore, putting aside all filthiness⁵⁸
- D 2 and *all* that remains of wickedness,⁵⁹
- C 2 The posture to receive God's Word: in humility⁶⁰
- C 3 The command to receive God's Word: receive the word implanted,⁶¹
- C 4 The benefit of receiving God's Word: which is able to save your souls.⁶²

⁵⁸ 1:21 - filthiness: *hruparia*, 4507, appearing only here in the NT. It means that which is filthy, befouling, defiling, dishonoring – <http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=4507>.

⁵⁹ 1:21 - wickedness: The noun *kakia*, 2549, which is derived from *kakos* (2556), a generic adjective for evil, means “(1) malignity, malice, ill-will, desire to injure, (2) wickedness, depravity, (a) wickedness that is not ashamed to break laws, (3) evil, trouble.” It is used frequently in “laundry lists” of depravity (Rom. 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:8; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8; Tit. 3:3; 1 Pet. 2:1). A minimal number of instances are somewhat helpful in providing definition (Matt. 6:34 [“each day has enough **trouble** of its own”]; Acts 8:22 [referring to Simon the Magician’s **wickedness** in attempting to purchase the ability to bestow the Holy Spirit]; 1 Cor. 14:20 [in regard to “**evil** be infants”]; 1 Pet. 2:16 [“do not use your freedom as a covering for **evil**”]. James’ point is that believers must make a deliberate effort to lay aside the twins of filthiness and wickedness. To lay them aside amounts to an act of humility, and prepares one’s heart to receive God’s Word.

⁶⁰ 1:21 - humility: *prautēs*, 4240, refers to “a mildness of disposition, gentleness of spirit, meekness” <http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=4240>. It takes a gentleness of spirit, a certain humility to receive appropriately God’s Word, implanted in the soil of our hearts. Passages which help illustrate this meaning include Gal. 6:1; Eph. 4:2; 2 Tim. 2:25; Tit. 3:2; James 3:13; 1 Pet. 3:15.

⁶¹ 1:21 - receive the word implanted: More literally, “Receive the implanted word, the one able to save your souls.” “Word” is *logos*, 3056. Logos has a broad range of meaning, as can be seen by the extensive lexical entries at <http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=3056>. Here it simply refers to the Word of God, not particularly differentiating as to whether it is being taught and heard or read personally. (Most Christians of that era did not have their own Bible, and the NT was not even complete yet.) “Implanted” translates *emphutos* (1721), used only here in the NT. It conveys the idea that the Word of God is sown in the hearts of His people. One is reminded of Jesus’ parable of the Four Soils (Matt. 13:1-9, 18-23). These Hebrew Christians would be represented by the fourth soil, in which the Word of God took root and actually produced within their lives a crop with varied yields. Believers are exhorted to receive (*dechomai*, 1209) the Word, that is, to welcome it into their lives. One is reminded of the Christians at Berea, who “received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11).

⁶² 1:21 - able to save your souls: “to save” is an aorist infinitive of *sodzō* (4982), which means, in general terms, “to save, keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction” <http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=4982>. In a theological sense, it refers to God’s successful eternal salvaging of a believer from the disastrous effects of sin. These effects include separation from God during this present life, physical decay and disease in this present life, and eternal separation from God in what the Bible describes as the “Lake of Fire and Brimstone” in the next life. The aorist tense looks at salvation as a whole. God uses His word as a vehicle to save us. As we respond positively in faith to His Word, we are saved. Specifically, it is faith in God’s Word about Jesus that saves us initially. But we grow in maturity by a continuing positive response to His Word. The word souls (*psuche*, 5590) looks at the whole person, not just man’s immaterial part. But James’ emphasis is not here on the body, but on the soul.

B 3 Doing, Not Just Hearing, the Word 1:22-25

- C 1 The command to be doers of God's Word 1:22
 - D 1 The positive: {22} But prove yourselves doers of the word,⁶³
 - D 2 The negative: and not merely hearers
 - D 3 The danger: who delude themselves.⁶⁴
- C 2 The description of those who only **hear** God's Word 1:23-24
 - D 1 The condition: {23} For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, 1:23
 - D 2 The simile: he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 1:23-24
 - E 1 Perception: {24}for *once* he has looked at himself 1:24
 - E 2 Departure: and gone away,
 - E 3 Amnesia: he has immediately forgotten⁶⁵ what kind of person he was.
- C 3 The description of those who **do** God's Word 1:25
 - D 1 Observant: {25} But one who looks intently at
 - E 1 The complete nature of the Word: the perfect law,⁶⁶

⁶³ 1:22 - But prove yourselves doers of the word: Listening to God's Word is abortive if one never practices it. Jesus told the story of a man who had two sons. He asked the first to work in his vineyard. The son said he would not, but later regretted what he had said and obeyed. The second said, "I will, sir," but never went. All agreed that the first son did the will of his father, even though both had heard. Jesus concluded that tax collectors and prostitutes would enter the kingdom of God before the chief priests and elders, for the former had believed John the Baptist, but the latter had not (Matt. 22:28-32).

⁶⁴ 1:22 - delude themselves: Those who hear God's Word but fail to heed it are delusional. If I attend church or study the Bible on my own, but make no changes, I am only deceiving myself. *Paralogidzomai*, 3884, is a present plural participle. We might say today this person lives in his own parallel universe, out of touch with reality.

⁶⁵ 1:24 - forgotten: The illustration James is expressing is that of a person who looks in mirror, let's say, with a bit of ketchup and mustard on his mouth. He observes, "Oh, I have some ketchup and mustard on my mouth!" But he turns from the mirror and never wipes his mouth off. That, James says, is like the person who hears what God's Word says, but makes no changes in his life.

⁶⁶ 1:25 - perfect law: "Perfect" translates *teleios* (5046), which means 1. "brought to its end, finished" 2. "wanting nothing necessary to completeness" 3. "perfect" <http://www.studydrive.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=5046>. Even though God's Word amounts to progressive revelation, with new revelation given in a successive dispensations, at any stage it is perfect in the sense of being complete for the purposes God intended it. James statement corroborates Paul's statement that the Scriptures are God-breathed (2 Tim. 3:16) and therefore without error or shortcoming. As John MacArthur states in his commentary on James, "Scripture is inerrant, sufficient, and comprehensive."

- E 2 The liberating nature of the Word: the *law* of liberty,⁶⁷
- D 2 Obedient: and abides by it,
- E 1 Negatively: not having become a forgetful hearer
- E 2 Positively: but an effectual doer,
- D 3 Rewarded: this man will be blessed in what he does.⁶⁸

B 4 Applying the Word: Unbridled Speech versus Pure Religion 1:26-27

- C 1 Worthless Religion: An unbridled tongue 1:26
- D 1 The self-perception: {26} If anyone thinks himself to be religious,⁶⁹
- D 2 The unbridled truth: and yet does not bridle his tongue⁷⁰
- D 3 The self-deception: but deceives his *own* heart,

⁶⁷ 1:25 - the *law* of liberty: The Bible constricts the world; it liberates the obedient Christian! MacArthur, James: "...by referring to the Word as the law of liberty, James focused on its redemptive power in freeing believers from the bondage of sin and then freeing them to righteous obedience (John 8:34–36).

⁶⁸ 1:25 - blessed in what he does: Hiebert, *James*, p. 123: "The voluntary doing of God's will is the secret of true happiness." The word "does" is *poiēsis* (4162), used only here in the NT. It is a singular noun, and it views the obedient believer's "whole life as a consistent doing. God wants more than isolated acts of obedience; the believer's entire life must be devoted to the incessant doing of His will" (Hiebert, *James*, p. 123).

