

**The Book of James Commentary
by Bill Burks
for General Epistles
Instructor John Owen
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James

- I. Introduction
 - A. Author: James the half-brother of Jesus.
 - B. Date: This epistle was one of the earliest. Written around 50 A.D.
 - C. Theme: Faith and Works
- II. Greeting 1:1
- III. The pattern of True Religion 1:2-1:27
 - A. Reasons for trials. 1:2-18
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The epistle of James was most likely written by James the half-brother of Jesus. The only reference to the authorship internal to the epistle is found in verse 1 of chapter one. In this verse the author describes himself as “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.” Although no conclusive evidence can be found that James the half-brother of Christ wrote this epistle, there is several parallels between the language of the letter that was written in Acts 15 to gentiles and the words of this epistle. In Acts 15 James the brother of Christ seemed to act in a leadership role in this matter. (Wilkinson & Boa p.463)

It is thought that James the brother of John died too early to be the author of this book. He died in 44 A.D. The epistle seems to have been written very early in the church era. The epistle is of a Jewish nature. It is written to “the twelve tribes” (1:1). This Jewish flavor of the book indicates a very early date of writing. This early date of writing, and the style of writing point to James the half-brother of Christ.

James along with all the siblings of Christ rejected his claims of Messiahship during his earthly ministry. In John 7:5 John says “...neither did his brethren believe on him.” James however saw Christ after his resurrection I Corinthians 15:7. It is believed that at this time he became a Christian. He and his brother Jude are seen in Acts 1:14 as being among those in Jerusalem waiting and praying before the Day of Pentecost.

James was a leader in the Jerusalem church. He played an important role in the first association of the church in Acts 15. Peter is directed to visit him after his release from imprisonment, Paul goes to visit James after one of his

missionary journeys in Acts 21:18. The nature of his ministry was to Jews. He is seen in verse 21 of Acts 21 as telling Paul “ seest brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are zealous of the law.” According to early Christian writers he lived a very aesthetic life style, and was known as a man of prayer. He is called by one of these writers “James the Just”.

James was martyred in 62 A.D. according to Josephus. The details of his death are sketchy. He was a martyr for Jesus. This man who loved Jesus and the law, was accused of being a “law breaker.” He most likely died of stoning. One early writer says that he was thrown from the pinnacle of the temple, and clubbed to death by the scribes and Pharisees. This account is according to Baxter “far-fetched and improbable.” (Baxter p. 258)

Since James is the writer it is clear that the work must have been written before 62 A.D. for this is the year in which he died. (Burdick p. 162) Burdick in the Expositors Bible Commentary gives five arguments for a date of authorship for this epistle between 45-50 A.D. They are:

1. The Jewish nature of the epistle, indicates a very early date. There is no reference to Gentiles.
2. No controversy is indicated over Judaizing.
3. James use of the Old Testament and Christ is significant. He illustrates these and gives no indication of Paul, who had as of this early date yet to make his impact on the Christian Church.

4. Simple evidence which Burdick sees as leaders being simply referred to as “elders” and “teachers”.

5. Finally the use of the term synagogue for the place where Christians met indicates an early origin. (Burdick p. 162)

The date of the writing of this epistle was around 47 A.D.

The epistle is addressed to the “twelve tribes scattered abroad” (James 1:1). This epistle seems to have been a circular type letter, not written to a specific church, but to all the brethren. This statement also reflects the intense persecution which took place in Jerusalem around this time. Many of the brethren fled Jerusalem to escape the persecution at home (Acts 8:4). This persecution must have continued beyond the persecution of Paul mentioned in Acts 8. The brethren in Jerusalem are viewed as destitute and in need in some of the writings of Paul (see I Corinthians 16:1-4).

Because of the early date of this epistle it is addressed to the “twelve tribes”, but its words and teachings are ubiquitous in nature. Gentiles and Jews can apply the practical teachings of this book.

James is writing to the brethren, concerning the application of faith. He gives practical tips for carrying out their faith. The theme of the book is Faith and Works. The thesis of James is that Faith without the evidence of Work is useless and dead. Therefore it is not Faith at all. James focus is those who already believe. Those who believe must act on faith. The key verses in the book seem to be in James 2:14-17 where James makes his argument for Faith that Works.

Chapter 1 verse 1

δουλος : enslaved, enthralled, subservient .. a male slave, or servant of various degrees ... a servitor, person of mean condition.

διασπορα : to scatter abroad or in every direction as seed; to disperse ... a scattering, as of seed; dispersion ... the dispersed portion of the Jews, specially termed the dispersion.

χαρειν : to rejoice, be glad, be joyful, be full of joy.

*Note: All Greek word studies are from The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised.

James who was a leader in the Jerusalem church, who played a critical role in the first church council, describes himself as a slave of God and Christ. This man was very humble, he is called by some “James the Just”. Some comment that he was a man of prayer. His knees had thick calluses on them according to tradition. This man indeed saw himself a subservient to Christ, and to the Father.

He writes this epistle to the twelve tribes. His ministry was to Israel. At the time of this epistle the Gentile church had yet to get its feet on the ground. James writes this circular letter to the twelve tribes.

The church has been under sever persecution, see Acts 8, and much of the church has been scattered, to all parts of the Roman Empire. James addresses this letter to those scattered brethren. James notes this scattering using the Greek word *diaspora*. Just as seed was broadcast from the hand of the farmer, so had these brethren been scattered from Jerusalem.

Even though these brethren, and the brethren that remained in Jerusalem were under sever persecution James sends, the a joyous, joyful greeting. Perhaps James is taking his own advice given in the next verse.

Chapter 1 verse 2

ηγησασθε : to lead the way; to take the lead, ... to be chief, to preside, govern rule ... with perfect ... to think, consider esteem, regard ...

πειρασμοις : a trial, attempt, endeavor; ... to attempt, ... to experience ... to make proof or trial of, put to the proof, whether with good or mischievous intent .. to attempt ... to try, subject to trial.

περιπεσητε : to fall around or upon, to fall in with, ... to fall into, light upon, ... to be involved in....

James tells them to consider, esteem and regard a trial as joy. The trial is to be seen as a method of proving one's character. To put the character of the individual to test was to check its quality to see what he/she was made of. James tells them that when one falls into or becomes involved in this trial to think about it in a joyful way.

Chapter 1 verse 3

δοκιμιον : proved tried; approved after examination and trial, acceptable.

κατεργαζεται : to work out; to effect, produce, bring out as a result ... to work, practice, realize in practice, ... to work or mold into fitness ... to dispatch, subdue....

υπομονην : to remain or stay behind, when others have departed, ... to bear up under, endure, suffer patiently ... to continue firm, hold out, remain constant, persevere .. patient endurance, patient awaiting, ... a patient frame of mind, patience, ... perseverance, endurance...

James wanted them to know that this examination of their faith and being approved would produce fruit results in the one under the trial. These trials mold character, by allowing one to put into practice patience, endurance, and steadfastness of character.

Chapter 1 verse 4

τελειον : an end attained, consummation; an end, closing act, ... full performance, perfect discharge, ... fulfillment, realization ... final dealing, developed issue .. final stage ...

ολοκληροι whole, having all its parts, sound, perfect, complete in every part; ... the whole, ...perfect, faultless, blameless ...

μηδενι : not one, none, no one ...

λειπομενοι : to leave, forsake; ... to be left, deserted; to be destitute of, deficient into fail, be wanting, be deficient...

Endurance through a trial brings in to full realization the perfect work.

This endurance brings about sound, perfect, and blameless character in the individual under pressure. He noted that the one who persevered not be deserted and destitute. God would provide. What a comfort these thoughts must have been to those souls chased from their homes, and families by persecution.

Chapter 1 verse 5

σοφιας : wisdom in general, knowledge ... ability, ... practical wisdom, prudence; learning, science, scientific skill; professed wisdom, human philosophy; superior knowledge and enlightenment, .. divine wisdom; .. revealed wisdom; Christian enlightenment ...

διδοντος : to give, bestow, present,.. to give, cast, throw, ...; to supply, suggest, ... to distribute alms, to pay tribute; to be the author or source of

a thing; to grant permit, allow, .. to deliver to, entrust, commit to the charge of any one; to give or deliver up; to reveal, teach, to appoint, constitute, consecrate, devote, offer in sacrifice ...

απλως : simplicity, sincerity, really, or, liberally, bountifully.

