

Bible Expositor's Analysis

James

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Introduction

Outline of James

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Translation of James

Chapter One

1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes of the Diaspora: Greeting. 2. Count it all joy my brothers, when you fall into various trials, 3. recognizing that the test of your faith produces constancy, 4. And let constancy have it's perfect work, so that you might be perfect and whole, lacking in nothing.

1:5 But if one of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives generously to all and reproaches not, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting. For the one doubting is like a wave of the sea, being wind-tossed and driven. 7 For let not that man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord: 8 A double minded man, being unstable in all his ways.

1:9 And let the Poor brother boast in his exaltation; 10 But the rich in his poverty, because he will pass away as a flower of the grass. 11 For the sun rises with the scorching east wind and parches the grass, and its blossom falls, and the beauty of its face is destroyed; so also will the rich man fade away in his pursuits.

1:12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation, because when he has been approved he will receive a crown of life, which He promised to those who love Him. 13 Let no one, being tempted, say "I am tempted by God." For God is untempted by evil, and He Himself tempts no one. 14 But each one is tempted by his own lusts, being drawn forth and enticed. 15 Then lust, having conceived, afterward brings forth sin; and sin, when it is mature, produces death.

1:16. Be not deceived, my beloved brothers. 17. Every good gift and every perfect present is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, in whom there is neither mutability, nor shadow cast by turning. 18. So willing, He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of His creatures.

1:19 You know *this*, my beloved brothers; but let every man be quick to hear, slow to anger. 20. Because the anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God. 21. Therefore, putting away all filthiness and prevailing wickedness, receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls.

1:22. And be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23. Because if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man contemplating his own face in a mirror. 24. For after he contemplated himself and gone, he immediately forgot what he was like. 25. But the one having looked into the perfect law of liberty, and having continued, being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of work, is blessed into understanding.

1:26 If anyone thinks himself to be devout, but does not bridle his tongue, but deceives his heart, his religion is empty. 27 Religion, pure and unspotted before our God and Father is this; to care for

orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unblemished from the world.

Chapter Two

2:1 My brothers, do not hold the faith of Jesus Christ our Lord of Glory in partiality. 2 For if a man should enter your synagogue with a gold ring and in fine clothes, and there also should enter a beggar in filthy clothes 3 and you have regard for the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "You sit here comfortably," and to the beggar you say, "You stand," or "sit here by my footstool" 4 do you not render a decision among yourselves, and become judges of corrupt verdicts?

2:5 Listen my beloved brothers; Did not God choose the poor of the world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to the one's loving Him. 6 But you dishonored the poor. Do not the rich oppress you and themselves drag you into court? 7 Do they not blaspheme the beautiful name which was pronounced over you?

2:8 If you really fulfill royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; but if you discriminate, you practice sin, being convicted by the law of liberty as transgressors. 10 For whoever should keep all the law, should he but stumble in one point, is answerable for all. 11 For the one saying, "You shall not commit adultery" says also "You shall not murder." 11 And if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you become a transgressor of law. 12 So speak and so act, as being ready to be judged by a law of liberty. 13 For the judgment is merciless to the one not showing mercy; mercy overcomes judgment.

2:14 What is the profit, my brothers, if someone should claim to have faith, but not have works? Can such faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister should be naked and lack food, 16 and one of you should say, to them "Depart in peace; be warmed and filled," but you do not give him the things necessary for the body, what is the profit? So also is faith unless it issues in deeds; it is dead by itself.

2:18 But someone will say, "you have faith and I have works; show me Your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." 19 You believe that there is one God; you do well; even the Demons believe also and they tremble. 20 But, will you know, O vain man, that faith without works is barren?

2:21 Was not our father Abraham justified by works, having offered up his son Isaac upon the altar? 22 Do you see that faith worked together with his works and by works was the faith made complete. 23 And the scripture was fulfilled, saying, "And Abraham trusted God and it was accounted to him as righteousness" and he was called friend of God. 24 You see that by works a man is justified and not by belief alone. 25 And similarly the harlot Rahab was also justified by works after receiving the messengers and then sending them out by another way. 26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

Chapter Three

3:1 Let not many be teachers, my brothers, recognizing that we will receive a stricter judgment. 2

For we all err at many points; if anyone does not err in word, he is a consistent man, and able to bridle the whole body. 3 Look! we put the bits into the horses' mouths in order that they might be obedient to us and we guide their whole body. 4 Behold also the ships, although they are so great and are driven by rough winds, are yet guided by a very small rudder, wherever the impulse of the pilot desires. 5a So also the tongue is a small member and boasts great things.

3:5b Behold how small a fire kindles so great a forest; 6 and the tongue is fire. The world of unrighteousness among our members is instigated by' the tongue, which contaminates the whole body and sets ablaze the course of life, and is itself set ablaze by hell. 7 For every creature, of beasts and birds, of reptiles and fish, is subdued and has been subdued by mankind. 8 But no one is able to subdue the tongue of man -- a capricious evil, full of deadly venom. 9 With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who are fashioned according to the likeness of God. 10 Out of the same mouth come blessing and cursing; my brothers, these things ought not to be so. 11 Does the fountain out of the same opening send forth sweet and bitter? 12 Can a fig tree produce olives, my brothers, or a grapevine, figs? Nor can salt produce sweet water.

3:13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him demonstrate by his good conduct his qualifications in the meekness of wisdom. 14 But if you have harsh zeal and selfish ambition in your heart, do not exult, and lie against the truth; 15 this wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthy, humanistic, demonic. 16 For where such zeal and selfish ambition are, there is instability and every evil matter. 17 Now the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceful, gentle, compliant, full of mere end good fruits, without ambiguity, without hypocrisy n And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by the ones who make peace.

Chapter Four

4:1 Whence come dissensions, and whence disputes among you? Do they not come hence from your pleasures which wage war in your members? 2 You desire and you possess not; you kill. And you envy and are unable to attain; you dispute and dissent. You possess not because you ask not. 3 You ask and receive not because you ask wrongly in order that you might squander it on your pleasures. 4 Adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship of the world is the enmity of God? Whoever, therefore, would be a friend to the world constitutes himself an enemy of God.

4:5 Or do you suppose that the scripture says in vain, "He longeth unto jealousy for the spirit He made to dwell in us?" 6 But He gives a greater grace; therefore it says "God resists the proud but He gives grace to the humble." 7 Submit therefore to God; withstand the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Sinners, cleanse your hands, and purify your hearts, you double minded. Be wretched and grieve and weep; let your laughter be turned into grief and your joy into heaviness. 10 Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord and He will exalt you.

4:11 Do not speak against one another, brothers; he who speaks against a brother or judges his brother speaks against law and judges law; and if you judge the law you are not a doer of the law, but a judge. 12 One is the lawgiver and judge -- the one who is able to save and destroy; but who are you to judge your neighbor?

4:13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a city and we will spend a year there and trade and get gain." 14 You do not understand the circumstances of tomorrow. What is the nature of your life? That which appears for a short while and then disappears. 15 Instead, you should say, "If the Lord wills we shall both live and accomplish this or that." 16 But now you glory in your arrogance. All such glorying is evil. 17 Therefore he who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

Chapter Five

5:1 Come now, you rich, weep, howling because of the miseries which are advancing upon you. 2 Your riches are rotted and your clothes have become moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and silver have rusted, and their rust will be a witness against you and it will devour your flesh as fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days. 4 Behold, the pay of the workers who mowed your fields, which was withheld by you, cries out against you, and the shouts of those who harvested have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. 5 You have lived luxuriously upon the earth and have taken excessive pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned and executed the righteous man for he does not resist you.

5:7 Therefore you should be patient, brothers, until the coming. Behold, the farmer expectantly awaits the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it until it receives the early rain and the late rain. 8. You also be patient; firmly fix your hearts, because the coming of the Lord is near. Brother, do not complain about one another, in order that you might not be judged; behold, the judge is standing at the doors. 10. Take the prophets, brothers, as examples of perseverance and patience, who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11. Behold, we consider them blessed who endured; you have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the outcome of the Lord, that "the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

5:12 But above all, my brothers, do not swear; neither by heaven nor by earth nor by any other oath. But let your "Yes be "yes" and your "no" be no!" so that you might not fall under condemnation.

5:13 Is any among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing psalms. 14 Is any among you ill? Let him summon 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 will restore the one who is sick and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, it shall be forgiven him. 16. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed.

5:16b The effective supplication of a righteous man can accomplish much. 17 Elijah was a man of like nature to us, and he prayed fervently concerning the rain, and it did not rain upon the earth for three years and six months. 18. And he prayed again, and heaven gave water and the earth yielded her fruit.

5:19 My brothers, if one of you departs from the truth and someone restores him, 20. Know that the one who restores a sinner from the departure of his way saves a soul from death and hides a multitude of sins.

First Pericope (James 1:1-4)

James 1:1 Ιάκωβος θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοῦλος ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ χαίρειν. ² Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἡγήσασθε, ἀδελφοί μου, ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις, ³ γινώσκοντες ὅτι τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως κατεργάζεται ὑπομονήν. ⁴ ἡ δὲ ὑπομονὴ ἔργον τέλειον ἔχετω, ἵνα ἥτε τέλειοι καὶ ὀλόκληροι ἐν μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

1:2 πειρασμοῖς (noun, second declension, nominative, masculine, singular) 1) *Test, trial*; 2) *Temptation, enticement to sin*; 3) *Testing of God by men*. Here, the context clearly demands the sense of "test" or "trial." That these trials are to be occasions of rejoicing rather than misery or grief excludes the notion of a trial of God by men, and can scarcely be applied to the enticement to sin.

1:3 κατεργάζεται (present, active, indicative, third person, singular) 1) do, achieve, accomplish; 2) bring about, produce, create; 3) prepare someone for something; 4) overpower, subdue, conquer. Here the word has the meaning "achieve" or "accomplish."

1:3 ὑπομονήν (noun, first declension, accusative, feminine, singular) 1) Patience, endurance, fortitude, steadfastness, perseverance; 2) patient expectation. Here the word describes the characteristic nature of a virtue, the essence of which is "perseverance."

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

1:1 The word translated "Greeting" actually means "rejoice;" when it is in the form of an infinitive, however, it is used in the absolute sense, and therefore makes a suitable salutation. It was frequently used in this way in the koine period.

1:2 The anarthrous construction indicates here a qualitative statement. "All joy" would then mean something akin to "all that can be called or counted joy; Pure joy;" or "undiluted joy" translates the true sense.

1:3 "The tested" is a good example of the articular adjective being used as a noun. It clearly refers to that which is, or has been tested, or that which is tried and found true. Here it means that which

is genuine.

D. Translation

1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes of the Diaspora: Greeting. 2. Count it all joy my brothers, when you fall into various trials, 3. recognizing that the test of your faith produces constancy, 4. And let constancy have it's perfect work, so that you might be perfect and whole, lacking in nothing.

E. Historical and Background Information

Diaspora and dispersion are the terms commonly used to denote the scattered settlements of Jews outside Palestine. Several features should be noted.

Dispersion, first of all, was the threatened penalty for national disobedience to the Mosaic Law. God expected the Jews to be a peculiar people and set them apart to Himself. He gave them the Law and expected them to honor it. The penalty was to be exile from the promised land. The promised land, of course represented to the Jewish mind the proper state of their relationship to God.

None the less, there may never have been a time when all of the Jews, or Israelites, were actually settled in Palestine. Trade provided ample excuse and opportunity for Jews to settle in other areas (cf. I kings 20:34. Solomon's expansionist policies provided additional impetus for "colonization" (cf. II Sam. 8, I Kings 4, Dt. 17:16, Jr. 43:7, and Jr. 44.

But while "Diaspora" can properly describe commercial or administrative colonization, the sense of shame usually associated with the word came from the experience of the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities.

Those Jews who were removed from Palestine were those of the classes made up of the skilled craftsmen, and administrators. Many of the groups which were transported, particularly of the northern kingdom, probably lost their identity. However, many colonies may have resulted through such exiles.

During the restoration of the Babylonian exiles, a segment of the Jewish populace returned to Palestine. Many, however, remained in Babylon. Cf. Esther.

Later, during the Alexandrian campaigns, a new dispersion began. By the late Hellenistic period of the Roman Empire, Jewish colonies were to be found across the face of the Roman world, including Egypt, Asia minor, Greece, and southwestern Europe, as well as in Rome itself (cf. Philo, Josephus, Strabo, Horace. By this time, Jews had established themselves to such an extent that even Judaism itself had taken on peculiar local flavors, and there no longer was anything like a monolithic

Jewish culture. During the period when the Jews were acclimating themselves to their new surroundings, from the Babylonian captivity onward, they produced two notable innovations, both representing radical departures from "normative" Judaism, the synagogue, and the Septuagint.

By the time of the early Church, there were to be found in these synagogues an ever growing number of Gentile converts and near converts known as "God Fearers. It was to these synagogues that Paul went to preach his new message, and it was largely (but not exclusively) these God Fearers who populated the first Churches in Gentile lands.

By now, the term "Diaspora" had come to be used figuratively by the Jews to denote their sojourn on Earth. It is this figurative sense which James used to denote Christians in general, without regard for their origins or geographical location.

F. Exposition

1:1 "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." A servant in Jewish literature did not mean "bond servant," or "slave," as it did in Greek culture, but instead denoted a "worshiper." Even if the form of the epistle of James is that of the Greek diatribe, as some hold, the content of the book is strictly Jewish. This does not imply that James was writing only to Jewish Christians, but only that his outlook was strongly and unmistakably Jewish.

1:1 "To the twelve tribes of the Diaspora." The "Twelve Tribes" is a term used in the Old Testament to indicate Hebrew solidarity, or the essential unity of the nation of Israel. Whether this term was used literally, or figuratively, the sense of solidarity was the unmistakably integral sense of the word. It was a synonym for "all Israel," but only rarely was used without a further limiting phrase such as "of Israel," or "of the children of God."

The early Christians felt that in some way they had displaced the Jewish nation in God's favor; indeed, for some time, the church was viewed by many as merely a sect within Judaism. Descent from Abraham is even ascribed to believers in the Epistle to the Galatians.

Here, the term is used to refer to Christians in general. For those who saw themselves as the successors to Israel, no such limiting term was needed, and in fact would have been confusing since these limiting phrases always implied nationalism, or Jewish nationality.

Diaspora," or dispersion, usually referred to the scattered segments of the Jewish nation. The term does not carry within itself any suggestion as to the specific location of the extent of the Diaspora, even when applied strictly to the Jews. But as a reference to the early Christian Church, the term Diaspora can only describe the natural (indeed, the essential) condition of the church, because it was formed not in one location, or for the benefit of one nation, but throughout the world. The Christian church was formed in dispersion.

1:1 "Greeting." The word translated "greeting," although it actually means "rejoice," was customarily used as a salutation.

1:2 "Count it all joy, my brothers." The word "joy" is from the same root as the word "greeting." James frequently ties successive units of thought together by means of a common word. This lends an artificial unity to the disparate teachings presented. But it should be noted that a common word does not denote a single context.

Here, it is stated to be the case that trials are to be counted as joy. Put another way, despite the pain of testing, trials are to be numbered among ones blessings, reckoned as a purifying factor. God is to be thanked for trials, and glorified through them.

1:2 "When you fall into various trials." The "trials," or "temptations" of this pericope are to be understood as "adversities" These are external to the person, for they are said to be "various" (hence not a vice) and are "fallen into" (and hence they come as something of a surprise. Compare these trials with those of 1:1314. These "external adversities" are to be viewed as an occasion for rejoicing. This can scarcely be said of the temptations of 1:1314. Nor is there no reason to think of these adversities as religious persecutions. They are assumed to be common experiences. James says "when you fall. not "if you fall." (cf. Rom. 5:35, I Pet. 1:6.

1:3 "Recognizing that the test of your faith produces constancy" The adverse circumstances are those through which Christian character (as opposed to natural character) becomes visible. A constant or recurring exercise and display of Christian virtue in adversity results in, or achieves not mere patience, constant, or habitual behavior pattern.

The idea of "being approved," of "the testing of your faith" may provide the unifying theme of James (if there is such a theme. (The double minded man is also a likely candidate for the role of unifying theme.

1:4 "And let Constancy have it's perfect work." The "perfect work," or "perfect product" of constancy is the quality of righteousness which comes with years of struggle and growth. This is what the Christian life is to be. The Christian is to react consciously to trials in a way that both requires and displays faith. If this is done repeatedly, or habitually, it becomes a quality of character, and a way of life. This patience, endurance, or "constancy" in turn produces behavior which is not merely religious, nor simply pious, but positively righteous.

1:4 "So that you might be perfect and whole, lacking nothing." Perfect and whole is a pleonasm, the adjectives being nearly synonymous, and used only to heighten the effect. The quality of being "perfect and whole" is said to be the result of habitual Christian walk. The complete sense is that Constancy's "perfect work" is Christian character which is without evil intent, complete in it's outworking, and lacking no positive quality.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

This epistle is, by it's nature, an ethical treatise Not that theology is totally ignored or passed over, but much of it must be inferred.

In the general terms of this pericope, the ethical consideration involves faith during trials, and its long range results. It is a factual, rather than a theoretical statement. For James, faith is no mere theological abstraction, but a concrete ethical manifestation of spiritual reality (cf. Chapter 2. This, of course, is a theological statement, but its effect is to define faith in such a way as to deny a merely mental attitude, and to affirm a strong behavioral element.

The ethical precepts taught here include the injunction to rejoice in the face of adversity, the fact that genuine faith produces habitually righteous behavior, and that this habitual behavior leaves a permanent mark on the Christian character. Repeated testing, faithfully endured, will eventually produce a visible Christianity beautiful to see, and worthy of the term "witness."

Theologically speaking, this righteousness is not perfection. James is dealing with Christians who are righteous to some degree; but never does he intimate that perfection can be reached in this life, not that if it could be, it would be the ground of salvation. It is presented only as the goal toward which those who are already Christians must strive. There *is* in short, no contradiction between the imputed righteousness of Christ, and the fact that those to whom such righteousness is imputed must themselves seek to display righteousness in their own lives.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

From James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to God's people throughout the world; greeting. Reckon it pure joy, my brothers, when trials beset you, remembering that a proven faith produces virtuous character. And let your virtuous character come to completion, in order that you might be both whole and wholesome, lacking no godly virtue.

Second Pericope (James 1:5-8)

James 1:5-8 Εἰ δέ τις ὑμῶν λείπεται σοφίας, αἰτείτω παρὰ τοῦ διδόντος θεοῦ πᾶσιν ἀπλῶς καὶ μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος καὶ δοθήσεται αὐτῷ. ⁶ αἰτείτω δὲ ἐν πίστει μηδὲν διακρινόμενος· ὁ γὰρ διακρινόμενος ἔστιν κλύδωνι θαλάσσης ἀνεμιζομένω καὶ ῥιπιζομένω. ⁷ μὴ γὰρ οἰέσθω ὁ ἀνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος ὅτι λήμψεται τι παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου, ⁸ ἀνὴρ δίψυχος, ἀκατάστατος ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

1:6 διακρινόμενος (present participle, middle, nominative, masculine, singular) 1) (active) *separate, arrange, make a distinction, differentiate, judge, (a) pass judgment on, (b) judge correctly, (c) deliberate; as a legal technical term, render a decision.* 2) (middle) *take issue, be at odds with oneself, doubt, waver.* Here the term indicates *doubt, or vacillation.*

1:6 ἀνεμιζομένω (present participle, passive, dative, masculine, singular) *In a passive sense, to be moved about by the wind.* Literally, *windblown* or *wind-tossed.* This seems to be one of only a very few occurrences of this word. The suffix of the Greek word is the equivalent of the English suffix "-ize" and performed the same linguistic function (that is, to turn common nouns or adjectives into verbs). The English word "scrutiny" is a noun; it is made a verb by replacing the "y" ending with "-ize," thus "scrutinize." This Greek word is built in similar fashion, from the word for "wind." The noun "wind" becomes the verb "windize." Not only can this word, by its nature, be used in a variety of contexts, but by its rarity of occurrence, it is difficult to give a sharp definition. It would seem that to "windize" papers would mean to scatter them, while to "windize" a tent would mean to blow it down. The suffix means "subject to the power or process of" the noun to which it is affixed. Thus, waves, "wind-tossed."

1:6 ῥιπιζομένω (present participle, passive, dative, masculine, singular) *Blow here, toss; of wind that sets a wave in motion on the water.* It is used of the surface of the water blown upon by shifting breezes. Despite Hort's belief that the word does not here denote waves lashed by wind, the use of two terms to define the action does not suggest the state of gentle breezes on a sunny sea. A violent storm churned sea need not be the only other option. A sea can be rough and choppy without benefit of a storm.

1:8 δίψυχος (adjective, nominative, masculine, feminine, singular) *Doubting, hesitating, literally double-minded.* James may well have coined this term. No examples of it are extant from earlier times, but the word comes into widespread use in the Church Fathers, cf. Clement of Rome, Barnabas and Hermas.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

1:5 *αἰτεῖτω* is both the apodosis to the phrase "If any of you lack wisdom" and the protasis to the phrase "and it will be given" The first conditional is what Burton calls "a present general supposition" The second conditional is what he calls a "future general supposition."

1:7 *μὴ οἴεσθω* a present imperative of prohibition, indicates that something already in existence (here an attitude or thought process) is to cease. This is necessary by the nature of the case, since, if the double minded man had not begun to think there was a chance of his petition being granted, he would never have prayed.

D. Translation

1:5 But if one of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives generously to all and reproaches not, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting. For the one doubting is like a wave of the sea, being wind-tossed and driven. 7 For let not that man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord: 8 A double minded man, being unstable in all his ways.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

1:5 "But if one of you lacks wisdom" There is no real connection between verse 5 and what precedes. The only thing the pericopes have in common is the word "lack" But this is likely a literary device. Verse 4 makes it plain that the full work of patience is "being complete" and "lacking nothing" The realm of discussion there is ethical. Patience produces wholeness of character, or virtue. Verse 5 speaks of a lack, not of a moral quality we must acquire, and without which we are incomplete Christians, but of a mental or spiritual capacity for understanding, without which we may yet be morally complete, but undiscerning.

Concerning wisdom, see Prov. 2:36. It is worth noting that wisdom often referred to worldly knowledge, as opposed to religious knowledge. This was true of later Judaism especially. Hence the Jews did not view themselves as the exclusive repository of wisdom, as they did with regard to Torah. In the Talmudic treatise Berechoth 58b says, "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who has imparted of Thy wisdom to flesh and blood" This, of course, is too universal to refer only to the Jews. Cf. Wisdom 7:7 and the Epistle of Barnabas 21:5 Though this wisdom is "worldly" rather than religious, it still comes from God. Cf. Prov. 2:6; Eccl. 1:1, 3: 56; Wis. 8:21.

1:5 "Let him ask of God, who gives generously to all, and reproaches not" God's giving is described as full and free. It is gracious. It is unlike that human trait which frequently prompts the giver to recall the gift to the mind of one to whom the gift was given. Man motives for such behavior can be found. Ecc. :22, 18:1518, 20:1416. see also Isa 55:1 Put such behavior cannot be predicated of God. He has no need of man, and thus has no need to trade favor for favor with him. As has been seen, the gift of wisdom is given by God.

The absence of wisdom or discernment is a problem which is to be redressed by addressing it to God in prayer.

It is not possible to get true wisdom from study, or other earthly means; rather, wisdom is that which keeps study on course, and makes knowledge useful. In short, wisdom is not the result of study or knowledge, but the sine qua non by which study and knowledge become at all useful. There is but one Person from whom wisdom can be obtained, and He is God

1:6 "But let him ask in faith" The word "faith" throughout this epistle, connotes not a belief in doctrine, but a thoroughgoing reliance upon the activity of the personal God who cares. This definition of faith is evident at every occurrence of the word, except 2:17, 18 (twice?) 20, 24, 26. James 2:1426 specifically contrasts the two definitions of faith.

The statement then means that the very asking is an act of faith, whereby he who asks does so in wholehearted reliance upon God.

1:6 "Nothing doubting" more closely reiterates and more clearly defines what is here meant by "faith" It is a faith which acts (in asking) and has no doubts. It is not the sort of faith which puts God to the test by making full and unconditional faith in Him contingent upon the outcome of a prayer request. This is no "get-me-out-of-here-and-I'll-always-go-to-church sort of faith. The unconditional surrender is already evident in the sort of faith James enjoins upon his readers.

1:6 "The one doubting" is a man whose allegiance wavers. He is not simply a man questioning his faith, nor is he tormented by mere speculation. He is the man who, despite his divided allegiance, fully expects an answer to his prayers, or some other benefit from God. This in spite of his own lack of commitment.

1:6 "Is like a wave of the sea" This figure may refer to the surge of the sea. But it seems more likely that the separateness of each wave is the quality referred to. A wave seems to be at the mercy of the winds, as an uncommitted doubter is at the mercy of his outward circumstances.

1:6 "Being wind-tossed and driven" This picture may be of the normal instability of the sea, but is more likely of a sea made rough by storm. The hopes, aspirations and commitments of the doubting heart are pictured here.

1:7 "For let not that man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord" The "anything" in this context is wisdom (cf. y 51. The truly uncommitted or double minded man in actuality does not think he will receive anything from God, for he is "doubting" He more or less expects failure, and in case of success is prepared to write such results off to chance. The admonition merely means that

God will not give wisdom to one who is unstable, and one who is unstable need not delude himself by thinking that God will grant such a petition to him. Wisdom is granted by God and is predicated upon unwavering faith. The admonition is "let him stop thinking he will receive anything from the Lord" It seems that even blatant, outright denial of the effectiveness Is preferable to double minded deceit. It is a mental parallel to the "lukewarm" of Rev. 3:16.

1:8 "A double minded man, being unstable in all his ways" Double minded" is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "double hearted" Failure to have but one allegiance produces just such ethical and spiritual wavering. A "double minded" man has his soul divided between faith and the world, cf. 4:4 Lot's wife is a prime example of the double souled or "double minded" person, cf. I Chr. 12:33; Ecc. 1:28, 2:1214; Hos. 10:2; Mt. 6:24.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

Theologically, several points may be made. Perhaps the most important fact is that prayer (specifically, the prayer for wisdom) is to be made in unswerving trust, reliance, or faith. This is the kind of faith which James presents throughout his epistle. As has been noted, faith is here said to be that upon which an action (prayer for wisdom) must be predicated. But it is also clear that the faith which acts is the faith which believes, or trusts, God with undivided strength.

In this pericope we meet the God who gives. This is God pictured in terms of ungrudging generosity. "Common grace" or His grace to all men, is seen herere. It is the God "who gives to all without reproach" to whom prayers for wisdom must be addressed. What God gives to "all" is not stated. We know only that "wisdom" cannot be meant, for those who are double minded will not receive such wisdom from God. This is the only plausible explanation for what would otherwise be a paradox of a God "who gives to all without reproach" while the double minded man cannot expect God to give him anything.

Ethically, it might be pointed out that faith amounts to trust, almost to friendship, but assumes the acceptance of a position of subordination to God. On the other hand, double mindedness assumes a position of would be autonomy and is therefore insubordination. It is, then, a striking inconsistency that such a person might even ask God for wisdom or anything else, much less that he might expect to receive it, seeing that he seeks both control of and credit for his own life. Such a position can scarcely be called anything but spiritual schizophrenia.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

But if anyone of you needs discernment, let him ask God, who is generous and ungrudging, and he will receive it. But let him ask in unwavering reliance. For he who wavers, resembles a rough sea, being wind-tossed and driven. So that man, having two conflicting allegiances, and being unstable in every way, should not imagine that the Lord will grant his desires.

Third Pericope (James 1:9-11)

James 1:9-11 ⁹Καυχάσθω δὲ ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινὸς ἐν τῷ ὑψει αὐτοῦ, ¹⁰ ὁ δὲ πλούσιος ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου παρελεύσεται. ¹¹ ἀνέτειλεν γὰρ ὁ ἥλιος σὺν τῷ καύσωνι καὶ ἐξήρανεν τὸν χόρτον καὶ τὸ ἄνθος αὐτοῦ ἐξέπεσεν καὶ ἡ εὐπρέπεια τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ ἀπώλετο· οὕτως καὶ ὁ πλούσιος ἐν ταῖς πορείαις αὐτοῦ μαρανθήσεται.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

1:9 ταπεινὸς (adjectives, nominative, masculine, singular) *Low*; in the New Testament used only in a figurative sense 1) of *low position, poor, lowly, undistinguished*. 2) of emotional states and ways of thinking; in a good sense, *lowly, humble*. In a bad sense, *subservient, pliant, abject*. Here, the context demands the sense of humble or lowly. It refers to outward condition, such as financial circumstances, but also station in life. That such a condition had an impact upon the spiritual state seems beyond controversy

1:9 ὑψει (noun, accusative, neuter, plural) 1) literally, as a dimension or a real height; *high, height, high place, heaven*. 2) figuratively, as a designat sheion of rank or disposition; *high degree, high position, exaltation, pride, arrogance*.

1:11 καύσωνι (noun, third declension, dative, masculine, singular) *Heat* or *burning heat*. It is used in reference to the scorching heat of the sun. The Septuagint uses the term to describe the southeast wind, named *Sirroco*, which commonly dried out new vegetation. The sight of fresh morning vegetation, wilted and dry by mid afternoon, was not uncommon in Israel. Interpreters and English versions are divided on the question of whether this heat is of the sun or the wind. It seems likely that James uses the term as it was used in the Septuagint; because, unless he was using the word in a deliberately ambiguous sense, he would certainly limit the word with a third person, singular pronoun whose antecedent was the sun.

1:11 εὐπρέπεια (noun, first declension, nominative, feminine, singular) Literally, *fine appearance* or *beauty*. But there is also the suggestion of "*being fitting*." Thus, a beauty that fits or accords with the circumstances.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

Verse 11 makes use of the Gnomic Aorist to relate general truths, where English usage commonly relies upon the present tense.

D. Translation

1:9 And let the Poor brother boast in his exaltation; 10 But the rich in his poverty, because he will pass away as a flower of the grass. 11 For the sun rises with the scorching east wind and parches the grass, and its blossom falls, and the beauty of its face is destroyed; so also will the rich man fade away in his pursuits.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

1:9 "And let the poor brother boast in his exaltation" Thus begins a difficult pericope. What is certain, so far, is that the Christian brother of low estate or pedigree is to boast in his exaltation. This exaltation must be of a different quality than his material or outward poverty. His exaltation is not material, but spiritual, psychological, moral, emotional, or some other such type. Only if such is the case does James avoid an outright contradiction. If the contrast is between the man's material poverty and low station in life, on the one hand, and his spiritual blessing and high calling in Christ on the other, the nature of the contrast alone will serve in the interpretation of this pericope.

If the "boasting" is taken literally and understood not to be done in a spirit of arrogance, it may provide an interesting form of testimony. The effect would be that of a poor man happily explaining to himself and others the very different nature of his true wealth, and expounding on its superiority to that which is outward or that which is merely material.

1:10 "But the rich man in his poverty" Opinion is divided concerning the identity of the rich man. Was he a Christian or not? It seems more natural to supply the word "brother" thus making him a Christian. The main difficulties with this seem to be 1) inconsistency with James 5:1; 2) the inadequate parallelism seen in the spiritual nature of the poor man's exaltation and the rich man's material poverty" and 3) it is difficult to interpret the words "pass away and fade away" to mean a mere loss of wealth.

On the other hand, if we refuse to supply the word "brother" for the rich man, his boasting is to be taken ironical. Here, the difficulties are 1) that refusal to supply the word "brother" seems quite unnatural; 2) such irony would be excessive and inconsistent with the general tenor of the epistle; and 3) the fact that this interpretation cannot easily be governed (as this pericope still seems to be) by the theme of temptation.

Despite the fact that this interpretation accords fairly well with both 5:1 and 1:1011, the criticisms are telling. we prefer to supply "brother" make the rich man a Christian, and seek the ways in which

he "fades away" It must be remembered that the ancients did not have a broad middle class such as we have today. The gap between the rich and poor was wide, and the rich were more oppressive then they are today. Perhaps this ill accords with calling a rich ran a Christian. But the rich man, on becoming a Christian, was humiliated somewhat anyway.

If he were to remain rich, he would have to continue his oppressive practices. But if he were to remain a Christian, the oppressive practices were discontinued, even at the expense of a fortune (which may well have been given away to the brothers. Furthermore, the rich Christian had much more to lose in time of persecution than a poor Christian. It seems likely, then, that the rich man either lost his money, or he did not become a Christian. He lost in either case. But the only case in which he could boast is clear.

That the rich man must die is not necessarily the case. The conditions of both this verse and the one following are met if the rich man merely ceases to be rich, for then he has indeed passed away and his presence is no longer awe inspiring, nor is he able to oppress. However, death does provide a good backdrop for this clause. The "flower" does not perish in any way that the "leaves" of grass do not; the only difference is that the ugliness of death is apparently greater, the more beautiful or powerful its object. Thus, the point seems to be that wealth, far from preventing death, made the rich man spiritually unable to deal with it. As a rich oppressive man, he would likely never openly have recognized the spiritual realm as a reality, or admitted his (own weakness and unpreparedness for death. His precise need was to recognize his spiritual poverty, and seek a grant of righteousness.

Whether or not death is pictured here, the poverty of the rich man is obviously a spiritual poverty.

For the Old Testament text upon which this verse is dependent, see Isa. 40:58 (also quoted in I Pet. 1:24).

On transitory riches cf. Job 24:24, 27:21; Psa. 4:1620; Wis. 5:8; Mt. 6:1; Lk. 16:21, 16:131; Philo De Sacrificantibus 10 (MII:259).

1:10 "Because he will pass away as a flower of the grass." Grass is the Greek word used in the Septuagint for the Hebrew "flower of the field." The problem here, is to determine the nature of its "passing away." Is it meant to convey a permanent situation, or a temporary condition which may be remedied? While it is true that many flowers fade and droop with a lack of water, or in intense heat, only to be revived by a return to more favorable conditions, the nature of the figure seems to picture permanence. While a temporary fading is possible in nature, the context speaks not just of passing away, but of parching and blossoms falling. The result is destruction.

The problem then becomes one of interpreting what kind of death is meant. It is possible that physical death is pictured. But it is also conceivable that the death of the rich man is merely the death of the man's status. Thus, the man might be represented as the grass (with the flower) and the flower might mean nothing more than the loss of wealth.

1:11 "For the sun rises with the scorching east wind and parches the grass" The wind of the east, or, literally, "the burner" or "burning heat" refers to the hot, dry wind which blazes its way across the

desert to the southeast of Israel. (The Italian equivalent of the Arabic name for this wind is Sirocco) The sight of yesterday's flowers gaily in bloom, today drooping and faded as a result of the sun and wind, was a common sight in Palestine.

The symbolic language of verse 11 obviously must refer to the rich man "in his pursuits" How this reference is to be understood is less clear. what are the adverse circumstances. the temptations or trials to which the rich are uniquely exposed? As noted above, they might include changed moral obligations which at least threaten the rich man's wealth and social standing, and the fact that he stands to lose a great deal in times of persecution. The fact that the rich maintained their wealth by means of oppressive practices was well known. (Jesus used the rich man and his poor victim in a number of parables) However, the word "parches" might as well mean death, although it may denote a temporary condition, as noted earlier.

1:11 "And its blossom falls, and the beauty of its face is destroyed" The blossom may refer either to the man or, if the man is represented only by the parched grass, to his wealth. Thus, the fall of the blossom may mean either death, or the loss of wealth under changed outward circumstances. Here, wealth seems more likely to be meant, because wealth has always been viewed as desirable, and hence the "beauty of its presence" while only rarely have rich men been characterized as beautiful.