⁶⁹ 1:26 - religious: "Religious" translates the adjective *thrēskos* (2357), used only once in the NT. It is related, of course, to the noun "religion" (*thrēskeia*, 2356), used four times as follows: Acts 26:5 (Paul "lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our **religion**"); Col 2:18 ("Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the **worship** of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind"); and in James 1:26 and 27, cited elsewhere in this document. The lexical definition of *thrēskeia*, 2356, is as follows: "1. religious worship a. esp. external, that which consists of ceremonies 1. religious discipline, religion." James is not trying to use religion in a disparaging sense. Rather, he is disparaging the kind of religion that permits one to be abusive with his tongue. In James 1:27 he lauds the kind of religion which visits orphans and widows in their distress and keeps oneself unstained by the world.

⁷⁰ 1:26 - does not bridle his tongue: James is very clear that what we say reflects our character. I think the issue is this. God is a speaker. He very clearly has messages to convey to others. In the very beginning of human history, God made man in His own likeness and image. Consequently, God also has given to man the ability to communicate. And in the beginning, God walked and talked with man in the Garden of Eden. God always speaks the truth, and does so in an upbuilding way. He expects man to do the same. But when we use our speech to tear others down or wrongly justify our ourselves, or when vent our anger at others, we are being abusive. That is not the true worship of God. Think of the ways God has spoken truly. He has spoken in nature (Psalm 19; Rom. 1:19-20); He has spoken through angels; He has spoken through prophets; and He has spoken through His Son (Heb. 1:1-2), who is the Word of God (John 1:1, 14). God expects our words to reflect His words.

- D 4 The futility of his religion: this man's religion ⁷¹ is worthless.⁷²
- C 2 Pure, Undeified Religion: Visiting orphans and widows and keeping oneself unspotted 1:27
- D 1 {27} The characterization of genuine religion: Pure and undeified religion in the sight of *our* God and Father is this:
- D 2 The activities of genuine religion
- E 1 Visitation: to visit ⁷³ orphans and widows ⁷⁴ in their distress,

⁷¹ 1:26 - religion: "Religion" translates the noun *thrēskeia*, 2356, used here in a negative sense, but in a positive sense in 1:27. The word "religion" (*thrēskeia*, 2356) is ethically neutral. Depending on how one lives it can be a negative religion or a positive religion. A religion in which one does not bridle his tongue is a worthless religion. See the footnote on 1:26 - religious.

⁷² 1:26 - worthless: "Worthless" translates *mataios*, 3152, used six times in the NT: Acts 14:15 ("turn from these **vain things** to a living God"); 1 Cor. 3:20 ("the reasonings of the wise ... are **useless**."); 1 Cor. 15:17 ("and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is **worthless**; you are still in your sins."); James 1:26 ("this man's religion is **worthless**."); 1 Pet. 1:18 ("knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your **futile** way of life inherited from your forefathers.") (emphases mine). In this instance James speaks of a religion that is worthless if the worshiper can use his own tongue for selfish purposes instead of for God-honoring purposes.

⁷³ 1:27 - to visit: "To visit" translates the present tense infinitive of *episkeptomai* (1980), is a compound word take from the preposition *epi* (upon) and the noun *skopos* (4649), used only once in the NT, in Philippians 3:14, where Paul pressed on toward the goal (*skopos*) for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. So *skopos* (4649) is a mark on which one focuses his gaze. *Episkeptomai* means, therefore, to fix one's gaze carefully on someone or something, to look carefully, to consider. Notice carefully how *episkeptomai* (1980) is used in the NT: Matt. 25:36 (... "I was sick, and you **visited** me"); Matt. 25:43 ("I was ... in prison, and you did not **visit** me."); Luke 1:68 (Zacharias prophesied that in the yet-to-be-born Jesus, God "has **visited** us and accomplished redemption for His people"); Luke 1:78 (Zacharias prophesied that through the agency of the promised Messiah and His forerunner, His own son John, there had been exhibited "the tender mercy of our God, with which the Sunrise [probably meaning Christ Himself] from on high **will visit** us"); Luke 7:16 (After Jesus had raised back to life the dead son of the widow from Nain, "Fear gripped them all, and they began glorifying God, saying, 'A great prophet has arisen among us!' and 'God **has visited** His people!'); Acts 6:3 ("Therefore **select** seven men from among you of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit ..."); Acts 7:23 (Speaking of Moses, Stephen said, "But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind **to visit** his brethren, the sons of Israel."); Acts 15:14 (At the Jerusalem Council, James stated, "Simeon has related how God first **concerned Himself about** taking from the Gentiles a people for His name."); Acts 15:36 ("After some days Paul said to Barnabas, 'Let us return and **visit** the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are.');" Heb. 2:6 ("What is ... the son of man, that you **are concerned about** him?"); and James 1:27 ("Pure and undeified religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: **to visit** orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world."). From these Scriptures we can see that a working definition of *episkeptomai* (1980) in the NT is "to inspect someone's situation carefully and to take the initiative to provide for them what they genuinely need." The present tense of the verb suggests that this visitation should be a continual process, not a one-time or occasional effort.

⁷⁴ 1:27 - visit orphans and widows in their distress: The OT had a great deal to say about the responsibility of the redeemed community (in that context, the people of Israel) to look after the needs of those who were especially vulnerable. High on that list are three in particular – the alien, the orphan, and the widow, often listed in that order. Representative Scriptures include Deuteronomy 10:18; 14:29; 24:17, 19-21; 26:13; 27:19; Jeremiah 7:6; Malachi 3:5.

Deuteronomy 10:16-18 is particularly instructive. The people of Israel were exhorted to circumcise their heart and stiffen their neck no longer, for Yahweh is a great and mighty God who "executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing." Yahweh is particularly concerned about providing **justice** for the orphan and the widow.

At the end of every third year, the sons of Israel were to bring a tithe of their produce and deposit it in their town. That was to be a stockpile for the Levite, the alien, the orphan, and the widow in their town. These

E 2 Spiritual purity: *and* to keep oneself unstained by the world.

A 3 THE SIN OF PARTIALITY 2:1-13

B 1 The Injunction Against Partiality 2:1

C 1 Those addressed: {1} My brethren,⁷⁵

C 2 The relational imperative: do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ⁷⁶

C 3 The incongruous discrimination: with an *attitude* of personal favoritism.⁷⁷

disadvantaged were to come and **eat** and be satisfied so Yahweh could bless the nation at large (Deut. 14:28-29).

There were several exhortations to the sons of Israel (Deut. 24:7) in Deuteronomy 24: They were not to “pervert the justice due an alien or an orphan, nor take a widow’s garment in pledge” (Deut. 24:17). This is because they all once were slaves in Egypt, and Yahweh had redeemed them out of that misery. Therefore they must treat the vulnerable of society with compassion (Deut. 24:18).

When they reaped their grain harvest, they were to leave the occasional sheaf standing in their field “for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow” in order that Yahweh might bless them in the work of their hands (Deut. 24:19).

When they beat their olive trees to harvest the olives, they were not to repeat the process, but leave the rest “for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow” (Deut. 24:20).

When they harvested the grapes in their vineyard, they were not to go back and gather grapes a second time, but leave the remainder “for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow” (Deut. 24:21). They were to remember that they were once a slave in Egypt.

Deuteronomy 26:12-13 is essentially a repetition of 14:28-29 – legislating a tithe every third year for the Levite, the stranger, the orphan, and the widow.

In Deuteronomy 27, the people were to pronounce curses upon one another if they violated God’s laws. Specifically, half the people were to stand on Mount Ebal and corporately recite aloud, among other curses, “Cursed is he who distorts the justice due an alien, orphan, and widow.” And all the people shall say, “Amen.” (Deut. 27:19).

This gives some idea of that which was expected of the New Testament community, the Church. There was no formal “Church Legislation” introduced anywhere, with specific procedures, such as was the case in Israel. But the responsibility was certainly there. The “distress” about which James was concerned seems to have been primarily a financial distress, but in some cases legal distress, which would, of course, have financial implications.