James tells those who are dispersed if they had a lack of wisdom, ability, or knowledge, that they should request it of God. These people far from their homes, shared the gospel wherever they went according to the scripture. These people needed God's special guidance, for in many cases they were sent into areas where churches had yet to form. They loved God, and Christ, and yet were in need of wisdom, guidance and knowledge. James tells them to ask for it.

He promises that if they will ask God would supply, bestow and give the needed wisdom. He promised that God would deal with such requests bountifully. He would supply it without reproach. He will not scold them for asking for this good thing.

Chapter 1 verse 6

διακρινομενος : to separate, to sever; to make a distinction or difference; to confer a superiority; to examine, scrutinize, estimate; to discern, discriminate; to judge, to decide a cause; ...(middle voice) ... for ones self - judging ...to hesitate or be in doubt

κλυδωνι : to dash, surge, like the waves; a wave, billow, surge.

ανεμιζομενω : the wind; metaphorically a wind of shifting doctrine.

ριπιζομενω : to hurl, throw, cast; to throw or cast down; ... to throw or cast out, ...to lay down, set down, ... to be dispersed, scattered

The person seeking wisdom must do so without doubting. He must not judge for himself the matter, he must not decide this cause. He must not scrutinize and hesitate for fear of the outcome of his request. He must ask in faith.

The passage goes on to describe the one who doubts, or wavers as like a wave that surges, and is torn by the wind. This one who is a doubter is one who is like the shifting winds, uncertain in the courses. Like that wave blown by the wind this one is cast down, and dispersed. He is like the wave that raises and falls, surges, and disperses, uncertain and unstable in all his ways. This one is uncertain and unsure of his doctrine.

Chapter 1 verse 7

οιεσθω : to think, suppose, imagine, presume.

λημψεταιι : to take, to take up, take in the hand, on one's self, sustain; to take, seize, seize upon;.. to catch ... to make a rightful or successful assumption of; to conceive, .. to take by way of provision; .. to get, get together, to receive as payment;

This unstable person who has ask for wisdom (or any thing for that matter) should not presume, imagine, think or suppose he will receive anything from God. He will get, receive, seize or take anything from the Lord. His request for this wisdom and knowledge will be responded in a negative way.

Chapter 1 verse 8

διψυχος : double-minded, inconstant, fickle.

ακαταστατος : unstable, inconstant; unquiet, turbulent.

οδοις : a way, road, means of access, approach, entrance, direction, quarter, region, the act of journeying, a journey, way course ...

This man who is doubting is of two minds. He is fickle, unstable, and uncertain about all the ways of life. His journey on the road of life is not on a straight path, but one that wanders back and forth between the ditches.

Chapter 1 verse 9

Καυχασθω : to glory, boast, to boast of a person or thing, to undertake a laudatory testimony to...

ταπεινος : humble, poor, mean, depressed, metaphorically of the mind, humble, lowly, modest ...

υψει : height, metaphorically exaltation, dignity, eminence ...

In verses 9 and 10 James takes on a new, but related topic. He has been talking about those who have been under severe conditions for the Lord's sake. He now turns to those whom the world views as having a special dispensation from God, and those who from the world's perspective have been dealt the blow of poverty. He shows that whether viewed by the world as blessed or cursed the rich and poor were on equal footing in the sight of God.

In verse 9 he deals with the poor, and lowly. He states that their relationship with God and Christ exalts their station in life. This relationship with God gives them dignity. This person of low estate should make their boast in God and Christ.

Chapter 1 verse 10

πλουσιος : riches, wealth, opulence ...

ταπεινωσει : low in situation; of condition, humble, poor, mean depressed.

ανθος : a flower.

In verse 9 James shows that the playing field has been leveled for the poor. Now in verse 10 he shows that the playing field has also been leveled for the rich. Those who live in opulence, and great wealth, are brought to a state of humility by their relationship with God. They should boast in God and Christ for the humility they have acquired from God.

He should do this for this humble man will realize he is but, a flower, there for a moment in time and then gone. He and his riches will pass from this life into death. The riches are temporary, and fleeting. The humble man however with the humility from God will gain a gift of eternal life.

Chapter 1 verse 11

καυσωνι : to cause to burn, kindle, light, to be kindled, burn, flame metaphorically to consume with a fire ... fervent scorching heat; the scorching of the sun ... hot weather, a hot time ... scorching of the wind of the East, Eurus ...

εξεπεσεν to fall off or from, ... to fall from, forfeit, lose, ... to be case ashore, to fall to the ground fruitless, ineffectual.

ευπρεπεια : well-looking, grace beauty.

απωλετο : to destroy utterly; to kill, to bring to naught, make void, to lose, to be deprived of...

μαρανθησεται : to quench, cause to decay, fade, or wither; passive. to wither, waste away; metaphorically to fade away, disappear, perish.

Just as a flower is temporary and its end comes with the hot east wind of the desert, so are the riches of man. As the flower is cast off, and lost because of the consuming fire of the sun, so the life of man is temporary. The rich man will age, wither, waste away, and fade away into the darkness of death. He will die pursuing his riches, and his riches will flee from him. The conclusion is clear, one can not take it with them. The rich and the poor both stand before God. All that is valued in this life is meaningless in the life to come. Therefore the rich should glory in God's humility.

Chapter 1 verse 12

Μακαριος : happy, blessed.

δοκιμος : proved, tried, approved after examination and trial ... acceptable.

στεφανον : that which forms an encirclement; a crown; a chaplet, wreath, conferred on a victor in the public games; metaphorically a crown, reward prize, ... to crown, adorn, decorate,...

Blessed, and happy is the man who endures through the trials/temptations that come. According to this passage the one who is proved, and approved after examination will receive a "crown of life." This same one who is approved of God is the one who loves God to him a promises this crown. A crown, or chaplet in ancient times was given to the victor in public games. It was a sign of his victory. Those who endure and are victorious over trials will receive a sign of victory called here the "crown of life."

Chapter 1 verse 13

πειραζομενος : a trial, attempt, endeavor.

κακων : a bad, of a bad quality or disposition, worthless, corrupt, depraved, ... wicked, criminal, morally bad; evil wickedness, crime, ,, malediction; ... mischievous, harmful, baneful, ...

ουδενα : not one, no one, none, nothing ...

Up to this point James has been discussing trials. These are those things which had been imposed upon the Christians of James' day in the form of persecution. James now turns his attention to temptation. The Greek word here for temptation is the same as for trial, there is however a drastic difference between trials and temptations. James outlines this difference in verses 13 and 15. First in verse 13 James notes that temptations do not come from God. He also notes that temptations are evil, worthless, wicked, and morally bad in nature. Temptation is directly associated with sin. James points out that God does not promote sin, nor can He be tempted with sin, therefore temptations do not come from God.

Chapter 1 verse 14

επιθυμιας : to set the heart upon; to desire, long for, have earnest desire, to lust after, to covet ...

εξελκομενος : to draw out, to drag out, metaphorically to withdraw, allure, hurry away.

δελεαζομενος : to entrap, take or catch with bait; metaphorically allure, entice, delude.

Here in verse 14 James continues his argument that temptation does not come from God. He shows the true sources of temptation. People are tempted when they are dragged away from God by their own desires, lust and

covetousness. Once a person has withdrawn from God and his ways, because of his own lusts, he is entrapped by it. He is allured by the possibilities of sin, and caught like a fish on a hook going for a tasty worm.

Chapter 1 verse 15

| | |
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| ΤΙΚΤΕΙ : | to bear, bring forth children |
| αμαρτιαν : | to miss a mark; to be in error;... to be guilty of wrong. |
| αποκυει : | to bring forth, as women, metaphorically to generate, produce. |

When lust has had its full gestation, it gives birth to sin. Man when he sins has missed the mark. Like an archer whose arrows have gone astray so is the man who allows lust to give birth to sin. God's ways are straight and narrow, sin causes deviation from God's path. This deviation from God's path when it to has had its full gestation gives birth to death. As Paul said, "the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life." James has said the same thing in a different way throughout the past few verses.

Chapter 1 verse 16

πλανασθε : a wandering, deceit, deception, delusion, imposture, fraud, seduction, deceiving, error, false opinion, wandering from the path of truth and virtue, perverseness, wickedness, sin.

αγαπητοι : to love, value, esteem, feel or manifest generous concern for, be faithful towards; delight in; to set store upon....

James has told his readers what God does not do. He does not tempt. He now tells them what God does do. Here in verse 16 he warns them against wandering down the path of blaming God for temptation. He address the

people his is warning as his beloved brethren. These are the ones to whom he is writing, those who he delights in, and that he has concern for. His warning is for their benefit, because he loves them.