1:11 "So also will the rich man fade away in his pursuits." This refers neither to the rich man's daily activity nor to his travel. It may refer to those activities calculated to sustain or further his wealthy status or social position. The whole expression would then mean that the rich man does not reach his once desired goals. Instead, he ceases altogether from the pursuits by which he might reach those goals. The desires of the rich man "die on the vine" He does not die, but he ceases to be a rich man. Thus, the rich man ceases, not to be a man (death) but he ceases to be wealthy (impoverishment, persecution, donations to the poor).

Reading the figure as death, however, still makes sense, even if one views pursuits" as those daily activities calculated to further one's wealth and position. The "heat" would be age with eventual death, and "fading away" would be the natural expectation of aging and dying. One's wealth could not be easily furthered; in fact, it would start to wane and even the position of being the object of popular envy would decline. People usually prefer young, active, rich man to old, sedentary rich men. Thus, his "beauty or desirability fades.

There is really no need to seek a definitive solution to this figure. It conveys the same basic message either way it is interpreted, because of its structure. In any case, the point is that there is a spiritual reality for which riches, far from being a preparation, are a detriment to understanding.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

There is one major theological statement, but it is drawn in practical language, making the theological and ethical overlap. Put simply is it this: Spiritual considerations are more important than material considerations. This notion comes from the statement that the poor man is to "boast,"

exult, or glory in his exaltation. This exaltation is by definition nothing outward. It is in this same sphere that the rich man is to see himself as totally lacking. Again, this is by definition not material possessions. This quality is by its nature not subject to the normal means of gain. It is here not seen so much as an eternal richness (even if the idea includes preparedness for death) as it is a present condition meant to encourage the "faithful." This spiritual reality is not spelled out in great detail here. It is merely shown to be superior (and therefore ethically positive) to material realities.

There is also in this pericope a very definite ethical implication, i.e. that material superiority cannot, of itself, gain spiritual soundness. Indeed, it may well be the case that materialism is totally (and deliberately?) ignorant of the spiritual realm. The implication comes very near a claim that wealth and spiritual soundness are contradictory. Stated in general terms it seems that James implies that materialism and spirituality are mutually exclusive.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

But let the humble brother exult in his high estate and the rich brother in his humiliation, because he will wither as the blossom of a wild flower. For the heat of the sun and the dry wind come out of the east and parches the wild flower and its blossom falls and the beauty of its presence is destroyed. So also will the rich man in the midst of his pursuits fade away.

Fourth Pericope (James 1:12-15)

James 1:12-15 ¹²Μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν, ὅτι δόκιμος γενόμενος λήμψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς ὃν ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν. ¹³Μηδεὶς πειραζόμενος λεγέτω ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ πειράζομαι· ὁ γὰρ θεὸς ἀπείραστός ἐστιν κακῶν, πειράζει δὲ αὐτὸς οὐδένα. ¹⁴Ἐκαστος δὲ πειράζεται ὑπὸ τῆς ἴδιας ἐπιθυμίας ἔξελκόμενος καὶ δελεαζόμενος· ¹⁵εἴτα ἡ ἐπιθυμία συλλαβοῦσα τίκτει ἀμαρτίαν, ἡ δὲ ἀμαρτία ἀποτελεσθεῖσα ἀποκύει θάνατον.

A. Textual Criticism

1:12 ". . . a crown of life, which" 1) "He promised," 2) "the Lord promised," 3) "God promised." The reading "He promised" deserves a better rating than it is assigned by the United Bible Society Text.

According to the internal evidence, our reading is the favorite, being both the most difficult reading and the shortest. The statement is general enough to be difficult, and it is easy to see how later scribes would be tempted to add an explicit subject to the verb.

According to the external evidence, support for our reading is early, widespread, and includes the best manuscripts.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

1:12 δόκιμος (noun, second declension, nominative, masculine, singular) 1) *approved, tried and (found to be) true, genuine*; 2) *respected, esteemed*; 3) *precious*. Here, the sense is approved or genuine. The clause is well rendered "having been approved" or "having shown himself genuine."

1:12 Crown: In antiquity, crowns had two basic forms and functions, and there was some overlapping of these. In the ancient monarchies, a crown usually denoted royalty, occasionally other nobility, and rarely such personal honor or reward. Crowns were of two types: those which developed from a turban became royal and priestly crowns, made originally of cloth and finally of gold, and those which developed from the headband, and became the wreath bestowed specifically as an honor or reward to esteemed individuals such as athletes.

Other honors were also accompanied by a crown. This crown also eventually came to be fashioned of gold.

In this passage, either the crown itself is said to be "of life" or the crown, if real, accompanies the reward. Thus, the crown itself may be a purely literary figure, meaning "the honor of acceptance" i.e. life, or it may be an actual reward showing such acceptance and life. In either case, God is the one who gives the reward, making it incomparable, with or without a crown.

1:14 ἐξελκόμενος (present participle, passive, nominative, masculine, singular) *draw out, drag away, take in tow*. Here, especially because of the following term, drawn out seems to be the best sense. the words are suggestive of fishing.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

James 1:13-15 contains several verbs in the "Gnomic present" These are fair approximations of the English present tense used to express maxims, "timeless truths" or other generalities. These Gnomic present verbs are translated "untempted," tempts," brings forth," and "produces."

D. Translation

1:12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation, because when he has been approved he will receive a crown of life, which He promised to those who love Him. 13 Let no one, being tempted, say "I am tempted by God." For God is untempted by evil, and He Himself tempts no one. 14 But each one is tempted by his own lusts, being drawn forth and enticed. 15 Then lust, having conceived, afterward brings forth sin; and sin, when it is mature, produces death.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

While this pericope is much longer than the brief pronouncements of blessing found in Matthew 5:3-11, it is probably a teaching originally given by Jesus, and now elaborated by James. This treatment may take the original words of Jesus and elaborate upon them, or simply paraphrase Jesus. In either case, there is here nothing like innovation. Cf. Mt. 19:17, Lk. 8:15, Jn. 14:15, 23, and L5:10.

1:12 "Blessed is the man who endures temptation." The temptation in view here is likely lust, or covetousness, or something of the kind, for it must be "endured" rather than merely resisted. It seems to point to an ongoing, or chronic condition rather than an occasional outbreak, though of course too fine a distinction should not be forced upon the passage. However, it seems certain that 1) such temptation does not refer to a mere act, 2) that it is internal, and 3) that it is frequently repeated, incessant, or continual. The sense is that of enduring without yielding; one can scarcely be said to endure temptation by giving in to it.

1:12 "Because when he has been approved." The idea is that of endurance of repeated or continuous temptation without yielding to it. The person who endures in such a fashion may be said to have "shown himself approved," or "demonstrated his genuineness." This, of course, is in reference to God, since the endurance of temptation has a quality of inwardness which hides it from the eyes of

men, but which is clearly and eternally visible to God.

Nor does this "genuineness," or "state of being approved" have anything to do with sinless perfection. James makes no such claim; he is not even as specific as we might wish him to be in regard to how such endurance is produced. He merely states that those who through endurance overcome the assault of their besetting sins are seen by God to be genuine seekers after Himself. This is not to say that they have arrived, or that they never sin again, or even that they will not fall victim to other vices. It says only that overcomers are the genuine articles.

The question remains as to the time of this approval, whether it is in this life or the next. Precisely at what point can one be said to be approved? The only clue from this clause is an inference from the fact that "endures" connotes continuous or repeated action, or a continuous present. Thus, he who endures does so until the end, or until death. Again it should be noted that this does not mean that every single sinful act or impulse is overcome, but that the basic character of the one approved is that of an overcomer. This is true even if instead of death, we assume the declared "end" to refer to the temptation itself, or to the period of that temptation. Thus, one may be severely tempted by certain types of sin for several years before age (rather than death) delivers him from further temptation.

1:12 "He will receive a crown of life." This clause confirms the notion that the time of approval is when God hands our rewards, or after death. The crown of life is a reward given after death.

1:12 "Which He promised to those who love Him." It is not known where the promise cited here is to be found, or if it is only a theological inference on the part of James. But the striking thing about the statement is its emphasis on love. It will be seen later that James, far from being poles apart from Paul, really shares with him his emphasis on faith as trustful obedience. Here he strikes a note more in accord with John, i.e. the emphasis on love (but Cf. also Paul in I Corinthians 13).

How ones love for God gains him this crown of life is not specifically stated, but the entire epistle deals with how love behaves itself toward others. The only thing of importance, therefore, is the promise itself. God promised, and men can but accept that. Having accepted the promise, there need be no wondering about specifics. There need be no emotional frenzy to whip up a deep love. If such were the case, specifics would have been given. As it is, all that is required is implicit in the behavior of love, which not only is implied in all scripture, but is the very essence of the rest of this epistle.

1:13 "Let no one, being tempted, say 'I am tempted of God'." In ancient polytheism were gods who did tempt people. Greek mythology is peopled with the offspring of various unions between gods and men. Much evil behavior was justified on the basis of the will of one god or another (Cf. particularly the complicity of the priests of Isis in the account of the seduction of the virtuous Paulina by the Roman in Josephus). There is a peculiarly modern ring to such a warning as this. The philosophical reasoning that God must be evil because man, his best creation, is tempted to that which He wont allow, is fallacious. It is claimed that God is inconsistent, and therefore evil, or that He made man in such a way that he sins by doing no more than what comes naturally. This is more abstract than the ancient practice of charging a god with a specific temptation. But even the ancient practice has its adherents today, in those who charge God with leading them to do what is contrary

to his teaching.

Both the abstract statement ("God made man sinful") and the particular assertion ("God is leading me to do such and such a thing") are denied, though the issue is dealt with more plainly at the level of human specifics.

At the level of abstraction the statement that God does not tempt men to sin is sufficiently broad to clear Him in any case. But it is a negative assertion, giving no indication of where, in human experience, sin does originate. That is given next. The positive statement is that all human acts of sin come from human nature. The frailty of human nature is thus stated to be sufficient cause for all human sin. While this is still a general statement, it is less abstract, and explains all specific *acts* of sin as lust that has *not* been endured, but gratified.

1:13 "For God is untempted by evil, and He himself tempts no one." Two things are stated forthrightly in these clauses. Both are given as reasons why God is not to be charged with causing sin. Far from doing evil, God cannot even be *tempted* to do evil. God is always assumed to be right and righteous, and He cannot compromise His character.

Furthermore, God does not desire to see others sin, admonishes men to be righteous, is grieved by sin, and therefore cannot be thought of as tempting men. For this, would indeed be inconsistent with His nature.

1:14 "But each one is tempted by his own lusts." That one is tempted by his own lusts confirms specifically what was only implied in v. 12, i.e. that such temptation refers to sensual impulses and desires. There, however, temptation is viewed as that which is endured without yielding; here, it is viewed as the same lusts being gratified. A person's temptations are peculiarly his own; that is his nature is prone to certain types of sinful behavior, whether sexual, material, or other. The sin of covetousness, to take but one example, is not brought forth *anew* with each occasion for its gratification; it is always present within the very nature of the covetous man.

1:14 "Being drawn forth and enticed" is taken from the language of fishermen. It means literally to awaken one and excite his interest, and then to lure him to some specific bait. This phrase later found use in reference to hunting, and finally to harlotry. This further confirms the nature of the trial being spoken of here, as sensual. It also confirms, by way of contrast, what is meant in v. 12 by "endurance." The language gives a perfect description of what happens during temptation. Either it is endured, i.e. suffered, but not gratified, or circumstances conspire to draw it out of hiding within the psyche, where it meets with approval and further goading, after which a man is nearly powerless to refuse its strength. Again, lust provides the most vivid example. A man who has a problem with his sexual behavior, may be said to be "drawn forth," by promising circumstances. He will investigate any possibility of satisfying himself, just as hungry fish investigate every ripple in the water caused by falling insects. Once he has identified a specific "lust object," it is usually too late to refrain even if such an inconsistent desire should press itself upon him. And, again, like the fish, once the object of satisfaction has been identified, the hook or sin is set, or its net is dropped. This is a graphic description of the very psychology of sin as it becomes behavior.

1:15 "Then lust, having conceived." The process of "being drawn forth and enticed" is here characterized as conception. This changes the figure slightly and personifies sin. The process involved when lust is "drawn forth and enticed" is where the sinful act itself is "conceived." Henceforth, sin will no longer be an invisible part of personal psychology, but a visible, historical fact. It is the swimming after the "bait" with a "meal" foremost in one's mind that is here viewed as the conception of lust.

1:15 "Afterward brings forth sin." Note the continuance of the figurative language. That lust, having "drawn forth" a man, "conceives," and now is said to "bring forth." Thus we have the results of passion. Here is where the act of sin is "born." The consummation of sin in behavior is the result of the union of man's sinful nature and the sought for accommodating circumstances. Cf. Paul's admonition to "make no provision for the flesh."

1:15 "And sin, when it is mature, produces death." The personification continues with the use of "matures" and "produces," Although the language has now descended from human terms to those of animal husbandry and agriculture. (For the same thought in the language of commerce, Cf. Rom. 6:23.) This is the least original statement of this passage. The Bible is full of the sin-death equation, from Genesis to Revelation. But the statement, for all its unoriginality, is still true, and it represents the conclusion of the thought. Once the act of sin is committed, once it becomes history, it produces death. Sometimes the death includes physical death, but what is signified here is probably limited to the spiritual death widely attested by the carnal. This is not only true of the "original sin," it applies in principle to every subsequent act of human sin. This has its ultimate expression at the judgment.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

This pericope is basically a strong theological statement. The ethical considerations are minimal except in so far as immoral behavior is produced by an immoral nature. It need only be noted that the man who endures temptation, who fails to yield to it, is called "blessed," or "happy." There is a striking contrast between the "crown of life" which is the result of "being approved," after a lifetime characterized by "enduring" sin, and the "death" which is produced by yielding to sin and gratifying it in the flesh with sinful behavior. Sin is (ethically) a matter of (spiritual) life or death.

This pericope also teaches a great deal about God. It is affirmed that He is a faithful God, who will honor his promises. It clearly states that God is not tempted by sin himself; nor does He tempt men. It is clearly implied that sin is contrary to the will and character of God. God is only God, and sin is wholly alien to Him. His nature has no part in sin. By force of definition alone, God can neither sin nor tempt to sin, and still lay claim to being God.

The character of sin is also made plain in this pericope. Sin can be endured. This sin is that which "is common to man;" it is part of his very nature. Endurance is enjoined without being defined. The power or strength for endurance is left untouched. Only the result of endurance and the final "approval" are subjects of discussion.

Likewise, the result of sin gratified, or death, is treated. But "sin gratified" receives treatment where "sin endured" does not, and it is worth repeating that the psychological, spiritual predisposition to sin, i.e. theological sin, must be endured or gratified, and it is gratification of inward, spiritual sin which gives rise to outward sin.

It has been held by many that *James* was originally a Jewish work into which some Christian ideas were inserted. One evidence given in support of this contention is that the Law and works are prominent throughout the epistle.

It might be argued that this passage is irreconcilably Jewish, from the statements "blessed is he who endures temptation (by means of human strength) as opposed to blessed is he who believes. For he will receive the crown of life (eternal life) which was promised to those who love Him. It is clear that an ethical imperative is tied to an eschatological promise.

Our problem revolves around our understanding of Law and the Christian relationship to it. Jesus said "If you love me, keep my commands." We have no soteriological or ethical interest *per se* in the Law. That is, the Law cannot save us. nor even guarantee the development of character in those who observe it. But we should observe it regardless of how we feel about it. because we love Jesus. Furthermore, we must recognize that although the Law is powerless to form character, it is essential to the *measurement* of character.

And it seems to have been character which was missing from those who legalistically followed the Law. It was character at which the Law aimed, but which Jesus defined in the Sermon on the Mount.

It is character which Paul tried to develop, when after dismantling the Law and teaching doctrine, he invariably concluded with ethical discourse.

A paradox, of sorts, arises from all of this. If one's behavior is in need of the Law, his character is not in keeping with either the Law or the new birth. If, on the other hand, the Holy Spirit has wrought in a man Christian character, the Law is superfluous.

It is here that the "perfect Law of Liberty" of James is to be grasped. For even a Christian's character is neither beyond temptation, nor always free from base desires. And because character is measured against Law, Law cannot simply be discarded. For although a Christian has temptation, he also has power to overcome it, and in the Law an objective method of determining what temptation looks like, and when it has been bested. Therefore, an appeal to the Law is not of necessity legalism.

Thus, when Jesus says "If you love me, you will keep my commandments," He is giving utterance to a sort of tautology. For both the love He desires and the commandments He enjoins are of the fabric of the character He epitomized and fostered.

The Law of Liberty does not have a curse attached to it as the Law of the Old Testament had. For its demands have been met and its penalty paid. It remains only as a backdrop over which Christian

character when fully developed, towers.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

Blessed is he who faithfully withstands temptation. Because when he has been approved, he will receive the reward of life, which was promised to those who love Him. But let no one, when he is being tested, justify failure by saying "I am only doing what God made me to do." For God can neither be tempted to such evil, nor does He tempt men. But each one is tempted by his own lusts, and by them he is lured and baited. And when lust conceives, she can bring forth only sin. And sin, when he matures, produces death.

Fifth Pericope (James 1:16-18)

James 1:16-18 ¹⁶Μὴ πλανᾶσθε, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί. ¹⁷ πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ καὶ πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον ἄνωθέν ἔστιν καταβαῖνον ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν φώτων, παρ' ὧ οὐκ ἔνι παραλλαγὴ ἡ τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα. ¹⁸ βουληθεὶς ἀπεκύησεν ἡμᾶς λόγῳ ἀληθείας εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἀπαρχήν τινα τῶν αὐτοῦ κτισμάτων.

A. Textual Criticism

Some fuss has been made over the somewhat unclear statement of James 1:17 with regard to "shadow of turning." Although the phrase occurs in several variants, and the evidence is scattered and uncertain, the sense is not impaired. At points such as these, it is entirely possible that a sound English translation, which takes all the variant readings into account, is as accurate as the original, troublesome Greek.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

1:17 παραλλαγὴ (noun, first declension, nominative, feminine, singular) *Change or variation*, of or caused by heavenly bodies. Here, the Father of lights is referred to as that heavenly light with whom there is no change. He is thus unique, and can only be identified as God, the Creator of all other lights.

1:17 ἀποσκίασμα (noun, third declension, nominative, neuter, singular) *Shadow*. The word is rare and difficult to define precisely. It seems to be *natural shadow* such as cast by the sun; variations include those changes such as occur in the length of shadows during a day, or the angular variation seen from season to season. Perhaps the phrase "shadow of turning" is best taken as a unit than as two individual words.

1:18 κτισμάτων (noun, third declension, genitive, neuter, plural) In Biblical literature *that which is created by God*; or *creature*. Here, it is difficult to know whether the context restricts its scope to men in particular, or leaves it unrestricted to all of creation. Many scholars understand it to refer to men only. But the reference to God as the "Father of lights" seems to indicate that "we" are "first fruits" of all of God's creatures. The meaning seems to be "good and perfect gifts come down to us from Him who created both us and His gifts. And He chose us to be a kind of first fruits of His creature.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

1:17 ἔνι with a negative was used in Koine, in the sense "there is."

1:18 εἰσ τὸ εἶναι . . . expresses purpose; τινα here means "a kind of."

D. Translation

1:16. Be not deceived, my beloved brothers. 17. Every good gift and every perfect present is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, in whom there is neither mutability, nor shadow cast by turning. 18. So willing, He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of His creatures.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

1:16 "Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers" is a formula which precedes a pointed utterance. The contrast is between the good gifts which God sends and the temptation, which does not originate with God (vv. 12-15).

1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect present." Gift" and "present" translate as two different words. The possibility exists that this line, being a hexameter, is a quoted line of poetry, in which case the use of two different words may be a purely literary device. However, Philo makes a distinction between the two. The latter word is stronger and contains the idea of perfection and greatness, which is not found in the former. (cf. Philo De Cherub 25 and Le Leg Alleg 3:70) It seems likely that, poetic license notwithstanding, the former word for gift is used for ordinary gifts, and the second for extraordinary gifts, perhaps rewards or answers to prayer. Or what better gifts than Savior and salvation? A possible translation for the first word for gift is "giving" The reading would then be "every good giving, and every perfect gift." This reading seems at least as likely as the first, and demonstrates that both the act of giving, as well as the gift itself, is good. That there must be a parallelism here is a gratuitous assumption. The giving, then, is said to be "good" and the gift "perfect." Perfect, in this case, means that there is neither trace nor semblance of evil in the gift.

1:17 "Is from above" indicates the source of gift and implies the character of the giver, It thus supports the notion of perfection in giving.

1:17 "Coming down from the Father of lights" The use of the word "Father" is likely in accord with Jewish usage, indicating the Father of creation. The restriction "of the lights" indicates a comparison of the stable, spiritual light who creates with the turning, physical lights which are themselves created and pronounced "good." The meaning seems to be that sending good gifts is part of God's very nature.

The figure makes God the "sun of blessing." The comparison with the "day-star" is suggested by the fact that the gifts are said to "come down from above," where both God and the sun dwell. The sun,

essential to life, is but another of God's creations, and here serves as a reminder of God's relationship to creation. Just as sunlight, that essential gift, "comes down," so do all other gifts "come down" from Him who created all.

The whole teaching seems to be this: We can expect nothing but good gifts to come from the righteous creator who deliberately made us the first fruits of His creation.

1:17 "In whom is neither mutability, nor shadow cast by turning" Here, the "Father of lights" is said to be unchanging. This statement gives the appearance of Platonism. The first clause might easily be understood as denying that God changes in His form or function. That is, He Himself does not change. The second clause may then be understood to deny that there is even so much as the impression of change. "He neither changes in fact, nor even in appearance" might then be the force of the full statement.

1:18 "So willing, He brought us forth by the word of truth" This is a statement of three facts: 1) God willed to create us: He wanted us. 2) He brought us forth, or created us, just as He willed. 3) We were created through the Word of Truth.

Only the last phrase offers a point for discussion; Is the "Word" here referred to Christ, or the spoken word of God's creating as seen in Genesis? Indeed, both may be meant, for they may both be viewed as the same thing, but such is not obvious from the text. Such a point of theology may well have been assumed by the author, but it cannot be proven here.

The grammar of the text does not, however, seem to indicate personal agency, and it might be reasonably concluded that the "person" of Christ is not in view here.

1:18 "That we might be a kind of first fruits of His creatures" This is a statement of purpose. The very reason God created us is that we might "be the first fruits of His creatures." The entire problem of this verse vanishes when we understand this clause as designating purpose, for then the first clause speaks of man as "the crown of creation," and this clause points out that his purpose is to be "first fruits."

It should be noted that "first fruits" were sacred and therefore were frequently offered to God (cf. II Thes. 2:13, Rev. 14:4). This makes the problem in this verse more pointed, for some controversy surrounds this verse regarding the identity of "first fruits of creation." One position equates all men (man in general) with the first fruits of creation as a whole, that is, man as the crown of creation. The other position believes Christians are the first fruits of salvation, being "brought forth" in the new birth, by the "word of truth," or the Gospel.

The statement in its entirety seems to encompass all of time by eternity "at both ends." God created man in the beginning of this cosmos to the end that he might be the first fruits of the next cosmos, the next creation. This was begun, and will be completed by the word of truth.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

Ethically, it should be noted first that all good gifts are God's. The gifts themselves come from Him who created both us and the gifts. This means that the quality of things may be compared to the character of the giver/creator. If they do not measure up to His character, they are not from Him.

The other ethical element in this passage deals with "first fruits." There can be little or no doubt that the reference is to redemption, even the incomplete or temporal redemption enjoyed by Christians now. All of nature one day will be redeemed according to Romans 8, but at present it is under the curse of Genesis 3. Thus, man as the crown of creation will become the first fruits of the great future redemption. This moves us into the arena of theology.

Redemption is itself one of God's good gifts. The rest of nature as well as what are described as "perfect presents" are for man in general, but for Christians especially. These gifts and presents are to have the function of aiding man in coming to redemption. Thus the gifts of nature are good gifts and are to be used both for man's benefit and as a reflection of their creator. And the "perfect presents," whether they refer to special needs of individuals, personal aptitudes and mentalities, or whatever else, probably have more to do with man's inner subjective workings than the objective "outside" world. Man is given the subjective apparatus with which to see, know, and appreciate God and His handiwork if only he will (Romans 1). This is consistent with God's purpose for man, i.e. that he be "a kind of (temporal?) first fruits."

Theologically, it has already been noted that according to this passage, man was created to be a kind of "first fruits." The implication is that the specific kind of first fruits man was created to become involves redemption of some sort. The concept of "first fruits" is necessarily one involving change, growth, and maturity. And the only sense in which man stands above the rest of creation is in his moral-spiritual nature, i.e. that which makes him peculiarly susceptible to redemption. If we are correct in the assumption that man is the eternal "first fruits of His creatures," it must be remembered that it is a temporal process of growth and maturity.

Other theological assumptions clearly visible in this pericope include the notions that God is 1) immutable, 2) creator, 3) volitional, 4) the author of the "word of truth," and 5) gracious provider.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

Make no mistake, my beloved brothers; every good gift and every gracious grant is from heaven, and is bestowed by the creator of the heavens, who neither repents, nor forgets and who deliberately brought us forth so that we might be a kind of first fruits of His work.

Sixth Pericope (James 1:19-21)

James 1:19-21 ¹⁹Ἔστε, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί· ἔστω δὲ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι, βραδὺς εἰς τὸ λαλῆσαι, βραδὺς εἰς ὄργην· ²⁰ ὄργὴ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ οὐκ ἔργαζεται. ²¹ διὸ ἀποθέμενοι πᾶσαν ῥυπαρίαν καὶ περισσείαν κακίας ἐν πραύτητι, δέξασθε τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον τὸν δυνάμενον σῶσαι τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

1:21 ῥυπαρίαν (noun, first declension, accusative, feminine, singular) Literally, *dirt* or *filth*. Used figuratively in the field of ethics to denote *moral uncleanliness*, *vulgarity*, *sordid avarice*, and *greediness*. Here, the word likely is restricted to the sphere of personal morality because of its association with *prevailing evil*.

1:21 παρισσείαν (noun, first declension, accusative, feminine, singular) *Surplus, abundance, greatly enlarged*. Here, by extension, the meaning seems to mean *prevailing*, *at large*, or *general*, in this case denoting the general evil of society as a whole in whatever form it may take. This is a deliberate contrast with "filthiness." The whole expression seems to refer to specific personal immorality, as well as to the current of socially acceptable evils against which the Christian must swim.

1:21 πραύτητι (noun, third declension, dative, feminine, singular) *Gentleness; humility; courtesy, considerateness; meekness*.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

1:19 Note the presence in the threefold exhortation of two articular infinitives and a noun as the objects of their respective prepositions. The article was regularly used to emphasize the substantive nature of the verbal concept. Thus, the notion of action-as-substantive twice is made the object of a preposition, while state-of-being-as-substantive is made an object of the preposition once. The exhortation could be rendered woodenly as follows: "Let every man be quick into the action of hearing, slow into the action of speaking, slow into the state of anger."

D. Translation

1:19 You know *this*, my beloved brothers; but let every man be quick to hear, slow to anger. 20.

Because the anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God. 21. Therefore, putting away all filthiness and prevailing wickedness, receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

1:19 "You know *this*, my beloved brothers." Though this may equally well be an imperative statement from the grammatical standpoint, the text seems to be more a gentle reminder than a new dogma. James is not demanding that his readers pay strict attention while he puts forth a new position. That human anger was inconsistent with divine righteousness was well known. James only paused long enough to remind his readers of the practical outworking of such a belief.

1:19 "But let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger." The exhortation is threefold. "Quick to hear" means eager to listen, learn, and understand, and to act upon what is learned; to obey. This is how Jesus spoke when he said "let those who have ears to hear."

"Slow to speak" refers not simply to being slow to teach, or pass on what is heard, but implies developing a sense of importance concerning what is spoken. One who is slow to speak can analyze the feasibility of his intended response by asking himself the following questions: Is it true? Is it second-hand gossip? Can it hurt anyone? Is it important? Is a response even called for? Is the response I propose fitting? In the light of the following exhortation, concerning wrath, it is obvious that the primary intention of the exhortation concerns angry, quick, or heated responses. The contrast is twofold; *the wrath of man v. the righteousness of God*, and *thoughtless or angry speech v. meek acceptance of the word*. cf. Sir. 5:11.

"Slow to anger" is a separate exhortation. It gives a special, pointed meaning to the exhortation to slowness of speech and yet remains a distinct directive. The anger or wrath rejected seems to partake of the same character as the speech repudiated before. It seems to be a spontaneous, ill advised and unfitting response. Its cause is implied by, but not limited to, what is heard. That is, "be quick to listen and learn, but do not hastily respond either in speech or in anger. cf. Ec. 7:9. The fact that improper nonverbal behavior is included in the prohibition tacitly includes it in the earlier encouragement, i.e. the obedience included in "hearing."

1:20 "Because the anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God." This verse gives the reason why anger and hasty speech is ill advised: Human ire cannot exhibit, produce, or practice divine righteousness. God's righteousness is absolute and His will does not depend upon human causes or behavior. The implicit lesson about God and His righteousness (which is to characterize Christians, cf. Mt. 6:33) is that it is absolute and deals with people rather than circumstances.

The anger of man is purely human, and stands in stark contrast to the righteousness of God. The contrast is not so much to be understood as lying between anger and righteousness (although that affords serious study) as between man and God. The "anger" and "righteousness," while grammatically the main substantives of the sentence, are only conceptual appositives more clearly defining the characters of man and God respectively. Man is he who is prone to respond in anger, while God is characterized by righteousness.

1:21 "Therefore, putting away all filthiness and prevailing wickedness . . ." It is doubtful that "filthiness" and "prevailing wickedness" can be correlated neatly with "speech" and "anger." It must be remembered that though the major emphasis has now shifted to Christian worship and behavior, the development of Christian character is the theme by which this verse must be interpreted. cf. Col. 3:8, I Pet. 2:1.

As was noted earlier (Lexical and Topical Study) "filthiness and prevailing wickedness" most likely represent the personal and social evils by which one might shape his ambitions and behavior. The context seems to support this notion. This clause is a conclusion from what precedes. More specifically, it is an inference from the contrast between God and man, and not from man's speech.

The argument is an enthymeme, the spoken premise being "man's anger cannot accomplish God's righteousness," and the unspoken premise being "we are all to accomplish God's righteousness." The conclusion is the theologically pregnant statement concerning the "engrafting of the word."

Thus the argument denies all of natural man's responses, as well as what might be socially acceptable. They all run counter to God's righteousness, and, perhaps in some sense, frustrate it altogether.

Viewed from this perspective, human anger is but one example of an evil response which is both personal and socially acceptable, and is to be "put away" with "all" other forms of "filthiness and prevailing wickedness." It is worth pointing out that if this view is correct, James sounds rather like the ethically high-minded covenanters of Qumran.

1:21 "Receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls." Receiving the engrafted word, in this context, does not refer either to the initial acceptance of the gospel, nor to a merely intellectual or mental assent to the tenets of the Christian faith, but to a repeated or continuous *practice* of "the word" which exhibits God's righteousness. It parallel to being a practitioner of the word, and mirrors Jesus' teachings to the effect that outward behavior reflects the inner state.

To receive with meekness stands in exemplary contrast to the "wrath of man." The "engrafted word" is not innate, but has been grafted in. It is not natural but alien. The context demands a state of mind which must be consciously acknowledged as superior and cultivated, not a state productive of natural reactions. The purpose of being quick to hear is to have more a the word engrafted. The purpose of being slow to speak and slow to anger is to give one time to react with than unnatural character of God's righteousness instead of man's natural, angry, defensive unrighteousness. This engrafted word is the imposition on the human soul of the "perfect law" of verse 25.

This "word" is further described as that which is always able "constantly to save your souls." This, being concerned with godly character, does not speak about a "once-for-all-salvation," but is more akin to the concept of Paul's "work-out-your-own-salvation. cf. Ex. 9:3, Deut. 30:14.

As noted above, Meekness, not anger is to characterize Christians. In addition to this contrast, we have also the contrasts of speaking hastily as opposed to receiving the word, and most important, the contrast of the inability of natural responses to accomplish the righteousness of God contrasted with the "engrafted word" that is able constantly "to save your souls."

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

Ethically, this pericope enjoins thoughtful response, and rejects hasty, unfitting responses to life's situations. It prohibits anger on the basis of its inability to accomplish the righteousness of God, who is the author of that word which is able to save. It is clear that human anger is not only ineffective, but gets the cart before the horse. We have need of God's salvation, whereas he has no need at all for our anger.

Theologically, there seems to be a connection between God's righteousness and the engrafted word which is the inverse of the relationship which quick speech and anger bear to "all filthiness and prevailing wickedness." Man needs but cannot accomplish by natural means, the righteousness of God. Yet in meekness, he can receive the engrafted word. The implication is surely that this engrafted, implanted, alien word is itself God's righteousness; for the soul which is unable to accomplish God's righteousness can yet be saved (and behave saved!).

It must be remembered that Christian character and behavior are foremost in the thought of James. He here states that the anger of man cannot accomplish the righteousness of God, and that Christians (his addressees) should put away *all* filthiness and prevailing wickedness. The implication is clearly that neither man's nature nor his social institutions will achieve God's righteousness. The saving of their souls, however, seems to refer to the whole range of salvation, temporal as well as eternal. Both the infinitive "to save" and the participle "putting away" are aorist, indicating acts viewed as completed. In this context, the acts are probably to be viewed as sequential, the "putting away" of wickedness occurring prior to "receiving the engrafted word." The word "receive" is also aorist, denoting a simple act or fact, rather than continuous, repeated, or habitual routine. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that the salvation under discussion denotes a one time issue received subsequently to "rejecting" worldly or natural responses, and which is to fill the ethical void left by the rejected natural values.

Yet the emphasis of the vocabulary is clearly ethical, not soteriological in the usual sense. Furthermore, it is directed to those who are already Christians. The conclusion is clear; salvation has ethical implications. In fact, for James, (as we shall have occasion to notice more than once) the ethical and temporal implications of salvation are of far more importance than the eternal implications. For James, like Jesus, is unable to separate eternal destination from the tell tale temporal evidence of the fact.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

You already know this; but let every one of you be eager to listen and understand, but slow to react verbally and slow to become angry, because human anger cannot carry out divine righteousness. Therefore, discarding every personal vice and pervasive social evil, receive in meekness and docility the engrafted word which alone can sustain you.

Seventh Pericope (James 1:22-25)

James 1:22-25 ²² Γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταὶ λόγου καὶ μὴ μόνον ἀκροαταὶ παραλογιζόμενοι ἐαυτούς. ²³ ὅτι εἴ τις ἀκροατὴς λόγου ἐστὶν καὶ οὐ ποιητής, οὗτος ἔοικεν ἀνδρὶ κατανοοῦντι τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ. ²⁴ κατενόησεν γὰρ ἐαυτὸν καὶ ἀπελήλυθεν καὶ εὐθέως ἐπελάθετο ὅποιος ἦν. ²⁵ ὁ δὲ παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας καὶ παραμείνας, οὐκ ἀκροατὴς ἐπιλησμονῆς γενόμενος ἀλλὰ ποιητὴς ἔργου, οὗτος μακάριος ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ ἔσται.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

1:23 κατανοοῦντι (present, active, participle, dative, masculine, singular) *Notice, observe carefully.*
2) *Look at with reflection or consideration, contemplate, consider.* 3) *Consider, notice, fix the eyes upon, concentrate on.* Here, a man is said to concentrate upon his reflection in a mirror.

1:25 παρακύψας (first active, participle, aorist, nominative, masculine, sing) Literally, *stoop over, bend down.* Figuratively, *look into.* The expression apparently was derived early from stooping over to see one's reflection in water, and later in a mirror. It came to have the figurative meaning of "looking into." Here it does not connote a searching scrutiny, but a glance or superficial look. It is contrasted with "contemplate." This is a deliberate switch in language, using the derived from "looking at a reflection" to denote deep study, and the word used of study, for the man's look in the mirror.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

1:24 A succession of verbs in the order of aorist, perfect, aorist. C. F. D. Moule interprets it "no sooner has he looked than he has gone away and forgotten." The aorists are best understood as gnomic aorists and the perfect as an historical perfect.