⁷⁵ 2:1 - My brethren: James uses this two-word phrase to address his readers at 1:2, 16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14; 3:1, 10, 12; 5:12, 19. Sometimes, but not always, it introduces a new topic. On three of the occasions listed above, James addresses his readers as “my beloved brethren” – 1:16, 19; 2:5. In addition to the instances already mentioned, James address his readers four times simply as “brethren” – 4:11; 5:7, 9, 10. It is clear that James is writing to Christians, albeit Jewish Christians (1:1).

⁷⁶ 2:1 - our glorious Lord Jesus Christ: This entire verse reads, literally, as follows: “My brothers, do not in partiality hold the faith of the Lord of us, Jesus Christ, the one of glory.” As Hiebert points out (p. 134), this is James’ personal profession of faith in his own half-brother as being the human embodiment of the glory of God. In the OT God’s glory was visible as the shekinah glory that led Israel through the wilderness, that made Moses’ face to shine, that dwelt between the cherubim on the ark of the covenant, and that filled the temple at its dedication. In the NT this glory was seen by Peter, James, and John (John 1:14; 2 Pet. 1:16-18), who beheld the glory of Jesus on the “Mount of Transfiguration” (Matt. 17:1-8) and by John, who witnessed, in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, Jesus Christ in all his glory (Rev. 1:9-20). But in the context, this characterization of Christ shames Christians who would elevate the feeble glory of a rich man and try to match it with the unique glory of Christ, before whom we *all* pale into insignificance!

⁷⁷ 2:1 - with an *attitude* of personal favoritism: This six-word phrase in English translates merely two words in Greek – a preposition (*en*, meaning “in” or “with”) and a noun (*prosōpolēmpsia*, 4382). *Prosōpolēmpsia* is used in Romans 2:11 (“For there is no **partiality** with God”); in Eph. 6:9 (“And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no **partiality** with Him.”); in Col. 3:25 (“For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without

B 2 A Hypothetical Case Illustrating Partiality 2:2-4

- C 1 The characters: A well-dressed man and a poor man in dirty clothes 2:2
- D 1 {2} For if ⁷⁸ a man comes into your assembly ⁷⁹ with a gold ring ⁸⁰ and dressed in fine ⁸¹ clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes,
- C 2 The partisan actions of the church: Giving a good place to the well-clothed and ostracizing the poor man 2:3
- D 1 {3} and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, “You sit here in a good place,” and you say to the poor man, “You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool,” ⁸²
- C 3 The judgment against the church: they have become evil judges 2:4

partiality.”); and in our present passage, James 2:1 (“My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with **an attitude of personal favoritism.**”) (emphases mine). The New Testament Greek Lexicon defines it as follows: “1. respect of persons 2. partiality a. the fault of one who when called on to give judgment has respect of the outward circumstances of man and not to their intrinsic merits, and so prefers, as the more worthy, one who is rich, high born, or powerful, to another who does not have these qualities” <http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=4382>. It is precisely this latter, lengthy definition that fits the present passage, James 2:1 and following.

It was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who said, in his “I Have a Dream” speech, “I dream of the day when a man will be known by the content of his character, not by the color of his skin.” American Liberalism has stood King’s dream on its head in the doctrine of Affirmative Action, in which certain Americans are given preferential treatment based solely on the color of their skin, and not on the content of their character.

James, and God, are similarly unimpressed with any kind of preferential treatment. But in fairness, what James rails against here is a fawning attitude toward the wealthy.

⁷⁸ 2:2 - if: *ean* (if) + the subjunctive mode of *eiserchomai* (enter) indicates a third class, or hypothetical condition – maybe these things will occur or maybe they won’t – but in the event that they do James was citing no specific infraction, but he warns them of something that could happen.

⁷⁹ 2:2 - your assembly: Literally, untranslated, “your synagogue” (*sunagōgē*, 4864). This demonstrates that these were Christian Jews (1:1-2) who deemed their place of worship as a synagogue. It was a Christian synagogue, however, for they themselves were in control of it (Hiebert, pp. 134-135). Elsewhere, James referred to the “church” (*ekklēsia*, 1577) (5:14).

⁸⁰ 2:2 - gold ring: *chrusodaktulios* (5554) is used only here in the NT. It means, literally, “gold-fingered,” and suggests a hand laden with gold rings. The wearing of many rings was a sign of wealth. Clement of Alexandria urged Christians to wear only one ring, for that was necessary for sealing. (Hiebert, p. 136, in part quoting Joh. Ed. Huther, *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the General Epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude*, p. 89).

⁸¹ 2:2 - fine: *lampros*, 2986, meaning “bright” or “shining.” The man obviously did not buy his clothes at WalMart.

⁸² 2:3 - stand over there or sit down by my footstool: Obviously the poor man, dressed in grimy clothes, perhaps his work clothes, is not afforded a place of either comfort or honor. He is relegated to standing or to sitting on the floor next to the speaker’s footstool! Both of these men are awarded places in the synagogue based solely on their exterior appearance, not on their intrinsic worth. Is it possible that we sometimes accord people who dress up for church with a higher degree of spirituality than those who do not?

D 1 {4} have you not made distinctions⁸³ among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?⁸⁴

B 3 The Incongruity of Valuing Wealthy People Over Poor 2:5-7

C 1 The worth of the poor man 2:5-6a

D 1 God's stance on the poor: {5} Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose⁸⁵ the poor of this world 2:5

E 1 Chosen to be wealthy in faith: *to be rich in faith*⁸⁶

E 2 Chosen to royalty: and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?⁸⁷

⁸³ 2:4 - made distinctions: They were discriminating against people based solely upon their external appearance!

⁸⁴ 2:4 - and become judges with evil motives: In discriminating in favor of well-dressed attenders at synagogue and against shabbily-dressed and unwashed attenders, James' readers had made themselves something that average people in a society hate – crooked judges (*kritēs*, 2923) who can be bought – not, in this case, with money, but with the appearance of money!

⁸⁵ 2:5 - did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith: “Choose” is the aorist tense, middle voice of *eklegō* (1586), meaning that at a point in time in the past God chose for Himself certain people, in this case, the poor of this world, to be rich in faith. Here is the particular definition that fits this instance, according to *The New Testament Greek Lexicon* (<http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=1586>): “1. to pick out, choose, to pick or choose out for one's self ... d. of God the Father choosing Christians, as those whom he set apart from the irreligious multitude as dear unto himself, and whom he has rendered, through faith in Christ, citizens in the Messianic kingdom: (James 2:5) 2. so that the ground of the choice lies in Christ and his merits only.”

Here are the references for *eklegō* (1586) in the NT: Mark 13:20; Luke 6:13; 9:35; 10:42; 14:7; John 6:70; 13:18; 15:16, 19; Acts 1:2, 24; 6:5; 13:17; 15:7, 22, 25; 1 Cor. 1:27, 28; Eph. 1:4; James 2:5.

The context that most nearly parallels the idea James states here is found in 1 Cor. 1:26-29, where Paul uses the word three times in rapid succession: “For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God **has chosen** the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God **has chosen** the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God **has chosen**, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God” (emphases mine).

James is not trying to say that all the poor will be saved, or that only the poor will be. Rather he is saying that those whom God has chosen are *primarily* among the poor of this world. James' point, furthermore, is that those to whom he is writing have contravened God's policy by being impressed with the wealthy instead of the poor! Their values are diametrically opposed to God's!

Incidentally, Queen Elizabeth is reported to have said, on one occasion, that she was grateful for the letter “M”. Why? Because, had it been omitted, 1 Cor. 1:26 would have read, “not any noble,” rather than “not many noble” God has chosen.

⁸⁶ 2:5 - to be rich in faith: Here is the incongruity that God delights in: He has chosen the poor of this world to be wealthy in faith! Paul expressed this truth in similar words in 1 Corinthians 1:26-29.