Chapter 1 verse 17

τελειον : an end attained, consummation; an end, closing act; full performance, perfect discharge; fulfillment, realization; final dealing, developed issue, result; practical issue, ultimate destiny....

παραλλαγη : a shifting, mutation, change.

αποσκιασμα : to throw a shadow, a shadow cast; metaphorically a shade, the slightest trace.

God is not subject to mutation, and change, He does not hide or shade His intentions. God provides good. The things He provides are good and complete. These things provide a full performance of the good promised. Unlike man who produces temptation by his own lusts, God produces good and perfect things. James does not want his people to be mistaken about what God does, and what His intentions are.

Chapter 1 verse 18

βουληθεις : to be willing, disposed; to intend; to desire; to choose, be pleased; to will, decree, appoint

αληθειας : worthy of credit; truthful; truth, verity; love of truth, veracity, sincerity ...

απαρχην : the first act of a sacrifice ... hence the firstfruits, first portion, firstling

κτισματων : to reduce from a state of disorder and wildness; to call into being, to create; to call into individual existence to frame, to create spiritually, to invest with a spiritual frame.

James now notes that by God's own volition, by His own desire, He was pleased to bring us forth, as a woman does her child. The method He used for this begetal was the word of truth. He did it with veracity and sincerity, by the word of truth, who we call Jesus Christ. He did this so that we might be the first part or portion of His creatures. This first part of a sacrifice was that which belonged to the High Priest and his family. We are the first part of the sacrifice that belongs to our High Priest, Jesus Christ.

Chapter 1 verse 19

ταχυς : swift, fleet quick; metaphorically ready, prompt ...

βραδυσ : slow, not hasty, ... slow of understanding, heavy, stupid...

λαλησαι : to make vocal utterance; to babble, to talk; .. to exercise the faculty of speech; to speak; to hold conversation with, to talk with; to discourse, to make and address; to make an announcement, to make a declaration, to make mention, to speak, address, preach; to give utterance to, to utter ...

οργην : mental bent, impulse; anger, indignation, wrath ...

Because we are the firstfruits of God who gives good gifts we should act like the firstfruits. We should be ready, willing and prompt to here what God wants us to hear. We should not be hasty to be angry, have indignation, or wrath.

Chapter 1 verse 20

δικαιοσυνην : right, justice; judicial punishment, vengeance; sentence of punishment, judgment ...

εργάζεται : anything done or to be done; a deed, work, action; duty enjoined, office, charge, business; a process or course of action; a work product of action or process; substance in effect ... to work labor, do business, to trade, traffic ...

The hesitance to show anger that must be a part of the Christian's life has a reason. This showing of wrath does not produce justice, judgment. These things along with vengeance fall within the sovereignty of God alone. These things are the business, trade, and labor of God, not man's indignation.

Chapter 1 verse 21

ρυπαριαν : filth squalor; metaphorically moral filthiness, uncleanness, pollution.

περισσειαν : about concerning, respecting ... superabundance ...

πραυτητι : meek, gentle, kind, forgiving ... gentleness, kindness

δεξασθε : to receive ; to receive into and retain, contain; metaphorically to receive by the hearing, learn, acquire knowledge of ...

εμφυτον : implanted, engrafted, infixed.

These things that do not produce the will of God must be put aside by the Christian. James commands them to remove from them selves, moral filthiness, spiritual uncleanness, and the superabundance of evil. He commands them in contrast to receive, and acquire the knowledge of implanted word of God. These are the products of a person who has salvation. These are the things which lead away from the product of sin, death. These are the things which produce life, and not death. James is not advocating the

replacement of faith in Christ for salvation, but is urging his brethren to demonstrate their faith through the path ways of life.

Chapter 1 verse 22

ποιηται : to make, form, construct, to create; to make, prepare a feast; metaphorically to establish, ratify, a covenant, to make, assume, consider, regard, to make, effect, bring to pass, cause to take place, do accomplish; to perfect, accomplish, put in excuse a purpose, promise, etc. to cause, make; to make gain, gain, acquire, to get procure; to make, to cause to be or become a thing; to use, treat; to constitute, appoint to some office

παραλογιζομενοι : to misreckon, make a false reckoning to impose upon, deceive, delude, circumvent ...

εαυτους : a reflexive pronoun of the third person, himself, herself, itself ...

James tells his readers to be becoming doers of the word. He commands the children of God to covenant, regard, establish, and do the things that the word says. He commands action, not just attention. He calls up Christians to respond and accomplish God's ways not just understand, and hear what God's ways are all about. The one who only puts God's ways into his mind and does not act upon them has deluded and deceived himself into believing he is in God's will.

Chapter 1 verses 23 and 24

κατανοουντι : to perceive, understand, apprehend, to observe, mark contemplate, to discern, decry; to have regard to make account of ...

εσοπτρω : a mirror, speculum ...

απεληλυθεν : to go away, depart, to go forth, pervade, as a rumor;
to arrive at a destination; to pass away disappear ...

επελαθετο : to forget; to be forgetful, neglectful of, to disregard ...

οποιος : what, of what sort or manner ...

James goes on in verse 23 to give a further description of this one who would but God's word into his mind, but not act on what he has heard. He says that this one is like a person who observes, and contemplates himself in a mirror, then turns away from the mirror and forgets what he saw. This is a useless and vain practice. Hearing God's word and not acting on it is also a useless and vain practice.

Chapter 1 verse 25

παρακυψας : to stoop beside; to stoop down in order to take a view; to bestow a close attentive look, to look intently, to penetrate.

ελευθεριας : free, in a state of freedom as opposed to slavery, free exempt, unrestricted, unfettered; free from the dominion of sin ...

Just as one contemplates what manner of person he is by looking in a mirror, the one who looks at the law of God discovers what manner of man he is. He must look attentively, and must stoop down beside God's law to view himself in the light of God's word. This law is based in freedom, unfettered from the dominion of sin. The one who looks into this mirror must not forget what he sees, but use it to bring his life more in harmony, by being a doer of the word. Doing so he is happy and blessed.

Chapter 1 verse 26

δοκει : to put in rapid motion; to pursue; to follow, pursue the direction of, to follow eagerly, endeavor earnestly to acquire, to press forwards; to pursue with malignity, persecute ...

θησκος : occupied with religious observances; religious, devout, pious.

χαλιναγωγων to guide with a bridle; metaphorically to bridle, control, sway.

James then qualifies his previous statements concerning the outward work of the inward religion. He talks to his brethren about those who appear to be religious in their actions. These ones are occupied with religious observances, and devout practices. He says that the one who seems religious, but cannot control his tongue, his words deceives himself. God's ways are not defined by pious acts, and outward religious observances. God's ways are based internally such as the control of the tongue, but produce outward action. Outward action must be based in an internal response to God and His ways.

Chapter 1 verse 27

καθαρα : clean, pure, unsoiled; metaphorically clean from guilt, guiltless, innocent; sincere, unfeigned, upright, virtuous, void evil, clean ceremonially.

ορφανους : bereaved of parents, orphan, desolate.

χηρας : a widow.

θλιψτει : to squeeze, press; to press upon, encumber, throng, crowd, to distress, afflict ...

ασπιλον : spotless, unblemished, pure.

James then sums up this section of his teaching by showing the opposite side of the religious coin. In the previous passage he talks of vain outward religious observance, now he describes the spotless, unblemished, pure religious acts, that come from the heart of the firstfruits of God. Those who visit the fatherless, and widows. Those who keep themselves unblemished, unspotted, and pure from the worlds uncleanness.

Chapter 2 verse 1

προσωπολημψιας :respect of persons, partiality.

James admonishes his readers that they have not been behaving themselves correctly. They had been showing partiality, to some, some whom the world thinks are worthy of respect.

Chapter 2 verse 2

εισελθη : to come or go in, enter, to enter by force, brake in.

συναγωγην : a collecting, gathering; a Christian assembly or congregation.

χρυσοδακτυλιος : having rings of gold on the fingers.

λαμπρα : bright, resplendent; clear, pellucid; white glittering; of a bright color, gaudy.

ρουπαρα : filthy, squalid, sordid, dirty.

Some came into the synagogue, the place where Christians were worshipping, with fine cloths. They had gold rings on their fingers. Their

clothes were bright and gaudy. These were people of money. They were received with respect and treated well.

If however one came into the assembly wearing filthy, squalid clothing, he was being treated poorly in the New Testament congregation.

Chapter 2 verse 3

επιβλεψηητε : to look up; to regard with partiality; to regard with kindness and favor, to compassionate.