1:25 Note the verbal substantive "forgetful."

D. Translation

1:22. And be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23. Because if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man contemplating his own face in a mirror. 24. For after he contemplated himself and gone, he immediately forgot what he was like. 25. But the one having looked into the perfect law of liberty, and having continued, being not a forgetful hearer,

but a doer of work, is blessed into understanding.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

1:22 "And be doers of the word, and not hearers only." In every age and culture, ethics have been given a better hearing than following. It seems that it is not an obvious fact that doing must follow hearing, if an ethical system is to be effective in producing a desired sort of behavior. James is interested in the development and strengthening of Christian character. Character development depends upon 1) hearing and understanding ethical precepts, 2) concentrating upon them to produce the desired kind of thinking, 3) practicing the proper sort of behavior. Thinking the right thoughts and doing the right actions mutually reinforce each other. 4) The result is the right behavior which stems from proper thinking or right attitudes. This is character. James is thinking of those who hear the law read or the gospel preached, and who contemplate it, and who perhaps know the precepts very well, but who do not practice what they know. It is a theme which recurs in "apparent religion versus real worship" (James 1:2627. And "Faith without works versus works of faith" (James 2:1420. The theme is not "how to get saved," but "how is saved behaved," or what is the character of saved men?

1:22 "Deceiving yourselves" James immediately warns that to hold the notion that hearing is sufficient is "self deceptive." (Cf. Mt. 7:21-27, Rom. 2:13, Lk. 8:21) Such deception results when it is held that "faith alone can save," or that hearing and merely believing either saves or as here makes one moral.

1:23 Here, James likens the man who listens to the word however diligently, and yet does not conform his character and behavior to its teaching to a man who stares at his image in a mirror. He is said to contemplate or concentrate on (see lexical study, to carefully consider the image of his face in a mirror. It matters not how diligently one may study his own image, nor how familiar he is with it; for he can retain no experience of it. That is, the experience of observing one's face in a mirror can have no effect beyond the experience itself. So also, one who hears the words often and with interest, yet fails to practice what he believes to be right, passes judgment upon himself as a fool.

1:23 "Because if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer" This is the first part of a conditional clause (the protasis) given to explain how failure to perform that which one believes is self deception. The case is built on a simile, involving one who is in fact a hearer. Whether or not he actually believes what he hears is not itself the issue, although it must be assumed that he is. No other possibility is consistent with the fact that the epistle was written.

Now the one who is hearer is further qualified by the statement that he emphatically is not a doer of the word, or a practitioner of the system. He is not living the essence of his "belief" This is the

nature of the one who will be the subject of the simile.

1:23 "He is like a man contemplating his own face in a mirror" This completes the simile per se, although some explanation must follow. The man who hears and believes the word, is like a man who looks at a reflection of his own face in a mirror. The nature of the comparison is not obvious, although its general nature may be deduced. The man (subject) may hear the word (object, just as he (subject) may see his own reflection (object. In both cases something of the man is experienced. In the case of the reflection he remains to be explained however, how this simile defines self-deception. He both departs and forgot.

1:24 "For after contemplating himself and departing he immediately forgets what he was like." These three acts correspond quite closely with what belief without practice involves. One hears the comfortable old word, the doctrine, dogma, or tenet; he recognizes the familiar fit of the beliefs, is comfortable and even complacent in this familiarity, In hearing the word he in fact recognizes an old friend who encourages without being harsh or demanding. And when he departs he feels good precisely because he has seen a familiar old friend who will make no uncomfortable or inconvenient demands on his life. Herein is the deception. For the word may be just such a familiar acquaintance but it is no friend. It is indeed nothing more than the man himself. He carries away a permanent experience neither of seeing his face in a mirror, nor of hearing the word. Both are meaningless 10 minutes after the experience.

1:25 "But the one having looked into the perfect law of liberty" is a deliberate contrast to the one who looked at his own image in a mirror. The perfect law of liberty makes a claim on those who see it. It demands to be obeyed.

The word "but" introduces a contrast (without introducing another simile) of liberty is its first element; the law corresponds to the mirror, and is identified with "the word."

1:25 The one who simply "looks" at the "perfect law of liberty" and remains, is said to be not just a member of the audience, but a member of the cast. The difference is not to be understood on the basis of the kind of "looks" given, but the nature of the nature of the objects beheld. The kind of "looks" given in each case, merely heightens the effect. One cannot have a permanent experience of how his own face looks, stare and contemplate as he might. But he may easily fix in his experience the "perfect law of liberty" not by concerted study, but with a glance. He has but to keep his eyes on the "engrafted word," that "perfect law" and practice what he can see at a glance. (Cf. Rom. 8:2, Gal. 6:2, James2:2, I Pet. 2:16, Jn. 13:17)

It must be noted that while this refers to the Old Testament writings, it is the "perfect" law of liberty, and as such is beyond controversy, rebuttal or appeal. Interpretation of this "word" belonged to Him who gave it, and who alone is "perfect." To see Jesus as the perfect interpreter of the Old Testament law and therefore its perfecter is totally justified on the basis of history and is quite consistent with the semantics of the passage. This makes "the perfect law of liberty" nothing less than the Old Testament scriptures as they were interpreted (in 2:12, as they will be interpreted) by Jesus Christ. This is the sense of "the word" as well, i.e. the will of God as it is expressed by Jesus Christ rather than His person itself. It may be argued that the person of Christ and His interpretation are one and

the same, but the outcome of such a debate can have little or no practical effect on this passage.

Ethically, no new precept is added, although the concept of "belief" is defined. The word belief itself is not used, but it is affirmed that what is heard is meaningful, or has ethical validity, only when it is practiced. This implies that behavior, rather than mental posture determines what is really believed. The one who is merely a hearer deceives himself; that is he convinces himself that he believes or adheres to the word when, in fact he does not. The one who continues in "the perfect law of liberty" is "blessed in (not by) doing it."

This also implies that the ethical behavior based upon "the word" is its own end and reward.

These two basic ethical assumptions are both profound and generally Jewish in outlook rather than Hellenistic. The Greeks had various other notions both as to the end of ethics as well as what constituted true belief.

1:25 "The law of liberty" is not a law of bondage and servitude. It is fulfilled spontaneously from inner impulses, not from fear of reprisal. It is synonymous with the "engrafted word." In a sense, the English word "law" poorly translates the meaning of this term because it connotes external, public, verifiable, objective precepts. 1:25 "And having continued" is the second element of contrast, and denotes those actions which incorporate "the word" or the perfect law of liberty. It is the opposite of being "forgetful."

1:25 "Being not a forgetful hearer but a doer of work." This clause adds nothing new to the contrast but functions oppositionally to sharpen and closely define what is meant by "having continued." The contrast is made strong, deliberate, and pointed. The reference here is not to the simile, but to the original element of the one who hears but does not act upon the word.

1:25 "Is blessed in doing it" refers not to the phrase "a doer of work," but is the end of a sentence which, without the explanatory segments would simply read "the one having looked into the perfect law of liberty is blessed in doing it."

The blessing is not said to result from doing the word, or to come after having done it, but is said to reside "in doing it." The blessing is in the doing. Doing God's word certainly has its rewards, and can be counted upon to have certain results; but the point made here is often missed: Doing right is by its very nature its own most immediate blessing.

1:23 & 25 The contrasts are 1) a searching stare at a temporary image (of human sinfulness?) versus a look at and practice of that which abides (righteous conduct?). 2) The hearing which is self-deceiving versus the doing which is itself a blessing. This blessing may take many forms, but always serves to reinforce the nature of true faith; we see by the contrast set forth here that "hearers" are forgetful, while "doers" are blessed. The essence of this blessing is its power to remind the doer of who he is.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

The single strictly theological teaching of this passage is the equation of "the word" with "the perfect law of liberty." There are but two positions possible in this pericope, and they are clearly antithetical. Those positions are of the doer and the non-doer or hearers only. Those who have not heard the word are not in view here. By opposing both "doers of the word" and those who are blessed "in the doing" of the "perfect law of liberty" to the "forgetful hearers," they are shown to be the same thing. This "law of liberty" is not conceived of here as the preincarnate Christ, but as the inscripturated will of God. This was more the common view rather than the Theological precept of John.

The law of liberty will also be seen from a different perspective in James 2:12.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

Be practitioners of that engrafted word, and not just auditors, fooling yourselves. Because if anyone is a mere auditor, and not a practitioner, he resembles a man contemplating his own face in a mirror: Because contemplate as he will, he has forgotten about his own image. But the one noticing the perfect law of liberty, and keeping his eyes fixed upon it, is not a forgetful auditor, but a willing practitioner who is blessed in his daily conduct.

Eighth Pericope (James 1 :26-27)

James 1:26-27 ²⁶Ἐλ τις δοκεῖ θρησκὸς εἶναι μὴ χαλιναγωγῶν γλῶσσαν αὐτοῦ ἀλλὰ ἀπατῶν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ, τούτου μάταιος ἡ θρησκεία. ²⁷θρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος παρὰ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ αὕτη ἐστίν, ἐπισκέπτεσθαι ὄρφανοὺς καὶ χήρας ἐν τῇ θλίψει αὐτῶν, ἀσπιλον ἐαυτὸν τηρεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

1:26 δοκεῖ (Present, Indicative, third person, singular) 1) Transitive: *think, believe, suppose, consider.* 2) Intransitive: *seem.* Here, the sense of the word is extremely difficult to determine purely on a lexical basis (but see grammatical notes). Though the sense appears to be transitive, there is no hint of the reflexive sense necessary to dictate an active voice, until the phrase "deceives his heart." The active sense of the word coupled with the barely discernible reflexive nature of the term requires the translation "pretend." This meaning (although not impossible) is not common in the Koine period. It occasionally had such a meaning in Classical usage. Here, the context points unequivocally to this meaning.

1:26 θρησκὸς (adjective, nominative, masculine, singular) Religious. In this context the translation by the word *religious* is particularly apt because it is contrasted with true worship, or Christian service. Again the distinction is between appearance and reality.

1:26 θρησκεία (noun, first declension, nominative, feminine, singular) The worship of God, religion as it is carried out in service or ceremony. Here Christian service, or "saved behavior." It is in strong contrast with the word "religious." The distinction is often made between religion and Christianity, between being religious and being saved. Here the contrast is between religious appearance which is empty, and true Christian service which fulfills.

1:27 καθαρὰ (adjective, nominative, feminine, singular) *Clean, pure; 1) literally, physically clean, 2) Ceremonially pure, 3) morally, free from sin, pure.* Here it is "clean."

1:27 ἀμίαντος (adjective, nominative, masculine, singular) *Pure* in a moral and religious sense, both of things and person. Here it is best translated "unspotted."

1:27 ἐπισκέπτεσθαι (present infinitive, active) 1) *Look at; examine, inspect, 2) visit* often with the intention *to care for, 3) of God's visitation bringing salvation.* Here the emphasis, as in the entire context, is positive care in action. It is the duty which separates Christian service from vain religion.

1:27 Orphans Although the Greek word means one who is without parents, in the underlying Hebrew idea, it is not at all clear that both parents are missing or dead. The Hebrew notion is that of "fatherlessness." The plight of the fatherless was both greater and more obvious in antiquity than it is today, due to the patriarchal nature of the family, and to recent trends to support the needy. It scarcely needs to be mentioned that such trends are one result of widespread Christianity in the West.

In ancient Israel the law protected the fatherless by providing for their inheritance rights and enabling them to partake in the annual feasts. They were also allowed "gleaning privileges." These laws either provided too little protection, or were generally ignored, to judge by the recurring admonitions for the care of the needy.

1:27 Widows Widowhood was considered shameful in ancient Israel first because death before old age was sometimes thought to be the result of sin, which even extended by imputation to the wife. Another factor which tended to make widowhood shameful was the fact that the honor accorded childbearing could not attach to the barren or to the widow; the possibility of conceiving the Messiah, or one of His direct ancestors was thus also impossible.

A widow perhaps had a typical appearance produced by unbound hair, unornamented face and hair, and sackcloth garments. Her face was unanointed. Like the fatherless (orphan), hired hand, and sojourner, the widow was the object of special legislation which was intended to guarantee her food. The widow was allowed to glean grain from the unharvested corners of the fields (cf. Ruth). A widow who had no children could return to her father's house (at least in the case of a Priest's daughter). She might benefit from a Leverate marriage. Her vow stood because she had no husband to revoke it.

The widow was the object of public pity and of God's special concern. As one might expect, however, the widow was also the target and victim of the unscrupulous, and the "guarantees" accorded her by the law were frequently nonexistent in practice, or wrested from the judges by persistence, as the widow of Jesus' parable. Under such circumstances, it is no wonder that the widows mite was so highly esteemed by Jesus. Nor can it be surprising that the reproach of widowhood provided the basis of the metaphorical usage the term came to have when it was used to describe cities such as Babylon in Revelation 18:7.

In the early Church, widows were expected to remarry if they could, but those who were sixty years of age or older and had had but one husband were put on a special role, and given special duties to perform, whereby they might be entitled to be kept by the Church.

It is worth noting that widows who had no children were considered to be in more dire circumstances than widows who had children, and likewise fatherless children with mothers did not evoke the same pity as did the true orphan. The obvious reason for this is that the widow and her children had each other, and therefore might provide at least some support for one another, whereas childless widows and true orphans were utterly alone and at the mercy of whatever forces entered their lives.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

1:26 As has been noted, Lexical considerations alone are not sufficient to determine the precise meaning of the term here rendered "pretends." While it may be true that the phrase "seems devout" is logically and semantically the same as the phrase "seems to be devout," the presence of "to be" underscores the fact that "devout" is a predicate nominative, and not a direct object (note the nominative case). The verb "to be" merely serves to complete the sense of "seems."

There is, however, one small hint that the word here rendered "pretends" should be understood reflexively. Although there is no pronoun to suggest this possibility, and although the passage presents a hypothetical case, the notion of "deceiving himself" implies that it is only the man who "thinks *himself* to be devout" can be said "to deceive *himself*."

Put another way, the only way of reconciling the notions of "seeming to be," and "thinking himself to be," is to assume a deliberate attempt to present a false front. This would necessitate understanding the whole verse to say "if anyone pretends to be devout, *yet does* not bridle his tongue, but deceives his heart." This not only makes sense, but accords perfectly with James' repeated admonitions to avoid sham.

D. Translation

1:26 If anyone thinks himself to be devout, but does not bridle his tongue, but deceives his heart, his religion is empty. 27 Religion, pure and unspotted before our God and Father is this; to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unblemished from the world.

E. Historical and Background Information

1:26 The special class of widows whose duties are clearly defined in Acts 6:1 and 9:39 constituted an institution or order of sorts, and is attested by both Ignatius and Polycarp (Symr. 13:1 and Phil 4:3 respectively). This "order of widows" was abolished by the council of Laodicea in A. D. 364.

F. Exposition

1:26 "If anyone pretends to be devout." It is immediately made clear that the subject is the difference between appearance and reality. The overriding concern is the correction of what *seems* to be true, or what is pretended. The philosophical distinction between appearance and reality, was essentially Greek. The philosophers had long wrestled with the discrepancy between what is and what often seemed to be. But distinctions between what "seemed to be" and reality were pointed out often by Jesus in regard to the Pharisees and their understanding of Torah. The Greek Philosophy spent much time with the problem. Jesus, although never dealing with abstractions, was quick to point out when the problem took a practical form. Here, the appearance is deliberate. It is

a serious, human attempt to be, or at least to appear holy. The phrase might best be translated "Pretends to be devout."

1:26 There was for the religious, a wide range of religious rites, ceremonies, feasts and other observances which they might keep in order to give such an appearance. The situation for Christians was not different from that of the Jewish sects. An appearance of holiness could thus be made by keeping the many external, contrived, religious rites.

1:26 "Yet does not bridle his tongue." Apparent piety is first contrasted with a properly "bridled" tongue. No mere *appearance* of piety is to be accepted if it is accompanied by an uncontrolled tongue.

Indeed, this passage is reminiscent of the tone of Jesus' teaching. All religious observances are shown to be empty by an unbridled tongue. Meaningful religion is not characterized by idle chatter lies, hypocrisy, or gossip. True Christian service, however, was not dependent on religious observances but on positive care for those in need (cf. 1:22-25, 2:15-16) and in moral purity. (cf. Ps. 34:3, 3:1, 141:3.)

1:26 "But deceives his heart." Deception is the *only* result possible from attempting to appear devout while not controlling the tongue. It is possible to deceive others by pretending; but when such pretending is genuinely thought either to be, or to produce an acceptable reality, then the pretender himself is deceived by his own actions. It is worth note that if the human heart is as it is pictured elsewhere in the Bible as being, i.e. sinful, then it is at least a very willing accomplice in such duplicity.

1:26 "His worship is empty." Here is a play on words. The word here rendered "worship" is a form of the word rendered "devout" in the first clause. Even the American Standard Version renders these words as "religion" and "religious" respectively. But this creates, rather than eliminates problems.

For no matter how one pretends to be devout, pious, or religious, such pretense is made obvious by an unbridled tongue; this renders meaningless any worship or religious experience or observance. The distinction between pretended piety and outward worship is more obvious than that between the attempt "to be religious" and "empty religion."

1:27 "Worship, clean and unspotted" begins the contrast between "seeming to be religious," and Christian worship and service. The idea recalls the attempt to give a religious appearance, as opposed to truly worshiping God. (Cf. Mt. 6:1-6, 25:36,43.) The idea expressed here is between "empty worship" and "pure worship."

1:27 "Before our God and Father is this." Here James makes it plain that what is to follow will best be understood by remembering God as a father; authoritative, loving, kind and protective.

This formulation also has the function of uniting James, his addressees, and the objects of his admonition, the fatherless and widows.

1:27 "To care for orphans and widows." This charge was older than Israel itself. As was noted under the Lexical and Topical studies, various legal provisions were made for the orphans and widows, as well as the poor, the sojourner, and the hireling. But James is here concerned neither with reviving the legislation itself, or recalling its limitations, but in recalling the intent of such legislation, that those unable to care themselves must have the care of others. This whole emphasis on the original intent is reminiscent of Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount; the more so since James also contrasts the outward religious display calculated to deceive others (and thus win their approval and praise) and that pure worship which is itself costly and frequently unrewarded.

1:27 "In their distress." Jewish tradition has it that there was a temple gate especially for mourners. Those in mourning were not tormented with talk (hence, one sort of "bridling the tongue"). Silence was observed in their presence, being broken only when the mourner spoke. In the synagogue, and later at home, the leader of the devotions would say "Inquire for the ground of mourning." To this a person, usually a Rabbi, would respond "God is a just judge," meaning that the reason for mourning was the death of a near relation. The synagogue service was performed according to a fixed formula. At home, expressions of consolation were spoken.

It was commonly held that God prescribed only one day for mourning (the first day, which was also the day of burial) and that the elders had prescribed a longer period. Deep mourning lasted seven days, the first three of which were "days of weeping." During this week, it was forbidden to eat meat, drink wine, or anoint oneself. Food items (bread, hard boiled eggs, and lentils) were brought in earthenware jars by friends.

1:27 "And to keep oneself unspotted from the world." The World is here used in the ethical sense of Paul and John. cf. :21. The sense is that which is opposed, or alien to God. It is conceived in almost personal terms, being the corporate image of fallen man and the satanic deception that prevails in society. Specifically, our context speaks of orphans and widows.

As was noted earlier, the unbridled tongue is the one which is guilty of idle chatter, lies, hypocrisy and gossip; in this context it is also capable of making unseemly remarks at the time of unparalleled grief. This is certainly worldly behavior from which the Christian is to remain unblemished. The other obvious aspect of worldliness from which this context calls Christians is ignoring the needy, the orphans, and widows. True enough, James would have his readers abstain from all worldliness, but here he is especially mindful of the shallow drivel which flows from the mouths of worldly well-wishers at a time of sorrow and the subsequent lapse of concern for those thus rendered helpless. As Jesus might well have said, "even wine-bibbers do as much; how are you better than they?"

1:26-27 The connection between bridling the tongue, visiting the fatherless and widows, and remaining unspotted is not clear. Certainly, an unbridled tongue is a "natural" response. cf. :1-22. But it is only one example of worldliness. The same thing could be said of a failure to visit orphans and widows. These are probably to be understood as obvious examples of the worldliness the Christian is to shun.

Furthermore, the contrast is between a worship which is empty and one which is "pure and unpolluted." Here, the comparison is not based upon parallelism or analogy, but is limited to a

comparison of dissimilar but not necessarily antithetical forms of religious observance.

The comparison is between "empty worship," which here consists of ritual ceremonial, and cultic practices without having "bridled the tongue" and that "pure and unspotted worship" which visits those in affliction, and remains pure. Perhaps full comparison can only be made with reference to 1:3-25.

Thus "empty worship" is an example of behavior which is not the result of "humbly receiving the engrafted word." It is an exterior religion which is empty of spiritual3 content. cf. 1:23. It is synonymous with being a "hearer of the word" and not a "doer of work." cf. 1:22-25.

"Worship, pure and unspotted," as noted earlier, is not itself antithetical to the rites of "empty worship." The contrast comes from 1:19-21. For "worship, pure and unspotted" is connected by parallelism with the "engrafted word" of verse 23 and with the "Perfect law of liberty" of verse 25. It is also parallel in intent, though more particular in scope, to "fulfilling the Royal Law" (2:8-13).

By "overlapping" the characteristics and teachings in 1:19-21, 1:22-25, 1:26-27, and 2:8-13 the following pictures emerge. 1) The engrafted word," the Perfect law of liberty," the Royal Law, and "worship pure and unspotted" are of the same fabric. The engrafted word is "received" when understood. As the perfect law of liberty, it produces doers, not hearers only. This worship, pure and unpolluted is Christian character. It is not merely a way of thinking, as is the religion of a hearer. Nor is it simply, external religion such as characterizes the Pharisees. 2) This religion is received in meekness (verse 21) looked at continuously (verse 25) and produces behavior pleasing to God (verse 27, 3) The Christian is said to be a person who, having discarded evil, receives God's word. In remaining in the recognizes it to be the "law of liberty" and is characterized as a doer of the word. Doing the word, may include religious rites and celebrations, but cannot exist if it neglects Christian service such as giving aid to those in need and not exhibiting worldly characteristics. 4) Though perhaps not intended when written, the steps of repentance (verse 23) humbly receiving God's word as the rule of faith and practice 21) persevering in practice and being blessed (verse 25) and exhibiting a definite Christian lifestyle (verse 27) cannot be missed. "Which is able to save your souls" (verse 21) it will be recalled, refers to sustained salvation and the building of Christian character. 5) The corresponding non-Christian contrasts implied in these verses may be seen and compared in the same fashion.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

Here again is a contrast between true worship and vain religion; between true worship and vain religion; between genuine concern and lip service; between being saved and feigning piety. The ethical consideration is unmistakable.

Theologically, we note that God is called "our God and Father," identifying God with Fatherhood. This, however is not merely an interesting bit of theology, but serves as a reminder that the Old Testament God was called the "Father of the fatherless and protector of widows" (Psa 68:5). In designating God as "our father" James reminds his readers both that God is the Father of the

fatherless, and that He is our father as well, thus establishing the brotherhood of believers and strengthening the call to care for widows and orphans.

It might be further noted that God accepts as "pure worship" such outward signs as aiding the widows and orphans. "Keeping oneself unblemished from the world" likely means first and foremost the avoidance of worldly practice with regard to widows and orphans.

Jesus charged the Pharisees with "devouring widows houses," and gave a parable in which a widow was able to have justice done by badgering a judge. Both giving in reluctantly to a widow's just demands and actively oppressing a widow or "devouring her house" are examples of the world's blemished piety, and the Church today is full of it.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

If a person, pretends to be devout, but cannot control his tongue, he is deceiving his own heart, for his fruitless religion is a hollow mockery. The pure and unsullied worship of which God approves, consists in visiting and caring for orphans and widows in their distress, and in keeping himself from worldly values.

Ninth Pericope (James 2:1-4)

James 2:1-4 Ἀδελφοί μου, μὴ ἐν προσωπολημψίαις ἔχετε τὴν πίστιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης. ² ἐάν γὰρ εἰσέλθῃ εἰς συναγωγὴν ὑμῶν ἀνὴρ χρυσοδακτύλιος ἐν ἐσθῆτι λαμπρῷ, εἰσέλθῃ δὲ καὶ πτωχὸς ἐν ρύπαρῳ ἐσθῆτι, ³ ἐπιβλέψητε δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν φοροῦντα τὴν ἐσθῆτα τὴν λαμπρὰν καὶ εἴπητε· σὺ κάθου ὡδε καλῶς, καὶ τῷ πτωχῷ εἴπητε· σὺ στῆθι ἐκεῖ ἢ κάθου ὑπὸ τὸ ὑποπόδιόν μου, ⁴ οὐ διεκρίθητε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς καὶ ἐγένεσθε κριταὶ διαλογισμῶν πονηρῶν;

A. Textual Criticism

2:3 The variants read as follows 1) *stand or sit here*. 2) *Stand here or sit*. 3) *Stand here or sit thus*. 4) *Stand here and sit*. 5) *Stand or sit thus*. 6) *Stand or come sit*. 7) *Stand or sit*. Readings two and three seem to be emendations aimed at maximizing parallelism. By modifying the word "stand" with the word "here," it is set in explicit contrast with "sit here in a good seat." Reading three furthers the parallelism by adding the word "thus" which occurred in the instructions to the rich visitor. Both readings, although supported by a better selection of manuscript evidence are found to be poor on the basis of transcriptional probability. Reading four is both intrinsically improbable, and transcriptionally improbable, as well as unsupported except by the original hand of C. Reading five seems also to try to provide a parallelism by using the word "thus." It is not an impossible reading, but it is unsupported by anything but the Sahidic Coptic version. There is no manuscript evidence for it. Reading six is also unsupported by manuscript evidence, occurring only in the Armenian version. It is not unlikely, either intrinsically or transcriptionally, and it is a short reading. But, so far as the evidence is concerned, it was nonexistent until the fourth century. Reading one, not to be selected by default, seems to be both intrinsically and transcriptionally sound. It has no forced parallelism and it is supported by a fair sampling of manuscript witnesses.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

2:4 διεκρίθητε (first aorist, passive, subjunctive, second person, plural) 1) (active) *separate, arrange, make a distinction, differentiate, or judge*; a) *pass judgment on*, (b) *judge correctly*, (c) *deliberate*; as a legal technical term. 2) (middle) *Take issue, be at odds with oneself, doubt, waver*. In 1:6, the term could mean nothing but waver. Here, however, the context does not deal with doubt, but with partiality among Christians, and it appears in a sentence with another term having a legal significance. Hence, it is here to be translated either "pass judgment" or "render a decision."

2:4 διαλογισμῶν noun, second declension, genitive, masculine, plural) 1) *thought, opinion, reasoning, design*. Also as the legal technical term, *decision*. 2) *doubt, dispute, argument*. Here we have it in the sense of the legal technical term, "decision."

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

2:4 This ("Judges of corrupt verdicts") is the "genitive of quality," often used with technical terms

in brachylogy. Here, the shortening of the clause is accomplished by the omission either of a verb or of an adjective. Normally such ideas would be expressed by saying either 1) "Judges who render corrupt verdicts," 2) "Judges rendering corrupt verdicts," 3) "Judges corrupt in their judgments" or some such adjectival, phrase.

D. Translation

2:1 My brothers, do not hold the faith of Jesus Christ our Lord of Glory in partiality. 2 For if a man should enter your synagogue with a gold ring and in fine clothes, and there also should enter a beggar in filthy clothes 3 and you have regard for the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "You sit here comfortably," and to the beggar you say, "You stand," or "sit here by my footstool" 4 do you not render a decision among yourselves, and become judges of corrupt verdicts?

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

2:1 "My brothers, do not hold the faith of Jesus Christ, our Lord of Glory in partiality." The Greek word for partiality? was a compound word, used in the Septuagint for translating the Hebrew phrase, "lift the face." "The faith" is used here to connote subjective faith, not a body of doctrine or a creed. "Of glory" is probably a genitive of characteristic. As such, it modifies the whole phrase "our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus, "our glorious Lord Jesus Christ." The whole expression means "do not show favoritism in the exercise of your Christianity," or "do not curry favor by a selective application of Christian concern."

2:2 "For if a man should enter your synagogue." The man is a visitor; no familiarity is suggested. The very early Church customarily met in synagogues in many places, as Christianity was at first considered a sect of Judaism. It may well have been that the man was a prominent Jew seeing how the Christians worshiped. It must be remembered that the teaching of the pericope is that there should be no respect of person or station in life; this applies to the rich member as well as the rich "first time visitor." But for the purpose of making the point unmistakable, strangers are used as literary foils.

2:2 "With a gold ring and in fine clothes." The rich man is said to have a gold ring and "shining" clothes. The clothing could be either clean or expensive for all the word tells us. But the context points to expensive clothing. As such it would certainly be clean. The contrast is to dirty or shabby clothes. This shows the man to be extremely rich, the ring itself being a sign of wealth and position, and the clothing enhancing that impression.

2:2 "And there also should enter a beggar in filthy clothes." While the contrast is not made as great

as it could be, it is still quite suggestive. The beggar also is treated as a first time visitor, nothing being said about him beyond the initial impression he gives. It is true that, like the rich man, he could be a member of the group, without having any adverse effect on the teaching of the pericope. But the point of the pericope deals not with the rich man and the poor, but in the way they are treated. This being the case, the less said about them the better.

2:2 "And you have regard for the one wearing fine clothes." This means simply that the one presenting a fine *appearance* is regarded as in fact *being* fine. Whether or not the men were members of first time visitors is here shown to be inconsequential in terms of how they are treated. for how they are treated is explicitly linked to their appearance. In the case of the rich man in fine clothes, he is highly regarded.

2:2 "And say 'sit here comfortably'." The high regard in which the group holds the rich man issues in preferential treatment. It can easily be imagined what bowing and scraping must have accompanied those who escorted the rich man to the best seat in the house. His comfort is all important; perhaps if he is well treated he may reciprocate by bestowing some favor upon them, either as a group, or at least on those individuals who bow the lowest.

2:3 "And to the beggar you say 'you stand; or sit here by my footstool'." The contrast in the appearance of the men is precisely paralleled in the contrast of the treatment the received. It is not said *how* the beggar is regarded; indeed he is *not regarded at all*. The contrast at this point is provided only by the treatment the rich man receives. For he is treated "with the dignity which befits his position," while the poor man is fortunate to be allowed in at all, since he has no dignity. It cannot be purely imagination that reveals the point that the group thought it was being *gracious* just to allow the beggar to be among them at all. That he should be treated as an equal of the rich man was a thought incompatible with the notion of grace as the "yes men" perceived it.

Thus, the beggar is handled rather brusquely and ushered to the poorest place in the house, a favor for which the one in charge of seating him might well have expected gratitude. Such is the contrast between the two men, and the resulting contrast of the treatment they receive. On Judging by outward appearances, cf. Mt. 23:27-28.

There can be no doubt that this contrast was based on actual events, but there seems little reason to suppose that it had to have been the result of the words alone, and not the manner in which they were spoken. The simple force of the words contrasts the invitation to sit with the command to stand, and the idea of "well" or "nobly" with "under my footstool."

2:4 "Do you not render a decision among yourselves?" The question might be shortened and paraphrased thus: "If you show partiality on the basis of appearance do you not pass judgment?" It is purely a rhetorical question to which only a positive response can be given. It is important to identify partiality in extending grace as "rendering a decision" or "passing judgment." It might also be well to note the possibility that James here makes a different use of Jesus' maxim not to judge "lest you be judged." Jesus used the statement to introduce a teaching about faultfinding or moral judgment. James ends his discussion about exercising the faith in partiality, by asking the question "Have you not become judges just as surely as you render such a decision?"

Implied in this, if there is reference to the teaching of Jesus, is the additional question "And are you not then liable to the same sort of judgment yourselves?" cf. Mt. 7:1-2.

2:4 "And become judges of corrupt verdicts." Showing partiality in extending courtesies has been shown to be the same thing as to become a judge and to render a decision. It is here established that such a verdict is corrupt. The sense is that "in showing partiality you became a judge and passed a corrupt judgment." It is noteworthy that the essentially legal jargon takes on a moral tone only when the "judges" are the subjects. Such decisions are corrupt not because they are false, but because they are based upon partiality rather than upon evidence.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

James is intent on showing the nature of God as it is reflected in the Law. He is not promoting legalism, but seeing in the Law something of the nature of God Himself, and contrasting that with human behavior. This may well provide the key hermeneutic device for this book, for James never advocates slavish adherence to the Law as something good in itself, but is concerned to reveal the follies of the sinful human heart. Thus, he never says "do this," or "do that," but reveals that in doing thus and so, or in failing to do as the Law prescribes, we show ourselves to be at fault. For the Law is perfect, even as the Lawgiver is perfect, and there is no fault to be found there.

This is parallel to what Paul does. But James does not *develop* a Biblical theology, but *assumes* it. He does not *express* it, he *exemplifies* it. James uses the Law as a reflection of God, and failure to see and live by the deeper implications of the Law, as an indictment upon man. Yet never does James suggest or imply that obeying the Law will merit God's favor.

What James is at pains to show is that disobeying the Law, particularly in the name of Grace already obtained, does not exhibit Christian freedom, but makes one a "corrupt judge." Here, he is a corrupt judge of man, but see James 4:11-12 for another particularly pointed example wherein man becomes the judge of the Law itself.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

My brothers, do not exercise partiality in the faith of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ. For if a rich man, wearing a gold ring and beautiful clothes should enter your meeting, and there also should come a beggar in dirty rags, and you highly regard the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "Come here and sit comfortably" and to the beggar you say "You stand," or "sit here on the floor by my footstool," do you not pass judgment among yourselves, and set yourselves up as judges who render corrupt verdicts?

Tenth Pericope (James 2:5-7)

James 2:5-7 ⁵Ακούσατε, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί· οὐχ ὁ θεὸς ἐξελέξατο τοὺς πτωχοὺς τῷ κόσμῳ πλουσίους ἐν πίστει καὶ κληρονόμους τῆς βασιλείας ἃς ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν; ⁶ ὑμεῖς δὲ ἡτιμάσατε τὸν πτωχόν. οὐχ οἱ πλούσιοι καταδυναστεύουσιν ὑμῶν καὶ αὐτὸὶ ἔλκουσιν ὑμᾶς εἰς κριτήρια; ⁷ οὐκ αὐτοὶ βλασφημοῦσιν τὸ καλὸν ὄνομα τὸ ἐπικληθὲν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς;

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

2:5 ἐξελέξατο (first aorist, middle, indicative, third person, singular) *Choose* or *select* something for oneself. Here, God is the agent making choice. The choice is not of personal election, but rather choice of a class or category. It seems like a natural law rather than a divine ordination that the poor would be more likely to have faith than rich; but then what is natural law if not a divine decree? The word is often translated "elect."

2:5-6 Poverty: "The Poor" was, first of all, a purely economic designation. Hebrew employed several terms to denote various aspects or accompanying conditions of poverty. The Greek New Testament regularly employs two such terms.

First, both in the Old Testament, and later in the New Testament the poor come to be used metaphorically for the oppressed, downtrodden righteous. this come about specifically for the kind of oppression which James mentions, of the poor by the rich.

Second, James shows more deliberate antipathy toward the rich than any other New Testament writer, and even at that he is careful to observe that it is the men who are corrupt and not the wealth itself.

Last, it should be noted that nowhere in the New Testament is wealth regarded as evil; but it is regarded as *dangerous*. Here, James is neither decrying wealth *per se*, nor is he praising poverty. His concern here is with the wealthy as oppressors, and with the poor as righteous.