⁸⁷ 2:5 - and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to them that love Him: The moment one trusts in Jesus, the Messiah, he enters into His kingdom. His kingdom, in its present form, is a kingdom of light, the kingdom of God's beloved Son (Col. 1:12-13). Right now Jesus' kingdom is a spiritual, non-political, heavenly kingdom. But in a real sense Jesus is King in Absentia. He is sitting at the Father's right hand, waiting until His enemies are made a footstool for His feet (Psalm 110:1). God's purpose was never to isolate His Kingdom up in heaven and allow an imposter, Satan, to usurp His original mandate that man should rule the earth in a benevolent way. Jesus will one day return to earth to establish His kingdom, destroying and otherwise judging all His enemies in the process (Zech. 14:1-15; Rev. 19:11-21; Joel 3:1-21). He will sit on David's throne in Jerusalem and reign over all the earth for a thousand years (Psalm 2; Isa. 2:1-4; 9:6-7; 11:1-16; Zech. 14:9, 16-21; Rev. 20:1-6). After a short-lived, Satanically-

D 2 The church's stance: {6} But you have dishonored the poor man.⁸⁸
2:6a

C 2 The rich man 2:6b-7

D 1 Oppressors of the powerless poor: Is it not the rich who oppress⁸⁹
you and personally drag you into court?⁹⁰ 2:6b

D 2 Impudent towards God: {7} Do they not blaspheme the fair name⁹¹
by which you have been called?⁹² 2:7

inspired final revolt (Rev. 20:7-10), God will destroy the existing sin-contaminated universe (2 Pet. 3:7-12) and create new heavens and a new earth in which only righteousness and righteous people will exist (Isa. 65:17; 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-4). Israel's capital city, home of Israel and Christ's Bride, the Church, New Jerusalem, will descend from heaven, likely orbiting and illuminating New Earth. Gentiles who live on earth will have ready access to the enormous city, and Jesus' slaves will serve Him and reign forever (Rev. 22:1-22:5). That, in a nutshell, is the kingdom which has been promised those who love God.

⁸⁸ 2:6 - but you have dishonored the poor man: In their rush to treat with honor the wealthy person and their contempt for the poor man, who is among those who have been chosen by God to be rich in faith and inherit the kingdom, these Christians had (and we today have) dishonored the poor man.

⁸⁹ 2:6 - oppress: Used only twice in the NT, "oppress" is the present tense of *katadunastēō* (2616), suggesting that the rich habitually "wield power over" their victims. In Acts 10:38, Peter spoke to Cornelius' household about Jesus, "who went about ... healing all who were **oppressed** by the devil, for God was with Him" (emphasis mine). Wealth translates into power, and in a godless society, most wealthy people will take as much advantage of poorer people as they can get away with. Marxism successfully exploits this tendency among the godless wealthy to wage class warfare battles. (And of course, when the Marxists have gained control, they exploit the poor even more, while the Marxist leaders themselves grow wealthy.) Certainly, not all rich people wield power mercilessly over others. Paul writes Timothy to instruct the wealthy not to fix their hope on the uncertainty of their riches, but rather to hope in God. They are to do good, be rich in good works, exercise generosity, and be ready to share of their resources. In this way they can store treasure for themselves "in the bank of heaven" (1 Tim. 6:17-19, my paraphrase).

⁹⁰ 2:6 - drag you into court: Literally, "And are not they themselves (habitually) dragging you into courts?" "The rich were using the courts to exploit the poor, either through appeal to unjust legal enactments or by their power with the judges to deprive the poor of their just rights. Religiously motivated hostility probably entered into their actions. The courts could be either Roman or Jewish – here, apparently the Jewish synagogue-courts" (Hiebert, p. 143).

⁹¹ 2:7 - blaspheme the fair name: "Blaspheme" is the present tense of *blasphēmēō* (987), which means "to slander, hence to speak lightly or profanely of sacred things" (*New American Standard Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries [NASHGD]*). The present tense indicates that this was a habitual action on the part of the wealthy people about whom James was writing. "Fair" is almost a maudlin translation of the rather "vanilla" word *kalos* (2570). Used 95 times in the Greek texts behind the *NASB*, it is translated simply "good" 79 times. *ESV* translates, "honorable name;" *NIV*, *NKJV*, "noble name;" *Young's Literal Translation (YLT)*, "good name." More literally the translation would read, "Are they themselves not (habitually) blaspheming the good name, the one by which you were called?" To what name did James refer? Probably, to the name, "Jesus," which means, "Yahweh is Salvation." According to Hiebert (p. 143), James' use of the term "blaspheme" in connection with his readers' wealthy oppressors suggests strongly that the latter "were wealthy Christ-rejecting Jews. Their blasphemous utterances against Jesus Christ may be viewed as expressed in the court in order to intensify the hostility of the judge toward the Christians, but it need not to be confined to the courts. It may well be their reaction to the testimony of believers to Christ in daily life."

⁹² 2:7 - name by which you have been called: "Called" translates the aorist passive participle of *epikaleō* (1941). *epikaleō* never is used in the NT in the sense of God's effectively inviting us into His kingdom. Frequently, it is used in the sense of "named," and that is the sense here. The sense is that these wealthy Jewish people were habitually blaspheming the good name by which they (the believing Jewish-Christian converts) were named. Hiebert (p. 144) takes the position that "The expression is a Hebraism denoting that they belong to the one whose name they wear

B 4 The Scriptures and Partiality 2:8-13

C 1 Fulfilling the "Kingly Law" is good 2:8

D 1 The content of the "Kingly Law" in Scripture: {8} If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law ⁹³ according to the Scripture, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF," ⁹⁴

D 2 The commendation on fulfilling the "Kingly Law:" you are doing well.⁹⁵

C 2 Violating the "Royal Law" 2:9-11

D 1 The assessment of partiality: Guilty of sin! 2:9

E 1 {9} But if you show partiality,⁹⁶

E 2 you are committing sin

E 3 *and* are convicted by the Law as transgressors.

(Deut. 28:10; 2 Chron. 7:14; Isa. 4:1; Jer. 14:9; Amos 9:12). So Christians belong to Christ. The *New English Bible* renders it "the honoured name by which God has claimed you." *NIV* translates it, "the noble name of him to whom you belong."

⁹³ 2:8 - royal law: The word "royal" translates the adjective *basilikos* (937), used five times in the NT. It means "of, or pertaining to, a king" (*basileus* 935). It is used of a **royal** official (John 4:46, 49), of King Herod's **royal** apparel (Acts 12:21), of the **king's** country (Acts 12:20), and here, in James 2:8, of "a royal law" or "kingly law." I prefer the expression "kingly law" because it is the law of love, the law supremely exhibited by King Jesus.

⁹⁴ 2:8 - you shall love your neighbor as yourself: If James' readers were to follow the dictum from Scripture, "Each of you is to love his neighbor as himself," they would be doing well. James is quoting from Leviticus 19:18, which forbids taking revenge or even bearing a grudge, but invokes "you shall love your neighbor as yourself." "Love" (in James 2:8) is the singular, future tense of *agapaō* (25), but used as an imperative. *agapaō* is the deliberate, self-sacrificial love embodied by God in John 3:16 – He loved the world so much that He gave His Son on behalf of the world. If Christians *agapaō* their neighbor the same way they *agapaō* themselves, they are doing the right thing. The first class condition "if" at the beginning of the verse assumes that, generally, his readers are doing so.

⁹⁵ 2:8 - well: "Well" is the adverb, *kalōs* (2573), obviously related to the "good (*kalos*, 2570) name" James spoke of in 2:7.

⁹⁶ 2:9 - if you show partiality: "Show partiality" is the verb *prosōpolēmpeteō* (4380), related to the noun "personal favoritism" (*prosōpolēmpsia*, 4382) James used in 2:1. It means "to have respect of persons" (*NASHGD*). The verb occurs in the second person plural present tense, and is preceded by *ei* ("if"), a first class condition assumed to be true. "If you keep showing partiality" – and you are!