καλως : well, rightly, suitably, with propriety, becomingly; truly, justly, correctly; becomingly, honorably; well, effectually.

υποποδιον : to stand under; a standing under; a taking of a thing upon ones self; and assumed position, an assumption of a specific character.

James continues his thought by pointing out that some were shown favor, with kindness, and compassion, only because they dress well and, had wealth. He was given a good place to sit.

The poor however were told to assume a position of humility. They were told to either stand, or to sit in a degrading position. They were to assume their role as a lower class person. This should not be so.

Chapter 2 verse 4

διεκριθητε : to make a distinction or difference; to make to differ, distinguished, prefer, confirm superiority; to examine, scrutinize, estimate; to discern, discriminate; to judge to decide a cause.

διαλογισμων : reasoning, ratiocination, thought, cogitation, purpose; discourse, dispute, disputation, contention; doubt, hesitation, scruple.

πονηρων : bad, unsound; evil afflictive; evil wrongful, malignant, malevolent, evil wicked, impious.

They were drawing distinctions between members of the church, and discriminating against the poor because of their station in life. These people were reasoning among themselves and creating, hesitation and doubt in the assembly over their policies.

Chapter 2 verse 5

κληρονομους : an heir; a possessor.

βασιλειας : a kingdom, realm, the region or country governed by a king; kingly power, authority, dominion, reign; royal dignity, the title and honor of king.

επηγγειλατο : to declare, announce; middle to promise, undertake ; to profess.

James commands his beloved brothers to listen. He tells them that it is not the rich well to do that God has chosen for His kingdom, but the poor. It is those who are rich in faith to whom He has made an heir, and possessor of the kingdom. It is within the realm, where God reigns, has power and honor, that God has reserved the inheritance of those rich in faith. He has declared, announced and promised this great gift to them.

Chapter 2 verse 6

ητιμασατε : to dishonor, slight; to treat with contumely or in dignity, to abuse or debase.

καταδυναστευουσιν : to tyrannism over, oppress.

ελκουσιν : to drag, to draw; to draw a sword, unsheath; metaphorically to draw mentally and morally.

κριτηρια : a standard or means by which to judge, criterion; a court of justice, tribunal.

James now draws a comparison of God calling, and promising good things to the poor, to the way the church was currently treating the poor. They were dishonoring, and debasing the poor. They were being tyrants over the poor. They were oppressing them.

He notes that while they were giving the rich special treatment, that it was the rich that were bringing them before the tribunal.

James is telling them that they have their view completely the opposite of where it should be. God was uplifting the poor and humbling the rich, they were doing the opposite.

Chapter 2 verse 7

βλασφημουσιν : to calumniate, revile, treat with calumny and contumely; to speak of God or divine things in terms of impious irreverence, to blaspheme.

καλον : beautiful; good, of good quality or disposition; fertile, rich, useful, profitable.

επικληθεν : to call on; to attach or connect a name; to attach an additional name; to surname; to receive an appellation or surname ...

These rich ones that were oppressing them were speaking of God in impious terms. They were reviling God's words and ways. The name and authority of God was rich, good, and beautiful, these rich ones treated it with irreverence. This was the name and authority into which these Christians had

been called. They were connected to God and his ways, they were receiving His name. These rich ones were downgrading them and God.

Chapter 2 verse 8

μεντοι : truly, certainly, sure; nevertheless, however.

νομον : a law; the Old Testament Scripture, a law, a rule, standard; a rule of life and conduct.

πλησιον : near, near by, a neighbor, a friendly neighbor.

James says that if they were truly, and with certainty keeping God's law you are loving your neighbor and doing well. He is telling them that they must practice the principles, standards, and conduct of life, that fulfills the command to love your neighbor.

Chapter 2 verse 9

ελεγχομενοι : to put to proof, to test; to convict; to refute, confute; to detect, lay bare, expose; to reprove, rebuke; discipline, chastise.

παραβαται : to step by the side of; to deviate; metaphorically to transgress, violate; to incur forfeiture.

To show favoritism is sin. James says that this fact is laid bare, and exposed by the law. Again he is referring to the portion of the law that is directed toward the love of neighbor. When you show favoritism you are deviating from God's ways, and you are violating God's law.

Chapter 2 verses 10 and 11

ολον : all whole, entire.

πταιση : to cause to stumble; to stumble, stagger, fall;
to make a false step; metaphorically to err, offend, transgress...

ενοχος : held in or by; subjected to; obnoxious, liable
to, an offender against.

μοιχευσης : to commit adultery with, debauch; .. middle to
commit adultery; to commit spiritual adultery, be guilty of idolatry.

φονευσης : to kill to put to death, kill, slay; to commit
murder.

Now James points out that violating the law in any area, causes someone to violate it in its entirety. Someone who has murdered, someone who has committed adultery, and someone who has shown favoritism, have all transgressed the law. The one who has offended the law even in what one might consider a minor point such as showing favoritism, is just as guilty of transgression of the law as the one who murders, or commits adultery. All transgression is equal in God's sight.

Chapter 2 verse 12

ποιειτε : to make, form, construct; to create; to make,
prepare a feast; metaphorically to make, establish, ratify, a covenant; to make assume consider, regard; to make effect, bring to pass, cause to take place, do, accomplish; metaphorically to accomplish, fulfill, put in execution a purpose, promise; to cause, make; to make gain, gain, acquire; to make, to cause to be or become a thing; to use, treat; constitute, appoint to some office...

λαλειτε : to make vocal utterance; to babble to talk; to
exercise the faculty of speech; to speak; to hold converse with, to talk with; to discourse, to make an address; to make an announcement, to make a declaration; to make mention; to speak, address, preach; to give utterance to, to utter.

μελλοντες : to be about to, be on the point of; it serves to
express in general a settled futurity.

James concludes his thoughts concerning favoritism in verse 12 and 13. His conclusion is simple. Be speaking, and doing the things that a person is on the verge of, or at the point of being judged by the law will do and say. Say and do what is right by the law. The possession, product, and results of this conduct of life is freedom, and liberty.

Chapter 2 verse 13

ανελεος : pitiless, unmerciful.

κατακαυχεται : to vaunt one's self against, to glory over, to assume superiority over.

His second conclusion is that to receive mercy from God you must show mercy. The one who does not show mercy to others God will treat unmercifully. He states that mercy is superior to judgment. Fortunately we as sinners saved by grace, have the mercy of God. As sinners we are worthy of the punishment of eternal death. The things we do in sin if their sentence were carried out would obliterate us. God provides mercy. We as Christians must provide mercy to others.

Chapter 2 verse 14

δυναται : to be able, either intrinsically and absolutely, which is the ordinary signification; or by specific reasons.

πιστις : faithful, true, truly; put in trust; true, veracious; credible, sure, certain indubitable; believing, yielding belief and confidence ..

σωσαι : to save, rescue; to preserve safe and unharmed.

Scriptural faith, faith that saves produces works. Faith and works after salvation can not be separated. Faith that does not produce works has no benefit. Here James begins a teaching. First he asks questions then he gives an illustration of his point.

Chapter 2 verse 15 through 17

γυμνοὶ : naked, without clothing; without the upper garment, and clad only with an inner garment or tunic; poorly or meanly clad, destitute of proper and sufficient clothing.

υπαρχωσιν : to cast under; metaphorically to suggest, instigate; to suborn.

τροφῆς : mode manner or way.

ὑπαγετε : to lead or bring under; to lead or bring from under; to draw on or away.

εἰρηνῆ : tranquillity; concord, unity, love of peace .

θερμαινεσθε : to warm; middle to warm one's self.

χορταζεσθε : to feed or fill with grass, herbage, to fatten; used of animals of prey, to satiate, gorge; of persons to satisfy with food; metaphorically to satisfy the desire of any one.

οφελος : profit, utility, advantage.

Verse 15 through 17 represents an illustration, of faith in action. James gives an example of brethren without proper clothing. They could be totally destitute, or lacking needed outer garments. The people during that day wore a tunic, and then had a cloak or outer garment that they wore. These people in the illustration may only have their tunics, and are in need of. These people are also in need of food.

James says that faith without works is like telling people in need of clothing to be warm and filled. The brethren who tell them this tell them to warm themselves, and to go and be satisfied with food. Their intentions are nice, but these people do not provide the needy with the clothing, and food they need. They still need the clothing, and the words given are meaningless. There is no profit in these words.

Chapter 2 verse 18

δειξον : to show to point out, to present to the sight; to exhibit; permit to see, cause to be seen, to demonstrate, prove; metaphorically to teach, make known, declare, announce.