2:5 Kingdom: The kingdom of God may be said to be that dominion over the natural and spiritual realm exercised by God through Jesus Christ, which was 1) foreshadowed by King David's rule, 2) commenced by Jesus in His incarnation, and 3) which will be brought in its fullness at a later time. The kingdom of God is now here in invisible form in the church, and is entered volitionally; Later this kingdom will be the established, visible *de jure* realm of the King of kings.

Put another way, it is wherever God rules, whether in the hearts and minds of a few, or throughout the length and breadth of the universe. From the time of Christ onward (and some would include

in express allegiance to the King; being "in Christ" is the Pauline formulation. This makes it easy to distinguish the present and future aspects of the Kingdom. For now the Kingdom, although truly here, is here only in what might best be described as a provisional way. The King lives, but He is not physically present. At His coming, the Kingdom will be here in its fullness.

Several aspects of the Kingdom idea are well worth note. From a "temporal" standpoint, the Kingdom is presented Biblically as 1) God's eternal rule over His creation or as an eternal reality; 2) as provisionally present among those who have accepted it, and the rule of the King; and 3) as yet future, as the eschatological consummation of history as we know it.

Further, seen from a social or ethical perspective, the Kingdom can be seen to be of a personal, ethical nature, or a corporate, social reality. In the passage here under consideration the Kingdom is seen as yet future, because the poor are said to be chosen "heirs" to the Kingdom. Furthermore, the poor are pictured as the "ones loving Him," and in antithesis to the "rich who oppress," thus revealing the individual, ethical aspects of the Kingdom.

2:6 Wealth: As has been noted, wealth is not regarded as evil, but as dangerous. In fact, the Old Testament pictures wealth as God's reward for faithfulness. But the Old Testament is full of admonitions concerning the duties incumbent upon the rich, as well as warnings concerning the dangers of wealth.

These dangers include a certain form of pride which refuses to acknowledge that God is the source of all material blessings, and The Great Benefactor. Also among the dangers of wealth is an attitude of materialism which makes prosperity a goal in itself, and believes its attainment assures one's security. Thus, riches easily become the center of life itself.

These dangers, when they become realities, explain why the Old Testament and the New Testament both denounce the abuses of wealth, and the failure of the rich to discharge their duties toward the poor. Thus, the seeking of wealth ends with the rich treating the poor as chattel. James himself cites withholding the wages due the laborers as a case of such oppression. Other cases of oppression of the poor by the rich can be found in abundance in both testaments.

2:6 καταδύναστεύονται (present, active, indicative, third person, plural) *Oppress, exploit, dominate.* The word is used of any kind of pressure exercised by the powerful over the weak, whether economic, judicial, political or physical. The term is general and fits relationships such as master/slave, rich/poor, strong/weak, and so forth. This text speaks of the rich/poor oppression.

2:6 Oppression: Although "oppression" is not a standard entry in Bible Dictionaries, it is interesting to note what forms rich oppression of the poor can take. God granted the poor such rights as gleaning the unharvested boarders and corners of grain fields, a year of release whereby freedom and property reverted to the "rightful owners," and interest free loans. It is clear that such benefits were never the norm in practices. God is frequently said to be the protector of the poor, the fatherless, and the widow. And those whose lives were not aligned with these teachings were roundly rebuked.

Oppression, then, is simply what happens when the rich fall prey to the dangers of wealth, make riches the center of their lives, and fail to make proper provisions for the poor. Often, the only recourse for the poor is to engage in activities which are either immoral, illegal, or completely unjust and demeaning.

2:6 ἔλκουσιν (present, active, indicative, third person, plural) (a) *Literally, to physically drag, draw, pull, haul, b) figuratively, to draw or attract.* 2) Intransitive; to *flow*. The word is primarily used transitively with the meaning of force. Even those usages in which the figurative meaning applies, depend for their force upon the main function of the verb. The main idea, whether the word is used literally or figuratively, is its effect, whether the rich trap the poor in iron and deliver them to the judge (cf. Mt. 5:25, or have a "summons" drawn up is not the force of the word. The point is that whatever the means used, they are effective, and result unerringly with the intended purpose fulfilled. The word is used of "dragging." Paul Acts 16:10, 21:30. In John 18:10, Peter "draws" his sword. In John 21:631, it is used of "hauling" fish nets. John 6:44 and 32:32 speaks of men "drawn" to Jesus. Here it likely means "drag."

2:7 βλασφημοῦσιν (present, active, indicative, third person, plural) *Injure the reputation, revile, defame, belittle, make common.* It is used in reference to God, idols, Holy objects, angels and men, as well as of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Here it is the name of Jesus Christ which is reviled. It would have lent itself naturally to abuse, both by Gentiles and especially by Jews. Here it is predicated of the rich, those whose power is within themselves, and who will admit no need of a "merely human" Savior.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

Note the articular adjectives "the poor," (2:5,6) and "the rich" (2:6).

D. Translation

2:5 Listen my beloved brothers; Did not God choose the poor of the world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to the one's loving Him. 6 But you dishonored the poor. Do not the rich oppress you and themselves drag you into court? 7 Do they not blaspheme the beautiful name which was pronounced over you?

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

2:5-7 This is a continuation and further development of verses 1 through 4 and is introduced by the

clause "listen, my beloved brothers" The last pericope demonstrated that partiality toward the rich made the addressees "Judges of corrupt verdicts." Here the concern is to show the incongruous nature of slighting, the poor in favor of the rich.

2:5 "Did not God choose the poor of the world . . ?" The contrast is between the actions of God and those of the addressees. God did indeed choose the poor (which is the assumed response to the rhetorical question) but the Christians (who in this case are identified with the poor on the basis of their having been "chosen") discriminate against them.

The poor are not chosen because of any merit, either in themselves, or necessarily in the state of poverty. Being elect and being poor simply coincide as far as can be discerned from the passage. Nor is it the case that there are no rich Christians. The statement reflects common belief and is merely a general observation. cf. Mt. 19:23-26, 1 Cor. 1:26-28.

2:5 "Rich in faith" is also a general observation. The phrase means rich in the attitude of faith and therefore in its fruits as well. cf. Lk. 12:21, 1 Tim. 6:18.

2:5 "And heirs of the Kingdom." The "heirs" inherit; the kingdom, or aspects of it, spoken of here is yet future. As such it may be taken to mean all that pertains to God's eternal rule. On the "kingdom," cf. Mt. 25:34, I Cor. 6:9-10, 15:50, Gal. 5:21. The kingdom itself is not further defined, and seems to be synonymous with Salvation itself. cf. Mt. 5:3, 10, James 1:12.

2:5 *Kingdom* 1) It was typified by David's kingdom, 2) Jesus is David's antitype; as such He (a) declared that the Kingdom was at hand, (b) taught that it had come and was present, (c) illustrated its nature by parables, (d) further defined it as the Kingdom of heaven (or the kingdom of God). 3) The kingdom is spiritual in nature and (a) is neither established nor entered by conventional means, (b) and transcends time. 4) It is God's redemptive reign in His universe.

2:5 "Which He promised to the one's loving Him" refers not to any specific occasion on which such a promise was made; It was not given a concise statement such as a covenant; yet it constitutes a major doctrinal teaching. It is mentioned in James only here.

2:6 "But you dishonor the poor" describes the necessary concomitant of favoring the rich. An illustration of this is seen in the previous pericope, but it need not be such an active abuse of the poor as was shown there. Any act designed to court the rich by that very fact is also designed to ignore or slight, and thus dishonor, the poor. For another form of dishonor of the poor cf. I Cor. 11:22.

2:6 "Do not the rich oppress you?" James turns now to consider the glaring inconsistency in dishonoring the poor, by favoring the rich. cf. James 5:4-6. Such oppression was at least as widespread a commonplace in the ancient world as it is today. There was then, however, little or no middle class buffer, and government and social functions were exclusively in the domain and interests of the rich. Thus, oppression of the poor was easier. It would seem that such inequity was taken as much for granted then as it is today.

2:? "And themselves drag you into court?" The dragging in this case may well be of the physical sort, the usage being literal and not figurative. The officers of Roman justice had only one desire; to profitably preserve the interests of Rome. This usually involved keeping peace with the "leading citizens," frequently involved taking bribes, and always involved the zealous maintenance of the *status quo*.

The context implies that generally, the fact of being dragged into court resulted in serious consequences for the poor. The hope of a favorable outcome is absent from the bleak statement. It is not equivalent to "one's day, in court," or "being put on trial" as although the outcome were unknown. The outcome of such proceedings usually followed a regular course ending in hardships for the poor.

It is noteworthy, that there were two kinds of justice, or at least two ways of administering justice, in the Roman empire; one for the Roman citizen, and another for subjects of Rome. And citizenship, in the period with which we are dealing, was not easy to obtain for the poor.

If the courts in question are Jewish courts, which seems highly unlikely, it is difficult to imagine, that poor Christians would fare any better. The rending of the political-social-religious fabric of Jewish society could not have been calculated to curry favor in a Jewish "court."

2: "Do they not blaspheme the beautiful name?" The name is doubtless that of Jesus Christ. The euphemism *cannot* refer to a Jewish practice and the addresses *cannot* be Jews as some have held. Had the addressees been Jews, the "beautiful (Honorable) name" could only have referred to God; but His name was held by the Jews as so Holy as to be unspeakable. And as the next clause shows, this name was "pronounced over" the readers. In any case, the correct pronunciation had long since been forgotten, the tetragrammaton (8454) being all that remained of His name. Therefore, only the name cf. Jesus can be meant.

2: "Which was pronounced over you?" The Old Testament bears witness to a belief in which, Israel is consecrated and dedicated, to God by receiving and bearing His name. cf. II Sam. 12:28, Amos 9:12, Isa. 4:1-2. The Christians doubtless adopted the practice and adapted it to use with the name of Jesus. It is impossible to ascertain with certainty whether or "not a specific form of the name was used, or if such a practice refeed to a particular occasion; but baptism is as likely an occasion as any. In such a practice, some form of Jesus' "name" was called out, or pronounced over the one being baptized to indicate the ownership of the latter by the former. I Kings 8:43, Jer. 7:30, 14:9, Amos 9:32, Acts 15:17.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

Several instructive contrasts appear in this pericope. It should be noted that God's treatment of the poor and the treatment given them by the rich are in stark contrast. The addressees of this book are undeniably linked with the poor. The question is this; Why dishonor the poor, by favoring the rich? Those rich do not treat you with the compassion God has shown you. Under such, circumstances, why favor those who seek your destruction and thereby dishonor those whom God has chosen?

It is said of God that "He chose the poor 1) to be rich in faith and 2) heirs of a Kingdom, 3) to those who love Him. The rich, on the other hand, are said to 1) oppress them, 2) seek their harm in court, and 3) revile the only One who loves them.

Not only is the contrast between rich and poor noteworthy, but it is also interesting that those "Poor in the world" will inherit "a kingdom."

On the other hand, the rich display their cruelty both in open, but accepted oppression, as well as in hypocritical displays of justice, the whole while dirtying Christ's Holy name.

Although wealth is not said to be evil in itself, the wealthy quite often *are* evil. It is much too easy to become entangled in the seductive dangers of wealth. As was noted in the Topical Studies, wealth easily leads to materialism; and materialism fosters the oppression and exploitation of the poor. cf. James 5:4. This pericope cannot but form an indirect plea to the rich by the very condemnation it pronounces upon them. This serves to reinforce the admonition of James 1:9-10.

The poor, on the other hand, are none other than the addressees themselves. The picture is that of the poor discriminating against each other in favor of the rich. These poor are reminded that they were chosen, not by the rich, but by God himself, and not for any worth in themselves, as heirs of a Kingdom. Therefore they need not indulge the rich, but should recall the admonition of James 1:9. They are furthermore called to remember the blasphemy of the rich, who use Christ's name either as a slur or a curse. This injunction is calculated to cause value judgments and loyalties to be reconsidered.

Theologically the Kingdom of God is contrasted in its eternal aspect to the transitory nature of the riches of this world. The fact that the poor are said to be heirs points to that aspect of the Kingdom that is yet future. It is noteworthy also that the phrase "heirs of the Kingdom" is juxtaposed with the phrase "rich in faith," suggesting their identity one with another.

Another theme touched upon here is that of redemption, for the readers are reminded that He whom the rich blaspheme is the One in whose name baptism and all that it symbolizes is accomplished.

Martin Luther called James an "epistle of straw" because no mention is made in it of the doctrine of Justification by faith. Yet while it is true that no explicit mention is made of such a doctrine, it (and several others) are here by implication, in the phrase "the beautiful name which was pronounced over you."

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

Listen, my beloved brothers; did not God choose those who are poor and inferior in the eyes of the world to abound in faith? And be heirs of the Kingdom which is promised to those who love Him? But you dishonored the poor! Do not the rich treat you shamefully and cruelly? Do they not drag you into court? Do they not blaspheme the precious name of Him who bought you and owns you?

Eleventh Pericope (James 2:8-13)

James 2:8-13 Εἰ μέντοι νόμον τελεῖτε βασιλικὸν κατὰ τὴν γραφήν· ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν, καλῶς ποιεῖτε·⁹ εἰ δὲ προσωπολημπτεῖτε, ἀμαρτίαν ἐργάζεσθε ἐλεγχόμενοι ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου ὡς παραβάται·¹⁰ ὅστις γὰρ ὅλον τὸν νόμον τηρήσῃ πταίσῃ δὲ ἐν ἐνὶ, γέγονεν πάντων ἔνοχος.¹¹ ὁ γὰρ εἰπών· μὴ μοιχεύσῃς, εἰπεν καὶ· μὴ φονεύσῃς· εἰ δὲ οὐ μοιχεύεις φονεύεις δέ, γέγονας παραβάτης νόμου.¹² οὕτως λαλεῖτε καὶ οὕτως ποιεῖτε ὡς διὰ νόμου ἐλευθερίας μέλλοντες κρίνεσθαι.¹³ ἡ γὰρ κρίσις ἀνέλεος τῷ μὴ ποιήσαντι ἔλεος· κατακαυχᾶται ἔλεος κρίσεως.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

2:8 Law: The word "law" seems to demand two definitions in this passage; and James does provide an interpretive key.

It is generally thought that Torah originally referred to individual and independent admonitions reached by reference to concrete situation. The body of these independent "laws" grew, and their preservation and deliverance, as well as their proper application were given over to the priests (probably after the laws had been reduced to writing).

The Jewish Law had several peculiarities which set it apart from contemporary Ancient Near Eastern codes. These peculiarities include the facts that Jewish Law alone 1) is represented as being of divine origin, 2) its undiscerning mixture of religious, secular, and moral areas, 3) its protection of the weak and powerless rather than the existing powers, and 4) its frequent inclusion of the historical setting which gave it the status of a body of historical events rather than merely of timeless abstractions. At every point an aspect of personality is visible in the Law. God's personality and holiness and the historical setting of some of the laws or commandments are enough in themselves to demonstrate His interest and intervention in human history.

It must not pass without note that even in ancient Israel, the motive force for the holiness enjoined by Law was to be love of God and neighbor. When the Law was honored, Israel prospered according to the Old Testament histories; and when the Law was in declension, Israel suffered spiritual and political setbacks. Israel underwent a shift in the time of Ezra in which worship was shifted from the temple to the Synagogue, and the class of scribes became the new spiritual leaders. However, this shift culminated in the total misapprehension of scripture known as legalism.

Jesus interpreted the Law neither in terms of how He could win salvation by gaining a claim on God, nor with a view to earthly prosperity, but from the perspective of working love into the fabric of life. As such, the nature of Law as God's love is made visible and distinct from the individual commands and commandments which only exemplify it. Obedience to commands produces nothing, while the

love which is exemplified by them is itself the essence of the Law, and transcends any such set of individual commands.

In the New Testament, the word "Law" is unbelievably flexible, having several distinct meanings. But in James, there are but three: 1) the "Royal Law," 2) the Law of Liberty, which points to the same entity but with the emphases of a) love and b) mercy, and 3) the code of commandments contained in the Old Testament.

It is beyond controversy that James and Paul are *not* at odds in regard to the Law; the flexibility of the word itself, and superficial analysis explain such seeming differences as many delight in positing. For both Paul and James, legalism in any shape is unviable and dead. But the unavoidable adherence to "law" as the ethical outworking in love of that salvation which is already possessed is to be seen as the normal behavior of the saints, both in Paul and in James.

2:8 πλησίον (adverb, substantive, second declension, accusative, masculine, singular) 1) as an adverb; *close by, near*. 2) as a substantive; *near one, fellow countryman, neighbor, fellow man*. The word came to be used by Jews, in explaining the command to love their neighbors, as a reference to fellow Jews. This was the assumption of the lawyer to whom Jesus spoke he parable of the Good Samaritan. By this parable Jesus, sought to remedy such a definition of "neighbor" by using it to refer to "fellow man." The use of the word neighbor is sometimes used of fellow countrymen or one or another political relationship. It did not (as did the word "brother" signify members of a common religion or ideological outlook. Its presence here tends to confirm that the rich man of 2:1-4 was not a Christian, but a visitor. This pericope is a condemnation of partiality toward such rich strangers. Here, appearing in the context of "the royal law," and being written to "Diaspora" Christians, the term doubtless refers to "fellow men."

2:10 ἐνοχός (adjective, nominative, masculine, singular) 1) *subject to* 2) as a legal technical term; *liable, answerable, guilty*. It can refer to the *crime* of which one is *guilty*, the *law* to which one is *answerable*, or to the *punishment* of which one is *deserving*. Here the sense is clearly general. The one who breaks one law is answerable for the whole law; 2) because guilt is viewed qualitatively rather than quantitatively, he becomes guilty of breaking the whole law. It is difficult to choose between these alternatives. "Answerable" seems best in light of the scope of the passage.

2:13 ἐλεός (noun, second declension, nominative, masculine, singular) *Mercy, compassion, pity*. Here, it is the object of the unexpressed verb. It is spoken of in very general terms, no single attribute being singled out. Mercy is thought of as that which motivates forgiveness, for it is part of life under the "law of liberty." Thus, pity, compassion, or whatever else might evoke forgiveness and he called "mercy" is implied here.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

2:8 Note the future active indicative in use as an imperative "you shall love . . ." This usage is found occasionally in classical Greek and frequently in the Septuagint.

2:10 The aorist subjunctives "keep" and "stumble" are perhaps proleptic, i.e. a general or hypothetical statement concerning future events or states. But the absence of the particle "an," somewhat rare in both classical and New Testament usage, might argue for a simple past tense, thus: "For whoever kept the whole law, but stumbled in one point . . ." Only the overwhelming sense of the timeless universality of such a statement prevents this interpretation.

D. Translation

2:8 If you really fulfill royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; but if you discriminate, you practice sin, being convicted by the law of liberty as transgressors. 10 For whoever should keep all the law, should he but stumble in one point, is answerable for all. 11 For the one saying, "You shall not commit adultery" says also "You shall not murder." 11 And if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you become a transgressor of law. 12 So speak and so act, as being ready to be judged by a law of liberty. 13 For the judgment is merciless to the one not showing mercy; mercy overcomes judgment.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

2:8-13 The example of behavior discriminatory toward the rich was given in verses 1-4: the resulting attitude toward the poor was riven, and contrasted with God's treatment of the poor in verses 5-7. Here, any attempt at justifying such behavior on the basis of legal observance is refuted.

2:8 "If indeed you fulfill royal law." It seems entirely likely that this is indeed a reply to a real or assumed response to the teaching about exercising partiality toward the rich. Such an excuse might go something like this; "we are to love our neighbors. Rich neighbors need to be attended to also." James replies, "If you really fulfill . . ." The implicit excuse assumes a legalistic frame of mind. Without detailing the theology of the Christian relationship to law, James points out the major implication of legalism and contrasts it with Christian practice.

The royal or supreme law is a reference not to a specific Old Testament commandment, but to the ethical precept of love underlying the law. The particular side of that precept, as the context of relations to rich and poor necessitates, is that of love of neighbor. That "royal law" is not there thought of in legalistic terms is seen from the fact that royal law, being the underlying ethical precept of the Mosaic law, cannot be summed up as The Royal Law, or indeed as any set of commands. (Cf. Mk. 12:31, Rom. 13:F, Cal. 5:14, Jn. 35:12)

2:8 "According, to the scripture, 'You will love your neighbor as yourself.'" The reference to Lev. 19:18 seems to indicate a particular manifestation of Royal law, and not its entirety. The whole

statement seems to be in contrast to; 1) *the* royal law which is according to the scripture," or 2) *a* Royal Law, i.e. the one referring to love of neighbor. Neither alternative seems attractive; royal law seems to be even more abstract than either formulation." (Cf. Lev. 19:18, Lk. 10:27, Rom. 13:9).

There is little reason to see here any stoic conceptions such as that of the wise being "kings."

2:8 "you do well." This, of course, refers only to the case of really fulfilling, royal law. Cf. James 2:10.

22:9 But if you discriminate," that is, "if you love the rich neighbor, and not the poor, you cannot really be loving your neighbor" Such a situation would be *picking* neighbors rather than *loving* the "near ones." The similarity between the implied situation here, and the hypothetical situation of Lk. 10:25-37 cannot be overlooked. In both cases "neighbor" was thought of as someone who had to be sought out, identified and only then treated with love. Following Jesus, James teaches that "neighbor is who neighbor does."

2:9 "You practice sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors." Discriminating "love" is sin, and cannot be used as an excuse for superior Treatment of the rich. (Cf. Dt. 1:17, 16:19).

2:10 "For whoever should keep the whole law" is reminiscent of the legalistic understanding of law, and reflects the frame of mind which would urge a scripture reference in defense of discriminatory love. That such a means was employed to justify the actions seen in 2:1-4 indicates that Christians fell prey to legalism then as they do now, and as the Jews had before them.

2:10 "Should he but stumble in one print" confirms the legalism of such excuse making. James reminds his readers that if they will defend discriminatory love on the basis of a commandment, and are going to make such commandments the basis of their action, they are obligated to keep all of the commandments in order to be perfect. The only other way is to obey royal law, which consists not in individual commands, but the principle upon which they are built.

2:10 "He is answerable for all." The idea is that the law, understood as individual commandments, is yet a single fabric, because it has one aim and is predicated upon the principle of love. Just as the sleeve of a shirt cannot be torn without the whole shirt being ruined, so the legalist must be reminded that such an understanding of the law requires perfect obedience in every part. Failing that, a breach of the smallest sort results in condemnation for transgression of the law as an entity, or as a whole.

2:11 "For the one saying, 'You shall not commit adultery' said also 'You shall not murder'." Here James gives an example of the legalist's concept of the law as no more than a series of commandments. The examples, taken from Ex. 20:14, Dt. 5:18 and Ex. 20:13, Dt. 5:17 respectively and elaborated by Jesus at Mt. 5:2 and 5:21, were apparently randomly selected to demonstrate only that while the commandments differ, He who gave them is one. This handily illustrates both the essential unity of law, and the problem of the diversity of commands. These examples, although apparently random, are harsh enough as to be unlikely of fulfillment by the addressees. This leaves their effect uncluttered by the possibility of bringing in new teachings or admonitions. (Cf. Mt. 19:18, Mk. 10:19, Lk. 18:20, Rom. 13:9).

2:13 "And if you do not commit adultery, but do murder, you become a transgressor of law." Here is the result of following a legalistic understanding of law. By breaking a particular command, one has also transgressed against Law in general.

2:12 "So speak and so act as being ready to be judged by a law of liberty." The original "royal law" is again in view. Having contrasted it with the legalistic concept of law, James now Admonishes his readers to abandon legalism and live as men who are to be judged by a law of liberty.

"A law of liberty" is a synonym for "royal law." This law makes it mandatory to recognize a greater responsibility than can be met under legalistic bondage to commandments.

2:13 "For the Judgment is merciless to the one not showing mercy. Mercy overcomes judgment." This verse gives the reason wily discriminating love will receive merciless judgment. It is because it shows no mercy. The point is that Christians are obligated to love the poor neighbor as the rich." It cannot be legalistically urged that love of neighbor is the motive force behind partiality, toward the rich, for on the basis of Legalism there is no hope of consistent behavior. On the basis of a law of liberty, however, consistent moral behavior is possible; but it cannot tolerate such abuses as discriminatory love.

2:8-13 The legalism of verse 10 is compared to living under a law of liberty in verse 12. Life under royal law is free to reflect God's character without recourse to constant comparison to numerous laws. Legalism, by contrast, is obedience to a series of laws and cannot acquit a man before God; but mercy overcomes judgment." Legalism renders sinners answerable for the whole law and (by implication) to bitter judgment. But life under the law of liberty results in merciless punishment only when (and upon those by whom) mercy has not been shown.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

It was noted in the Topical study on the Law that James uses "the Royal Law" and "The Law of Liberty" to refer to the motive force of Love which is to picture God's holiness. In the first phrase, the major emphasis is upon the motive of love, while in the second it is the mercy which grants love to the undeserving or unlovable.

The notion of "really" fulfilling the "Royal Law" is that of loving *all* neighbors without discrimination. for to discriminate, i.e. either to love one group of one's neighbors, and not another, particularly where such "love." when it is motivated by greed or other base desire) is not to fulfill the Law of Love, but to be convicted by the Law of Liberty."

Legalism receives a telling blow here. For though it seems an inappropriate place to bring in the notion of Law as a set of commandments or a code of ethics, that James does so indicates that there were at least two possible ways in which his teaching could have been frustrated. On the one hand, the readers might have assumed that the "Law of Liberty" was but one more command for the faithful to keep. On the other hand, they might have tried to defend their discriminatory behavior by citing a Biblical precedent. Both possibilities are thwarted by James by recourse to the

statement concerning the commands prohibiting murder and adultery.

First, James shows that neither the old set of commandments nor the issuance of a new commandment would free them from the charge discrimination or inconsistency, because it is precisely the inconsistency of obedience at the level of individual commandments that all are shown to already be sinners; i.e. that to break one point makes one guilty of "all."

But then, it also becomes obvious that Biblical precedent is no defense for failure to apply the "Royal Law" even handedly. For no Christian would dare to claim that he had kept the whole law. And only such claimants would reach for the scriptures for *legal* defense. Put differently, a person who seeks to justify his behavior by recourse to a law or legal precedent (which is what is here assumed) is condemned before his passage is found. Because for every precedent he finds, there is a law which he breaks. Thus crumbles the edifice of legalism.

Finally, there is the concept of mercy which overcomes judgment. this idea unfolds neatly. In the first place, mercy is love which refuses to judge others, especially in a discriminatory fashion. In this sense, mercy *overcomes* judgment by *refusing* to judge. This is love not legalism. Legalism will receive legalistic (i.e. loveless, merciless) judgment. This places the person showing mercy in the position to receive mercy, in a relationship not unlike forgiving sins in the Lords Prayer. "As you measure out, so shall it be measured to you (Mt.).

Let it be noted carefully that this passage does *not* teach that showing mercy *earns* mercy. The statement is unambiguous: "So speak and so act *as being ready* (already) to be judged by the Law of Liberty." The challenge is simply this: If you are in line for mercy, show mercy.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

If you really fulfill royal law in accordance with the scripture, which says, "you shall love your neighbor as yourself," you please God. But if you discriminate, you sin. Because if anyone should diligently obey the Mosaic Law, and even once fail in a minor matter, he is, in God's eyes, guilty of breaking the whole law. Because the same One who commanded us not to commit adultery also commanded us not to commit murder. So if you never commit adultery, but you one day murder someone, you become a transgressor of that legal system. Behave yourselves as befits those who will be judged under a law of liberty. Because judgment is without mercy to anyone who legalistically discriminates in neighborliness. But mercy triumphs over judgment.

Twelfth Pericope (James 2:14-17)

James 2:14-17 Τί τὸ ὄφελος, ἀδελφοί μου, ἐὰν πίστιν λέγῃ τις ἔχειν ἔργα δὲ μὴ ἔχῃ; μὴ δύναται ἡ πίστις σῶσαι αὐτόν; ¹⁵ ἐὰν ἀδελφὸς ἢ ἀδελφὴ γυμνοὶ ὑπάρχωσιν καὶ λειπόμενοι τῆς ἐφημέρου τροφῆς ¹⁶ εἴπῃ δέ τις αὐτοῖς ἐξ ὑμῶν· ὑπάγετε ἐν εἰρήνῃ, θερμαίνεσθε καὶ χορτάζεσθε, μὴ δῶτε δὲ αὐτοῖς τὰ ἐπιτήδεια τοῦ σώματος, τί τὸ ὄφελος; ¹⁷ οὕτως καὶ ἡ πίστις, ἐὰν μὴ ἔχῃ ἔργα, νεκρά ἔστιν καθ' ἑαυτήν.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

2:14 πίστιν (noun, third declension, accusative, feminine, singular) 1) *that which causes trust and faith; 2) trust; confidence; faith, 3) that which is believed; body of faith or belief; doctrine.* James uses the word here in the most basic sense of belief or confidence. The purpose of this passage is to show that faith cannot justify ignoring the needs of the poor. This is accomplished by denying that belief which does not issue in works has any right to be called "faith" in the Christian sense of the word. The nature of that Faith, which can ignore the needs of the poor can only, be called "belief."

In Greek, faith and persuasion are often used as synonyms, the meanings overlapping at several points. The same condition arises in English between the words "faith" and "belief." Often in English and occasionally, in Greek, the word "faith" is used in the sense of "belief; mental assent; opinion." But by the abuse of language, "opinion" or "mental assent" has come to be the commonly accepted meaning of the word. Thus, when the Greek word for "faith" is accurately translated into English as "faith" the translation is accurate, insofar as the words are concerned; but the modern conception of faith has changed. The best way to translate the word, when Christian faith is meant is to use either "trust" or "reliance."

2:14 ἔργα (noun, second declension, accusative, neuter, plural) 3) *deed; action, (a) as opposed to rest, (b) manifestation; practical proof (c) deed; accomplishment; work; occupation; task, 3) the result of work; that which is created by work; 4 thing or matter.* By "works," James does not mean "works of law" in the Pauline sense of legalism, but what might be called "acts of faith," or "deeds of faith." The point of this pericope is to contrast belief accompanied by suitable deeds with mere belief off works, or faith with belief. It is not the purpose to compare faith with works, as many have thought. Because legalism is nowhere in view in this pericope, the word might best be transited "deeds" or "manifestation?.

2:14 σῶσαι (first aorist, active, infinitive) *save, keep from harm, preserve, rescue, 1) from natural dangers or death, 2) from eternal death or hell.* Here, the word "save" means preserve or save from eternal death. The subject of such salvation in this question is the spirit of man bidding the poor

"depart." Because he is in no physical danger, it is his spiritual well-being which must be in jeopardy.

The questions "what is the profit" and "can such faith save him?" are to be taken together. The second question puts a limitation on the first. When, after the example of the poor brother and sister, the question "what is the profit?" is again asked, its effect has been strengthened by the comparison. If a man's faith will not move him to save the life of a poor man, can it possibly be sufficient faith to save him from hell? Is such "faith" *saving* faith in any way?

2:16 ἐπιτήδεια (adjective, accusative, neuter, plural) necessary; proper. As a substantive; *what is proper or needed*. Here, James uses the word for those daily needs which are essential to life. "needful for the body" could be Translated "necessary for life."

2:17 νεκρά (adjective, nominative, feminine, singular) 1) as an adjective, *dead*; (a) literally; *of dead bodies, corpses*, (b) figuratively, *of spiritual death*, 2) as a substantive; *the dead*, also both literally and figuratively. In this pericope, James means by death, a figurative sense of death. It is death by separation; just as separation from God is the ultimate and most horrible death, so separation of belief from deeds is the death of faith.

But it should be noted that this death, (being alone) is here the result of separation from works of the most rudimentary nature. Such faith as will not give aid is dead itself.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

No grammatical anomalies.

D. Translation

2:14 What is the profit, my brothers, if someone should claim to have faith, but not have works? Can such faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister should be naked and lack food, 16 and one of you should say, to them "Depart in peace; be warmed and filled," but you do not give him the things necessary for the body, what is the profit? So also is faith unless it issues in deeds; it is dead by itself.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

In 2:1-4, James admonishes his readers not to hold the faith of Jesus in respect of persons; that is,

not to discriminate in behavior so as to favor the rich neighbor and dishonor the poor brother. The favoritism toward the rich is illustrated in 2:5-7, such behavior is called "dishonoring the poor," and the real nature of the rich is pointed out. The remedy for the excesses urged in justification of the fraternizing with rich visitors to the detriment and hurt of the poor brothers provides the subject matter of the rest of the chapter. For the abuses, having been pointed out, must be corrected.

In 2:8-13, James denies that favoring the rich can be justified on the basis of "love of neighbor," for this understanding of the commandment is essentially legalistic and self serving. Because the rich man is a visitor, and therefore, a "neighbor" cannot excuse inhospitality to the poor man who is of the faith. The solution to the abuse is to live not legalistically, but under a law of liberty, exercising mercy.

In the next pericope (2:14-17) James must deal with faith, for it apparently has been urged as an excuse for dishonoring the poor. It is shown that any faith which can piously "believe" that the poor will be helped, but does not help them is as dead as the poor soon will be. The rest of the chapter deals with establishing the proper understanding of faith.

If holding the faith in respect of persons describes indulging we the rich neighbor and dishonoring the poor brother, and such behavior is justified by reference to love and faith, James demonstrates that love shows mercy and faith has action.

2:14 "What is the profit my brothers" indicates that there ought" to be profit in faith. That is, that it ought to benefit all concerned. Yet it is likely that such belief as might make works unnecessary was urged as an excuse for not meeting the needs of the poor. Such, excuses as "God will care for them if they are really His," and "we will wait on the Lord and watch His mighty works," and "these are, after all Christians; if they have faith, their needs will be met" may well have been as common then as they are today. Just as "love" likely was urged as an excuse for favoring the rich, "faith" may well have provided the excuse for neglecting the poor. It may have taken only the form James refutes that which practices non-involvement with individuals in need. Or it may also have taken the form popular today which smiles warmly and says "keep on keepin' on," or "God will work all things together for good, wait and see."

2:14 "If someone should claim to have faith, but does not have works." Faith, in the Biblical sense of the word, is essentially a demonstration. And that demonstration is, by its very nature, beneficial. It "benefits" the one having it in the development of his character (cf. James :22-2) and in his salvation. It benefits those upon whom it is allowed to practice. And it brings honor to God. Such faith as has not works is immediately suspect.

2:14 "Can such faith save him?" The expected answer to this question is negative. The faith that James questions can only be called belief. Implicit in this question and its expected reply is the assertion that "this faith , or mere belief, cannot save the man but will gladly let him die. James points out that while such a faith as this provides a convenient excuse for ignoring the poor, it cannot save. One who has such faith, has an excuse sure enough, but, he has not salvation.

2:15 "If a brother or sister should be naked and lacking the daily food." Here, James again illustrates his point by recourse to a hypothetical situation. As in the last pericope, so here, the illustration is given in stark terms, not to indicate the precise nature of the reality, but to make a point. James is not trying to show the addressees about their behavior; the point is to define and illustrate a certain kind of faith which might be urged as an excuse for that dishonoring the poor which results from holding the faith in partiality. But because the illustrative situation was purely hypothetical does not mean that it bore no relationship to reality. As has been evident, the subject has been the Christian attitude toward poor brethren. (cf. 2:4, 5-7) The illustration quite fittingly deals with the poor brethren.

2:35 "Brother" and "sister" were words commonly used both among the Greeks and the Jews, to signify those of a common faith. The presence of the words here confirms the opinion that the subject of the whole of chapter two is the proper treatment of poor Christians.

2:36 "And one of you should say to them 'Depart in peace; be warmed and filled'." There is no doubt that faith of this sort can identify the problems of the poor. Though "go in peace" was a customary thing to say upon the departure of a friend or guest, there is a degree of irony in its use here. Such guests ought not be made to depart in the first place, but to be asked to do so "in peace" is ludicrous; for the rest of the command is an approximation of "and good, luck with your needs." It is obvious that on their departure, the needs of the poor had not been met. The "faith" which would bid the poor "depart" is the kind which is compelled to do so for fear of feeling uneasy in the presence of those whom they would not help. James is pointing here to what might best be described as "best wishes faith."