- D 2 The seriousness of partiality: Guilty of violating the whole Law! 2:10-11
 - E 1 The reasoning behind this assessment 2:10
 - G 1 {10} For whoever keeps the whole Law
 - G 2 and yet stumbles in one *point*,
 - G 3 he has become guilty of all.
 - E 2 The proof of this assessment 2:11
 - G 1 The singularity of the Law-Giver
 - H 1 {11} For He who said "DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,"
 - H 2 also said, "DO NOT COMMIT MURDER."
 - G 2 The unity of the Law
 - H 1 Major premise: Now if you do not commit adultery,
 - H 2 Minor premise: but do commit murder,
 - H 3 Conclusion: you have become a transgressor of the law.
- C 3 Anticipate judgment under the Law 2:12-13
 - D 1 The expectation of judgment: {12} So speak and so act, as those who are to be judged by *the* law of liberty 2:12
 - D 2 The reciprocity of judgment: {13} For judgment *will be* merciless to one who has shown no mercy; 2:13
 - D 3 The triumph of mercy: mercy triumphs over judgment.

A 4 FAITH AND WORKS 2:14-26

B 1 The Basic Question About the Relationship Between Faith and Works: Can a faith devoid of works be a saving faith? 2:14-17

- C 1 The question about faith without works 2:14
 - D 1 The negative cast to the question: {14} What use is it,⁹⁷ my brethren,

⁹⁷ 2:14 - What use is it: James' whole point is that a valid faith will be accompanied by works. If there are no works, the faith is invalid – it is not a saving faith.

- D 2 The conditions to the question
 - E 1 The major premise: if someone says he has faith
 - E 2 The minor premise: but he has no works?
- D 3 The essence of the question: Can **that** faith save him? ⁹⁸
- C 2 The illustration of faith without works 2:15-16
 - D 1 The hypothetical situation: {15} If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, 2:15
 - D 2 The inadequate response 2:16
 - E 1 Positive speech: {16} and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,"
 - E 2 Absence of action: and yet you do not give them what is necessary for *their* body,
 - D 3 The assessment of worthlessness: what use is that? 2:16
- C 3 The conclusion about faith without works: {17} Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, *being* by itself. 2:17
- B 2 The Discussion About the Relative Importance of Faith and Works 2:18-20**
 - C 1 The claim of equal importance: {18} But someone may *well* say, "You have faith and I have works; 2:18
 - C 2 The counter-claim that works are an indispensable evidence of faith 2:18
 - D 1 The position unsupported by evidence: "show me your faith without the works,
 - D 2 The position supported by evidence: "and I will show you my faith by my works."
 - C 3 The absurdity of faith without works 2:19
 - D 1 The assumption of faith in the unity of God: {19} You believe that God is one.
 - D 2 The tongue-in-cheek commendation: You do well;
 - D 3 The condemnation-by-association: the demons also believe, and

⁹⁸ 2:14 - that: Emphasis mine. Lit., "can **the** faith save him? NAS has caught the thrust – "Can **that** kind of faith save him? The expected answer is "NO."

shudder.⁹⁹

- C 4 The conclusion about faith without works: {20} But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless? 2:20

B 3 Examples of Faith Accompanied by Works 2:21-26

- C 1 Abraham 2:21-24

- D 1 The question about justification by works: {21} Was not Abraham our father justified by works 2:21
- D 2 The occasion: when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? 2:21
- D 3 The completing aspect of works accompanying faith: {22} You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; 2:22
- D 4 The fulfillment of Scripture: {23} and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3) 2:23
- D 5 The approbation of Scripture: and he was called the friend of God (2 Chron. 20:7; Isa. 41:8). 2:23
- D 6 The conclusion about the importance of works: {24} You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone. 2:24

- C 2 Rahab 2:25-26

- D 1 Her justification by works 2:25
- E 1 The rhetorical question: {25} In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works
- E 2 The works in question: when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?
- D 2 The concluding analogy 2:26
- E 1 The physical truth: {26} For just as the body without *the* spirit is dead,

⁹⁹ 2:19 - demons also believe, and shudder: The implication is that merely believing in the unity of God is insufficient unless there are good works that ensue. That kind or degree of faith is insufficient resulting in no works.

In this writer's estimation, there are here two different kinds of faith. What is being proposed here is a belief in facts about God, not a belief in God. If one trusts in God, rather than merely trusting in facts about God, he will not shudder, as do the demons, but will obey the God in whom he trusts.

E 2 The theological truth: so also faith without works is dead.¹⁰⁰

A 5 THE TONGUE 3:1-12

B 1 The Caution Against Teaching 3:1-2

C 1 The warning: {1} Let not many *of you* become teachers, my brethren, 3:1

C 2 The reason for the warning: knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment. 3:1

C 3 The potential for judgment: {2} For we all stumble in many *ways*. 3:2

C 4 The benchmark for perfection 3:2

D 1 The hypothesis – inoffensive speech: If anyone does not stumble in what he says,

D 2 The indication: he is a perfect man,

D 3 The generalization: able to bridle the whole body as well.

B 2 The Principle Operative with the Tongue: Small entities unduly influence large outcomes. 3:3-5

C 1 The example of bits and horses 3:3

D 1 The small entity – a bit: {3} Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us,

D 2 The large outcome: we direct their entire body as well.

C 2 The example of rudders and ships 3:4

D 1 The large outcome – the destination of a huge ship: {4} Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds,

D 2 The small entity – the rudder: are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires.

C 3 The parallel with regard to the tongue 3:5

D 1 The small entity – the tongue: {5} So also the tongue is a small part of the body,

D 2 The large outcome: and *yet* it boasts of great things.

C 4 The example of fire and forest 3:5

¹⁰⁰ 2:26 - faith without works is dead: James' point is that so-called faith without works is a dead faith, and therefore not a saving faith.

D 1 The large outcome – a forest fire: See how great a forest is set aflame

D 2 The small entity – a small fire: by such a small fire!

B 3 The Evil (or Dangers) of the Tongue 3:6-12

C 1 The description of the tongue's evil 3:6-8

D 1 Its volatility: {6} And the tongue is a fire, 3:6

D 2 Its unrighteousness: the *very* world of iniquity;

D 3 Its ability to contaminate: the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body,

D 4 Its ability to destroy: and sets on fire the course of *our* life,

D 5 Its source: and is set on fire by hell.

D 6 Its untamability 3:7-8

E 1 The pliability of animals: {7} For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. 3:7

E 2 The incorrigibility of the tongue: {8} But no one can tame the tongue; 3:8

D 7 Its evil: it is a restless evil

D 8 Its venom: *and* full of deadly poison.

C 2 The examples of the tongue's evil 3:9-12

D 1 Its hypocrisy toward God and man: {9} With it we bless *our* Lord and Father; and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; 3:9

D 2 Its inconsistency:

E 1 The statement of its inconsistency: {10} from the same mouth come *both* blessing and cursing. 3:10

E 2 The rebuke of its inconsistency: My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. 3:10

E 3 The absurdity of its inconsistency 3:11-12

G 1 The example of a fountain: {11} Does a fountain send out from the same opening *both* fresh and bitter *water*? 3:11

G 2 The example of horticulture 3:12

H 1 {12} Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives,

H 2 or a vine produce figs?

G 3 The example of water: Nor *can* salt water produce fresh. 3:12

A 6 WISDOM 3:13-18

B 1 The Proof of Wisdom 3:13

C 1 The claim to be wise: {13} Who among you is wise and understanding?

C 2 The display of wisdom

D 1 Good behavior: Let him show by his good behavior his deeds

D 2 Gentleness: in the gentleness of wisdom.

B 2 Earthly Wisdom 3:14-16

C 1 The indicators of earthly wisdom 3:14

D 1 Jealousy and ambition: {14} But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart,

D 2 Arrogance and deceit: do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth.

C 2 The source of earthly wisdom 3:15

D 1 Not from above: {15} This wisdom is not that which comes down from above,

D 2 But from this present realm: but is earthly, natural, demonic.

C 3 The fruit of earthly wisdom 3:16

D 1 The presence of jealousy and ambition: {16} For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist,

D 2 The concomitant of chaos and evil: there is disorder and every evil thing.