χωρις : apart from, parted from; alien from; apart from, on a distinct footing from, without the intervention of, independently of.

In verse 18 James teaches his brethren through something some people say. This unknown person talks about the attempt by some to separate faith and works. The point of the teaching is that faith is demonstrated, proved and announced by one's works. He is teaching that faith can not be separated from, or operate independently from works.

Chapter 2 verse 19

δαμονια : a god, a superior power; a malignant demon, evil angel. ... specifically a heathen god, deity, a demon, or evil spirit.

φρισσοουσιν : to be ruffled, to bristle; to shiver, shudder from fear.

He notes that saving faith is not defined simple belief. He points out that even the evil, demonic evil spirits believe and know there is but one God.

These demons not only believe but, shudder from fear, because they know God's power.

Chapter 2 verse 20

θελεις : to exercise the will, properly by an unimpassioned operation; to be willing; to be inclined, disposed; to choose; to intend, design; to will .

κενε : empty: having no thing, empty-handed; metaphorically vain, fruitless, void of effect., in vain, to no purpose; hallow, fallacious, false, inconsiderate, foolish.

αργη : inactive, unemployed; idle. averse from labor; unprofitable, hollow.

James asks his brethren if they will be willing, inclined, and disposed to admit that faith without works is dead. He calls the one who would believe that faith can live without works, empty, of no purpose, hallow, and foolish. In James' view faith without works is unprofitable.

Chapter 2 verse 21

εδικαιωθη : to make or render right or just; middle. to act with justice; to avouch to be good and true, to vindicate; to set forth as good and just; to hold as guiltless, to accept as righteous, to justify..

ανενεγκας : to bear or carry upwards, lead up, to offer sacrifices; to bear aloft a burden as sins.

θυσιαστηριον : the altar of burnt-offering.

James then draws on the life of Abraham for a illustration. James says that Abraham was accepted as righteous, and vindicated because he offered his son Isaac upon the altar. He led his son upwards to the alter, to offer him as a burnt-offering. It was attributed to him as righteousness.

Chapter 2 verses 22 and 23

βλεπεις : to have the faculty of sight, to see; to exercise sight, to see; to look towards or at; to take heed.

ετελειωθη : to execute to fully discharge; to reach the end of, run through, finish; to consummate, place in a condition of finality.

επληρωθη : to fill, make full, fill up; to fill up a deficiency; to pervade; to pervade with an influence, to influence fully, possess fully; to complete, perfect; to bring to an end; to perform fully, discharge; to consummate; to realize, accomplish, fulfilled, come to an end, be fully arrived.

ελογισθη : to count, calculate; to count, enumerate; to set down as a matter of account; to impute; to account.

φιλος : loved dear; a friend; a congenial associate.

Look at this example James says. Notice that faith and works work together. Faith is fully discharged, and finished by works. Scripture was fulfilled, and realized by the faith of Abraham. He through active belief in God was imputed with righteousness.

Chapter 2 verse 24

ορατε : to see, behold; to look, to visit; to mark, observe; to be admitted to witness .

μονον : without accompaniment, alone; singly existent, sole, only; lone, solitary; alone in respect of restriction, only; alone in respect of circumstances; not multiplied by reproduction, lone, barren.

He again calls his brethren to the example. He tells them to observe, that faith and works work hand and hand. Neither stands totally alone.

Chapter 2 verse 25

υποδεξαμενη : to give reception to; to receive as a guest, entertain.

αγγελους : one sent, a messenger, angel.

εκβαλουσα : to cast out, eject by force; to expel, force away; to refuse; to extract, contemn; to send forth, send out, to send away, dismiss.

James then calls upon another illustration from Israel's history. He goes to the other end of the sociological scale, by selecting Rahab, who was a harlot, and a foreigner when she acted upon her faith. It was then that she received as guests the ones sent out as spies into Jericho. She then sent them away, in a manner that would keep them from being caught. Through this active faith Rahab was justified.

Chapter 2 verse 26

σωμα : a living body; a person, individual; a dead body, corpse, carcass; the human body considered as the seat and occasion of moral imperfection, as inducing to sin through its appetites and passions.

πνευματος : win, air in motion; breath; the substance spirit; a spirit; the human spirit, the soul.

νεκρον : dead, without life, metaphorically dead to a thing, no longer devoted to, or under the influence of a thing, dead with respect of fruitlessness; morally or spiritually dead ...

Lastly James draws an illustration from nature. He says that just like a carcass is dead without the spirit, and/or breath, so is faith with out works. Apart from works faith is just as dead as a corpse.

Chapter 3 verse 1

διδασκαλοι : teacher, master; in NT equivalent to Rabbi.

μειζον : to a greater degree.

κριμα : to separate; to make a distinction between; to exercise judgment upon; to estimate; to judge, to assume censorial power over, to call to account; to bring under question.

The person who teaches will receive a greater judgment. God will judge their actions more carefully. They will be called into account. James warns the brethren of this. Many were wanting to become Rabbis, or teachers, James was saying that it is a job not to be taken lightly. The Rabbi was looked upon highly and favored in the community, James said with the job came a greater responsibility and therefore greater judgment for improper actions.

Chapter 3 verse 2

πταιομεν : to cause to stumble; to stumble, stagger, fall; to make a false step; metaphorically to err, offend, transgress *.

χαλιναγωγησαι : to guide with a bridle; metaphorically to bridle, control sway.

James gives a reason for His caution about being a teacher. He notes that all of us cause offenses. All cause others to make false steps, stumble, and stagger, and fall. The weakness of the nature of every man causes them to cause offense. Sometimes the very message of the Gospel causes one to stumble, after all it is called a stumbling block to some. These offenses caused will have to be answered for in the long run. James says that one who does not offend is a “perfect” man able to control his life like a horseman controls a horse.

Chapter 3 verse 3

- χαλινοὺς : a bridle, bit, curb *.
- στοματὰ : the mouth; speech, words; command of speech, facility of language.
- βαλλομεν : to throw, cast; to lay; to put, to place *; to place, deposit, to pour; to thrust; send forth; to assault, strike.

James now uses three illustrations on the power of the tongue. He discusses these illustrations in verses three through six. Here in verse three he compares it to the bit in the mouth of a horse. It causes the horse to curb his natural tendencies and to turn their head in the direction the rider wants to go. The head being turned turns the whole body of a horse.

Chapter 3 verse 4

- ελαυνομενα : to drive, urge forward, spur on *; to impel a vessel by oars, to row.
- μεταγεται : to lead or move from one place to another; to change direction, to turn about *.
- πηδαλιου : a rudder *.

The second comparison that James draws concerning the tongue is found in verse four. The second illustration compares the tongue to the rudder on a ship. He first talks of the power forces it takes to move a large ship. He talks about the wind driving that ship forward. He notes that even though ships are large, and the forces that spurn the ship onward are tremendous yet it is turned by a relatively small rudder.

Chapter 3 verse 5

γλωσσα : the tongue; by metonymy .. speech, talk; a tongue, language.

μελος : a member, limb, any part of the body.

αυχει : bragging, boasting.

Now James gives the point of the previous two illustrations and lays the foundation for the third. Just as the bit is a small thing in the mouth of the horse, and just as a rudder is a small thing on a ship, even so the tongue is a small part of the body. Even though the rudder, and bits are small they are used to turn and control large objects. The tongue even though it is small brags and boasts of great things. Its words cause large things to happen.

James begins his third illustration concerning the tongue in this verse, and then continues the analogy in the next verse. He talks of the tongue creating a little fire in this verse.

Chapter 3 verse 6

πυρ : fiery, fire.

αδικιας : injustice, wrong iniquity, falsehood, deceitfulness.

γεεννης : Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, once celebrated for the horrid worship of Moloch, and afterwards polluted with every species of filth, as well as the carcasses of animals, and dead bodies of malefactors.

The fire begun in verse six runs out of control causing a large fire. So large here it is compared to the Gehenna fires of hell. You see James says here that the tongue may be small, but its results are large. He also shows

that the tongue's (and the man behind the tongue) nature is toward unjust, wrong, iniquity, and falsehood. So the large fire it creates is not for the good.

Chapter 3 verse 7

φύσις : essence; native condition, birth; native species, kind *; nature, natural frame; nature, native instinct, prescribed course of nature.

δαμαζεται : to subdue, tame; metaphorically to retrain within proper limits *

In verse seven James gives a reason for and, an illustration of the negative impact of the improper use of the tongue. He notes that our language, our words, our tongue can not be tamed. Almost every animal can be tamed, their essence, and their nature allows them to be taught to bring themselves under control. This is not so of man and his tongue.