2:16 "But you do not give in the things necessary for the body," makes explicit the condition only implied in the previous clause. As noted above, identifying the needs is not the shortcoming of this variety of faith, failure to supply the needs is the problem. Such faith always manifests itself in "best wishes," never in "the things necessary."

It was noted above (verse 14) that "faith" such as this cannot save the man who has it, but it will gladly let him die. If this is true of the man himself, what must be said for others? The illustration just given indicates that such, "faith" would easily let others die as well; potential beneficiaries become actual victims.

2:16 "What is the profit?" The question is again asked. The expected answer is more clear now, because of the illustration; it is "no profit at all." For it has been implied that such "faith" *cannot* save the man who holds it, and *will not* save others.

2:1 "So also is faith unless it issues in deeds; it is dead by itself." Just as the poor are dead without their bodily needs being met, so faith without works is dead. Works are seen here to keep faith alive, just as food and water keep the body alive. (See verse 26 where the comparison is changed slightly.)

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

James was probably written after the Jerusalem meeting recorded in Acts 11.30, and after enough time had elapsed that antinomianism (against law) tenets had developed and been urged by many. Thus, the epistle of James may be a response both to legalism, and antinomianism. It is totally unimportant whether James was familiar with the writings of Paul; he was familiar with the misused motif of faith current in his day.

That faith alone saves is what one familiar with Paul's Damascus road experience and the extremes to which he was could to go, might expect his Gospel to teach. Yet Paul never left any discussion after nothing more than an invitation to, or definition of, faith. He inevitably used faith as the very basis for ethical action and the foundation for what might be called "works of faith."

Paul never says not to do good works -- only that they don't save one. (In this regard, it may help put Paul's theology in perspective if, instead of seeing in his writings the doctrine that faith alone saves, we see instead the doctrine that *works alone cannot save* -- for that is the burden of his writing.) James says that *true* faith is indistinguishable from the *good works* produced thereby; and Jesus says that the one *doing* His words is like one who is wise, and "saved."

The real problem with legalism is the attempt to be made righteous by law. Even under law salvation was intended to be "by grace through faith." But Grace does not mean that breaking the law would or could go unpunished or sin go unpaid. God did indeed keep a ledger and balance sheet. It was that very balance sheet He cleared on our behalf.

The evil of legalism was the result of the faulty conclusion that to not sin is to be perfect and thus to win God's acceptance. But not committing sin is not equal to being perfect. We need a positive perfection, as Jesus taught, not just a lengthy abstinence from overt sin.

To trust in our non-commission of sin, as if this were a positive righteousness deserving of heaven, is to be a legalist, fallen from grace and still under law. Positive righteousness is produced by our behavior, but is a *result* of faith in the balance sheet already having been dealt with in the person of Jesus Christ.

So whereas Paul combated legalism, James refuted (the resultant?) Antinomianism. Hence Paul says that faith alone saves -- works alone cannot. James says that works demonstrate and evidence faith. Faith that *does* nothing is nothing.

The reconciliation between the two is simple. For the word we translate "faith," read 'trustful obedience.' Recall that Jesus, James and Paul all agree that mere avoidance of sin cannot recommend one to God, but devote considerable time and energy promoting positive righteousness.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

My brothers, what is the profit for one to claim to have faith if he does not have deeds commensurate with that faith? Can such "faith" alone save him? If a poor brother or sister should be found naked and starving, and one of you kindly says, "go in peace brother; and may your needs be met," but you neglect to give him those necessities yourself, what is the profit? Faith without works is like that also; alone, it is as dead as a body without food or clothing.

Thirteenth Pericope (James 2:18-20)

James 2:18-20 Ἀλλ' ἐρεῖ τις· σὺ πίστιν ἔχεις, καὶ γὰρ ἔργα ἔχω· δεῖξόν μοι τὴν πίστιν σου χωρὶς τῶν ἔργων, καὶ γάρ σοι δεῖξω ἐκ τῶν ἔργων μου τὴν πίστιν. ¹⁹ σὺ πιστεύεις ὅτι εἶς ἔστιν ὁ θεός, καλῶς ποιεῖς· καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια πιστεύουσιν καὶ φρίσουσιν. ²⁰ Θέλεις δὲ γνῶναι, ὥς ἀνθρωπε κενέ, ὅτι ἡ πίστις χωρὶς τῶν ἔργων ἀργή ἔστιν;

A. Textual Criticism

2:19 Six variants occur here. The readings are as follows; "You believe that one God is . . ." 2) "You believe that one is the God . . ." 3) "You believe that one the God is . . ." 4) "You believe that the God is one . . ." 5) "You believe that one the God . . ." 6) "You believe that is God . . ." (or perhaps to be understood as "that there is a God . . .").

Variant numbers 2, 3, and 4 do no involve a change in the content of the statement, but have to do only with word order. Before it could be profitable to determine which of these variants were miscopied, it must first be determined if they even represent the original content of the statement.

It seems likely that the addition of the article was an expansion which appealed to the theological sensitivity, of an early scribe. the shorter reading, which omits the article, is not much more difficult for its omission.

Though variant numbers 5 and 6 are short and difficult manuscript evidence is lacking for them. Variant number 6 is attested only by a manuscript of the eighth or ninth century, while number 5 is supported by a late copy of the later version (tenth, or eleventh century) the sixth century Ethiopic version, and a quotation in one Church father of the fourth, or fifth century. It cannot be claimed for certain that these errors occurred late, or even that they are in fact errors. however, the lack of early evidence or widespread evidence leaves one little choice but to reject these readings, only with, great caution. For although. readings 2, 3, and 4 are more widespread and have greater manuscript support, it will be observed that readings 2 and 3 could have easily occurred by conflation of the readings contained in variants 5 and 6, leaving, reading number 4 a variant of the conflation only in word order. The situation is rendered more difficult by the fact that generally the best manuscript evidence belongs to these apparent conflations. Of these manuscript evidence favors reading 2 while internal evidence favors 4.

Because reading, number 1 is shorter than the conflations, does not mean that it could not also be a conflation of earlier readings. The only thing missing from the reading is the article before the word "God." The manuscript evidence, for this reading is also late.

Thus, external evidence is wholly ambiguous and unconvincing, supporting nearly equally well three readings which, appear to be conflations.

Transcriptional evidence is equally indecisive, favoring the shorter readings 1, 5, and 6. Reading 6 includes, a copula, but omits the article. The copula is not necessary, strictly speaking, but

clearly there must be either the word "one" or the word "is," whether with or without the article, or the sentence would read "You believe God." Clearly the demons cannot be said to have this sort of faith. The problem is that they may be said to believe both that there is a God (that God *is*) and that He is one (as opposed to Pantheism and Polytheism).

But comparing the shabby "faith," which is mere belief and has not works, with that faith held by the demons, one must look for the highest common denominator between them if true faith is then to be enjoined. This narrows the field to readings 1 and 5. At this point, one is humbly reduced to arguing from theology. The anarthrous construction is best, for it does not share the quality of being optional to the same degree as does the copula.

On the basis of intrinsic evidence, the first reading is cautiously adopted.

2:20 Three variants occur here. The readings are as follows: Faith without works is 1) *barren*, 2) *dead*, 3) *vain*.

Internal evidence is decisive on this textual problem. Transcriptional probability easily accounts for the variants, "dead" and "vain," being made to conform to the text; "dead" conforms to the sense of verse 17, and "vain" is a conformation to the modifier of "man" in this verse. The word for barren probably, involves a play on words in Greek which cannot be satisfactorily translated into English.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

2:18 δεῖξόν (first aorist, active, imperative, second person, singular) 1) *point out; show; make known.* 2) *Explain; prove.* Here the word is used twice with the same meaning, that of showing, making known or visible, or demonstrating something which may be otherwise unknown. The challenge carries with it an implicit denial or the possibility of fulfillment. It might be paraphrased thus 'Demonstrate to me your faith, without demonstrating it and I will demonstrate my faith by demonstrating The challenge is ridiculous, but is necessary to contrast "belief" with faith.' The point has already been made (2:1) that faith without demonstration or fruitfulness is dead. Here the same thought is used to show the nature of proper faith. "Show me your invisible belief and I will show you my visible faith." No response on the part of the one challenged is expected.

2:19 δαιμόνια (noun, second declension, nominative, neuter, plural) 1) *a deity or divinity; 2) a demon or evil spirit; a bodiless, independent being who is less than God but has more power than men. 3) a ghost.* Here, that which is signified is viewed as real, hence "evil spirit" or "demon." This status could not be predicated of deities or divinities, particularly in light of the very tenet of belief to which they are here declared to adhere, that is that there is "ONE God," or that "God is one." It should be noted that the demons of James 2:18-20 are orthodox and probably recognize Jesus as they did in the Gospels.

2:20 θέλεις (present, active, indicative second person, singular) *wish; want; desire something.* 2)

wish; will; resolve to do something. 3) *like; take pleasure in something.* Here the idea is generally that of purpose or resolve in the sense of "to gain" something. The question might be paraphrased "will n admit," or "will you face facts?"

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

No grammatical anomalies.

D. Translation

2:18 But someone will say, "you have faith and I have works; show me Your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." 19 You believe that there is one God; you do well; even the Demons believe also and they tremble. 20 But, will you know, O vain man, that faith without works is barren?

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

2:18 "But someone will say." Two explanation for this text exist, neither of which is wholly, satisfactory. The first makes the indefinite "someone" an objector to what has gone before. This, understanding itself has two forms. One has the objector himself referring to James himself by use of the second person singular. Thus, "But someone will say, 'you have faith' . . ." would mean "But one of you will say to me 'James, you have faith . . . !'" The crippling objection to this interpretation is that such a reply would be inaccurate. James has been at pains to defend works. The response would, of necessity have to be "You, James, have works . . .!"

The second type of "objector" response interprets the expression "But someone will say" as itself to make a general statement. It would be translated "But one of you will say 'One has faith and another has works!'" But this understanding has the objector entirely miss the point of the preceding pericope. Nobody who had understood the teaching there could have raised such an objection. Furthermore, if his statement continues "show me your faith," his statement is nothing more than an ignorant, but heartfelt reiteration of the teaching just given, and he can no longer be called an objector at all; he becomes an ally. And if the statement, "Show me your faith" is the response of James, and not part of the objection, it is difficult to see to whom he is addressing his response, or why he would have phrased it in this way. Is the "you," the one who is expected to demonstrate his faith, or is the "You" the objector to the teaching on dead belief? The statement, whether given by an "objector" or by an "ally," is one statement, not two. The clause "You have faith and I have works" sets the stage for the contrast to be drawn. This cannot be done easily, if

the following clause "Show me your faith" is to be put in the mouth of another character.

The second interpretation makes him who replies an ally, reinforcing James' teaching by means of a succinct challenge to the nature of faith. James seems to indicate that holding such belief as he is challenging leaves those holding it open to just and scathing criticism. Indeed, the very point of this pericope is that such "faith alone" has no claim to the name Christian.

The preceding, pericope did not charge those who catered to the rich of not being Christians, but of improperly applying royal law, (verses 8-13) and with a faulty understanding of faith (verses 14-11). Extensive treatment of faith is critical here, precisely because when properly understood it follows the royal law, but when misunderstood may give rise to the charge of not truly being Christian faith at all.

Thus interpreted, the passage would be understood to say "someone may challenge you and say 'You claim faith for yourself, and I claim works. Show me that faith of yours *without* recourse to deeds and I will, *by* my deeds, manifest my I faith to you.

If this is the correct understanding of the response, it does not matter if it is thought to continue through verse 20 or to end with verse 18. It is the great strength of the "ally" view, and the undoing of the "objector" view, that the whole teaching from verse 18 through verse 20 is of the same fabric. It can easily be viewed as a single sentence.

The objection to this view is that the clause under consideration usually introduces an objection and most "ally" theories fail to do so. But in this view, it does introduce an objection. It is, as noted above, directed to the addressees of James, and it contains a pointed criticism, that James did not (want to) make himself. Thus, the statement is an objection, but is given by an ally, and makes the charge James did not want to represent himself as making. And when it is remembered that James has treated two "objections" already, (verses 8-13 and 14-17) neither of which began with this phrase, it seems more peculiar that it should appear here if it were supposed to be an objection of the addressees.

In addition, if it is recalled that the purpose of the passage is to point out that faith without works is dead, the point is strengthened considerably if a third party, should be represented as viewing such belief not as dead but as wholly unchristian. "Nay, others would say it is the faith not of Christians but of demons."

2:1 "You have faith and I have works." This is the first part of the objection. It is a simple affirmation of two facts, both of which are contextually conditioned by the previous pericope. The word "faith" taking its meaning from the last pericope, might best be translated "belief." The point of this statement is to set the stage for a contrast to be drawn.

2:18 "Show me your faith without the works;" here again, "faith" is to be understood as "belief." Those who believe this passage to teach salvation by works not only miss the general tone of this whole chapter, but fail to note that the challenge is to "show *me* your faith;" it is not said that God must be shown. The point is not that God will justify man on the basis of works (verses 9-11

implicitly deny this possibility) but that any faith that *is* Christian *acts* Christian, and is visible. (in contrast to) This belief (which) is (of) a purely intellectual nature.

2: "And I Will show you, my faith by my works." Again, the contrast is not between faith and works, but between faith-with-works and faith-without-works. This clause should read "I will show you my belief by my works." The whole expression amounts to this: "Show me your belief and I will show you my faith." The idea of the comparison is to take the "dead belief" of the last pericope and use it as a foil in the definition of Christian faith. As such, the character of faith without works, which has already been described as dead, is seen to be 1) purely intellectual, 2) ineffectual, 3) invisible. By means of the contrast, true faith is implied to be 1) emotional as well as intellectual, 2 effective and 3) visible.

2:10 You believe there is one God": This may be stated "You believe God is one," which, seems too much like a formulation of Trinitarianism. The concern was not to distinguish between different Christian beliefs about God, but to demonstrate that faith, in order to be distinctively Christian, had to be such, as no pagan could hold. Monotheism filled this requirement quite as well as Trinitarianism, in that it distinguished itself from polytheism and pantheism.

The Jews strongly emphasize Monotheism and it constitutes the basic "article of faith" in the Jewish "creed" in the Shema (Dt. 6:4) "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord."

Within the creed there is certainly room for Trinitarians, but it must not be thought that at this early date, Trinitarianism was of vital concern in great theological circles. All that was required, in this area, was belief in the existence and essential unity of God, without reference to "how many, persons there were in the Godhead.

2:19 "Even the demons believe and tremble." For belief to be Christian, however, it must both hold distinctively Christian tenets and act in a peculiarly Christian manner. But failing the latter, the former cannot be urged as definitive of Christianity. For even the demons hold the orthodox beliefs, but it cannot be said that they are Christian. Indeed, they tremble. (Cf. Mt. 8:29, Mk. 1:24, 5:7, Lk. 4:34.

As has been shown, (verses 14-17) mere belief does not necessitate Christian behavior. Here, even those who, because of their circumstances, *cannot* behave in a Christian manner nevertheless share in proper belief, whether it be monotheism or Trinitarianism. (Cf. Lk. 8:28)

2:20 "But will you know, O vain man;" that is, "can you admit" or "will you face the fact." "O vain man" is a direct address in harsh, emotional terms, being approximately equal to "fool," or "empty headed one."

2:20 "That faith without works is barren?" True faith, if it is divested of its essential deeds, becomes barren belief, which cannot save him who holds it, will not help those in need, and not surprisingly, is characteristic of the demons. In all of these ways "belief" is "dead, being alone."

Holding such faith as this is no cause for joy, as befitting Christianity, but should result in

trembling as it does for the demons, because it too is dead. (Cf. James 2:17,26)

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

The very nature of faith as resulting in works of positive righteousness is here spelled out. Faith that does not result in positive righteousness is not Christian faith at all. As if to underscore the assertion, James points out that even the very demons have "head faith." Their faith is at least strong enough that it makes them shudder. How is it that man hasn't the sense to shudder when all he has is such empty "faith-alone?" If we will remember that faith does not mean mere belief or mental assent, we can avoid having nothing more than the demon's minimal faith that there is a God. If we remember that true Christian faith is "trustful obedience," we can lay claim to being Christian and our behavior verifies our claim.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

But if you persist in such "faith" someone is sure to say, "You have faith and I have deeds; it is as impossible for you to manifest your belief as it is easy for me to manifest my faith. You believe in the existence and unity of God; and that is fine as far as it goes. But it is not enough to make you a Christian, because even the demons hold orthodox views. Yet they tremble." Don't you understand, o empty one, that "belief" is not "faith" but a shallow, deception?

Fourteenth Pericope (James 2:21-26)

James 2:21-26 Ἀβραὰμ ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἐδικαιώθη ἀνενέγκας Ἰσαὰκ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον;²² βλέπεις δὲ τὴν πίστιν συνήργει τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἔργων ἡ πίστις ἐτελειώθη,²³ καὶ ἐπληρώθη ἡ γραφὴ ἡ λέγουσα· ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Ἀβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην καὶ φίλος θεοῦ ἐκλήθη.²⁴ ὀράτε δὲ τὴν ἔργων δικαιοῦται ἀνθρωπος καὶ οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως μόνον.²⁵ ὅμοιώς δὲ καὶ Παῦλος ἡ πόρνη οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἐδικαιώθη ὑπὸ δεξαμένη τοὺς ἀγγέλους καὶ ἐτέρᾳ ὁδῷ ἐκβαλοῦσα;²⁶ ὥσπερ γάρ τὸ σῶμα χωρὶς πνεύματος νεκρόν ἔστιν, οὕτως καὶ ἡ πίστις χωρὶς ἔργων νεκρά ἔστιν.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

2:22 συνήργει (imperfect, active, indicative, third person, singular) *work together with; cooperate; help*. That faith "works together with" works cannot be urged as proof that James advocates both faith and works and therefore, that the two are separate categories. James was not responsible for this practical dichotomy, which pits mere belief against legalism but having picked it up and in speaking to "faith" he, of necessity uses those terms. The distinction is still between faith as mere belief, and trust as belief directed life. The category of faith-as-trust is the same as it is with Paul" but James is defending it against intellectualism, or mental-assent-faith, and perhaps against an implied sense of license, while Paul defends it primarily against legalism. It should be noted that for a picture of opposites, nothing, quite compares to the contrast between mental assent belief and legalism. Arguing against such opposites, quite naturally puts Paul and James in seeming opposition, for each must emphasize the quality of trust which is contrary to his opponent, thus making for the appearance of contradiction between them.

Legalism implies non-belief. That is, it is not of faith, but solely of works. There is no trace of trust in legalism. The contrary position is taken by Paul; that is, that of trust.

But in order to combat legalism, Paul must emphasize that element in trust which is totally lacking in legalism, namely faith. Paul could not combat pure works by emphasizing the ethical element or trust. This gives rise, however, to the false inference that mere belief or mental assent saves. This is clearly the logical contradiction of legalism. Pure works is opposed by pure belief. But it does not follow so much from what Paul held, as from affirming the opposite of Paul's enemy on the basis of apparent similarity of content to Paul's emphasis.

But this is the very enemy against which James argues. Empty belief, far from being logically Pauline, is simply anti-legal.

Now, against this enemy of mere belief, James urges trust. But to do so effectively requires that

he emphasize, not the belief aspect of trust, but the resultant works. James is every bit as effective in dealing with belief as Paul is in dealing with legalism, but his emphasis is on the other half of trust. Hence, modern men are quick to invalidly infer that James was a legalist and quite opposed to Paul.

It is true that, logically, James seems to stand opposed to Paul. But this is because of emphasis, not because they actually held mutually exclusive tenets.

Associating James with legalism is truly Illogical, not only because such an association is false, but such a backward implication is illogical in principle, as well.

The problem is resolved when it is realized that there are only three positions dealt with, not four. There is 1) legalism, which is all work and no faith; 2) mere belief, which is a mental nod to all the right things and an ethic which ranges from merely detached, all the way to license; and 3) there is trust, as both Paul and James understand it, but with different emphases, in order to combat enemies one and two.

It should be noted that Paul not only is full of ethical admonition, but that he himself turns his guns rather convincingly upon the mere belief position when it seems that such faith as Paul is preaching implies license, cf. Rom. 6:1 ff. In similar fashion, James also has put a challenge to legalism. (Cf. 2:8 ff)

It should not be thought that such a case as presented here proves or implies the temporal priority of Paul. This was a purely logical sequence, which could easily have taken its beginning elsewhere. It may well be that James is actually earlier than Paul and, because of the nature of the debates outlined here, the expression "faith alone" is not an unlikely coincidence.

2:22 ἐτελειώθη (first aorist, passive, indicative, third person singular. 1) *Complete; bring to an end; finish; accomplish; 2) bring to its ordained goal or to fulfillment; 3) consecrate; initiate.* The meaning here is "finished" Belief, working together with works or deeds, was "completed" or "made whole. In a word, it became "trust."

2:23 ἐλογίσθη (first aorist, passive, indicative, third person, singular) 1) *Reckon, calculate; 2) think about, ponder, consider, dwell on; 3) think, believe, be of the opinion.* The sense here is *reckon, calculate or account.* The word "account" is preferable because it clearly indicates a substitution, without the slightest implication that such an accounted righteousness is fictitious, or contrary to the facts; faith was accounted as righteousness "in lieu of perfect conduct" but not "despite its inferior status" or any such notion.

It is noteworthy in defense of this interpretation of "faith" that James makes reference to the same verse concerning faith as Paul does, even although he cites a different example of Abraham's faith than Paul does. The point to be made from this is not that they should have cited the same example, but that they both view faith as "imputed as righteousness.

2:23 δικαιοσύνη (noun, first declension, accusative, feminine, singular) *Righteousness;*

uprightness. 1) *As a quality of just judgment;* 2) *as a quality or moral or religious life;* 3) *as the acceptance or the ground of acceptance by God.* Gen. 15:6 is also quoted by Paul in Gal. 3:6. It has been noted that Paul's opponents were legalists and those of James proponents of intellectual assent. The word, both in Galatians and in James, denotes the ground of acceptance with God. The emphasis is, of necessity, upon the aspect of belief with Paul, because he is refuting those who hold works to be sufficient grounds for justification.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

No grammatical anomalies.

D. Translation

2:21 Was not our father Abraham justified by works, having offered up his son Isaac upon the altar? 22 Do you see that faith worked together with his works and by works was the faith made complete. 23 And the scripture was fulfilled, saying, "And Abraham trusted God and it was accounted to him as righteousness" and he was called friend of God. 24 You see that by works a man is justified and not by belief alone. 25 And similarly the harlot Rahab was also justified by works after receiving the messengers and then sending them out by another way. 26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

E. Historical and Background Information

Biblical evidence for Abraham is found in Gen. 15:6. New Testament passages include Rom 4:2-3, Gal. 3:6 and Heb. 11:8, among others. Evidence for Rahab is found in Heb. 11:31. No extra-biblical, primary sources are known.

F. Exposition

2:21 "Was not our father Abraham justified by works?" This takes up the idea of trust versus belief. The paraphrase in the previous pericope concluded with the idea that belief is not trust. This was demonstrated from the negative example of the demons. The demons also believed, but because of their belief, they trembled. The question that should be asked there (how is our belief different from that of the demons?) is partially answered here. Their belief was what might be called mental assent. Yet it is likely that there is more to it than that. For the demons are said to tremble. Looked at logically, the facts that the demons believed and that they trembled imply two things about their belief.

First, they had access to information that man does not have. The belief of the demons more nearly approached the status of knowledge than does that of the addressees. They believed to be true that which they feared and loathed and wished were not true. Whereas the child of whom Mark Twain

spoke may well have "believed things he knew weren't so" which accurately represents much of what passes for belief, the demons were absolutely certain of what they fervently wished not to be so. It would appear that the belief of the demons was actually greater than mental assent, closely approaching or surpassing the faith of our greatest saints.

The second implication gains strength from the first, for apparently there was no quantitative distinction between the belief of saints and demons. But there is a giant qualitative difference between men who believe and the demons who believe. It is this: the addressees of James who only believe, but have no works, are apparently uninterested in doing good works. Indeed, they quite likely chose, as the larger context shows, to willingly clothe discriminatory behavior in the guise of faith. The demons, however, whose belief is really certainty, would probably like very much to do good deeds, but cannot. That is, they would welcome the chance to convert their mental assent into faith by ethical performance, but are incapable of doing so.

Now, in the case of Abraham, the evidence is positive, but the conclusion is the same; belief is not faith, or, to use a less ambiguous term, trust. The assertion that Abraham was justified works is supported in verse 23, by the scripture quotation⁷And Abraham trusted God and it was accounted to him as righteousness" Because the word "Justified" in verse 21, is the verb form of the word translated "righteousness" in v. 23, and because they speak of the same thing (the verb of obtaining the thing, the noun to the thing itself) works are equated with trust. Note the plural "works" as if they are many manifestations of one "trust" This is exactly the opposite of the emphasis Paul gives the same quotation.

The problem for this text is to determine how works can be considered faith or trust. Note that Abraham is called "our father" and is said to have offered up "his son" Isaac. No Jewish Christian could miss the point that Abraham, the "father of faith" sacrificed Isaac, the "father of blessing" (cf. Gen. 21:12, Rom. 4:7) and with him, them. And the Gentile Christians doubtless saw that if there had been no Israel, there would be no Gentile Christianity.

2:21 "Having offered up his son Isaac upon the altar" is the particular work James has in mind for demonstrating Abraham's trust. For other examples, cf. Rom 4:17 ff; Gal. 3:6, Heb. 11:8-17. Thus, the specific equation states that obedience in offering up Isaac was the trust which justified Abraham.

The unspoken premise is that Abraham's obedience was a manifestation of his trust. But the premise is unspoken precisely because it clouds the issue. Three things are known about trust: 1) it is qualitatively different from mere belief, no matter how certain the belief may be; 2) works are of the very essence of trust; 3) it is this trust which justified Abraham and, by extension, justifies others as well.

Now, because "belief" masquerades as *faith*, but is alien to *trust* (the demons prove this) and because the trust which saved Abraham is viewed as works, belief and works are seen to be antithetical. (Cf. verses 14-20)

2:22 "Do you see that faith worked together with his works" The phrase worked together with his

"works" accomplish verbally the union of faith and works, It is not the case, however, that such a dichotomy in faith and works really exists in life. There is simply "belief" (faith" without works) and "trust (faith manifested by works). But the only way of explaining an artificial dichotomy is in terms of the dichotomy.

2:22 "And by works was faith made complete" This clause continues with the terminology of the false dichotomy of faith and works. Literally rendered, the expressions are "the works" and "the faith" This not only sounds awkward, but is likely a common way of expressing the idea of "his works" and "his faith" referring to Abraham. This may further illustrate the point that Abraham did not wrestle with God's statements, calculate the possible outcomes and then, taking a chance on God, act accordingly. That is, he did not sit and decide to believe God, and then tailor his behavior to suit his decision. Rather, he trusted God, and his life demonstrated the fact.

Thus, such dichotomous explanations as the clause under consideration are necessary, not optional, if the dichotomy is ever to be healed A bone may be broken and physically made two instead of one. In order for the two to heal and again become one, they must be joined or placed in close proximity to one another. So with faith and works. In order to remove the artificial division, the two terms of the dichotomy must be used in close proximity to one another, demonstrating what their relationship should be in the whole. The usage of the word translated "complete" suggests such a joining. Thus, what is complete is trust" which results in justification.

2:23 "And the scripture was fulfilled" The word "and" introduces the result of faith and works "working together" It was by the two working together that the scripture was fulfilled.

2:23 "Saying And Abraham trusted God and it was accounted to him as righteousness" The quotation is from Gen. 15:6. It is accurately quoted from the LXX, but the Genesis text refers not directly to the sacrifice of Isaac, but to Abraham's trust of God's promise to him. This, of course, is exactly what is not needed in an argument against shallow belief. James seems to take the statement prophetically, as indeed it may well be taken. The basis for such an interpretation need not be limited to prophecy in the strict sense of the word. In every case in the New Testament where Gen. 15:6 is quoted, regardless of the incident cited in support of the conclusion, Abraham is held up as a paradigm of trust.

Coupled with these quotations and the Old Testament tradition, it is possible that Gen. 15:6 may be intended (or properly interpreted) to be a summary statement of Abraham's life and character.

Abraham's trust is equated with "works" (verse 21) and with the working together of "belief and works" (verse 22, thus representing a union, in positive terms, of the separated factors of faith.

2:23 "And he was called friend of This is not part of the Gen. 15:6 quotation, but a parallel to it, in that it is a result of the faith that "worked together with works.

The title "friend of God" was apparently quite routinely applied to Abraham. Modern Arabs still refer to Abraham this way, the expression being "El khalil Allah" or simply "El Khalil" Cf. Isa. 41:8; Jud. 1:; 30:20; II Chr. 20:7; Dan. 3:35, the latter two representing a slight departure in

language.

2:24 "You see that by works a man is justified, and not by belief alone" This of course represents the conclusion of the matter. All that has been implied in the word "trust" is here explicitly stated to be "belief" and "works.

2:25 "And similarly, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works" An additional case from the Old Testament is here presented by way of confirmation of the essential feature of James' argument in verse 12. Trust has works. Rahab makes a logical choice for such use. In contrast to Abraham's life, which could be characterized as "he trusted God" Rahab presents the picture of those whose lives cannot be so characterized. Yet her harlotry did not condemn her in the eyes of the Jews nearly as much as her aid to their fathers made her revered.

Various Jewish traditions held her to have become a sincere proselyte. She was supposed to have married Joshua and become an ancestor of priests and prophets. Her faith was said to have gained the "express recognition of God Himself" Matthew puts her in the lineage of our Lord. (Cf. Mt, 1:5)

The contrast here is not in the righteousness of Abraham and Rahab, for they both enjoyed the same "Justification by works" Nor is the contrast in the kinds of trust they exercised; indeed both examples are cited primarily to support the contention of James that "belief without works is barren" The contrast is between Abraham "the friend of God" and Rahab "the harlot" for both exercised belief which was manifested by works.

2:25 "After receiving the messengers and then sending them out by another way" It is worth noting that what is praised about Rahab, contrary to many modern ethical systems, is not her lie, but her aid to Israel. Rahab has been used (e.g. by Fletcher) in defense of lying. It may well be that the aid to Israel in this case involved a lie, but she was praised for her aid to Israel.

It is not that she didn't die; she did. There may have been another way of escape for her; we are not told. Those who conclude that this supports situation ethics will continue to see, in this passage, support for lying. Others will see that Rahab was saved by belief that manifested itself, not negatively in lying, but positively in her affirmative treatment of God's chosen people.

2:26 "For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead" This is the conclusion of the whole matter. In James' mind there is one certainty concerning belief: if it does not make itself visible by works, it cannot be pronounced "trust" but must be pronounced "dead" This is given by way of illustration. Faith with works missing is as dead as a body with the spirit missing. How this defines the nature of "trust" as distinct from belief, is in the implied situation of life.

If mere belief is as dead as mere body, then trust (belief with works) is represented by "soul" (body and spirit -- cf. Gen 2:7, then James? 1:17).

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

Both Paul and James use the Old Testament quotation, "It was accounted to him as righteousness" They both have in mind Abraham's trusting obedience to God as that which is so accounted. Paul emphasizes the belief aspect of such faith, because he is concerned to counter "works-righteousness" which claims that mere obedience to law can guarantee God's approval. James emphasizes the works of faith, because he is seeking to destroy what is today known as "easy beliefism" There is neither contradiction nor conflict in their respective doctrines; merely different emphases. This cannot but be the case, precisely because they refer to the same figure and same type of behavior.

The notion here set forth by James is simply that belief plus its resultant behavior is true faith. Without the visible display seen in works, there is but the belief, or mental assent, which is now called dead. (It has already been shown to be "unprofitable" and "barren. No new ethical or theological teaching in this pericope.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

Was not our father Abraham justified by works when he offered up on the altar Isaac, from whom we came? Do you see that his belief was manifested in his works and thus made complete? And the scripture was fulfilled which says "And Abraham trusted God and it was accounted to him as righteousness" and he was called "friend of God" So you see clearly that what justifies a man is works as well as belief. A similar case involved Rahab the harlot, who, although she was less virtuous, was also justified by works, aiding the messengers of Israel. Belief without works can profitably be compared to a body without spirit, in that both are incontestably dead.

Fifteenth Pericope (James 3:1-5a)

James 3:1-5 Μὴ πολλοὶ διδάσκαλοι γίνεσθε, ἀδελφοί μου, εἰδότες ὅτι μεῖζον κρίμα λημψόμεθα.
² πολλὰ γὰρ πταίομεν ἀπαντες. εἴ τις ἐν λόγῳ οὐ πταίει, οὗτος τέλειος ἀνήρ δυνατὸς χαλιναγωγῆσαι καὶ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα. ³ εἴ δὲ τῶν ἵππων τοὺς χαλινοὺς εἰς τὰ στόματα βάλλομεν εἰς τὸ πείθεσθαι αὐτοὺς ἡμῖν, καὶ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα αὐτῶν μετάγομεν. ⁴ ἴδοι καὶ τὰ πλοῖα τηλικαῦτα ὅντα καὶ ὑπὸ ἀνέμων σκληρῶν ἐλαυνόμενα, μετάγεται ὑπὸ ἐλαχίστου πηδαλίου ὅπου ἡ ὄρμὴ τοῦ εὐθύνοντος βούλεται, ⁵ οὕτως καὶ ἡ γλώσσα μικρὸν μέλος ἐστὶν καὶ μεγάλα αὐχεῖ.

A. Textual Criticism

3:3 The variants read as follows: 1) "Now if we put . . ." 2) "Behold, we put . . ."; 3) "For look we put . . . 11 ; 4) "Look we put . . ." This constitutes a fairly difficult problem and one which, unfortunately, cannot be ignored. It determines the sense of the illustration of the bridle.

Intrinsic probability favors reading No. 4 The illustration is of a point already made in verse 2, consistent speech is the sign of a "bridled body" The expression "and the whole body" is used both in verse 2 and in the illustration of verse 3, indicating how close the connection is between the two. It would seem less likely that such a point would be followed by a conditional sentence, which is used to *make* a point rather than to *illustrate* it.

Transcriptional probability also favors the last reading. Reading No. 2 is obviously an emendation, replacing the somewhat more obscure original with the word appearing. in verse 4 (behold also; note the word "also) and in verse 5 This neither lengthens nor shortens the verse, but does eliminate a seeming difficulty.

Reading No. 1 is also an attempt to correct what must have appeared to the scribe as a contraction. The reading itself is slightly longer and, as far as vocabulary is concerned, slightly easier. Reading p No. 3 supports this conclusion. For the insertion of the word "for" indicates that the reading was understood to mean "look" and not "now if." "For look" is the sense of the reading, rather than the cumbersome "For if not" but the third redactor substituted what he considered to be the original reading, "Look."

The external evidence is more or less evenly divided

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

3:1 εἰδότες (present participle, active, nominative, masculine, plural. 1) *Know*; 2) *be acquainted with, stand in close relation to*; 3) *know how, be able*; 4) *understand, recognize, come to know, experience*. The present context leans heavily toward the latter definition.

There is a subtle connection between "You" (the addressees) and the speaker. It revolves around the fact of judgment. That harsher judgment is given to those who proclaim a truth than to those

who merely practice it, was common knowledge to the addressees, as well as to the teachers themselves. It was the implicit acceptance of this fact upon which the teaching is based. The word must, then, refer to the fact of a common understanding or assumption.

This knowledge, being common, seems to be not the result of tutoring or training, but of experience. It is not individual, but common.