B 3 Heavenly Wisdom 3:17-18

C 1 The character of heavenly wisdom: {17} But the wisdom from above is 3:17

D 1 first pure

D 2 then peaceable,

D 3 gentle,

D 4 reasonable,

D 5 full of mercy

D 6 and good fruits,

D 7 unwavering,

D 8 without hypocrisy.

C 2 The activity of those possessing heavenly wisdom 3:18

D 1 The production of righteousness: {18} And the seed whose fruit is righteousness

D 2 The production of peace: is sown in peace by those who make peace.

A 7 SPIRITUAL CONFLICT 4:1-17

B 1 Interpersonal Conflict 4:1-2a

C 1 The Source of Interpersonal Conflict: Hedonism 4:1

D 1 The question about the source: {1} What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you?

D 2 The identification of the source: Is not the source your pleasures¹⁰¹ that wage war in your members?

¹⁰¹ 4:1 - pleasures: The word is *hedone* (2237), "pleasure", and the word from which we get our English word hedonism.

C 2 The Description of Interpersonal Conflict 4:2a

D 1 The progression of lust

E 1 The strong desire: {2} You lust ¹⁰²

E 2 The disappointment: and do not have;

E 3 The vindictive reaction: so you commit murder.

D 2 The progression of envy

E 1 The jealousy: You are envious

E 2 The disappointment: and cannot obtain;

E 3 The vindictive reaction: so you fight and quarrel. ¹⁰³

B 2 The Conflict Between Believers and God (Disloyalty) 4:2b-5

C 1 As illustrated by ineffective prayer 4:2b-3

D 1 The neglect of prayer 4:2b

E 1 The impoverishment: You do not have

E 2 The failure to petition: because you do not ask.

D 2 The misguided use of prayer: faulty motives 4:3

E 1 The request: {3} You ask

E 2 The impoverishment: and do not receive,

E 3 The impure motives: because you ask with wrong motives,

E 4 The real agenda: so that you may spend it on your pleasures.

¹⁰² 4:2 - lust: The word is *epithumeo* (1937), meaning "strong desire."

¹⁰³ 4:2 - fight and quarrel: For an illustration, see "Face to Face With the [Tasmanian] Devil" by Paul Raffaele, p. 130, *Reader's Digest*, Feb., 1996.

"Meet one of the smelliest, greediest, worst-tempered animals on earth." "...the Tasmanian devil has one of the most unsavory reputations in the animal kingdom. A champion eater, the devil punctuates bloody squabbles over its daily feed of carrion and prey with the piercing screams and howls that gave it its satanic name. Given half a chance, the creature will even eat others of its kind and its own young." (p. 131)

C 2 As caused by spiritual adultery 4:4-5

D 1 The disloyalty of a Christian's being friendly with the world 4:4

E 1 The shocking label: {4} You adulteresses,

E 2 The anti-God character of worldliness: do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God?

E 3 The inimical stance of worldliness

G 1 The desire for worldly friendship: Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world

G 2 The opposition toward God: makes himself an enemy of God.

D 2 The fierce jealousy of God 4:5

E 1 The truthfulness of Scripture: {5} Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose:

E 2 The jealous longing of God's Spirit (for believers' unwavering loyalty): "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"? ¹⁰⁴**B 3 Overcoming Conflict (Humility) 4:6-17**

C 1 Submission to God 4:6-10

D 1 The proactive working of God to counter disloyalty 4:6

E 1 His giving a greater grace (than the pull of strong desires and the world) (to those who will submit to Him): {6} But He gives a greater grace.

E 2 His documented opposition to the proud and graciousness to the humble: Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." (cf. Ps. 138:6;

¹⁰⁴ 4:5 - He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us: James 4:5 can grammatically be translated several different ways (see *James*, D. Edmond Hiebert. The literal rendering: "Or think ye that vainly the Scripture says: "To envy yearns the (S)pirit which dwelt in you?" (*Greek-English New Testament*, Samuel Bagster and Sons, London, 1958). NIV translates, "Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us tends toward envy, 6 but he gives us more grace?", etc. In its marginal readings, NIV has the alternates, Or "that God jealously longs for the spirit that he made to live in us"; or, "that the Spirit he caused to live in us longs jealously." In a context which emphasizes Christians as being adulterous toward God in their friendship with the world, it follows most naturally that God's Spirit would envy or be jealous of these disloyal believers and want them to return, wholly loyal to Himself!

Prov. 3:34)¹⁰⁵

- D 2 The responsibility of the believer 4:7-10
 - E 1 Submission to God: {7} Submit therefore to God. 4:7
 - E 2 Resisting the devil 4:7
 - G 1 The command: Resist the devil
 - G 2 The result: and he will flee from you.
 - E 3 Drawing near to God 4:8
 - G 1 The command: {8} Draw near to God
 - G 2 The promise: and He will draw near to you.
 - E 4 Personal purification 4:8
 - G 1 From acts of sin: Cleanse your hands, you sinners;
 - G 2 From attitudes of sin: and purify your hearts, you double-minded.
 - E 5 Personal remorse 4:9
 - G 1 Exhibit sorrow: {9} Be miserable and mourn and weep;
 - G 2 Displace gaiety
 - H 1 Let your laughter be turned into mourning
 - H 2 and your joy to gloom.
 - E 6 Personal abasement 4:10
 - G 1 The command: {10} Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord,
 - G 2 The promise: and He will exalt you.
- C 2 Refraining from judging 4:11-12
 - D 1 The command to abstain from judging: {11} Do not speak against one another, brethren. 4:11

¹⁰⁵ 4:6 - God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble: Psalm 138:6 Though the LORD [be] high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off. Proverbs 3:34 Surely he scorns the scorers: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.

- D 2 The analysis of judging 4:11
 - E 1 The act of judging: He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother,
 - E 2 The assessment of judging: speaks against the law and judges the law;
 - E 3 The consequence of judging: but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge *of it*.
- D 3 The prerogative of judging 4:12
 - E 1 The rightful Judge
 - G 1 The exclusive right: {12} There is *only* one Lawgiver and Judge,
 - G 2 The powerful right: the One who is able to save and to destroy;
 - E 2 The usurping judge: but who are you who judge your neighbor?
- C 3 Refraining from boasting 4:13-17
 - D 1 The reprimand for boasting: {13} Come now, you who say, 4:13
 - E 1 The assertion of control over (immediate) time : "Today or tomorrow
 - E 2 The assertion of control over matter: "we will go to such and such a city,
 - E 3 The assertion of control over (intermediate) time : "and spend a year there
 - E 4 The assertion of control over energy (activity): "and engage in business
 - E 5 The assertion of control over productivity: "and make a profit."
 - D 2 The presumptuousness of boasting 4:14
 - E 1 Human ignorance of the future: {14} Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow.
 - E 2 The fleeting nature of human existence
 - G 1 Human insignificance: You are *just* a vapor
 - G 2 Human transience: that appears for a little while

G 3 Human mortality: and then vanishes away.

D 3 The alternative to boasting – deference to Divine Sovereignty: {15}
Instead, *you ought* to say, 4:15

E 1 Human planning dependent upon Divine resolve: "If the Lord wills,

E 2 Human existence dependent upon Divine will: "we will live

E 3 Human activity dependent upon Divine will: "and also do this or that."

D 4 Their culpability in boasting 4:16

E 1 The indictment of their speech: {16} But as it is, you boast

E 2 The indictment of their attitude: in your arrogance;

E 3 Their guilt: all such boasting is evil.

D 5 The incentive for refraining from boasting 4:17

E 1 The informed conscience: {17} Therefore, to one who knows *the* right thing to do

E 2 The violated conscience: and does not do it,

E 3 The conviction of sin: to him it is sin.

A 8 WOE TO THE WEALTHY! 5:1-11

B 1 The Calling of the Rich to Mourn 5:1

C 1 The mourning of the rich: {1} Come now, you rich, weep and howl

C 2 The misery of the rich: for your miseries which are coming upon you.