Chapter 3 verse 8

ακαταστατον : unstable, inconstant; unquiet, turbulent.

ιου : a missile weapon, arrow, dart; venom, poison *; rust

θανατηφορου : mortiferous, bringing or causing death, deadly, fatal.

James continues his condemnation of men who can not restrain their tongue. He says, man's tongue is unretrainable. It is unstable, inconstant, and turbulent. The tongue of man is like a poison arrow, darting out causing death to its intended victim.

Chapter 3 verse 9

| | |
|--------------|---|
| ευλογουμεν : | to speak well of; to bless, ascribe praise and glorification; to bless, invoke a blessing upon. |
| καταρωμεθα : | to curse, to wish evil upon; passive to be doomed. |
| ομοιωσιν : | like similar, resembling; like, of similar drift and force. |

James says that the tongue is unstable. It produces words thoughts and ideas that are in opposition. A man may bless God praising Him, giving and also giving Him glory. Yet this same man, this same mouth will send out curses upon his fellow man. He will wish evil upon his neighbor almost in the same breath that he praises God. Here James seems to appeal to the two great commandments to love God and love your neighbor. He notes that it is inconsistent to praise God and yet curse a neighbor. He argues that this neighbor is made in the likeness of God. James seems to appeal to the creation story of man, in this comparison between the love of God and neighbor. In Genesis 1:26 God created man in His own image, yet man seems more than ready, and willing to curse the one made in God's image.

Chapter 3 verse 10

| | |
|------------|--|
| χρη : | there is need or occasion, it is necessary, it is requisite; it behooves, it becometh, it is proper. |
| γινεσθαι : | to come into existence; to be created, exist by creation *; to be born, produced, grow; to arise, come on occur, as the phenomena of nature. |

James continues his thought from the previous verse here in verse ten.

This man who curse man, and yet praises God is shown as having done so

out of the same mouth. James after noting the evil practice of loving God, and hating man gives his judgment in the matter. James says that is not proper, nor is it becoming, nor is there any occasion which justifies the production of hatred toward neighbor, while claiming to love God.

Chapter 3 verses 11 and 12

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| οπης : | a hole; vent opening *; a hole, cavern. |
| βρῦει : forth * | to be full, to swell with anything; to emit, send forth *. |
| γλυκυ : | sweet *. |
| πικρον : | bitter *; metaphorically bitter, harsh. |

James continues his condemnation of the practice of blessing God, and cursing neighbor here in verses 12 and 13. In these passages he gives two illustrations of the contradiction and hypocrisy of such actions. The tongue speaking and saying these two contradictory things is contrary to nature. A fountain can not at the same time give forth good water (sweet) and yet at the same time give out bad (bitter) water. The fig tree cannot give out figs and olives at the same time. James unspoken conclusion is that blessings to God must not be real because the tongue that blesses God cannot curse its neighbor.

Chapter 3 verse 13

σοφος : wise generally; shrewd, sagacious, clever, intelligent; divinely instructed; furnished with Christian wisdom, spiritually enlightened *.

δειξατω : to show, point out, present to the site; to exhibit, permit to see, cause to be seen; to demonstrate, prove *.

αναστροφης : conversation, mode of life, conduct, deportment.

James broadens his theme of the last few passages. He is not only including the words of the mouth but, the thoughts, and the intents of the heart, and the actions of people toward one another that need to be brought into control. He starts out this section with a rhetorical question, and then gives his rhetorical answer in this same passage. A man is wise, clever, shrewd and spiritually enlightened, if he demonstrates his wisdom by his conduct. Man in loving his neighbor proves to others what sort of man he is , and of what manner of life he leads.

Chapter 3 verse 14

ζηλον : generous rivalry; noble aspiration; zeal ardor in behalf of, ardent affection; in bad sense, jealousy, envy, malice; indignation, wrath.

επιθιαυ : to serve for hire, to serve a party; the service of a party, party spirit; feud, faction; contentious disposition *; by implication untowardness, disobedience.

James contrasts the righteous lifestyle of the wise man that he spoke of in the previous verse, with the unexceptable lifestyle of envy. Jealousy, malice, and wrath characterize the life of man who is not sagacious. A contentious disposition, a feuding nature, is not the sign of one who is wise. He

commands those who have this nature not to glory. He commands them to stop lying against the truth of God.

Chapter 3 verse 15

επιγειος : on the earth; earthly, terrestrial; earthly, low, groveling *.

ψυχικη : pertaining to life or the soul; animal, as distinguished from spiritual subsistence; occupied with mere animal things, animal, sensual *.

δαιμονιωδης : pertaining to or proceeding from demons; demoniacal, devilish *.

He continues his contrast of lifestyles here in verse 15. He says that the man of contention and strife has wisdom, and knowledge, but that God is not the source of that wisdom and knowledge. This wisdom is devilish, it comes from the demonic powers. It is not from above but, is earthy and low in nature. James draws this stark contrast of true knowledge, and knowledge falsely so called. The wisdom of God is not the wisdom of this world. What the world's wisdom teaches, and its sources are far removed from God. The two are as far apart as the earth is to the sky.

Chapter 3 verse 16

ακαταστασια : instability: hence, an unsettled state; disorder, commotion, tumult, sedition.

φαυλον : sorry vile, refuse, evil, wicked.

James gives a conclusion concerning the bitter strife of a man with this world's wisdom in this verse. He states that contentions, strife, and factions

create instability. They cause a seditious spirit leading to disorder, commotion and tumult. These come from and produce every vile, evil and wicked action in man.

Chapter 3 verse 17

| | |
|---------------|---|
| αγνη : | pure, chaste, modest, innocent, blameless. |
| ειρηνικη : | pertaining to peace; peace; peaceable, disposed to peace and concord *. |
| ευπειθης : | easily persuaded, pliant. |
| ανυποκριτος : | unfeigned, real, sincere. |

James again contrasts the world's wisdom which causes bitterness and strife to godly wisdom. He says that this godly wisdom is caste, pure, innocent. He says that it is peaceable. It is real not faked, but it is sincere in its actions.

Chapter 3 verse 18

| | |
|-------------|---|
| καρπος : | fruit of the womb, offspring. |
| σπειρεται : | to sow seed. |
| ειρηνην : | peace; tranquillity; concord, unity, love of peace. |

Here James continues his description of godly wisdom. God's wisdom is the offspring of righteousness. God's wisdom produces peace and tranquillity. It sows the seeds of concord, and unity.

Chapter 4 verse 1

πολεμοι : a battle, engagement, combat; battling, strife *.

εντευθεν : hence, from this place; hence and hence, on each side; hence, from this cause.

στρατευμενων : perform military duty, serve as a soldier; to battle *; to be spiritually militant.

In the previous few verses James has been very general in his discussion of the sources of strife and discord, now he gets pointed. He accuses his brethren of the sin of strife and bitterness. He does so in the form of two rhetorical questions in this verse. He asks where is the source of their battles and strifes among one another. He then asks them if the cause, and source of their internal church wars were not from their own lusts. He says that these lusts battle in a military sense with their own bodies. This lust and the internal strife it causes is the source of their external strifes and bitterness.

Chapter 4 verse 2

επιθυμειτε : to set the heart upon; to desire, long for, have earnest desire to lust after; to covet.

φονευετε : to put to death, kill, slay.

ζηλουτε : in a good sense generous rivalry; noble aspiration, zeal, ardor in behalf of, ardent affection; in a bad sense jealousy, envy, malice; indignation, wrath.

Here James begins a series of contrastive couplets that are similar to some of the words of proverbs. He contrasts the things they desire in one statement with the things that they actually have in the second statement. These proverbs couplets continue through verse 3. He tells them that they set

their hearts on things to lust after them. They break the command of not coveting. Yet even though they have this burning longing for things, they do not have them.

He says they do murder to get what they want. Whether this is the physical act of murder, or whether it is murder in the heart by hating without cause he does not say. Later when he speaks of adultery it is clearly speaking of spiritual adultery through idolatry. It is safe to assume that he is also speaking of spiritual murder in this passage, because of the evil and hatred that it going on in these scattered assemblies. All this hatred does not give them their desired results.

They strive and have these bitter contentions to get what they want, but they still do not have them. They do not get what they want because they do not ask God for it.

Chapter 4 verse 3

λαμβάνετε : to take, take up, take in hand; to take on one's self, sustain; to take, seize, seize upon; to catch; to assume, put on; to make a rightful or successful assumption of; to conceive; to take by way of provision; to get, get together.