3:2 πταίομεν (present, active, indicative, first person, plural) *Stumble; trip*. As in 2:10, the word is here used figuratively and means *sin, stray or err*. However, because the relationship here is not between man and law, but between language and action, self-control and consistent behavior enter the picture. Therefore, "err" seems the most appropriate translation. The sort of tripping, or stumbling, in view here is not only sinning, in speech, but in inconsistency of speech with action, as the illustration makes clear.

3:2 χαλιναγωγῆσαι (present, active, infinitive) From χαλινόσ, (bit, bridle) and ἀγω (to conduct). *Restrained conduct; restraint which is characteristic of one's life*. Here, the control spoken of does not denote restraint as such, but careful guidance. The mouth is likened to the bit in a horse's mouth (hence the use of this term, which controls "his whole body" The tongue is likened to a ship's rudder. Neither item can be said to act exclusively like a break, but, as both illustrations point out, as a means of guidance. Restraint, in this case, means conduct carefully measured and guided, in some sense, by the mouth.

3:3 μετάγομεν (present, active, indicative, first person, plural) and 3:4 μετάγεται (present, passive, indicative, third person, singular) *Guide* (in another direction); *steer or lead to a place*. The word occurs in Acts 7:16d, with reference to Jacob and the fathers who were "taken back" to Shechem for burial. It also occurs in a figurative sense in I Clement 44:6, with the sense of "forcing" or "removing" from office. It indicates not only that locations are involved, but that the desire or will of an outside interest is at work. That is, the change of locality is the result not of the object's will (when the object can properly be said to have a will) but of the subject's will. There are, then, two classes of meaning. The first concerns the imposition of the subject's will upon inanimate objects, such as the Israelites "taking out" the bodies of their fathers, or the piloting of a ship by a steersman.

The other class of usage indicates the superimposition of the subject's will upon an object having its own will, whose desires might be contrary to those of the subject. Thus, a given power can superimpose its will upon an official and "drive" or "lead" him from office.

The passage under discussion uses the word twice, once in each sense. As it is used in verse 3, it relates to the guiding or leading of horses. This usage involves the change of location in accord with the will of the subject instead of the will of the object. It thus justifies the translation, "guide" or "lead" involving the subordination of one will to another.

The usage in verse 4 relates to an inanimate object; as such, there is no superimposition of one will upon another, but only the chance of location dictated by the subject. This sense of the word is best translated as "guide" or "Steer".

The same ambiguity that appears in the Greek word is also seen in the English word, "guide." It is therefore preferable in the translation (but not in the paraphrase).

3:4 ὁρμὴ (noun, first declension, nominative, feminine, singular). *Impulse; inclination; desire.* Here, the "desire" or "inclination" is said to "will" something. This appears to represent not a concept of a dual will, but an idiomatic expression such as "wherever his heart desires" or "as his desire dictates."

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

3:3 Note the failure to follow through consistently with the idea as originally conceived. This is a fair example of anacoluthon.

D. Translation

3:1 Let not many be teachers, my brothers, recognizing that we will receive a stricter judgment.
2 For we all err at many points; if anyone does not err in word, he is a consistent man, and able to bridle the whole body. 3 Look! we put the bits into the horses' mouths in order that they might be obedient to us and we guide their whole body. 4 Behold also the ships, although they are so great and are driven by rough winds, are yet guided by a very small rudder, wherever the impulse of the pilot desires. 5a So also the tongue is a small member and boasts great things.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

3:1 "Let not many be teachers, my brothers" The term "teachers" is the equivalent of Rabbi, with emphasis not upon his revered status, but on his function as an instructor of others and as a wise man. As such, it denotes the function of a qualified person, not an appointed or permanent office. The admonition is both for few people to set themselves up as teachers, and for the church to help set the limits by recognizing only a few.

Yet, there must be some teachers; James does not set forth a positive method for determining who or how many.

The maxim concerning preaching, to the effect that "if there is anything else you can do, do it" illustrates the point nicely, particularly in an age when the function of the pastor has been equated with teaching. The idea of not teaching unless there is nothing else you can do, does not imply a lack of qualifications to do other work, but aims primarily at the call itself, or at the purity and

intensity of conviction.

3:1 "Recognizing that we will receive a stricter judgment" James does provide a rationale for abstaining from teaching, viz, that teachers are subject to "stricter judgments" or "harsher condemnation" if he is found wanting.

This bit of common knowledge is to have the effect of making men think before deciding to become teachers; yet the notion of "stricter judgment" itself requires further explanation.

James includes himself among the teachers, saying "we" receive stronger judgment.

3:2 "For we all err at many points" begins the explanation of why teachers receive stricter judgment. Here, too, James begins with a bit of common knowledge; he includes himself this time as a member of the larger body of men.

As was pointed out in the Lexical Study, the word translated "err" includes the notion of sin, but is broader in the sense that it includes consistency in behavior. The point of such a statement is not that all sin, but that all are guilty of conduct inconsistent with their aims. This of course includes but is not limited to, sin. Even teachers fail in achieving their own aims and they are, to a degree, inconsistent; that is, they "err

3:2 "If anyone does not err in word" Here James contrasts the erring of which all are guilty with that which is verbal, or is caused by ill-advised speech. Such speech might include the broad categories of sinful speech, which consists of lying, swearing, taking oaths (cf. Jas. 5:12 and Mt. 5:34) and blasphemy; hypocritical speech, which would include anything tending to falsify Christian profession, such as cutting remarks or poorly timed, wrongly stated facts. The context seems to limit the meaning of "err in word" to the last two categories, since they are even more difficult to control than blatantly sinful speech. Many are those who can avoid lies and blasphemies, but cannot pass up the opportunity to gossip, boast, slander an enemy (or worse, a friend, or claim more than can be performed.

There is, in most men, a natural inclination or desire to match words with actions; this is seen in the threats men make and try to carry out. It also explains man's fear of professing something he may later be forced to repudiate, as well as his fear of being unable to practice what he preaches. No man wants to "bite off more than he can chew" by claiming more than can be delivered. How many crimes have been committed solely on the basis of an idle threat which must be made good?

There is, in fact, a determinative function of language which dictates, within wide limits, the sort of behavior one might expect from any given speaker. One often gains courage in unfavorable circumstances by speaking courageously. Bold speech can make one daring, simply from the sound of one's own voice.

It is a misconception to think that speech is always dependent upon inner forces. Language often has the function of obligating the speaker to a certain deliberate course of behavior; the oath (as the threat) guarantees action in accordance with the speech. Furthermore, a position once taken

is not easily abandoned later.

There is the further danger, in teaching, of passing on imperfect or erroneous tenets. The only options are retraction of the statements, or further philosophical refinement of the error.

3:2 "He is a consistent man" This is the consequence of the antecedent "if anyone . . ." it is essential to notice two things which tend to confirm the present understanding of "erring in word" The first is that this statement is given in the same context as the statement, "We all err . . ." Now, either "err" cannot mean "sin" in the strict sense, or the word often translated "perfect" cannot refer to moral perfection. That is James cannot say both that "we all sin" and that "the one who does not sin in word is sinless." Not only is such a concept unbiblical in general and alien to the teaching of the epistle itself, but there is no easy way to see how such a statement could be used as a rationale for the statement, "Let not many be teachers;" it can scarcely be urged that few should be teachers because few are morally perfect.

Indeed, the context forbids understanding either "err" to mean "sin" or "perfect" to mean "sinless" morality is not the subject under discussion, but the rationale for limiting the number of teachers.

This leads to the second point. The teacher is under stricter judgment, perhaps from God, but most certainly from men in general, and Christians in particular. The notion of "err in word" meaning hypocrisy or hurtful speech is quite clear under these circumstances. Men judge most harshly those who proclaim ideas which they fail to perform or conform to. The teacher, because he is the "display case" of Christianity, must, be consistent. Only in this way will men not gainsay Christianity or her Christ.

3:2 "And able to bridle the whole body" James here introduces the word "bridle" which will figure prominently in his first illustration of the principle here set forth,

That one who does not err in word is able also to control the body can be seen in two ways. The first might be described as a similar action; that is, if one is able to control his speech, he is able to control the body, the latter of the two being easier. The second represents a causal control, that the controlled mouth itself controls the body.

The clause here being considered might seem to indicate the first option, that of controlling the mouth and also the body. But a causal sense is far from impossible, in Greek as well as in English. The word translated "also" might be translated "even" or "thereby."

Furthermore, the examples which follow tend to confirm the causal aspect of controlling the tongue, and also of the above interpretation of the phrase "err in word."

The admonition, then, is not only to avoid claiming what cannot be delivered, but to- deliberately state what must be lived; to put one's life on the line, or to use the mouth as a steering mechanism for behavior.

Teachers are to be consistent. Many are Christians, a good number of those are intelligent enough

to teach. A few might even be eloquent enough to gather a following. But consistency is to be the hallmark of Christian teachers. Fear of inconsistency should make Christians, but especially teachers, fear to utter what cannot be lived or justified, as well as to not live what has been spoken. This fear is a positive aid in the control of the tongue and, by that fact, also of the body.

To "err in word" therefore means either to proclaim what is neither justifiable nor practicable, thus making a mockery of the teaching, or, conversely, to fail to perform according to that which has been proclaimed.

This is the sort of causal relationship which is assumed here. Christians must not advocate what they fear to practice, nor practice what is contrary to their proclamations. Rather, they must deliberately state what is right, and thereby commit themselves to a course which they are then obliged to follow. Because of the verbal nature of teaching, this applies with all the more force to teachers.

3:3-4 The illustrations do not serve to show disuse, but guided use, of the tongue. The tongue is not to remain silent, not even primarily to reject certain kinds of misuse (which, like abstaining from gross sin, is simply assumed, but is to provide constructive utterance for the guidance of the body).

The teacher must try to bridle mouth and body, but the students may actually come closer to accomplishing it, since they, need not say much and are not in the limelight.

3:3 "Look! We put the bits into the horses' mouths in order that they might be obedient to us" This takes up the illustration introduced by the use of the word "bridle" in verse 2. The illustration serves to confirm the interpretation given above.

The bridle illustrates a means of control, the mouth the object being controlled, and obedience the reason for seeking control. The bridle itself may be parallel to the controlling, dynamic in the Christian life, whether it be thought of as love, self discipline or the Holy Spirit. In any case, such a comparison is not the point of this pericope. It is instructive to note that "obedience" denotes the relationship of behavior to will.

3:3 "And we guide their whole body" further defines obedience. Obedience of the horse's body is produced through its relationship to its mouth. The "activity" of the mouth is produced by the bridle, which renders it subject to a will. In this case, the will to which the mouth is subject is not that of the horse, but of the one who has the bridle. The whole purpose of putting the bit in the horse's mouth is to control his body. The same must, in some sense, be true of bridling human speech. Thus, "guidance" here involves the superimposition of one will upon another. The course of both horse and rider (if he rides rather than walks) is determined by the behavior of the mouth. It does not, however, illustrate the control exercised upon the Christian by the Holy Spirit, for two reasons. The first has already been mentioned, that this pericope is not conceded to demonstrate the function of the Holy Spirit. The second is that neither in Scripture nor in life is the Holy Spirit found to exercise so complete, absolute and dictatorial power over believers as is possible by such mechanical means as a bit.

3:4 "Behold also the ships, although they are so great, and are driven by rough winds" This begins the second illustration. Here, the great size of the ships corresponds to the magnitude of behavior, the rough winds correspond to powerful external forces in human motivation and behavior, perhaps peer pressure or some other powerful social force. This all lies just beneath the surface of the example, but is not to be thought of as separate from the main point, viz, that a very small element is able to control and change the direction of a body, which, lacking its own will, is abandoned to the power and direction of the surrounding forces.

3:4 "Are yet guided by a very small rudder" This phrase sets forth the relative size of the rudder as an important feature. All that keeps a ship off the reefs, all that prevents it from being totally at the mercy of hostile forces, all that gives it direction in the chaos of wind and sea, is a "very small rudder" This rudder guides the ship, which has no will of its own.

3:4 "Wherever the impulse of the pilot desires" This clause points up the will behind the rudder. without the pilot, even the rudder is without will, direction or strength. The pilot might well serve as a picture of the Holy spirit, especially in light of the rest of the comparison noted above. Even here, however, this is not the only possibility. Other wills, including the human will, work equally well. Yet the picture of the Holy spirit providing direction to seemingly mindless men, amid the forces of social chaos, is a compelling one.

3:5a "So also the tongue is a small member and boasts great things" This clause draws the conclusion of the comparison. The tongue can boast of actually controlling the body, in the sense of dictating, within certain limits, the behavior of the body. If a person properly uses the tongue, he behaves as he says he will, and claims for himself only what he can perform. This is a severe discipline to which few can attain. And for lack of such attainment, no man should seek to teach.

Only when one, like the horse, has a superimposed will, can he be sure of his mouth and of his behavior. Only when that will is greater than the impersonal forces surrounding the teacher, can he, like the ship, be kept "off the rocks."

3:1-5a Using speech as a guidance device would involve verbally setting a course and steering by it. Teachers must not be directionless, but consistent to their espoused aims. They should commit themselves to a course and live by it.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

The clearly ethical injunction of this passage is given a theological basis. Teachers are to be kept to a minimum because they receive harsher judgment. Thus, character is assessed on the basis of speech, as well as action; and character is the essence of James' concern. The teacher is judged more harshly because he is appraised on the basis of what he does, as well as on the basis of what he advocates (or teaches. There are three areas of judgment, then: 1) what is done; 2) what is said; 3) the consistency between what is said and what is done.

It is noteworthy that James sees behavior itself as easier to control than the speech; that if speech

can be controlled, so can behavior, making consistency possible.

The first hint of the ethical nature of speech is noted here.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

My brothers, not many should become teachers, because, as teachers, we will receive more critical judgment. For all of us fail in many ways; if anyone fails not in his speech although, he is at least consistent, being able to bring his behavior into line. Now, bits are put in the mouths of horses, so that they will obey us, because bodies are therefore easily led. Likewise, behold the ships, which, although they are quite huge, and are driven by rough winds, are yet steered and kept on course by a very small rudder, as the pilot desires. So also the tongue is a small member and must not be underestimated, but properly used.

Sixteenth Pericope (James 3:5b-12)

James 3:5-12 ἵδοὺ ἡλίκον πῦρ ἡλίκην ὥλην ἀνάπτει· ⁶ ¶ καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα πῦρ· ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας ἡ γλῶσσα καθίσταται ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν, ἡ σπιλούσα ὅλον τὸ σῶμα καὶ φλογίζουσα τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως καὶ φλογιζομένη ὑπὸ τῆς γέεννης. ⁷ πᾶσα γὰρ φύσις θηρίων τε καὶ πετεινῶν, ἐρπετῶν τε καὶ ἐναλίων δαμάζεται καὶ δεδάμασται τῇ φύσει τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ, ⁸ τὴν δὲ γλῶσσαν οὐδεὶς δαμάσαι δύναται ἀνθρώπων, ἀκατάστατον κακόν, μεστὴ ἵου θανατηφόρου. ⁹ ἐν αὐτῇ εὐλογοῦμεν τὸν κύριον καὶ πατέρα καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ καταρώμεθα τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τοὺς καθ' ὄμοίωσιν θεοῦ γεγονότας, ¹⁰ ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ στόματος ἔξερχεται εὐλογία καὶ κατάρα. οὐ χρή, ἀδελφοί μου, ταῦτα οὕτως γίνεσθαι. ¹¹ μήτι ἡ πηγὴ ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς ὀπῆς βρύει τὸ γλυκὺ καὶ τὸ πικρόν; ¹² μὴ δύναται, ἀδελφοί μου, συκῆ ἐλαίας ποιῆσαι ἡ ἄμπελος σῦκα; οὕτε ἀλυκὸν γλυκὺ ποιῆσαι ὕδωρ.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

3:6 καθίσταται (present, passive, indicative, third person, singular) 1) *Bring; conduct; take; appoint; put in charge; ordain*; 3) *make; cause*. The difficulty here lies in the English translation. In choosing the word to translate this term, several things from the context need to be remembered. One is the contrast between the "ideal" use of the tongue (3:1-5a) and the real use spoken of here. The proper use of the tongue involves speech which is the cause of Christian behavior; that is, the Christian life is to be "piloted" by means of Christian speech. The tongue is to guide as a rudder. Here, however, we find that behavior which is reality. The contrast is twofold. In reality, the tongue "guides" (that is, deliberately, willfully directs) behavior only infrequently, being a "cause" of trouble more often than a guide through it. Furthermore, far from dictating good behavior, it is used in lying, cheating, cursing, the commission of crime, seduction, swearing, filthy talk; to say nothing of empty words and vain philosophy. To continue with the analogy of the ship, the tongue, rather than being the rudder which guides, is in reality the slide down which the ship is launched into the water, and the wine bottle which christens it. The word "launch" shares the sense of cause inherent in the word under consideration can continue the analogy of the ship, and contrasts nicely with the sense of "to guide" without wholly giving up that notion. It must also be remembered that the tongue is said to be "a fire" like that which "kindles a forest." Two words in the context here suggest such an action; that which is translated "kindle" and that which is translated "set on fire." It is clear that the same sort of causation is to be assumed here.

The following considerations point toward the present translation. 1) It is basically causal in nature; 2) it does not completely lose sight of the idea "to guide" yet is contrasted to a deliberate, purposeful, continuing guidance; 3) it is compatible with the process described as kindling. "Kindle" "launch" and "initiate" are all taken into account in the word "instigate."

3:7 φύσις (noun, third declension, nominative, feminine, singular) and φύσει (noun, third declension, dative, feminine, singular) *Nature*, as 1) *natural endowment or condition*; 2) *natural characteristics or disposition*; 3) *nature*, as *the regular natural order*; 4) *natural beings, product of nature, creature*. Here, "creature" and "kind" are meant. It is used in the generic sense, to indicate kind or class, not every individual. The same word is used of "mankind".

3:7 δαμάζεται (present, passive, indicative, third person, singular) *Subdue*. Its usual usage, in connection with animals, is that of *tame*. It is so translated by AV, ASV and RSV. But that meaning is too narrow. The context is one which defines relationships, proper (1-5a) and real (5b-12). The sentence hangs upon the notion of mankind's position superior to the rest of "creaturedom" The reference can scarcely be to anything other than Gen. 1:26, 28. (Perhaps also 2:1) As such, the position of "animal trainer" is too narrow. The context makes it clear that taming, training or controlling is only part of the relationship. The ideal relationship of the tongue to behavior is that of rudder to ship. There is a sense of fitness and consistency in these illustrations. On the other hand, the illustration of reality is a forest fire.

The idea of "subdue" is much greater than the idea of "tame, in just the same way as being "subject" involves more than mere "obedience."

The idea refers back to Genesis, where man (Adam) was told to subdue the creation; he studied, named and understood it. Since Adam, man has discovered the best possible relationships to the various animals. Thus, some animals are harnessed for work, others are tamed for pets and companions, some trained for entertainment; some are domesticated and others are hunted for food. Some are merely deemed dangerous and avoided,

The idea of "having dominion over" or "subduing" in the contexts of Genesis and James involves determining what man's relationships are, and making them work for his betterment. Thus, his relationships and betterment involve physical help, pest control, hunting aids, and game and personal protection. Dominion, or the subduing, of nature has never meant the technological slaughter or destruction currently being practiced. The problem is to determine in what respects man has failed to similarly "subdue" his own tongue. This includes the lack of understanding of the importance of silence, as well as the causal function of language itself.

Man neither speaks nor keeps silent properly, nor does he allow speech its proper place in determining his behavior.

In the case of the tongue, the word "tams" in its broadest sense might suffice. In the case of animals, it is too narrow. In the interest of consistency, the broader word "subdue" is used. (Cf. also Psa. 8:68)

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

3:6 Note the articular predicate nominative, "the world" This is somewhat unusual, most predicate

nominatives being anarthrous. The article occurs with the predicate noun when it "refers to a definite object which is well known, has been "previously mentioned or hinted at" or "is identical with the subject." Cf. Smythe, *Greek Grammar*.

D. Translation

3:5b Behold how small a fire kindles so great a forest; 6 and the tongue is fire. The world of unrighteousness among our members is instigated by' the tongue, which contaminates the whole body and sets ablaze the course of life, and is itself set ablaze by hell. 7 For every creature, of beasts and birds, of reptiles and fish, is subdued and has been subdued by mankind. 8 But no one is able to subdue the tongue of man -- a capricious evil, full of deadly venom. 9 With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who are fashioned according to the likeness of God. 10 Out of the same mouth come blessing and cursing; my brothers, these things ought not to be so. 11 Does the fountain out of the same opening send forth sweet and bitter? 12 Can a fig tree produce olives, my brothers, or a grapevine, figs? Nor can salt produce sweet water.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

James passes now from his admonition to proper use of the tongue as it behaves in reality. If "steering" the body is essential for teachers and desirable for all Christians, the understanding of the natural, easy, iniquitous use of the tongue is necessary. Here, the contrast is Provided.

3:5b "Behold how small a fire kindles so great a forest" This clause forms a transition from 3:1-5a by once again comparing the relative sizes of the cause and the effect. It is a transition because what follows, although also a function of the comparison of sizes, is a contrast between what ought to be (3:1-5a) and what actually is. That is, the same literary device is used. to, contrast the real with the right. This is apparent in the figure of a forest fire.

3:6 "And the tongue is a fire." The identification is made specific because the nature of the contrast is not to be missed. Rather than being bridled and acting as a steering mechanism, the tongue is, in reality, "a fire."

3:6 "The world of unrighteousness among our members is instigated by the tongue" The scope of the problem is indicated by this clause, as well as by the relationship to it of the tongue. The meaning of the phrase "world of unrighteousness" has received some attention. The idea provided by the contrast, as well as the sense of the word translated "instigated" seems to be one of causality. Not that the tongue is the agent of all iniquity, or that it carefully guides all sin, but it instigates, causes, or promotes the bulk of evil. The contrast with the guidance provided by the

rudder is that of continuance. The tongue merely initiates evil, and lets the consequences come as they may. Rather than constantly guiding the body as it ought, the tongue ignites the fire, stands back and lets it burn uncontrollably.

The tongue is also viewed as "boasting great things" For, although it is but one "member" among others, and bears not the same relationship to the whole as does a rudder to a ship, yet it is the instigator of trouble and unrighteousness for its fellow members.

3:6 "Which contaminates the whole body" confirms this assessment. This statement is slightly ambiguous, but probably deliberately so. The tongue may be thought of as the contaminant itself, or as the agent of contamination. It may contaminate either by its presence or by its activity, or both. Yet, it does not seem likely that the tongue is pictured as sinful in itself, any more than another member is sinful merely by virtue of its identity. It is much more probable that the tongue is viewed as the mischief-maker, as the contaminant, by virtue of its activity. This is consistent with the context, both in describing the tongue as the agent of action or behavior, and in the contrast between the proper and the actual character of the behavior produced.

The important features have been noted. The tongue "instigates" activity which is unhealthy. It does this "among the members.

This phrase further identifies the character and activity of the tongue.

3:6 "And sets ablaze the course of life" Not only does the tongue "contaminate" the body by instigating sin among its members, it is here stated that the tongue "sets ablaze the life of the body. The picture seems to be one of self-perpetuating evil. Gossip, feuds, ill feelings, and back biting, with their resulting spiteful behavior, come immediately to mind. The picture is of situations initiated by a hurtful remark, perpetuated by verbal retaliation and escalated by spiteful, resentful actions. While "contaminating" the members perhaps consists of isolated acts of sin committed by body members as a result of verbal activity, "setting ablaze the course of life" refers to continual or recurring sinful behavior.

This phrase also acts in further identifying the tongue, by citing another mode of its behavior.

The expression "course of life" has been the cause of much discussion . Here wheel" or "circle of creation" or "nature" gives a literal rendering. Such an expression was not unknown to Greek authors, but none of those usages fits the present context. "Round" or "course of life" or "existence" accords well with the context and other Greek usages.

3:6 "And is itself set on fire by hell" Here, James gives not a further identification of the tongue, but the reason for its hellish character. "Hell is a translation of the word "Gehenna" The Hebrew "Ge Hinnom" or "Valley of Hinnom" is translated into Greek "Genna" and thence into English "Gehenna" The Valley of Hinnom begins its descent just west of Jerusalem. It descends southward to the southwest corner of Jerusalem, where it turns abruptly and continues to descend eastward until it is joined to the Tyropoean Valley and Kidron Valley, and continues to descend in a southeasterly direction. The valley was the site, in antiquity, of Topheth, where children were

burned to Molech. During the reform of Josiah (II Ki. 23:10) the practice was abolished. Later, the site was used as a garbage dump. The innards of sacrificial animals, as well as the dead bodies of criminals, were disposed of there. Because of the hideous sins practiced there, and its association with refuse, the term passed over into use as the popular designation for the place of eternal punishment. The concept of eternal punishment was current and popular in the time of Jesus. Because of the fire which burned continually there, He described Gehenna as a place where "the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched" (Mark :44 ff. This is likely the basis for, or the basic truth underlying, the "lake of fire" in Revelation.

With this in mind, the sinful character of such speech is unmistakable. The tongue is said to partake of the sinful nature of such eternal fire, not to be deserving of punishment in hell. Such punishment would have been assumed without making a contribution to an understanding of the expression. The idea is that "the tongue is as sinful as hell" not that it "is deserving of hell.

3:7 "For every creature, of beasts and birds, of reptiles and fish (lit. aquatics" Here, James has reference to Gen. 20, 24, 26. The expression means "all animal life "and is fairly frequent in the Old Testament, occurring in Dt. 4:17, 18; I Ki. 4:33; and Acts 10:12, 11:6.

The word translated "fish" is literally "things of the sea" or "sea creatures" Because the word translated "creature" is used twice in this passage and is so translated once (the other being "kind" as in "mankind) it is simply translated "fish" The context, as well as the reference to Genesis makes it clear that such was intended. James alludes frequently to the Old Testament but quotes it only three times (2:23, 4:6, 5:11, and his vocabulary is generally more refined than the original language, The difference between the English "fish" and "aquatic" aptly illustrates the difference.

3:7 "Is subdued and has been subdued by mankind" This might be paraphrased "Is occasionally subdued, and has been subdued." The idea is that the ordering of man's relationships to the animal creation has continued to go forward, with new "uses" being discovered for various animals in particular, while the broad outlines of those relationships to "every" different kind in general had been established long ago.

3:8 "But no one is able to subdue the tongue of men" Here, James provides a perfect contrast. Both "every creature" and "the tongue" are specific references to particulars, while "of beasts and birds: reptiles and fish" and "of men" are expressions denoting general categories or "universals." Such a mode of expression designates both the class as a whole, and at least some of the particulars within that class. The contrast is made by predicated something of one set of terms, and denying it of the other. Because that ordering which is affirmed of the animal realm (which is wild and external to man) and that ordering which is denied in regard to the tongue of men (which is supposedly easy to control because internal to man, a sense of irony is developed. The crown of creation has ordered the rest of creation, but cannot govern his own tongue.

3:8 "A capricious evil, full of deadly venom" The nature of the irony is made clearer by the addition of this clause. For the tongue is described b a word variously translated as "restless" (ASV and RSV) or "unruly" (AV) and meaning unstable, restless or vacillating (see Lexical Study. But, as the context makes clear, the tongue is not being dealt with because it is restless, or because

of ceaseless activity, but because of its unpredictable (therefore unknowable) nature, and the idea therefore is that it is ungoverned and becomes ungovernable. "capricious" best describes this nature.

There is also a contrast between God and men.

3:9 "Who are fashioned according to the likeness of God." James here refers to Gen. 1:26, 27 The contrast between God and men is furthered here. It has been stated that God is blessed and man is cursed by the same tongue. The contrasts are obvious enough. But, again, James introduces a note of irony. For not only is cursing men inconsistent with proper use of the mouth, but it is sinful irony to bless God and yet curse His image. No man would sing "God Bless America" and turn to curse its flag. It can be no wonder that the tongue is viewed as capricious and uncontrollable, when it manifests such behavior.

3:7-9 For convenience, the literary functions of two statements can be treated together, because their logical structures are identical. The first part of each thought consists of a statement of positive behavior. In the first case, it is the subduing of animals, in the second, it is blessing God.

The second part of these thoughts involves a contrast which is made by stating either a contrary (not subduing the tongue of man) or a contradictory (cursing man. in both cases the contrast Is between the actions, as well as between characters.

In both cases, the contrast is given an ironic twist by the addition of a third clause which functions by uniting the contrasted characters in some way and thereby more forcefully opposing the contrasting actions and showing them to denote mutually exclusive or inconsistent behavior patterns. Notice the copula between the second and third clauses of the two statements.

In the first case, the full force of the irony is lost because it involves not a contradictory, but a contrary, and because the reason for failure to subdue the tongue is implied in the difference between animals and tongues (i.e. capriciousness).

It is this capricious nature of the tongue which is illustrated by the second statement. As noted, it involves a blatant contradiction. But it also involves a much closer comparison of the characters, God and His image-bearer, very nearly approaching identity. The irony consists, then, of beginning with a contrast and, by means of a third clause, transforming it into a comparison.

3:10 "Out of the same mouth come blessing and cursing" James draws out the contrast dealing with the behavior of the tongue, leaving behind that of God and man. This has the effect of further defining the caprice of the tongue. and puts the contrast in the form of the illustration which will follow.

3:10 "My brothers, these things ought not to be so." James condemns such inconsistency and caprice before turning to the illustration, which plainly shows the exact nature of such inconsistency.

3:11 "Does the fountain out of the same opening send forth sweet and bitter?" This comparison not only parallels the inconsistency of blessing and cursing of v. 10, but serves to show the impossibility of such caprice in nature. For the assumption is that such an occurrence is not improbable but impossible.

3:12 "Can a fig tree produce olives, my brothers, or a grapevine figs?" Again, the assumption is that it is impossible for such a thing to occur. It should be noticed that the comparisons of v. 12 and that of v. 11 are of different varieties, for both comparisons of v. 12 operate on the same formula, i.e. A" cannot produce both "B" and "C" at the same place. The comparisons of v. 12 serve to compare the production of the mouth to fruit which is consistent with its own character. It has been shown that the unsubdued tongue does produce inconsistent types of speech, while such a condition should not (indeed in nature does not) arise.

Whereas v. 11 illustrates the caprice of the tongue in blessing and cursing, v. 12 illustrates the unknowable nature of the tongue. Men can plant olives and expect to gather olives; so also with grapes and figs. But man hasn't a clue as to the future behavior of the tongue, except that it will be unpredictable. The implication of the illustrations is that the fickle tongue cannot consistently produce the proper speech. And, judging by the various fruits of the tongue alone, it is impossible to determine man's real nature, just as a tree that yields pears, peas and potatoes could not be named. Its character could only be called inconsistent.

3:12 "Nor can salt produce sweet water" The conclusion is that what is capricious cannot produce stability or consistency. There are essential features of one who would teach. Some men more nearly approximate the ideal than others, and some of these can, by rigorous discipline, send forth only the sweet water and suppress the salt water. If a tongue is conditioned to send forth salt water it cannot send forth sweet water. The water which a fountain sends forth is conditioned by the kind of fountain it is.

The teacher is called to that sort of character and discipline as will reveal itself in speech as originating in a sweet fountain. Because such is manifestly impossible to guarantee, there should be few teachers, and they should be of the highest character, and therefore of purest speech.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

Here, the tongue is called "a fire" is said to instigate trouble among the members of the body (this is as true of the Body of Christ, the Church, as it is of the human body; but that is not the question here) and to contaminate the body. It is said to be fired by hell, and thereby to set ablaze all of life. It is said to be untamable. These characteristics surely refer to the various evil uses of the tongue, such as lying, gossiping, taking oaths, swearing, and praising the evil or questionable deeds of others. Thus, the mention of blessing God and cursing men is only an example, and not the whole case against the tongue. This moral lapse, or inconsistency is not merely between what is *spoken* and what is *done*, as was the case in the previous pericope, but between what is said *on one occasion* and what is said *on another occasion*.

Also visible is the doctrine of man's "God-image" This makes gossip, slander and cursing men an even greater evil than would otherwise be the case.

All this points to the essential but overlooked fact that language *qua* language is an ethical entity, and speech an ethical event, with deep theological implications. The very notion of blessing God the Communicator, and cursing man, His image-bearer, makes plain the theological "double-mindedness" of men.

One cannot use speech to bless the One who created speech, and curse those who speak, without revealing a fundamental discontinuity in one's very soul.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

Remember how a small match can burn an entire forest. And the tongue is just such a match. The continuing and on-going fires of unrighteousness in our other members are ignited by the tongue, which, by its activity, contaminates the whole body, setting ablaze the course of life, and is itself inflamed by the sinfulness of hell. For man has exercised his dominion over the animal creation. But no one has ever been able to completely govern his tongue, which is a capricious evil and, in a sense, just as venomous as some reptiles. with the tongue we bless God, our Maker, and with it we curse other men, who are themselves His image-bearers. Out of the same mouths come both blessing and curses, My brothers, you know such inconsistencies should not exist. Natural fountains do not send forth from the same opening both bitter water and sweet, do they? Or would you expect to gather olives from a fig tree, or figs from a grapevine? Neither can salt make water sweet.

Seventeenth Pericope (James 3:13-18)

James 3:13-18 Τίς σοφὸς καὶ ἐπιστήμων ἐν ὑμῖν; δειξάτω ἐκ τῆς καλῆς ἀναστροφῆς τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ ἐν πραύτητι σοφίας. ¹⁴ εἰ δὲ ζῆλον πικρὸν ἔχετε καὶ ἐριθείαν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν, μὴ κατακαυχᾶσθε καὶ ψεύδεσθε κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας. ¹⁵ οὐκ ἔστιν αὕτη ἡ σοφία ἀνωθεν κατερχομένη ἀλλὰ ἐπίγειος, ψυχική, δαιμονιώδης. ¹⁶ ὅπου γὰρ ζῆλος καὶ ἐριθεία, ἐκεῖ ἀκαταστασία καὶ πᾶν φαῦλον πρᾶγμα. ¹⁷ ἡ δὲ ἀνωθεν σοφία πρῶτον μὲν ἀγνή ἔστιν, ἔπειτα εἰρηνική, ἐπιεικής, εὔπειθής, μεστὴ ἐλέους καὶ καρπῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἀδιάκριτος, ἀνυπόκριτος. ¹⁸ καρπὸς δὲ δικαιοσύνης ἐν εἰρήνῃ σπείρεται τοῖς ποιοῦσιν εἰρήνην.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

3:14 *ζῆλον* (noun, second declension, accusative, masculine, singular. 1) *Zeal; ardor*; 2) in a bad sense, *jealousy, envy*. Here, the word describes that wisdom which is not from above, and which , fails to qualify a man to be a Christian teacher. It is paired with the descriptive word translated "selfish ambition" and is the opposite of "good conduct" while Jealousy or envy may be included in the usage of the word, and while it has a decidedly bad connotation, it must be rendered "zeal" for two reasons.

First, zeal usually is an outward manifestation (hence the noun, *zealot*) and must be so understood here because of its opposition to "good conduct" Another indication of this character of outward behavior is the fact that it is paired with the term "selfish ambition" which provides a natural internal basis or cause for such zeal.

The second reason for rendering the word "zeal" rather than "Jealousy" is the presence of the modifying term "harsh" It could as easily be translated by the word "bitter" but in either case, it would be superfluous to so modify the word if meant simple jealousy, which itself includes such a notion.

The context makes it clear that what is meant is a "harsh zeal" born in the heart of "selfish ambition" and even if not always expressed in outward behavior, inconsistent with "good conduct."

3:14 *ἐπιθείαν* (noun, first declension, accusative, feminine, singular) This word was, prior to New Testament usage, a designation for pursuit of political office purely for personal gain, and by unfair means. Though *strife* and *contentiousness* are possible translations, *selfishness* or *selfish ambition* gives a better rendering.

Here, coupled with "harsh zeal" and opposed to "wise humility" (literally, "meekness of wisdom) the elements both of "selfishness and "ambition" are clearly present.