B 2 The Catastrophes of the Rich 5:2-3

C 1 In the present 5:2-3a

D 1 The decay of their foodstuffs: {2} Your riches have rotted 5:2

D 2 The decay of their clothing: and your garments have become moth-eaten.

D 3 The decay of their precious metals: Your gold and your silver have

rusted; ¹⁰⁶ 5:3a

C 2 In the future 5:3b

D 1 The testimony of materialism: and their rust will be a witness against you ¹⁰⁷

D 2 The damnation of materialism: and will consume your flesh like fire.

D 3 The time-frame of materialism: It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!

B 3 The Evils of the Rich ¹⁰⁸ 5:4-6

C 1 Withholding pay 5:4

D 1 The labor performed: {4} Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields,

D 2 The pay withheld: *and* which has been withheld by you,

D 3 The damning testimony: cries out *against you*;

D 4 The fearsome judge: and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

C 2 Luxurious living 5:5

D 1 Their life of luxury: {5} You have lived luxuriously on the earth

D 2 Their life of pleasure: and led a life of wanton pleasure;

D 3 Their coming judgment: you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.

C 3 Subverting the judicial process 5:6

D 1 Their subversion of the legal system to eliminate innocent victims: {6} You have condemned and put to death the righteous *man*;

¹⁰⁶ 5:3 - rusted: Better, corroded. Gold and silver do not rust, but silver tarnishes and gold darkens. (See John Peter Lange and J. J. Van Oosterzee, "The Epistle General of James," in *Lange's Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, 23:138.

¹⁰⁷ 5:3 - witness against you: The essence of these statements is that the corrosion of their wealth will, in the day of judgment, serve as a poisonous testimony to their misplaced emphases in life.

¹⁰⁸ 5:4-6 Title - The Evils of the Rich: This explanation in 5:4-6 indicates that wealth in and of itself is not that which is evil. It is rather, as Paul says (1 Timothy 6:10), the love of wealth that motivates one to engage in criminal activity to secure it that is evil.

D 2 The helplessness of their victims: he does not resist you.

B 4 Patience (under the Harassment of the Wealthy) until Christ's Return 5:7-11

C 1 The Exhortation to Exercise Patience 5:7

D 1 The command: {7} Therefore be patient,

D 2 The subjects: brethren,

D 3 The goal: until the coming ¹⁰⁹ of the Lord.

C 2 The Illustration of Patience: The Farmer 5:7

D 1 His waiting: The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil,

D 2 His patience: being patient about it,

D 3 His reward: until it gets the early and late rains.

C 3 The Application of Patience to the Christian 5:8

D 1 The exhortation to patience: {8} You too be patient;

D 2 The exhortation to inner strength: strengthen your hearts,

D 3 The motivation – the imminent return of Christ: for the coming of the Lord is near.

C 4 The Verbalization of Patience 5:9

D 1 The prohibition of mutual criticism: {9} Do not complain, brethren, against one another,

D 2 The reasons for the prohibition

E 1 To incurring of judgment of oneself: so that you yourselves may not be judged;

E 2 The proximity of the judge! behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.

¹⁰⁹ 5:7 - coming of the Lord: The oppressed Christians are therefore, in view of their systematic harassment from the rich, urged to be patient until Christ comes, designated as the Judge (5:9) not only of the evil wealthy (implied), but also of themselves!

C 5 The Examples of Patience 5:10-11

D 1 The prophets 5:10-11a

E 1 The example: {10} As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 5:10

E 2 The commendation: {11} We count those blessed who endured. 5:11a

D 2 Job 5:11b

E 1 The patience of Job: You have heard of the endurance of Job

E 2 The compassion of God

G 1 and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings,

G 2 that the Lord is full of compassion and *is* merciful.

A 9 INTEGRITY 5:12

B 1 **The prohibition of oath-taking:** {12} But above all, my brethren, do no swear,

B 2 **The examples of oaths:** either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath;

B 3 **The proper alternative – perpetual truthfulness:** but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no,

B 4 **The benefit of perpetual truthfulness:** so that you may not fall under judgment.

A 10 APPROPRIATE RESPONSES TO CIRCUMSTANCES 5:13-18

B 1 To That of Hardship – Prayer 5:13

C 1 The scenario: {13} Is anyone among you suffering? ¹¹⁰

C 2 The antidote: *Then* he must pray.

B 2 To That of Optimism – Praise 5:13

C 1 The scenario: Is anyone cheerful?

C 2 The joyful response: He is to sing praises.

¹¹⁰ 5:13 - suffering: Notice that in verse 13, the person in question is said to be **afflicted** (2553, *kakopatheo*), and has evidently undergone a harrowing experience. In the only other three occurrences of this word (2 Timothy 2:3, 9; 4:5), the harrowing experiences had to do with difficult ministry experiences. Here the context does not indicate the nature of the difficult experience the subject is undergoing. The emphasis is on emotional, not physical stress. In today's vernacular we would ask, "Is anyone among you going through a hard time?"

B 3 To That of Stress, Burnout and / or Depression – the Prayerful Ministry of the Elders 5:14-15

- C 1 The scenario: {14} Is anyone among you sick? ¹¹¹ 5:14
- C 2 The antidote: *Then* he must call for the elders of the church 5:14
 - D 1 and they are to pray over him,
 - D 2 anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;
- C 3 The effectiveness 5:15
 - D 1 The assumption – believing prayer: {15} and the prayer offered in faith
 - D 2 The result
 - E 1 Restoration: will restore the one who is sick,
 - E 2 The source of restoration: and the Lord will raise him up,
 - E 3 The concomitant – forgiveness: and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.

B 4 To That of Sinfulness – Mutual Confession, Prayer, and Rescue 5:16-20

- C 1 **Confession** – The exhortation to confess: {16} Therefore, confess your sins to one another, 5:16
- C 2 **Prayer** 5:16-18
 - D 1 The exhortation to pray: and pray for one another
 - D 2 The result of prayer: so that you may be healed.

¹¹¹ 5:14 - sick: While one cannot rule out entirely the possibility that James has in mind physical sickness, the whole context surrounding James 5:14 seems to favor mental / emotional / spiritual weakness, that which we might term depression. The sins to be forgiven would, in this latter scenario, be those of self-pity, or of doubting of God's faithfulness. See also "James", J. Ronald Blue, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, II, 834,835. For a more detailed explanation, see the Appendix at the end of the analysis of James.

- D 3 The incentive for prayer 5:16-18
 - E 1 The conditions for success: The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. 5:16
 - E 2 The example of success: Elijah 5:17-18
 - G 1 The humanity of Elijah: {17} Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, 5:17
 - G 2 The fervency of Elijah: and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain;
 - G 3 The success of Elijah 5:17-18
 - H 1 The withholding of rain: and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. 5:17
 - H 2 The granting of rain: {18} Then he prayed again, 5:18
 - J 1 and the sky poured rain
 - J 2 and the earth produced its fruit.
- C 3 **Rescue:** Retrieving straying sinners 5:19-20
 - D 1 The condition – departure: {19} My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth 5:19
 - D 2 The engagement: and one turns him back,
 - D 3 The benefits: {20} let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way 5:20
 - E 1 Salvation of the physical body: will save his soul from death
 - E 2 Salvation of the corporate testimony: and will cover a multitude of sins.

APPENDIX TO JAMES 5:14, "SICK"
(*astheneo*, 770)
Compiled by James T. Bartsch

Lexical Information, Based on KJV

0770 *astheneo* {as-then-eh'-o}

from 772; TDNT - 1:490,83; vb

AV - be weak (12)

- be sick (10)

- sick (7)

- weak (3)

- impotent man (1)

- be diseased (1)

- be made weak (1) [36]

1) to be weak, feeble, to be without strength, powerless

A. To be Medically Ill or Physically Disabled

1. Matthew 10:8 Heal the **sick**, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.
2. Mark 6:56 And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the **sick** in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.
3. Luke 4:40 Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any **sick** with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.
4. Luke 7:10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been **sick**.
5. Luke 9:2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.
6. John 4:46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was **sick** at Capernaum.
7. John 5:3 In these lay a great multitude of **impotent** folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.
8. John 5:7 The **impotent** ¹¹² man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steps down before me.
9. John 6:2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were **diseased**.