ηδοναις : pleasure, gratification; especially sensual pleasure; passion.

δαπανησητε : to expend, be at expense; send, waste, consume by extravagance *.

Asking they do not seize the prize, they don't take what they are desiring, because they ask wrongly (amiss). Their reasons for asking are not based in a proper motive. They ask to give themselves sensual gratification, satisfying

their passions. They consume and waste what they have asked for at the expense of others, and for selfish reasons.

Chapter 4 verse 4

| | |
|--------------|--|
| μοιχαλιδες : | an adulteress . |
| φιλια : | loved, dear; a friend; a congenial associate. |
| εχθρα : | enmity, discord, feud; alienation; a principle or state of enmity. |

He calls the brethren involved in these strifes adulterers and adulteresses. (Note: the Received Text and the King James Bible calls them both adulterers and adulteresses here. Some other Greek texts and translations omit the word adulterers.) He notes that those who have a loving, endearing, congenial relationship with the world is alienated from God. You can not be a friend of God and a friend of the world. If you love the world you will hate God.

Chapter 4 verse 5

| | |
|-------------|---|
| κενωσ : | empty; having nothing, empty-handed; metaphorically vain, fruitless, void of effect. |
| επιποθει : | to fall upon; to throw ones self upon; to press, urge upon; to light upon; to come over; to come upon, fall upon mentally or spiritually. |
| κατωκισεν : | to sit down, sit; take up a dwelling. |

The scripture does not say things out of emptiness. It produces fruit. The words of scripture have a purpose. Here James asks a rhetorical question to his readers. He is telling them by this that the scripture is not vain.

It is interesting to note, but probably not of much significance that James calls this passage a quote from scripture, and yet it is not from the known cannon. There may have been some obscure texts that were considered scripture that have not been preserved for us today. There may have been portions of books considered to be scripture, but the rest of the book was not. Jude, James' brother quotes from the *Book of Enoch*, this is another example of this type of reference in the New Testament. We do know this that God preserved James and that this passage is now part of the standard cannon, and therefore is valid scripture.

It is clear that the human spirit which is dwelling in us presses toward envy. We are people of a fallen nature, headed down a destructive path.

Chapter 4 verse 6

υπερηφανοις : conspicuous, above, supereminent; metaphorically assuming, haughty arrogant *.

αντιτασσειται : to post in adverse array, as an army; to set ones self in opposition, resist; to be averse *.

ταπεινοις : humble, poor, mean, depressed *.

God is more powerful than our human flesh. He gives us grace beyond our nature driven toward evil. God resists the haughty arrogant. He has placed

Himself in an adverse array, as and army against the proud ones. Yet this same God giveth grace toward the humble.

Chapter 4 verse 7

- αντιστητε : to stand in opposition.
- διαβολω : a calumniator, slanderer; a treacherous informer, traitor; the devil.
- φευξεται : to flee, take to flight; to shrink, stand fearfully aloof; to make escape.

James now draws a conclusion about his preceding comments about God resisting the proud and giving grace to the humble. Because God has done this James commands that his brethren stand in opposition to Satan. Satan is a slanderer and a treacherous informer, we must be resisting him. We must submit to God. If we stand firm Satan will shrink away from us. He will make his escape for he will not be able to stand in our presence.

Chapter 4 verse 8

- εγγισατε : to cause to approach, draw near; metaphorically to be at hand, impend; to offer him reverence and worship.
- καθαρισατε : to cleanse, render pure, to cleanse from leprosy; metaphorically to cleanse from sin, purify by an expiatory offering, make expiation; to cleanse from sin, free from the influence of error and sin, to pronounce ceremonially clean.
- αγνισατε : purify, morally, reform.
- διψυχοι : double-minded, inconstant, fickle.

James continues his series of commands based on God's provision of grace. He tells his brothers to approach God, offering to him reverence and worship. He promises that if the Christian draws near to God that God will approach the Christian.

James commands his brothers to purify themselves morally. He tells them to change their lifestyles in reform. As part of this command he addresses his listeners as double-minded knowing that they were inconsistent and fickle in their approach to God.

Chapter 4 verse 9

| | |
|-------------|--|
| πενθησατε : | to lament over; to lament, be sad, mourn. |
| κλαυσατε : | to weep, to wail aloud |
| γελως : | to laugh, smile; by implication mirth, joy rejoicing. |
| κατηφειαν : | having a downcast look. |

James having called his brothers to repentance and reform in the previous passage, tells them now to do it with a serious attitude. This is not the giddy, proud boastful approach to God. He tells them to lament, to mourn. He tells them to weep and wail aloud as a mourner does. He tells them to let their mirth, and joy be turned into a downcast look.

This is the attitude of deep repentance. James knew that their actions had led them far astray from God. James did not view this free grace, as a grace free from cost. That cost was the death of the savior, that death and

grace was serious business. The turning to God must be accompanied with mourning grieving over past sin.

Chapter 4 verse 10

ταπεινωθητε : to bring low, depress, level; middle to descend to, or live in, a humble condition; to humble, depress the pride of any one; middle to humble one's self, exhibit humility and contrition *. to humble with respect to hopes and expectations, to depress with disappointment.

ενωπιον : before, in the presence of; in front of; immediately preceding as a forerunner.

υψωσει : exaltation, dignity, eminence *.

He tells them that if they will exhibit humility and contrition in the presence of God, that God will exalt them. He will give them dignity and eminence.

Chapter 4 verse 11

καταλαλων : to blab out; to speak against, calumniate.

ποιητης : to make, form, construct; to create; to make prepare a feast; metaphorically to make, establish, ratify, a covenant.

James continues his commands to his brothers. He tells them not to be blabbing about their fellow church members. He tells them not to speak out against one another. He claims that this makes one an evil judge, speaking against God's law. Since this would break the law of loving your neighbor James sees it as an offense against God. He says that Christians should not be judges of evil, against God's law. God does not need judges, but demands

doers. Therefore one should be about establishing and ratifying the law through their actions of performing the law.

Chapter 4 verse 12

νομοθετης : a legislator, lawgiver.

απολεσαι : to kill, to bring to nought, make void; to lose, be deprived of.

We are not to be the determiners of right and wrong, judges of the law, because God is the only lawgiver. He is able to save. He is also able to make void, or to bring to nought the offender of the law.

Chapter 4 verse 13 and 14

πορευσομεθα : to go, pass from one place to another; to go away, depart.

εμπορευσομεθα : to travel; to travel for business sake; to trade, traffic *; to make gain of, deceive for ones own advantage.

κερδησομεν : to win, acquire possession of; to profit in the avoidance of, to avoid; to make gain *.

ατμης : an exhalation, vapor, smoke.

φαινομενη : middle voice; to be seen, appear, be visible.

James now gives and illustration as a way of instructing and commanding his brethren. He notes that it is presumptuous to assume that you are going to do something without God's allowance. Those who think that they can travel by their own strength and power to make gain, and get advantage, who seek to win and acquire gain and profit, need to realize they are totally in God's power.

No one but, God can determine the future. Our lives are but, a mere vapor, like smoke that disappears as it rises to the sky. We are like a breath on a glass that for a moment fogs the glass, and then disappears.

Therefore we must not be hasty in our plans.

Chapter 4 verse 15

θελη : to exercise the will, properly by an unimpassioned operation; to be willing; to be inclined, disposed; to choose; to intend, design; to will.

ζησομεν : to live, to be possessed of vitality, to exercise the functions of life.

ποιησομεν : to make, form, construct; to create; to make prepare a feast; metaphorically to make, establish, ratify, a covenant.

James now comes to a conclusion in his teaching about the temporary nature of life. He notes that we should recognize God's sovereignty We should note that we will be allowed to do a thing if God is inclined and disposed to its success. If it is God's will we will survive to carry out the functions of life to do the things we will. We can only establish our ways if they are within the will and allowance of God.

Chapter 4 verse 16

καυχασθε : to glory, boast.

αλαζονιας : ostentatious, vain-glorious, arrogant, boasting, haughtiness, presumptuous speech *, haughtiness.

πονηρα : bad, unsound; evil, afflictive; evil, wrongful, malignant, malevolent; evil wicked impious.

James contrasts the desired attitude of the sovereignty of God and the humility of the brethren with the situation that was present in his hearers. He says that they were boasting and glorying in their own arrogant haughtiness. James tells them flat out that their attitude of boasting was wicked, unsound, and evil.

Chapter 4 verse 17

καλον : beautiful; good, of good quality or disposition; fertile, rich; useful profitable.