3:15 ψυχική (adjective, nominative, feminine, singular) *Pertaining to the soul, or life in its earthly, bodily, materialistic expression; physical or unspiritual.* Because it is of that wisdom which is "not from above" it is implicitly impure. Such wisdom as contains or allows self seeking, if characterized by "harsh zeal" and is linked with the terms "earthy" and "demonic" in their opposition to that wisdom which is "peaceful, kind and compliant" can only be called man-centered or humanistic. It certainly cannot be rendered "sensual" in any sense meaningful today except insofar as it has no basis for guidance other than the human perspective and human senses. As such, it is again manifestly humanistic, denying the "wisdom" or "enlightenment from above.

3:17 ἐπιεικής (adjective, nominative, masculine/feminine, singular. *Yielding; gentle; kind; forbearing.* The word is used to describe the "wisdom from above" which is, "first of all, pure" As such, it can have no connotation of compromise. It is not a wisdom that can sell out its source. It is clearly defined by its close connection with the words translated "peaceful" and "compliant" It describes a wisdom which need not be silent, but must be considerate; one that cannot compromise, but which seeks peaceful means of overcoming ill-conceived opposition. It cannot be predicated on that which stein, from "harsh zeal" and "selfish ambition" It is neither "humanistic" nor "demonic" those may be camouflaged to appear "gentle" The kind, gentle wisdom from above" is not concerned with the rules of debate or interested in keeping score of the points made. Nor does it consider opposition to be enmity, which must be overcome. It is concerned only to clearly display its source.

3:17 ἐύπεισθής (adjective, nominative, masculine/feminine, singular) *Obedient; compliant.* The idea is one of conformity to the character of its source. The "wisdom from above" is said to be "first, pure" Here, that purity is safeguarded by means of "obedience" or "compliance" to God, the Giver of such wisdom. The words It peaceful" and "gentle" describe abstract states of being. But the word "compliance" immediately suggests a "master" or authority beyond the one manifesting the trait. Given the language of the context, one cannot but assume that "compliance" designates a relationship to God.

3:17 ἀδιάκριτος (adjective, nominative, masculine, feminine, singular) The word is used to designate a state of being in which there is no discord or uncertainty. It may mean *unwavering, impartial, inseparable or unshakable.* It is, in the present context, closely associated with the trait of "sincerity" translated "Without hypocrisy" and stands in something like the same relation to it as "instability" does to "every evil matter." The basic characteristic is primarily indicative of a state of mind; it is basically internal.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

No grammatical anomalies.

D. Translation

3:13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him demonstrate by his good conduct his

qualifications in the meekness of wisdom. 14 But if you have harsh zeal and selfish ambition in your heart, do not exult, and lie against the truth; 15 this wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthy, humanistic, demonic. 16 For where such zeal and selfish ambition are, there is instability and every evil matter. 17 Now the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceful, gentle, compliant, full of mere end good fruits, without ambiguity, without hypocrisy n And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by the ones who make peace.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

3:13 "Who is wise and understanding among you?" The question is directed to Christians in general, but specifically to would be Christian teachers. The question continues the purpose of restricting the number of teachers. The term "wise" is a Greek technical term for teacher, although it is probably not used in that sense here.

The term translated "understanding" may be used with the slightest trace of sarcasm. It was capable of the same sort of use as seen in the English word "educated" or "expert."

As was noted earlier (see on Jas. 3:1) the position of "teacher" or "professor" or "Rabbi" was free to anyone who could command a following by his teaching. James is addressing those who would likely set themselves forward as teachers.

The copula, which must be supplied in this question was perhaps omitted to deliberately allow for a greater selection of candidates to be set forth. It can be understood to ask, "Who is, who seems to be, or who claims to be, wise and understanding?" By allowing various means of putting the question, and then placing the qualifying limitation, a greater selection may be had and a more conscientious choice can be made. The sense most clearly consistent with the context, particularly the limiting qualification of the next sentence, is to be had by supplying the words "would-be" as the copula.

3:13 "Let him demonstrate by his good conduct his qualifications in the meekness of wisdom." This sentence is difficult to translate; either the grammar or the vocabulary must be given considerable latitude for a likely interpretation to be given. The sentence could be understood to ask for a demonstration "that his works are done in wise humility." This involves the supplying of words and an altered view of the grammar of the sentence.

It may also be taken in a sense which, although grammatically possible, makes nonsense of the statement, thus: "Let him show his works in wise humility by his good conduct" in which case it would mean that would-be teachers were to humbly, and in the best of behavior, point out their works. This not only is dreadfully awkward, but fails of its purpose to give guidelines for choosing

teachers.

The option chosen involves defining the word "show" in such a way as to give grounds for putting oneself forward, and being accepted as a teacher. It also involves understanding the word "works" not as isolated deeds or even general behavior (both of which would render redundant the phrase "by his good conduct," but as "qualifications." These would include deeds, teachings, experience, beliefs, and so forth. This is semantically permissible and contextually desirable.

In addition, the prepositional phrase, "in the humility of wisdom" is seen to modify the phrase "his works" or "his qualification." Grammatically, this is the most likely construction.

Thus, James intends to add a further qualification to be met by would-be Christian teachers. Not only must their tongues be bridled and act as steering mechanisms' living lives consistent with their convictions and teachings, they must demonstrate by their daily conduct that they are qualified not only in the knowledge of wisdom (so much is assumed, but also in the meekness of wisdom.

This also serves to point out a little known or regarded attribute of true wisdom, namely its meekness.

3:14 "But if you have harsh zeal and selfish ambition in your heart." By Its very nature, this antithesis to the meekness of (true) wisdom eliminates many would-be teachers from consideration. The strong contrast sets it apart from meekness and the presence of "harsh zeal and selfish ambition" even if nothing more than "approbation lust" was as prevalent then as now, and just as divisive. The underlying assumption is that the Church is, and ought to remain, unified. That it should suffer division by diverse teachings is not of the essence of the "meekness of wisdom."

"Harsh zeal" may include envy, but it is primarily an inward characteristic which manifests itself in theological debate and disputation. It definitely includes a fierce desire to promote one's own position and exclude all others. The ulterior motive is to win points, not friends. It is designed to glorify the disputant rather than Him who is worthy. This is simply the game of theological "one-upmanship."

"Selfish ambition" is the internal breeding ground for "harsh zeal" and consists of any rationale which can justify theological argument, and. thus further the Interest or tenets of the "teacher." "Selfish ambition" is the father of factions and party rivalry.

3:14 "Do not exult, and lie against the truth." This clause forbids the outcome and its practical implication of both having and successfully exercising "harsh zeal and selfish ambition." Exult" may mean "brag or boast" and is a verbal acknowledgment of victory in a theological debate. It also means "to gloat or glory in, to congratulate oneself, even in the back of one's mind. It is, according to James, to "lie against the truth." One who has no meekness in his wisdom, but because of his superior knowledge or understanding seeks the post of teacher as a showcase for his expertise, can be said to, (exult It or "glory" but is also said to "lie against the truth." For the truth is that true wisdom is meek. Furthermore, even the true knowledge of such a teacher would seem to be belied by such behavior.

3:15 "This wisdom is not that which comes down from above." Thus begins the reason for not teaching from such a frame of mind. It is not that such a would be teacher has no knowledge, but simply that such knowledge or wisdom, lacking as it does the character of meekness, is not what is to be expected from heaven. It does not have the character of divine wisdom.

3:15 "But is earthy, humanistic, demonic." Far from being heavenly or divine, such "wisdom" no matter how great otherwise, if it lacks meekness, can be at best "earthy" or, at its worst, "humanistic" or "demonic." The three terms are arranged in order, progressing from "best" to "worst."

3:16 "For where such zeal and selfish ambition are, there is instability and every evil matter." This sentence serves to distinguish further the wisdom "not from above." For not only is such wisdom characteristically "earthy, humanistic or demonic" owing to its origin, but the results of such wisdom invariably are characterized by "instability and every evil matter." Instability seems to refer to the strictly internal state of affairs produced by selfish ambition, and described elsewhere in James as doubled-mindedness, while "every evil matter" closely corresponds to the "harsh zeal" which exists internally, but has, from time to time, external manifestations. This is the truer since James does not deny that many might be wise. But human wisdom, far from overcoming, "harsh zeal and selfish ambition" usually takes it into partnership. And such wisdom as this, coupled with selfish ambition, can only produce instability (or double-mindedness. For one's loyalty becomes divided between teaching the truth and seeking one's reputation.

It is equally clear that "harsh zeal" if coupled with merely human wisdom, will produce "every evil matter" from hypocrisy and self-serving, to denominational splits, heresy trials, inquisitions and other such extremes. It is tempting to include "holding the faith . . . in partiality (2:4) as just such an "evil matter" and the attempted justifications for such behavior as such "earthy wisdom" at work.

3:17 "But the wisdom from above is first pure." With this statement, James takes up the description of "the wisdom from above" It is said to be first of all "pure" by which little else can be meant but freedom from both the source and character of earthly wisdom. That wisdom from above suffers not from zeal or ambition, does not produce instability or evil, and cannot be characterized by such adjectives as "earthy, humanistic, demonic.

3:17 "Then peaceful, gentle, compliant, full of mercy and good fruits." This phrase takes up the description of heavenly wisdom, by referring to its positive traits. These qualities stand in antithesis to the "earthy, humanistic and demonic" characteristics of worldly wisdom. It is not simply the absence of these qualities in the "wisdom from above" indicated by its "purity" rather, it stands characteristically in opposition to these traits. A truly "peaceful" genuinely "gentle" and compliant character cannot be predicated on worldly wisdom.

It should not be assumed that this exhausts the qualities of the "wisdom from above." These serve only to point out how opposed heavenly wisdom is to that which is self seeking and argumentative.

"Full of mercy and good fruits" seems to refer to an attitude which is quick to forgive, slow to press an advantage and eager both to teach and to display the tenets of Christian righteousness.

3:17 "Without ambiguity, without hypocrisy" stands in direct opposition to the "instability and every evil matter" without more narrowly defining them. Thus, "without hypocrisy" is contrasted with "every evil matter" without restricting those evil matters to mere hypocrisies. Again, ambiguity seems to refer to an internal state, while hypocrisy requires external manifestations before it can be predicated of anything.

3:18 "And the fruit of unrighteousness is sown in peace by the ones who make peace." Sowing the fruit of righteousness is the function of the teacher. The fruit of righteousness might be the results or products of Christianity; that is, the implications of practical righteousness, as Christianity teaches it. Despite passages such as Heb. 12:11 and Phil. 1:11, it is difficult to see how "the fruit of righteousness" can be understood as the "reward for righteous conduct" (Ropes) or how such "rewards" would be sown. The outworkings of righteousness, which is the subject of the Epistle of James, was the staple of the Christian teacher, and he sowed it among Christian converts and adherents of "The Way."

This sowing is done wisely, i.e. without self-assertive quarrelsomeness, but in a spirit of gentleness, peacefulness and humility.

The sowing is carried out by those who make peace. This cannot refer to social arbiters or political referees, but to those individuals who practice living peaceably and quickly reconcile their differences with others.

Such people are qualified, by their meekness, to be Christian teachers. In fact, such people *are* Christian teachers.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

The governing thought is still that of restricting the number of teachers. Here, true wisdom is not explicitly contrasted to knowledge (although it is assumed, but rather to that which appears to be "wise and understanding" but is improperly motivated.

If a math teacher must demonstrate not only a proficiency with numbers, but also the qualifications of a classroom instructor, so must a Christian teacher not only be "wise and understanding", but must demonstrate his qualifications in the meekness which characterizes true wisdom. The point is that demonstrated meekness must accompany obvious wisdom, in order to qualify one as a Christian teacher. This is made clearer by the contrast to "harsh zeal and selfish ambition.

The import of this contrast must not be lost or ignored, for it is significant both theologically and ethically. God's wisdom, that for which we are to ask if we lack, is qualitatively (that is, ethically) different from worldly wisdom.

Worldly wisdom is earthy at best, demonic at worst, and wholly humanistic in any event, and is not motivated by humility. All of the attributes of godly wisdom can be summed up under the heading of "meek" or "humble." This, of course, is descriptive of God's character, not man's.

The ethical terms of this pericope are not to be understood as imperatives, as such; but they represent a partial catalog, of the qualities of meekness.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

Who among you would be your teacher? Who claims to be understanding? Let him manifest by his example his credentials in the meekness of wisdom. But if your heart is contentious and divisive, do not glory or boast in your wisdom, and play false with the truth. Such wisdom is not godly, but is purely this worldly, human centered, and demonically inspired. For wherever this sort of wisdom appears, there will be found also a double-minded instability and every evil manifestation. Now divine wisdom is free of these gross impurities and is characterized by peacefulness, gentleness, compliance; it is full of mercy and good fruits; it is undivided in its aims and is not inconsistent. And the teachings of righteousness shall be sown in peace by those who are at peace.

Eighteenth Pericope (James 4:1-4)

James 4:1-4 Πόθεν πόλεμοι καὶ πόθεν μάχαι ἐν ὑμῖν; οὐκ ἐντεῦθεν, ἐκ τῶν ἡδονῶν ὑμῶν τῶν στρατευομένων ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ὑμῶν;² ἐπιθυμεῖτε καὶ οὐκ ἔχετε, φονεύετε καὶ ζηλοῦτε καὶ οὐ δύνασθε ἐπιτυχεῖν, μάχεσθε καὶ πολεμεῖτε, οὐκ ἔχετε διὰ τὸ μὴ αἰτεῖσθαι ὑμᾶς,³ αἰτεῖτε καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετε διότι κακῶς αἰτεῖσθε, ἵνα ἐν ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ὑμῶν δαπανήσητε.⁴ μοιχαλίδες, οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ἡ φιλία τοῦ κόσμου

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

4:1 πόλεμοι (noun, second declension, nominative, masculine, plural) Literally, *armed conflict; war; battle; fight*. Figuratively, *strife; conflict; quarrel*. The meaning here is almost certainly figurative, in the sense of "quarrel." But it would be a mistake not to see that real war and murder comes about precisely in the manner here described. James is pointing out that the same forces that produce real war and real murder also produce less physical, but *not* more acceptable forms, of damage.

James addresses Christians, not the world at large. In v. 4, this is reaffirmed by the address of his readers as adulteresses, which, were it used either of the world population generally or of particular Christians, would be used literally to denote those who commit sexual offenses. Surely some of those would include men, who would be "adulterers" (There is an unlikely variant reading which suggests that this very line of reasoning was used to justify an emendation of the text) The use of the feminine form suggests the figurative usage of the word for "idolatry" found in the Old Testament. This confirms the notion that the addressees are not inclusive of the whole world and are well acquainted with the analogies of the Old Testament. The early Christians cannot be accused of waging war for several reasons. War, literally understood, was not thought to be the prerogative of the early Christians, individually or corporately, regardless of the nature or strength of their desires. For the Christian within the Roman empire to fight a war required either leaving the empire to reside with and fight for barbarian forces, or fighting in the service of Rome. The latter option was reserved for Roman citizens, and few Christians qualified.

Furthermore, on the basis of the historical data available, it seems likely that the early Christians generally loathed war and military service. Christian participation in such carnage became common only after Constantine. But it should be remembered that, while Christians did not become soldiers did become Christians, and this probably resulted in problems.

In addition, James describes the occurrence of "wars" in terms which are the genuine causes of international wars, but he does so in language that can be easily understood only of individuals ("your pleasures" and "among your members").

Hence, the warfare here is not to be understood as that involving armed warfare, but deals with spiritual warfare.

4:1 μάχαι (noun, first declension, nominative, feminine, plural) *Battle; confrontation*, with no reference to the scope of the engagement; two opponents are sufficient. Furthermore, weapons are unnecessary for such conflicts as can be denoted by this word. The phrase "quarrels and disputes" covers both "continual" and "intermittent but heated" confrontations.

4:1 στρατευομένων (present participle, middle, genitive, masculine, plural) *Do military service; serve in the army; 1) literally; 2) figuratively of Christians.*

The word normally might be translated "are soldiers among your members" in accordance with its more general meaning. But the piling up of military metaphors makes it necessary to use the word in the narrower sense of "performing the duties of a soldier" in this case "fight." The figurative character of the pericope is not destroyed, but is continued, by the presence of this term.

4:2 φονεύετε (present, active, indicative, second person, plural) *Murder; kill.* Even here it is surely best to understand the term figuratively. In 2:11, James uses the term literally but hypothetically. Here, he is dealing with a situation which is current among the Christians, but in which actual murder is unlikely. Furthermore, James likely refers vaguely to Mt. 5:21-26, where Jesus goes behind murder to its cause, anger. Here, murder; but figuratively, to the killing of spiritual warfare.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

4:2 Note the asyndeton, or lack of connectives between the clauses "you . . . possess not; you kill" and "you . . . are unable to attain; you dispute." This gives a more powerful effect.

4:2,3 διὰ, when it governs an articular (neuter accusative) infinitive, expresses cause just as does ὅτι. But the former gives no indication of the time of the action, whereas the latter does.

D. Translation

4:1 Whence come dissensions, and whence disputes among you? Do they not come hence from your pleasures which wage war in your members? 2 You desire and you possess not; you kill. And you envy and are unable to attain; you dispute and dissent. You possess not because you ask not. 3 You ask and receive not because you ask wrongly in order that you might squander it on your pleasures. 4 Adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship of the world is the enmity of God? Whoever, therefore, would be a friend to the world constitutes himself an enemy of God.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

This pericope speaks of hostilities and warfare. And the contest can, with some difficulty, be taken literally. However, because it is addressed to Christians and because it comes between teachings dealing with the "humility" or "meekness of wisdom" and "peace" on the one hand, and "envy" and "pride" on the other, it seems best to see the motif of war providing the structural framework for a teaching which deals with more personalized problems.

The major terms translated "dissensions," "waging war" and "kill" may be understood literally in contexts similar to this, and may be so understood even here. But the difficulty with a literal interpretation is that it ill befits Christians, either individually or as a group. These terms do not contribute materially to the teaching of the text, but demonstrate in strong language the dynamics of the text.

The major terms translated pleasures, desire, covetousness, attain, and squander are to be understood in the literal sense. These words provide the subject matter of the teaching. They do not describe a corporate situation, but limit the dynamic language to the realm of figurative usage.

In this way there is in one text both figurative language and literal language. It is the presence of some literal language which keeps the teaching from being allegorical. It is the presence of some figurative language that prevents a dull teaching of little depth. The figurative language of warfare suggests the dynamic and strength of the relationships under consideration and lends passion to the teaching, while the terms used literally anchor the figurative language firmly to ethical realities.

Though there can be no doubt that this constitutes a new subject, it is interesting to note the method of transition from the teaching on wisdom to the present text. The final statement of the teaching on wisdom is "and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by the ones who make peace." The first question of this pericope is "Whence come quarrels, and whence disputes?" The antithetical situation arises naturally from the preceding teaching. While it is not the point under consideration, it is difficult to miss the fact that desires which disrupt peace cannot spring from wisdom.

4:1 "Whence come dissensions and whence disputes among you?" A natural question to follow the final statement of chapter three, yet introducing a new subject. The question, stripped of the prepositional phrase, is still valid, even though it is not then limited to James addressees: "Whence come wars, and whence come fights?" It is difficult to understand the language as referring to something less than full scale combat.

But such conflicts as Christians do have can be understood to result from "divisive, self-seeking wisdom" 3:13-18, and are merely consistent with self-seeking in general. Self seeking becomes here a major topic.

4:1 "Do they not come hence from your pleasures?" James answers his question with another question, the first clause of which connects self-gratification with the strife spoken of in the first question.

4:1 "Which wage war in your members" The pleasures are said to "wage war" another indication of the figurative nature of the word "war" The "members" here refer to the various parts of the Christian body. The "War" is with the "Members" or the Christians themselves. The original question, "From where come the wars among you (people)?" is answered by the question, "Don't they come from the pleasures which fight (for gratification) among you (individuals)?" The battles between Christians result from the battles within Christians. Thus, "pleasures" are thought of as waging war "against" as well as "within" Christians.

4:2 "You desire and you possess not; you kill." This is the first clause of the explanation of the relationship between "pleasures" and "quarrels and disputes." The explanation takes the form of two parallel clauses which describe the situation, followed by a third clause which reveals the result of the situation. The "desire" here spoken of has a connotation of evil because it is explanatory of the "pleasures which wage war" and because that "lack" of possession results in "killing." It is difficult to imagine a man so intent on giving to missions that he would "kill" his opposition. Part of the difficulty arises from the fact that personal opposition to most of the good which can be accomplished by individuals is generally scarce.

Examples might be multiplied indefinitely of Christian factions, divisions and denominations, which have their origin in one or another set of theological "lusts." Christian political activity, and the various views of the relation of Christians to the State, can be traced to lusts for material possessions and personal security and a willful abandonment of Christian commitment to its witness. These divisions correspond to the figurative idea of the results of "war" and the "killing" of fellow Christians. The most immediate example that presents itself is the faction caused by the "self seeking" lust of too many would-be teachers (3:13-18. For surely such confrontations must resemble small wars, with hostilities raging and theological infighting taking many "casualties."

It should be noted that the verbs "desire" and "envy" are both normally transitive. The lack of direct objects is a deliberate attempt to let them indicate broad, unspoken categories. They amount almost to carte blanche propositions.

4:2 "And you envy and are unable to attain; you dispute and dissent." This clause Is parallel to the first, and adds nothing new to the overall concept other than the idea of escalation, present in the terms "dispute" and "dissent." These terms are the verb forms of the corresponding nouns in v. 1. Their order is reversed, suggesting, that the question posed in v. 1 was deliberately stated in such a way, not only to provide a smooth transition from 3:13-18 to the present text, but also to reveal at the outset of the discussion the scale and nature of the spiritual relationship, which are the bases of the discussion. In this way, the "sowing of peace" (3:18) is the stated norm. It is followed by a question to the effect "So why is there war and strife among you?" This is answered by saying that "you envy and cannot attain, so you dispute and war" thus showing the progression of frustrated desire through petty squabbles to open hostilities.

This clause also more closely defines the figurative usage of the word "kill" in the first clause. The killing is the same sort of anger and ill feelings spoken of by Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount, only here some of the causes are set forth, and the setting is specifically the Church, rather than men in general.

The punctuation Riven here is the only way of preserving the parallelism mentioned, and avoiding the anticlimactic pairing of the terms "kill" and "covet" (So Westcott, Hort; RSV and NEB).

The word "envy" is translated "covet" in RV. and "desire to have" in KJV, in an attempt to harmonize it with the word "lust" in the first clause. But such a parallel, although consistent, is narrower than the Greek terms warrant. "Desire" lust" and "envy" include ill feelings toward people and their ideas as well as their possessions, and the narrower sense of "to covet" being restricted to goods or positions ill accords with such general teaching, directed as it is to the Church at large.

Surely if the problem being dealt with were one of material possessions or positions of authority, there would be mention of terms intermediate to "lust" and "Murder" such as "theft" or "usurpation." The picture is more like a witch hunt or heresy trial than an armed robbery.

4:2 "You possess not because you petition not." In this third clause, James gives, in blunt terms, why Christians have not. it should be noted that the text does not say "you obtain not" thus indicating that what is sought cannot always be gained by a "victory in battle." If all that were at stake was a material item, then by fighting, one might stand a reasonable chance of obtaining it. The force of this statement indicates that in no case does what is sought become one's possession by virtue of conflict. The statement may be taken to mean "you fail to obtain for the same reason that you never had; i.e. you failed to ask Him who gives freely and without grudging" (cf. Jas. 1:5-8). Here, the failure to obtain is not said to be "doubt" but the double-mindedness which countenances doubt, (1:7) or bitter zeal and self-seeking (3:14) and which here "asks wrongly." This statement will be qualified by the next. (Cf. 1:5-8)

4:3 "You petition and receive not because you petition wrongly." Thus, again, the teaching is begun by a harsh truth bluntly stated and then explained. The statement "You possess not because you petition not" is here explained to mean not that prayers are never said, but that they are worthless and unheard because wrongly motivated. It might be paraphrased, "Oh, it is not that you don't ask, or that you are not heard, but that you ask improperly."

4:3 "In order to squander it on your pleasures." As has been pointed out, the objects of such desire and envy may include material goods, but must include also the means of satisfaction for less visible distress' such as self aggrandizement. Approbation lust, that which desires the comfort afforded by what is today called "stroking" has always been a powerful force. God's gifts could easily be squandered" by seeking praise from men rather than the glory of God, and are therefore as susceptible to misuse as the tongue or a book of matches. (Cf. 3:3-12)

The attempted attainment of pleasures through "violence" is "necessitated" when pleasure is the goal of life. For the only source of true satisfaction will withhold it from those who seek the gift

in isolation from the giver. The irony is that the need for satisfaction, rather than being met, often grows worse when it is sought in "violence" and not found.

4:4 "Adulteresses! Do you not know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" This question contains a list of common knowledge concerning relationships with the world and with God. Whether it is a direct quotation or not, the basic concept was probably widely known and accepted. What perhaps was not realized, what James points out, is that the pursuit of pleasure (whether it be a big house or, more likely, a psychological or political advantage or personal recognition, whether sought by violent means or by petitioning God, is of the fabric of worldliness. For it seeks self-satisfaction, and If the result is unheard prayer or violence among Christians, it is the aim itself that is wrong. The nature of any worldliness is enmity with God. But the surprise is that what be! , an so much in the fashion of a denunciation of improper methods of some Christians, quickly became a scathing denunciation of the worldliness which all Christians ill conceal. Adulteresses, indeed.

The expression "the friendship of the world" is ambiguous. It may denote that friendship and acceptance extended *by* the world *to* individuals, or it may denote the corresponding relationship extended *by* the individual *to* the world. The context seems to make the individual the active party. But it is possible that the world extends its blessings to those it perceives to be in essential conformity to its standards or objectives. This understanding of the phrase provides a better element of surprise. Do you not know that such aims and behavior have made you the friend of the world and thereby the enemy of God?

The ambiguity is literarily pleasing, and perhaps ought not to be too closely limited.

4:4 "Whoever, therefore, would be a friend to the world, constitutes himself an enemy of God." The conclusion is stated in such a manner as to expand the normal conception of the "enmity with God." It was common knowledge that idolatry and immorality constituted enmity with God. But in calling his addressees "adulteresses" (i.e. idolaters) because of harboring worldly motives and goals, as well as finally resorting to worldly means of obtaining, them, James includes hedonism in enmity with God. It is well that the word translated "Pleasures" is the word from which "hedonism" cones. Thus, it is not merely the "warfare" which is condemned, but the aims of such warfare. One can but wonder if Christians should not be urged, on the basis of this teaching, to abstain from military service. If Christians are not to wrangle among themselves for the attainment of pleasure or self-satisfaction, what business have they in engaging in the massive wars of conquest for which "the world is justly infamous?"

The friendship of the world" may be an ambiguous phrase. But there is no ambiguity whatsoever in the statement that the act of seeking friendly relations with the world, whether by imitating its methods or sharing its goals, constitutes a relationship of enmity with God. If repentance is the ground of acceptance with God, surely seeking acceptance with the world constitutes a firm foundation for God's anger.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

Theology and Ethics weave a fine web in this pericope; it is scarcely possible to label the individual strands. The first thing to note is that dissension comes from the pleasures which wage war in the Christian(s) members. Next, it should be seen that such "wars" fail to attain satisfaction for the members, for the lack is shown to be the result of failure to pray properly. Improper prayer is that which is motivated by the same forces which motivate "wars" i.e. the desire to squander for the sake of pleasures. It can plausibly be argued that improper prayer, because it goes unanswered, prompts such "wars" and "dissensions" as are calculated to achieve the desired results through human strength. These desired results are the pampering of man's lust for pleasure, particularly (in this context) advancement and recognition.

Such lusts ask improperly, receive no answer and, without loss of time, go about to attain the sought after end through other, worldly means, making Christian and non-Christian indistinguishable, both in goals and methods. (Do not the Gentiles do the same?) This is friendship with the world, and it is such not only because of the similarity in the means and ends employed by both the world and Christians, but because God is cut off in the beginning without a thought. There is no visible difference between silent atheism and "hedonistic" Christianity. Both are enemies of God.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

Whence arise clashes and contentions among you? Do they not begin with the hedonism which constantly seek expression? you crave and you have not; so you kill. And you envy and yet cannot attain; so you contend with one another until a full scale clash results. But the reason you do not have what you want, and cannot be satisfied is that you do not ask Him who is able both to give and to satisfy. Mind you, it is not that you don't go through the notions of prayer, but that you do so for the wrong reason, that of pleasure seeking and self-serving. You isolators! Haven't you been told that to be worldly is to be ungodly? Anyone, therefore, who does not fear but seeks the friendship of the world, by that act makes himself the object of God's anger.

Nineteenth Pericope (James 4:5-10)

James 4:5-9 Ἡ δοκεῖτε ὅτι κενῶς ἡ γραφὴ λέγει· πρὸς φθόνοιν ἐπιποθεῖ τὸ πιεῦμα ὃ κατώκισεν ἐν ἡμῖν, ⁶ μείζονα δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν; διὸ λέγει· ὁ θεὸς ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν. ⁷ ὑποτάγητε οὖν τῷ θεῷ, ἀντίστητε δὲ τῷ διαβόλῳ καὶ φεύξεται ἀφ' ὑμῶν, ⁸ ἐγγίσατε τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἐγγιεῖ ὑμῖν. καθαρίσατε χεῖρας, ἀμαρτωλοί, καὶ ἀγνίσατε καρδίας, δίψυχοι. ⁹ ταλαιπωρήσατε καὶ πενθήσατε καὶ κλαύσατε. ὁ γέλως ὑμῶν εἰς πένθος μετατραπήτω καὶ ἡ χαρὰ εἰς κατῆφειαν.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

4:7 ὑποτάγητε (II aorist, passive, imperative, second person, plural) 1) *Subject; subordinate*; 2) of documents, *append; attach*. The term here refers to a deliberate subordination to God, and the appropriation to everyday life of His will. The context makes it plain that this involves contrition and repentance and is rewarded by a greater grace, rather than resistance.

4:7 ἀντίστητε (II aorist, active, imperative, second person, plural) *Set against; oppose; resist; withstand*. The word is not strictly speaking, in contrast with the "submission" to God. That sense would be expressed by the word translated "resists" in v. 6. The idea here is that God's "greater grace" is given to the humble. Armed with this grace, those who will "withstand" the devil, who will merely turn and face him resolutely with God's grace, will soon see Satan's backside.

4:7 φεύξεται (future, active, indicative, third person, singular) 1) *Flee; seek safety in flight*. 2) *Escape*. 3) In a moral sense, *flee from; avoid*. 4) *Guard against*. 5) *Vanish; disappear*. Here, the term means "flee from" in the moral sense.

Satan, although neither actually seeking safety by flight, nor vanishing entirely, will flee from and seek to avoid God's "greater grace" seen in the humble servant.

4:8 ἐγγίσατε (I aorist, active, second person, plural) *Approach; come near*. Although the word is intransitive in the NT, the figurative usage of the word here admits of the meaning "embrace." The teaching given here is that if the Christian humbles himself before God and resists the devil, then the devil will flee. "Drawing near" and all that follows is a description of both the Christian's submission and the "greater grace" with further imperative emphasis on the nature of submission.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

No grammatical anomalies.

D. Translation

4:5 Or do you suppose that the scripture says in vain, "He longeth unto jealousy for the spirit He made to dwell in us?" 6 But He gives a greater grace; therefore it says "God resists the proud but He gives grace to the humble." 7 Submit therefore to God; withstand the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Sinners, cleanse your hands, and purify your hearts, you double minded. Be wretched and grieve and weep; let your laughter be turned into grief and your joy into heaviness. 10 Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord and He will exalt you.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

4:5-10 James has equated selfish desires and the resulting conflicts with friendship with the world. Here, he gives the reason for God's hostility toward worldliness, and gives the Christian response in overcoming it.

4:5 "Or do you suppose that the scripture says in vain?" The rhetorical question reminds the addressees of their ultimate source of earthly authority. The assumed answer to it is, "No" thus affirming that this whole passage is spoken to those who hold the scripture in the highest regard.

45 "He longeth unto jealousy for the spirit He made to dwell within us." The longing unto jealousy is best understood as the emotional condition, or ardent desire, of a husband who will brook no rival. The emotion of hatred is as much directed at the hated rival (the world) as the ardent desire is directed toward its object (the spirit). "The spirit He made to dwell in us" refers most likely to the human spirit, which God created in man and quickened in Christians, the object of which is to have fellowship with its Creator. Simply put, God does not want Christians rolling their newly quickened spirits across the dung hill of the world, but desires complete, undivided spiritual fellowship. (Note the language of the jealous husband.) It is equally possible to understand this "spirit" to be the Holy Spirit who indwells believers. On the translation of this verse, God is the Implied subject of the verbs "longeth," "made," and the following verb (4:6) "gives." This is the sense found in the RSV and NASV. The sense found in KJV is a statement that the spirit dwelling within us does, in fact, lust to envy; this makes no sense at all, unless the object supplied is "us." Otherwise, the spirit which lusteth to envy is responsible for the misbehavior cited in vv. 1-4; clearly, this is untenable. For this reason, the ASV renders the quotation as a question. Thus, the implied object is indeed the worldliness of vv. 1-4. In both cases, the supplied elements are different. God is the supplied subject of "gives" in v. 6, while the "spirit" (which is expressed is the subject of the verbs "envy" and "dwelleth" (KJV, thus making it necessary to supply an object

such as "us" or "worldliness." The ASV makes "the spirit the object of "lust," supplies God as the object of "maketh to dwell" and "gives," and infers that the subject of "longing unto envy" corresponds to "worldliness." The problem is especially difficult to resolve because no such direct quotation has been found. It may be a poetical paraphrase of Ex. 20:5, or perhaps a quotation from a Greek version of the O.T.

4:6 "But He gives a greater grace." The "greater grace" is not specified, but must be determined from the context. This pericope is explanatory of that which precedes it (vv. 1-4, as can be seen by the connective "or" (vs. 5). The word "but" refers to the continuation of the thought as it is stated in v. 5. "Friendship" with the world is enmity with God. Do you imagine the scripture says in vain that God longs for the Spirit He made to dwell in us? But He gives grace, etc. The "greater grace" then, must provide an escape from, or an alternative to, friendship with the world. It must also be compatible with, or identical to, the relationship God has planned for the Christian's spirit. Additionally, it must be consistent with the following statement.

4:6 "Therefore it says God resists the proud but He gives grace to the humble." The conclusion (therefore) is interesting. God gives a greater grace; therefore the Bible says . . ." The fact does not come because the Bible says it will; rather, the Bible relates what has already achieved the status of certainty in this case. The grace spoken of here, and called "a greater grace" is seen to be the acceptance into fellowship of repentant sinners (more exactly, humbled sinners. The nature of the "greater grace" which God gives to those who humble themselves is seen by the antithesis of resistance, or opposition to the proud. That which this grace is compared with (greater than) is simply the quickening of the Christian's spirit. God is said to be jealous over the spirit which He established, but He gives a greater gift, namely personal acceptance of that spirit. It should be noted that God resists those who are haughty, arrogant, proud or self-reliant. He accepts the poor, lowly and humble. This is enough to account for the emotional exhortations which follow.

4:7 "Submit therefore to God." The foregoing discussion has, as far as James is concerned, provided enough information to establish this conclusion and the following explanatory exhortations. The reason for submission to God goes back to 4:1-4. Christians desire to be friends of God. The teaching there is that friendship with the world is enmity with God; the solution is God's "greater grace." This, it was shown, is given to the humble. The obvious conclusion, then, is to humble oneself and be submissive to God.