¹¹² This man was possessed of some ailment that left him physically disabled and virtually immobile.

10. John 11:1-3, 6 1. Now a certain [man] was **sick**, [named] Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 (It was [that] Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was **sick**.) 3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is **sick**. 6 When he had heard therefore that he was **sick**, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.
11. Acts 9:37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was **sick**, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid [her] in an upper chamber.
12. Acts 19:12 So that from his body were brought unto the **sick** handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.
13. Philippians 2:26-27 26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been **sick**. 27 For indeed he was **sick** nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.
14. 2 Timothy 4:20 Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletus **sick**.
15. Matthew 25:36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was **sick**,¹¹³ and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

B. Suffering a Physical Handicap or Advanced Age, Making Robust Physical Exertion Difficult or Impossible.

1. Acts 20:35 I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the **weak**, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

C. A Non-Physical, Often Spiritual Disability or Weakness (as in weak faith or weak (i.e. overactive or legalistic) conscience, or spiritually weak because of one's sinful flesh, or weak as a Christian -- spiritually immature, and easily offended or deterred from following Christ)

1. Romans 4:19 And being not **weak** in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:
2. Romans 8:3 For what the law could not do, in that it was **weak** through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:
3. Romans 14:1-2 1. Him that is **weak** in the faith receive ye, [but] not to doubtful disputations. 2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is **weak**, eats herbs.
4. Romans 14:21 1 [It is] good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor [any thing]

¹¹³ This would seem to be a physical weakness, inasmuch as being in prison is a physical confinement and being without clothes is a physical deprivation.

whereby thy brother stumbles, or is offended, or is made **weak**.

5. 1 Corinthians 8:9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are **weak**.
6. 1 Corinthians 8:11-12 11 And through thy knowledge shall the **weak** brother perish, for whom Christ died? 12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their **weak** conscience, ye sin against Christ.
7. 2 Corinthians 11:21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been **weak**. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.
8. 2 Corinthians 11:29 Who is **weak**, and I am not **weak**? ¹¹⁴ who is offended, and I burn not?

D. Perceived Impotence or Seeming Ineffectiveness in Ministry

1. 2 Corinthians 13:3-4 3 Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not **weak**, but is mighty in you. 4 For though he was crucified through **weakness**, yet he lives by the power of God. For we also are **weak** in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.
2. 2 Corinthians 13:9 For we are glad, when we are **weak**, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, [even] your perfection.

E. Mental or Emotional Weakness Brought About By Difficult Living Circumstances and Persecution

1. 2 Corinthians 12:10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am **weak**, then am I strong.
2. James 5:13-16 13 Is any among you afflicted [JTB = "stressed out"] (2553, *kakopatheo*, ¹¹⁵ to endure an evil experience)? let him pray. Is any merry (2114,

¹¹⁴ Possibly simply indicates he tries to identify with easily offended Christians and gird them up in their spiritual weakness.

¹¹⁵ 2553 *kakopatheo*, from the same as 2552; TDNT - omitted, 798; vb

AV - endure hardness (1)
 - suffer trouble (1)
 - endure affliction (1)
 - be afflicted (1) [4]

1) to suffer (endure) evils (hardships, troubles); to be afflicted

2 Timothy 2:3 Thou therefore **endure hardness**, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 2:9 Wherein I **suffer trouble**, as an evil doer, [even] unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

2 Timothy 4:5 But watch thou in all things, **endure afflictions**, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

euthumeo, to be cheerful, optimistic, in a good mood)? let him sing psalms. 14 Is any **sick**¹¹⁶ [JTB = depressed?] (770, *astheneo*, to be weak, lit., not strong)

among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: 15 And the prayer of faith shall save the **sick** [JTB = exhausted one] (2577, *kamno*,¹¹⁷ to be weary, faint, or exhausted) and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he

James 5:13 Is any among you **afflicted**? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

¹¹⁶ Although at first glance, the reading seems to suggest physical sickness, a closer examination of the all-important context reveals another possibility. (1) Notice that in verse 13, the person in question is said to be **afflicted** (2553, *kakopatheo*), and has evidently undergone a harrowing experience. In the only other three occurrences of this word (2 Timothy 2:3, 9; 4:5), the harrowing experiences had to do with difficult ministry experiences. Here the context does not indicate the nature of the difficult experience the subject is undergoing. The emphasis is on emotional, not physical stress. (2) The next question calls for someone who is **merry** (2114, *euthumeo*), in an optimistic, cheerful frame of mind, to vent his feelings in a spiritual way through singing psalms. Again, the emphasis is on emotion, not a physical condition. (3) The next question is the significant term under consideration, **sick** (770, *astheneo*), lit., weak, the remedy for which the person is instructed to call for the elders of the church to pray and to anoint him with oil, to which we shall refer momentarily. (4) About this same person, situation #3, it is affirmed that the prayer of faith shall save (4982, *sozo*, the generic word for rescuing from an adverse condition, determined by the context) the **sick** ((2577, *kamno*), that is, one who is wearied or about to faint because of his external difficulties. (Observe that the only other two uses of *kamno*, Hebrews 12:3 and Revelation 2:3, both specify weariness brought about by opposition in ministry and/or difficult labor in ministry.) Again, emotional, rather than physical weariness, is emphasized. Again, in James 5:16, the believers are urged to confess their faults to one another, praying for one another that they might be healed (2390, *iaomai*). Here the difficulty seems to be a spiritual ailment, rather than a physical ailment.

In short, in light of the context, this person in James 5:14 who is sick and needs to call for the elders of the church seems to be suffering from mental / emotional / spiritual stress, perhaps from opposition to his Christian lifestyle or ministry. The prayer of faith will rescue him and the Lord will raise him up and his sins will be forgiven, if he has committed them.

In short, the whole scenario certainly lends itself to reflect a spiritual / emotional trial rather than a burden of physical illness. The sickness in situation three may, then, well connote a mental / spiritual / emotional burn-out. The oil which the elders are to bring is to be used in anointing (218 *aleipho*) the suffering one. This anointing is used in one other passage in a context of anointing physically ill people (Mark 6:13), but more often refers to cosmetic anointing, for example, the kind that a good host would provide for his dinner guests (see Luke 7:46). If this be the case, the elders are asked to pray for the person who is mentally and emotionally depressed and provide him with the proper accoutrements of being socially presentable and in a good frame of mind.

While one cannot rule out entirely the possibility that James has in mind physical sickness, the whole context surrounding James 5:14 seems to favor mental / emotional / spiritual weakness, that which we might term depression. The sins to be forgiven would, in this latter scenario, be those of self-pity, or of doubting of God's faithfulness. See also "James", J. Ronald Blue, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, II, 834,835.

¹¹⁷ 2577 *kamno*, apparently a primary verb; TDNT - omitted, omitted; vb

AV - be wearied (1)
 - sick (1)
 - faint (1) [3]
 1) to grow weary, be weary
 2) to be sick

Hebrews 12:3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye **be wearied** and faint in your minds.

James 5:15 And the prayer of faith shall save the **sick**, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

Revelation 2:3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and **hast not fainted**.

have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. 16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed [JTB = spiritually] (2390, *iaomai*).¹¹⁸ The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

EXPANDED ANALYSIS OF JAMES

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¹¹⁸ Of the 28 verses using 2390, *iaomai*, to heal, 16 of them unquestionably refer to physical healing; five unquestionably to spiritual healing; four unquestionably to relief from demonic oppression; one probably to both physical healing and relief from demonic oppression; and one to emotional healing. While James 5:16, the verse in question, could conceivably refer to physical healing, the spiritual and emotional context of the verse lends itself better to a spiritual healing.