ποιουντι : to make, form, construct; to create; to make prepare a feast; metaphorically to make, establish, ratify, a covenant.

James then makes a conclusion concerning the sovereignty of God, and the temporary nature of man. He tells them that to know good is not enough. You must do good. Not doing good is sin.

Chapter 5 verse 1

πλουσιοι : riches, wealth, opulence.

ολοιυζοντες : to cry aloud in invocation; to howl, utter cries of distress, lament bewail.

ταλαιπωριας : toil, difficulty, hardship; calamity, misery, distress.

James now returns to a theme he began in chapter 1. He talks of the rich and the humble. In chapter one he talked rich being made low. Now in a way almost reminiscent of Old Testament prophetic language he tells those who live in opulence to howl, and lament. This loud invocation has to do with misery, difficulty and woe. It is a woe that is placed in the future. The passage

seems to point to a day of reckoning when calamity will fall on these wealthy ones. In verse 7 he tells his brethren that that day is coming.

Chapter 5 verse 2

σεσηπεν : to cause to putrify, make rotten.

ιματια : a garment, the upper garment, mantle.

σητοβρωτα : moth-eaten

James in the prophetic lament tells the rich that their riches are rotting, that they are putrefied. The things they most cherished are like rotten fruit. The cloths they most treasured have been eaten by moths. This is a picture of the desolate state of world gotten gains, and the world's success at the day of reckoning.

Chapter 5 verse 3

κατιωται : to cover with rust, to rust, to become tarnished.

μαρτυριον : testimony, evidence.

σαρκας : flesh, the human body, flesh, human nature, human frame ...

He continues his prophecy of concerning the inadequacy of riches in eternity. He tells the rich that their gold and silver are rusted and tarnished. He tells them that their flesh would be devoured by fire.

Chapter 5 verse 4

βοαι : a cry, outcry, exclamation.

θερισαντων : to harvest, reap metaphorically to reap the reward of labor, to reap the harvest of vengeance.

Σαβαωθ : armies, host.

He tells them at the end of the previous verse that they had been collecting money as a hedge against the last days. He tells them that to protect themselves they had robbed from those who had labored in their fields. James warns them that the outcry of the defrauded ones had ascended to the ears of God. Here James describes God by the Old Testament term, the Lord of hosts. The returning Lord will have his armies with Him.

Chapter 5 verse 5

ετρυφησατε : to live delicately, luxuriously.

εσπαταλησατε : to live luxuriously, voluptuously, wantonly.

σφαγης : slaughter.

These people had flourished in the days of slaughter. They had lived delicately, luxuriously, wantonly and voluptuously.

Chapter 5 verse 6

κατεδικασατε : to give judgment against, condemn.

δικαιον : used of things, just equitable, fair, of persons just, righteous.

αντιτασσειται : to set one's self in opposition, resist.

These rich ones give judgments against the righteous ones. He accuses them of murdering the righteous ones. The just ones do not put up resistance against the rich and their murderous intentions.

Chapter 5 verse 7

Μακροθυμησατε : to be slow towards, be long-enduring; to exercise patience, to be long-suffering, clement, or indulgent, to forbear.

παρουσιας : to be beside, to be present, to be come, to be in possession.

Now James turns from his prophecy against the rich. He turns to the just who had been devoured by the rich. He tells them to be long suffering, to exercise patience. He tells them to forbear until the Lord has come. He compares them to the precious fruit in God's garden. He is telling them that God is patient till the right time when the fruit is ripe for the harvest. He is waiting patients until the time is right just like the farmer waiting till the harvest season is come.

Chapter 5 verse 8

στηριξατε : to set fast, to set in a certain position or direction; metaphorically to render mentally steadfast, to settle, confirm.

ηγγικεν : to cause to approach, to approach, draw near, metaphorically to be a hand, impend.

James repeats his message from the previous verse. He tells the brethren to set fast, to settle themselves because the Lord's return approaches.

Chapter 5 verse 9

στεναζετε : to sigh inwardly, to give vent to querulous or censorious feelings.

κριθητε : to separate, to make a distinction between, to exercise judgment upon, to estimate, to judge, to assume censorial power over, to call to account.

εστηκεν : to make to stand, set, place, to set forth, appoint, to fix, appoint; to establish, confirm, to set down to impute.

He tells the to not have censorious feelings against one another. He warns that God makes a separation between those who hold grudging feelings to their brother, and those who do not. He warns them that God stands at the door as a judge.

Chapter 5 verse 10

υποδειγμα : to indicate, to intimate, suggest.

κακοπαθιας : to suffer evil or afflictions, to be vexed, troubled, dejected.

He tells his brethren to use as their example the prophets who suffered evil afflictions with patience.

Chapter 5 verse 11

μακαριζομεν : to pronounce happy, felicitate.

υπομειναντας : to remain or stay behind, when others have departed.

υπομονην : to remain or stay behind, when others have departed, to bear up under, endure, suffer patiently.

James now turns his plea for patience to an Old Testament example of Job. He tells them that they had heard of the pertinence of Job. He hold up Job as an example of patience and the reward for patience.

Chapter 5 verse 12

ομνυετε : to swear, to promise with an oath.

ορκον : an oath.

Here is the beginning of a series of final teachings. He tells his brothers not to make oaths. He tells them not to swear at all. not by heaven or by anything on earth. This is a similar admonition as given by the Lord in Matthew 5:34-37.

Chapter 5 verse 13 and 14

προσευχεσθω : to pray to offer prayer

ψαλλετω : to move by touch, to touch, to twitch; to strike the strings or cords of a stringed instrument. to sing music; to sing praises.

ασθενει : to be weak, infirm, deficient in strength;
to be sick.

προσκαλεσασθω : to call, to summon, invite.

αλειψαντες : to anoint with oil, ointment

Here James begins a discussion of worship and prayer. He tells his readers who were afflicted to pray. He tells those who are merry to sing psalms. An interesting side note to this comment is that the New Testament word for psalm carries with it the idea of sing a song accompanied by music.

Those in the Church of Christ have no support for their view, that musical instruments were not part of New Testament worship.

He then tells those who were infirm, to summon the elders of the church. He says that they should pray over the infirm one, and that they should anoint them.

Chapter 5 verse 15

σωσει : to save, rescue, to preserve safe and unharmed.

εγερει : to excite, arouse, awaken.

αφεθησεται : to send away, dismiss, suffer to depart; to emit; send forth.

Here God promises that when the elders prayed for the sick that he would preserve them, through their illness. Perhaps this is a special promise to this afflicted people. There were sick then that were not healed in that day. This does not change James view that the people should be obedient to the command of God.

Chapter 5 verse 16

εξομολογησθε : to agree to bind one's self, promise.

ιαθητε : to heal, cure.

δεησις : to be in want, to need; to ask, to request, pray, offer prayer, beseech, supplicate.

He also tells his brethren that they should confess their faults to one another. Here he was not telling his brothers to get into a confessional both,

but to develop a relationship with their brothers where they could be open enough about their faults that God could deal with their faults. James holds the view that some illness is caused by sin. He promises that God will forgive sin, causing healing, of some afflictions.

Chapter 5 verse 17

ομοιοπαθης : being affected in the same way as another, subject to the same incidents, of like infirmities, obnoxious to the same frailties and evils.

βρεξαι : to wet, moisten; to rain, cause or send rain.

He reaches again into the Old Testament for an example. He talks of the power of prayer through the example of Elijah. He was one of like passions, he was of like infirmities and frailties as us. His prayer was more powerful than his failings. So our prayer can also be powerful.

Chapter 5 verse 18

εβλαστησεν : to cause to shoot, produce, yield.

καρπον : fruit.

Here he continues his example of Elijah. When he prayed God withheld rain for three years and six months it says in verse 17. In verse 18 he says that he prayed again and it rained and the earth shot forth its produce and produced fruit.

Chapter 5 verse 19

πλανηθη : to lead astray, cause to wander about, stray, metaphorically to mislead, to deceive; passive: to be seduced or wander from the path of virtue, to sin, transgress.

αληθειας : worthy of credit, truthful.

Now he finishes the book with a discussion of brotherly love. He knows that some will be lead astray. They will wander about in sin and transgression. They will be deceived and lead away from the things worth of credit, those things truthful.

Chapter 5 verse 20

επιστρεψας : to turn towards; to turn round; to bring back to convert.

πληθος : to fill, to be filled.

The last part of the previous verse describes a condition of turning someone back from sin, from straying from God. He tells them that someone who helps his brother who has sinned to turn back to God, helps save his life, and hides a multitude of sins.

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