4:7 "Withstand the devil and he will flee from you." This clause is the first of six exhortations given in explanation of what James means by submission to God. The first two contain both antecedent and consequent clauses. This entire sentence is in contrast to the one which follows, rather than the one preceding. The submission James has in mind will first involve standing against the devil. The result of this will be that the devil flees. It should not be supposed that he will flee merely because we stand against him, but because of the "greater grace" God will give the submissive Christian. It is difficult to imagine the devil attaching a Christian who is enjoying the acceptance and fellowship of God.

4:8 "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you." This is the second characteristic of submission, and the second one having a stated consequence. The contrasts are between the

previous withstanding and embracing, and between flight and a returned embrace. Cf. Lk. 15:1, 22:47. Cf. also Zech. 1:3, Mal. 3:7. This drawing near to God also requires further explanation. Thus, the following directions illustrate the submission to God and the drawing near to Him as well.

It is interesting that, here apparently, God does not take the initiative. The addressees are, however, Christians and the subject is not salvation, but a call to repentance from worldliness. God is interested in granting a greater grace, which the Christian, by repenting of his worldliness and submitting to God, may appropriate for himself. what he appropriates, as seen here, is God Himself. It is difficult to conceive a better acceptance or a more intimate fellowship with God than is indicated here.

4:8 "sinners, cleanse your hands." This expression comes from Jewish ritual washing, which had as its purpose making priests fit for holy service. By the time of Jesus and the Apostles, the expression had long been common among Jewish religious teachers, meaning "to make one's behavior pure." The expression, especially here, designates visible sin, and the outward expression of inner sinfulness. The next clause deals with the inward sinfulness.

4:8 "And you double-minded, purify your hearts." The inward counterpart to the outward cleansing just prescribed is made by reference to the heart of the double-minded. In 1:8, James introduces the term "double-minded" there, too, it denotes an internal condition which jeopardizes the believer's relationship to God. It is clear, by the inclusion of this clause, that James has in mind no merely legalistic righteousness, but, like Jesus, is concerned with the inward, as well as the outward, state of affairs.

"Double-minded" here, is not to be thought of as addressing only doubters, or a group other than the "sinners" of the previous clause. "Sinners" is applied to worldly Christians among James' addressees; so also is "double-minded" which emphasizes the nature of the condition of Christians who seek the friendship of the world.

The sense would then be to the effect, "You who inconsistently seek the friendship of the world, should cleanse your hearts of such evil motives and desires

4:9 "Be wretched and grieve and weep." This is indicative of what a proper Christian attitude should be, in contrast to the attitude of worldliness, and is in keeping with repentance or submission. It is an exhortation to sobriety; this need not mean cheerlessness or pessimism. There is much for a Christian to mourn, yet nothing is hopeless.

4:9 "Let your laughter be turned into grief." This seems to be a direct invitation to abandon the easy, frivolous ways of the world and let the spiritual reality of man's true condition, the plight of the lost, and the absence of godliness in the world measure one's thoughts.

4:9 "And your joy into heaviness." Again, being governed by the preceding pericope, joy, here, cannot but refer to joy as the world understands it. "Heaviness' gloominess or dejection, denotes the outward expression of shame. This is doubtless not just to be expressed instead of joy, but

because of having shared such shallow worldly joy the first place. This is consistent with submitting to God. But godly joy is beyond worldliness, and worldly joy is no substitute for the heavenly.

4:10 "Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord and He will exalt you." The assumption throughout 4:1-10 is that the addressees were Christians. The desire is to be God's servants. The attitudes of a servant are consistent with humble submissiveness. The exhortations are to this end. And this verse constitutes the summation of the call to repentance (vv. 7. Humble yourselves before God. The consequence is that God will exalt those who are humble. The obvious contrast is between worldliness and exaltation. For the world cannot compensate by its esteem what a Christian gives in imitation, like God can and does exalt true humility.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

The notion of friendship with the world constituting enmity with God is taken up here, and an explanation given. It will be recalled that Christians friendly with the world were called "adulteresses" (James 4:4). God is here said to long unto jealousy. As noted, the expression carries both an idea of love for the spirit as well as a notion of hatred of the rival (the world). God loves those in whom He has made to dwell the quickened spirit. The rest follows naturally. God resists the proud (a characteristic of His rival) and gives grace to the humble (the Christian).

The admonitions to 1) submit to God, 2) resist the devil, 3) draw near to God, and 4) cleanse hands, and purify the heart, are not in themselves ethical imperatives, but directives to produce a desired state of mind or set of attitudes. These attitudes are consonant with humble friendship with God.

The specific commands concerning grieving, weeping and so forth are particular examples of how humble repentance might reasonably be expected to behave. The first thrust, however, is that in becoming humble before God, Christians are exalted by God.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

Or do you think that without reason the scriptures plainly teach that God is like a jealous husband in regard to the Spirit He established in us? But He gives us a greater grace. For the scriptures say, "God resists the arrogant and proud, but He graciously accepts the humble." This is all the reason you need to submit to God. Stand fast against the devil, and you will see his backside; embrace God and He will embrace you. Let sinners clean up their acts, and those with conflicting allegiances purge their hearts of compromise. Let them be miserable, and mourn and cry; let their

hollow laughter turn into mourning, and their petty joy into the sober dejection and contemplation. Humble yourselves before God, and He will exalt you truly.

Twentieth Pericope (James 4:11-12)

James 4:11-12 Μὴ καταλαλεῖτε ἀλλήλων, ἀδελφοί. ὁ καταλαλῶν ἀδελφοῦ ἡ κρίνων τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ καταλαλεῖ νόμου καὶ κρίνει νόμον· εἰ δὲ νόμον κρίνεις, οὐκ εἴ ποιητὴς νόμου ἀλλὰ κριτής. ¹² εἰς ἔστιν [ό] νομοθέτης καὶ κριτὴς ὁ δυνάμενος σῶσαι καὶ ἀπολέσαι· σὺ δὲ τίς εἰς ὁ κρίνων τὸν πλησίον;

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

4:11 καταλαλεῖτε (present, active, imperative, second person, plural) *Speak against; speak evil of; defame; slander.* While the root word is sometimes used to denote inarticulate sound, the preposition prefixed to it directs the speech toward an object. In keeping with the true character of the root word, however, the emphasis is upon the act of speaking, rather than on the content of the speech. Thus, gossip, slander or defamation fit well. The idea does not include testimony, but ill founded talk and rumor spreading.

4:11 κρίνων (present, participle, active, nominative, masculine, singular) 1) *Separate; distinguish; select; prefer.* 2) *Judge; think; consider; look upon.* 3) *Reach a decision; decide; propose; intend.* 4) As a legal, technical term, *judge; decide; bring to court; condemn.* 5) *Do justice.* 6) *Judge; pass judgment on; especially express an unfavorable judgment; criticize; find fault.* Here, the last sense is intended, "judgment" being juxtaposed with "evil speech." The expressions "speak against" and "Judge" refer to statements which must almost certainly be untrue. They are without question critical and damaging, and denote a hostile attitude. To "speak against" might mean to confront with true charges, it much more likely means to "murmur against" or "complain about" or even "to defame." The context makes it plain that it is done with an unjustly critical attitude. The term "judge" on the other hand, can have a variety of good meanings; but in this context it, too, is limited to a bad sense. Because of the fact that he who judges a brother judges the law, the sense of judgment has a hostile, deliberately hurtful connotation. Furthermore, the posture of disobedience is clearly in view. The clause can be paraphrased, "Do not criticize or be judgmental toward your brother." This is then put in perspective, when James says that such behavior is tantamount to criticizing, and condemning, the law.

4:12 νομοθέτης (noun, first declension, nominative, masculine singular) *Lawgiver.* The term is brought into play in the text as being opposed to those who do not do the law, and is distinct from the judge of the law. The argument involves two unspoken premises. The first is to the effect that "those who judge the law are not subject to the law." This statement is obviously true in one sense, which James describes. But certainly none of James' audience would have consciously wished to place himself above the law, even as a judge, but especially not as God. "Only the *lawmaker* is truly above the law." The Lawmaker sustains a legislative relationship over all men, even judges.

It should be remembered that "law" as James knows it, is the "royal law" (2:8, "Love God and love neighbor." Thus, to judge a brother is, in fact, to deny God's law and become its Judge" as well.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

4:12 Note the attributive participle in the clause, "the one being able . . ." This gives definiteness to the "One" (by inclusion of the article) as well as giving a description of Him.

D. Translation

4:11 Do not speak against one another, brothers; he who speaks against a brother or judges his brother speaks against law and judges law; and if you judge the law you are not a doer of the law, but a judge. 12 One is the lawgiver and judge -- the one who is able to save and destroy; but who are you to judge your neighbor?

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

4:11-5:12 The pericopes following 4:11 are capable of being understood independently of each other. But they are very loosely joined to the teaching concerning friendship with the world and submission to God, being examples of behavior to be avoided, or of the sort of character to be cultivated.

4:11 "Do not speak against one another, brothers" is a simple command not to harm a Christian brother (although doubtless all men may well have been included) by ill-advised or evil speech. Christians are not to engage in character assassination, gossip or rumor mongering. That which is not based on fact and is detrimental to the well being of one's neighbor (that which is usually spoken against or about one behind his back) is primarily in view here. But the category is somewhat larger, for (as will become apparent) that which is unloving or unhelpful is also in view. (Cf. Jas. 3:5b-8)

4:11 "He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother." This clause adds significantly to the concept of speaking against a brother, by adding the phrase "Judges a brother." Judgment overlaps "speaking against" and carries the idea further. The sense of condemnation (whether just or unjust) enters the picture as part of "speaking against." The idea is no longer that of merely gossip or rumor spreading, which is often not founded on facts, but now contains the idea of hostile criticism or fault finding, which may be based on facts, but is nonetheless detrimental to character and is more often addressed to the person involved. To equate "a brother" with "a fellow man" and "Your

brother" with "your fellow Christian" is to make much too fine a distinction and destroy the reasoning by destroying the obvious link between "speaking against" and "Judging" and by unnecessarily fragmenting the notion of "law" into too many specifics.

4:11 "Speaks against law, and judges law." The practical results of speaking against a brother or of judging him may vary; but such behavior must always be viewed as tantamount to murmuring against law or judging it, in effect becoming one's own law and judge. It should be obvious that the law in question is the "royal law" of 2:8 for this is the law which is antithetical both to "speaking against" and "Judging" in the sense of fault finding. Furthermore, the equating of "brother" to "law" cannot fit so smoothly with any other law or pair of laws in the Bible. The logic of the next clause bears this out.

4:11 "And if you judge the law you are not a doer of the law, but a judge." This indicates that the sort of judging being done against a brother not only is rendered also against law, but that such judgment prevents one from doing the law. Now, it is plain that men may murmur against the law concerning lying, because it is expedient, and yet keep the law by not lying. It is the spirit of the law that is transgressed. And this in turn involves the spirit of love. It is impossible to grumble, murmur against or judge the royal law of love (by judging a brother) and still manifest love; for the whole process implies that love is not what is needed and makes one feel justified in not exhibiting love. Thus, one who judges a brother willfully places himself beyond the law and thereby judges it to be unnecessary or inapplicable.

4:12 "One is the lawgiver and judge." The idea is that there is only One who can, in *any* sense, claim to be beyond the law. As the Judge, He has given a law which is based on His own character and He gave it because He judged it to be necessary. The character comparison is interesting. God the Law Giver and Judge gave the law of His character as normative for man. Those who judge their brothers abrogate to themselves the role of judge, by failing to practice love. Thus the Judge, who is bounded by His own character, has His decision overturned by an upstart judge who sees that character (the law of love) as unnecessary and a mere option.

The mechanics (although stated in reverse order) work this way. The Creator God is a God characterized by redemptive love. This was common knowledge. This characteristic (love) has always been seen as normative of God's dealings with man and expressive of His law. Indeed, His law was, even in the O.T., reduced to the commands to love God and love man. The God of love commands that man act lovingly. When man is disobedient to this principle, even in speech (which does, perhaps, the least obvious harm, but which is the most difficult to control; Cf. 3:6-12) he becomes, by virtue of not being a doer of law (the royal law of love, Cf. 2:8) a petty judge whose behavior is either pronounced or assumed to be justifiable. This is a classic example of self-righteousness. The result is that the character and ordinance of the supreme Lawgiver is judicially set aside by the lowest of JP's. The square of opposition relates God (Judge/Lawgiver) to man (lawbreaker-judge) in the typically Biblical relationship of loving master and hateful, willful runaway.

4:12 "The one who is able to save and destroy." This does not define the idea of judge; "lawgiver" properly limits the sort of judge seen here. This clause only adds power and majesty to the

designation of "lawgiver and judge." Rather than just say "God" James (in keeping with Jewish reluctance to say the word) indulges in descriptive overkill. Thus "lawgiver and judge" denotes the function, and "able to save and destroy" designates the rank of absolute authority.

4:12 "But who are you to judge your brother?" As the function of man and God were compared in the foregoing clauses, so here God's rank, power and majesty are implicitly compared to man's. Man is said to be a judge and not a doer of law. God judged the need and gave the law. God is able to save and to destroy as He wills, and thus compels men to pay heed. The comparison is plain in the highly sarcastic, rhetorical question, "who are you?." What are your credentials and whence your powers, that you think yourself competent or duty bound to judge your brother? Can you, by your lack of love, compel anything but man's sympathy and God's judgment? The underlying notion is not far from that of 2:1. If God commands love, who are you to deny it?

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

It is clear that speaking evil of others, particularly of one's Christian brothers, is tantamount to judging the Law which protects him and values his life. Here is a heightened concern for the brother which goes beyond mere physical injury to the injury of soul. To speak of a brother in any evil or unjust manner, whether speaking the truth from evil motives, of speaking falsely, is to injure him.

James goes to the heart of the matter by stating that he who hurts a brother judges (and thereby injures) the Law that marks him off as valuable to God. Man in God's image is intrinsically worthy of human respect and love. In this connection, it should be evident that the Law of which James here speaks is more than a mere collection of commands and edicts, but reflects the very principle they try to protect and instantiate.

In essence, then, James says that to speak evil of a brother is to injure both the brother and the Law which is intended to protect and define him. Hence, to defame a brother is to disagree with God about the sanctity of a human being only God can rightly judge. What God has created in His image, we should in no way defame and devalue. For what is valued by God has ultimate value.

The "one Lawgiver," alone (i.e. He who values your neighbor) is properly able to be the "the Judge" of your neighbor.

That the Old Testament Law is not specifically in view here can be seen from the fact that James moves beyond the Law to the Lawgiver. This, of course is what the Old Testament law was meant to do. It was designed to be *exemplary* (rather than *exhaustive*) of Grace by showing how God regards men, and consequently how men are to regard each other. This, then, is no call to a new legalism, but an attempt to show that Law reflects the nature of the Lawgiver, and that whoever disregards the principles enunciated in the Law reveals a disregard for the Lawgiver himself. There is no hint here that obeying the Law will gain one favor with, or salvation from, God, only that God's Law is good because God Himself is good.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

Brothers, don't indulge in speech calculated to be harmful to one another. He who harms his brother by his speech, or finds fault with him, belittles and finds fault with the law; and if you belittle law you are not a practitioner of law, but a judge of it. But only the one who is able to save and destroy is really a judge. But what are your credentials, that you feel justified in finding fault with your brother rather than loving him.

Twenty First Pericope (James 4 :13-17)

James 4:13-17 "Ἄγε οὐκοῦν οἱ λέγοντες· σήμερον ἡ αὔριον πορευσόμεθα εἰς τήνδε τὴν πόλιν καὶ ποιήσομεν ἐκεῖ ἐνιαυτὸν καὶ ἐμπορευσόμεθα καὶ κερδήσομεν.¹⁴ Οἵτινες οὐκ ἐπίστασθε τὸ τῆς αὔριον ποία ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν· ἀτμὶς γάρ ἔστε ἡ πρὸς ὀλίγον φαινομένη, ἔπειτα καὶ ἀφανιζομένη.¹⁵ ἀντὶ τοῦ λέγειν ὑμᾶς· ἐὰν δὲ κύριος θελήσῃ καὶ ζήσομεν καὶ ποιήσομεν τοῦτο ἡ ἐκεῖνο.¹⁶ οὐν δὲ καυχᾶσθε ἐν ταῖς ἀλαζονείαις ὑμῶν· πᾶσα καύχησις τοιαύτη πονηρά ἔστιν.¹⁷ εἰδότι οὖν καλὸν ποιεῖν καὶ μὴ ποιοῦντι, ἀμαρτία αὐτῷ ἔστιν.

A. Textual Criticism

Three different textual problems exist in v. 14 Only the first contributes significantly to a change of meaning. But the complete chaos of readings, the wide variety of variants, and the notable lack of agreement among major witnesses to the text make it important to establish a reading.

The problem is complex enough to warrant a different methodology. The criteria will be the same, but because of the close proximity of the first two problems, they may be treated as one problem.

Intrinsic probability favors a reading whose general sense is to the effect "For you do not understand the conditions of tomorrow; for what is your life?" The concept of conditions is general and the notion of human life is one of its particulars.

Because 1) the statement concerning the vapor answers to and describes life, not conditions; and 2) because the exhortation of v. 15, by means of a sort of chiasmus, deals with life particularly and then of conditions generally, this Interpretation seems assured.

The other textual probability is the sense "You do not understand the conditions of your life tomorrow, for they (or "it" -- life) are (is) but a vapor. But this is forced and not consistent with the literary polish of James.

Transcriptional probability can be but little better than guesswork, but it is profitable to remember that the text of v. 13 is notable for its omission of articles, which has a definite bearing on this passage. The shorter reading (which here is less difficult) is shorter, largely because of the rejection of two articles. Thus, although the VI3S Greek text contains the reading in all three problems, it is so admittedly on the basis of poor evidence, and it is here rejected.

While this much of the explanation seems satisfactory, the third textual problem complicates matters seriously. For none of the many readings fits satisfactorily. Furthermore, the least awkward construction is not supported by the witnesses supporting the above readings. Here, intrinsic probability gives a likely reading, but no manuscript evidence supports it. Transcriptional evidence favors "they are" or "it will be" referring to circumstances and life respectively, for either option can explain the reading, "it is." The reading "it is" seems preferable. On the whole, external evidence can support both classes of statement. But it is ambiguous, at best.

The manuscripts Sinaiticus, Vaticanus and Alexandrinus all provide readings which make sense on the whole, but have one or more failings over all.

Sinaiticus, however, gives the shortest reading. It gives the most difficult reading because of its brevity. It best explains the occurrence of all other variant readings (mostly due to scribal additions intended to flesh out the meaning. Furthermore, it has the basic sense outlined above.

The ASV is based upon the text adopted by the VBS Greek text, that of Vaticanus. This is short and consistent, but fails on Intrinsic grounds.

Alexandrinus, the text upon which the KJV, RSV and NASV are apparently based, is a composite of the texts of Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, and also fails on intrinsic grounds.

The text of Sinaiticus is adopted here, despite its short, inexplicit reading.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

4:13 εμπορευσόμεθα (I aorist deponent indicative first person plural) The word means *to buy and sell* or, in other constructions, *to trade in*. Whether it is used intransitively or transitively, the underlying concept is that of commerce. The word carries two definite connotations which are imperative to the understanding of this passage. The first is the motive of profit, of coming away with more than one took. The second is that of essential legality. There is nothing illegal about this practice; it is acceptable in human terms. (whether or not the profit motive is acceptable to God is an entirely different question, and is not dealt with here.

4:13 κερδήσομεν (I aorist, active, indicative, first person, plural) 1) *To gain*. 2) To spare oneself something; *to avoid*. Here, the term clearly has a commercial sense, meaning "to get gain" or "to make a profit." Clearly, the idea expressed by these two terms is 1) the desire to gain legally, or to prosper financially (for a year, etc; 2) an overweening confidence in themselves (their lives and abilities; 3) an implied arrogance in forgetting or ignoring all other factors.

4:14 φαινομένη (present participle, middle, nominative, feminine) *Shine; give light; be bright. 2) Appear; shine; flash; become visible; be revealed; become apparent; be seen.* Here, the term is paired with its opposite, to disappear. This pairing, as well as the nature of the context, make the meaning of "appear" absolutely necessary. The text taken here omits the word "mist" supplied by English translations, because of its textual status. It appears that the word "mist" was added 1) to alleviate in some degree the rather unusual construction of the text; and 2) as an explanation of the phrase "appearing for a little and then disappearing." The figure of a mist, if not original, confirms at least that the present meaning was also assumed by the vast majority of scribes.

4:16 ἀλαζονείαις (noun, first declension, dative, feminine, plural) *Arrogance; pretension; self confidence; pride.* The word is often used in conjunction with words and deeds; and so it is here. But here, it seems to point to that which underlies such behavior. It follows, and is contrasted with, what ought to be said." It is explanatory of that by which the questioned behavior is motivated, as

well as denoting the quality of such behavior. The teaching equates directing one's own life without thought for the will of God with boasting in one's self confidence.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

No grammatical anomalies.

D. Translation

4:13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a city and we will spend a year there and trade and get gain." 14 You do not understand the circumstances of tomorrow. What is the nature of your life? That which appears for a short while and then disappears. 15 Instead, you should say, "If the Lord wills we shall both live and accomplish this or that." 16 But now you glory in the your arrogance. All such glorying is evil. 17 Therefore he who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

4:13-17 Another example of friendship with the world. As it is becoming apparent, not all kinds of friendship with the world and certainly not the most dangerous kinds, are obvious. James is again dealing with a worldly attitude or frame of mind, much as Jesus did. It is not that such attitudes are without outward manifestations, but that in themselves they look so normal and innocuous as to call for no comment. James would seem almost to be a "nit picker" were it not for the fact that he is dealing with underlying attitudes.

4:13 "Come now, you who say 'today or tomorrow . . . '" The address is brusque and insistent, as if to say "Wake up!" The address seems to be somewhat more particular than "My brothers" designating only *some* of the brothers, i.e. those "who say . . ." It is unlikely that the addressees here are not Christians (and therefore more general than "my brothers," because of the thrust of the larger context, to the effect that friendship with the world is enmity with God).

The phrase "today or tomorrow" seems to indicate an attitude of cultivated indifference, of almost cocky unconcern. Today or tomorrow, whenever, it really doesn't matter; the results will be the same. So whenever you're ready . . . This "overkill paraphrase" brings out the attitude.

4:13 "We will go into such and such a city." This clause expresses the human determination in terms of certainty. "Will go" need not be understood to carry undue emphasis. It is certainly not

a case where the mission is beset with obstacles which must be removed. On the contrary, the attitude is one of easy presumption. The unstated attitude is that of "after all, what's to stop us?" The cities in question are of course specific to the would-be traders, but to James are irrelevant; thus, "such and such a city.

4:13 "And we will spend a year there and trade and get gain." This clause expresses the purpose for the trip, namely to make money. It is a business trip. While it is not specifically the motive for the trip which James rebukes, one cannot doubt that it was chosen, rather than some other motive, because it well accords with the rebukes of the "rich" in 1:9-11, 2:1-4, and 5:1-6; and because such a profit motive is, at best, questionable. "We will spend" reiterates the notion of presumptuous certainty first sounded in "we will go." A year" is actually "a period of time" but may be a year as well as any other unit. It is best to understand it as a year because the word did have that meaning quite often. "And trade and get gain" manifests an attitude that may fall well short of denoting the desires of outright money-grubbers, without being any less worldly and inimical to God. The other possibility, that of merely breaking even and thereby avoiding poverty, is totally alien to the thought. Those whom James chastises are not sight-seers, seeking to subsidize a stay in the city; they are merchants, seeking to make a profit, if not a killing.

4:14 "You do not understand the circumstances of tomorrow." This is a rebuke against the presumptuousness illustrated in the last sentence. The presumption, as outlined above, includes the notions that 1) there is no reason to hurry; there is no obstacle in the path; 2) people may do as they please; and 3) set their own time table; 4) for their own gain or pleasure. The response is a blanket denial that any of these presumptions are true; tomorrow's circumstances might alter any or all of the above assumptions.

4:14 "What is the nature of your life?" This question narrows the discussion from all of tomorrow's circumstances to those of life only. The point is that if one cannot be sure of his own life, how can he be sure of any of life's uncertainties? James, like Jesus, pointed out that life itself has no guaranteed tomorrows. The whole passage is reminiscent of Lk. 12:18-20.

4:14 "That which appears for a short while and then disappears," answers the question concerning life. As was noted, the vast majority of manuscripts contain the word "Mist" to describe life in its transitoriness. It is not inappropriate. Life is short and uncertain in all its aspects. It Foes as it comes, unbidden and poorly understood.

4:15 "Instead, you should say" serves to mark a contrast to the presumptuous speech which characterizes many Christians. "You who say that, ought instead to say this . . ."

4:15 "If the Lord wills, we shall both live and accomplish this or that." It will be noticed that 1) all those circumstances which presumptuous men are said not to understand, are here made dependent upon God's will. The comparisons and contrasts between the statements are instructive: 1) Again, there is no hurry, but now it is not because of human pride, but because of trust in God. 2) People should do that which is pleasing to God. 3) God's time is the right the 4) Gain is that which is consistent with trust in God and pleasing to Him. All tomorrows are God's, for He is not limited by them; rather, He limits them. The expression given here complies with the structure of

the charge, "You do not understand . . . what is your life?" It states chiasmatically that if the Lord so wills, life will continue, and if He so wills, circumstances will allow for the accomplishment of such and such.

4:16 "But now you glory in your arrogance." This sentence sharply brings the addressees back to the point at issue, namely that such attitudes as many had, reflected great pride, although in a subtle way, and thus betrayed a strong friendship with the world. This statement makes a charge upon which the next clause renders judgment.

4:16 "All such glorying is evil." A blanket condemnation of pretentious pride. It is arrogance, and such attitudes that take life for granted, boast of human accomplishments and view tomorrow as a certainty, all of which are censured.

4:17 "Therefore he who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin." This statement is equivalent to wagging a finger at a child and saying, "Now you have been warned." It is stated as a conclusion in precisely the same manner, and covers the whole of the preceding exhortation. The idea is that those Christians who had unknowingly been cultivating friendship with the world by their pretensions had been warned; and failure to heed the warning constitutes sin. Beyond this, the statement is little more than a tautology.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

Two ethical points are used to make a theological point forcefully. The order of presentation is literary, rather than logical, and the ethical points under consideration are related to one another as particular and universal examples.

The ethical particular is given first. It is that all too often life is handled presumptuously and in a spirit of materialism. The presumption here is that there is nothing to prevent the acquiring of wealth and material possessions, and the underlying notion that such gain is necessarily good and satisfying. But in v. 16, James categorizes this presumption as glorying in ignorance. This, of course, is the universal category, of which presumptuous materialism is but an example. And James condemns the whole category, not merely the example, when he says, "All such glorying is evil."

The reason such glorying, is evil is precisely because it is presumptuous. Thus, both the question, "What is your life?" and the corrective, "You should say, 'if the Lord wills'." The point is that God is both in control, and not subject to tomorrow.

The real force of this pericope, however, lies in the solemn consideration of the transitory nature of human life before a sovereign God, coupled with the statement that "he who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin."

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

Listen, those of you who say, "When the mood moves us we will go into town and stay for a while and do business and make some real money." You don't understand future circumstances. What, after all, is life, but that which appears for a little while and then disappears? Instead of thinking, and acting, that way you should say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and work for His glory." As it is now, you are no different than the rest of the world. Your proud boast is in that which you arrogantly take for granted as your due. Such an attitude is evil and repulsive to God. You've been warned now; do what you know is right or you are sinning.

Twenty Second Pericope (James 5:1-6)

James 5:1-6 Ἐγε νῦν οἱ πλούσιοι, κλαύσατε ὀλολύζοντες ἐπὶ ταῖς ταλαιπωρίαις ὑμῶν ταῖς ἐπερχομέναις. ² ὁ πλούτος ὑμῶν σέσηπεν καὶ τὰ ἴματια ὑμῶν σητόβρωτα γέγονεν, ³ ὁ χρυσὸς ὑμῶν καὶ ὁ ἄργυρος κατίωται καὶ ὁ ἵδις αὐτῶν εἰς μαρτύριον ὑμῖν ἔσται καὶ φάγεται τὰς σάρκας ὑμῶν ὡς πῦρ. Ἐθησαυρίσατε ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις. ⁴ ἵδον ὁ μισθὸς τῶν ἐργατῶν τῶν ἀμησάντων τὰς χώρας ὑμῶν ὁ ἀπεστερημένος ἀφ' ὑμῶν κράζει, καὶ αἱ βοαὶ τῶν θερισάντων εἰς τὰ ὕδατα κυρίου σαβαὼθ εἰσεληλύθασιν. ⁵ ἐτρυφήσατε ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐσπαταλήσατε, ἐθρέψατε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σφαγῆς, ⁶ κατεδικάσατε, ἐφονεύσατε τὸν δίκαιον, οὐκ ἀντιτάσσεται ὑμῖν.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

5:2 σέσηπεν (II perfect, active, indicative, third person, singular) *Cause to rot or decay*. The word is used in a passive sense in the Bible. This is the first indication of the figurative nature of this passage. The very essence of most forms of wealth, besides their relative scarcity and universal value, is its resistance to normal processes of decay. Gold, silver, bronze and copper, diamonds and other precious stones, and even real estate, normally don't show signs of decomposition. There is in the text one exception (garments) but even that contributes to the figurative nature of the text. The decay is said to have set in and run its course, resulting in a state of rottenness and decay.

5:2 ἴματια (noun, second declension, accusative, neuter, plural) 1) Generally, *of any piece of clothing*. 2) *Of the outer clothing; cloak or robe*. There, as in Mt. 6:1, garments are considered a form of treasure, capable of being "laid up" or hoarded. It is probably not that clothing was a means of exchange, but the object of investment. Even today, those who spend a great deal of money on clothing (particularly high fashion) do so for the sake of appearance and are called "clothes horses" or fashion plates." Clothes or garments are here said to be moth eaten, and are classed with "rotten riches." It is not that clothes are impervious to the action of moths, as gold is to rust, but that, having become moth-eaten, clothes are just discarded. The description is of the clothing of the rich, as although it is still being kept and used. The sense is that "all of your possessions, from your gold to the clothes you are standing in, are in a state of ruin, if you could but see it.

5:3 κατίωται (perfect, passive, indicative, third person, singular) Used passively; *become rusty, tarnished or corroded*. This is the only occurrence of the word in the New Testament. It also contributes to the figurative aspect of the passage, being predicated of gold and silver, metals normally impervious to such action.

5:3 ἵδις (noun, second declension, nominative, masculine, singular) 1) *Poison*; 2) *rust*. The

contribution to the figurative portion of the passage made by this word is seen in its use as a witness or sign.

5:3 ἐθησαυρίσατε (I aorist, active, indicative, second person, plural) *Store up; gather; store.* The word usually takes an object, but need not always do so. It is here used to mark a transition to that part of the pericope which is to be understood literally. (Note the change from the perfect to aorist tense. The action designated by the verb is viewed as a reality.)

5:4 ἀφυστερημένος (Perfect participle, passive, nominative, masculine, singular) *Withhold.* Here, the action of withholding is assumed to be fraudulent. The wages of the laborers were their due, the price of their hire. Their duties having been performed (the fields were "mowed" the crops "harvested," they were entitled to their wages. withholding those wages constituted fraud.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

5:3 Notice the predicate nominative in the expression "their rust will be a witness . . ." The translation demands a predicate nominative; however, the actual form is a prepositional phrase because of Semitic influence. (Cf. diagram).

D. Translation

5:1 Come now, you rich, weep, howling because of the miseries which are advancing upon you. 2 Your riches are rotted and your clothes have become moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and silver have rusted, and their rust will be a witness against you and it will devour your flesh as fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days. 4 Behold, the pay of the workers who mowed your fields, which was withheld by you, cries out against you, and the shouts of those who harvested have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. 5 You have lived luxuriously upon the earth and have taken excessive pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned and executed the righteous man for he does not resist you.

E. Historical and Background Information

Comparisons and related material can be found in the following references: 2 Mac. 7:14, 17, 19, 35; 4 Mac. 9:9, 32; 10:11; 11:3, 23 12:12, 19-13:15.

F. Exposition

5:1-6 Friendship with the world is still the major theme. In the last pericope the first words were, "Come now, you." Here, they are the same words, but directed not as there, to the church, but to the world itself. Yet it is not for the purpose of changing the world, but for the purpose of encouraging Christians. The addressees are probably not the same, despite the similar address.

The only possibility of the addressees being Christians arises if they are thought of as being, rich converts to Christ, who have not yet given up those practices calculated to make or preserve wealth by whatever means. If this is the case, as seems unlikely, this describes that death which the rich must die in 1:11. The first of these two pericopes ends with the warning, "To one who knows to do right and does not do it, to him it is sin." Such a warning would be a waste of words if directed at the world, especially as 1) the world was not the recipient of the letter; and 2) the church would not otherwise be edified by a challenge to the world.

This pericope, however, is designed to show the Christian both the true spiritual nature of wealth and the wealthy, as well as the evil means whereby it was gained and the judgment coming upon it. This seems evident, largely from the fact that the language of this pericope ill accords with the fate awaiting Christians, and by the fact that it issues in the teaching of patience in the next pericope (note the "therefore. This pericope is a platform for the next, and functions to teach the true nature of ill-gotten gain. Similar "addresses" to other than the intended readers include the prophets' addresses to foreign countries and the woes of the scribes and Pharisees. (Cf. Mt. 23)

5:1 "Come now, you rich, weep, howling for the miseries that are advancing, upon you." The rich, as noted above, are not Christians. This is confirmed by the nature of the judgment they will receive. This sentence serves merely as an emotional call to attention regarding what is to follow. One might justly wonder if in other circumstances this might also serve as a call to repentance. Now is the time to lament the miseries which are now advancing steadily.

5:2 "Your riches are rotted." This introduces the figurative element to the narrative. Wealth normally does not rot in any physical sense. James has in mind here, not a physical state of a certain type of physical property, but the uselessness of wealth in evaluating a human being or in making him worthy. The picture is interesting; wealth and items of value are such, precisely because of their relative permanence. Any form of currency which is not imperishable (or rapidly and lastingly reproduced) will rot. And wealth that rots is useless. That, of course, is why men don't keep stacks of bass and bluegills in safe deposit boxes, and why chicken livers are not used as currency. But the assertion here is that such might as well be the case, for all the ultimate good wealth will do the rich.

5:2 "And your clothes have become moth." That is, the clothing which serves to manifest wealth and financial well-being is useless before Him who can see beyond clothing and cares for other things. Though clothing may be the display case of wealth and pampered luxury, showing man that which is wished to be seen, that which is hidden is the area of hidden poverty which God sees. Again, the point of the expression is the utter uselessness of moth-eaten clothing. Moth-eaten garments are not worn; they are destroyed because they have lost their power to impress others. But even a king's robe does not impress God when it rests on an evil king. For God judges the king, not the robe.

5:3 "Your gold and silver have rusted." Even imperishable metals are said to have become utterly worthless. The question must certainly now come to mind, "Useless, how?" That the meaning is figurative is now quite evident, for gold can always be relied upon to buy things in the marketplace. The miseries of v. 1 cannot refer to economic miseries, and must have some

spiritual meaning, as is here confirmed. In what case is money useless? What can't money buy? These questions, of course, find their answers in the fact that money cannot buy a favorable judgment from God. One is tempted to wonder if the teaching of Mt. 6:24 might not form the basis for this teaching. But James presses on in a slightly different direction.

5:3 "And their rust will be a witness against you." The rottenness, the moth-eaten quality and the rust all represent present qualities. The wealth spoken of is now worthless. The uselessness of wealth is a present condition. It is said here that this present state will, in the future, be a witness against (or a sign to?) the rich. Simply stated, wealth's present worthlessness will some day give testimony against the rich. The questions one would now like to ask include "glen will this testimony be given, and for what purpose?

5:3 "And it will devour our flesh as fire; you have laid up treasure in the last days This segment presents a grammatical difficulty. It may be expressed in four ways : 1) As above; 2) "It will consume your flesh, since you have stored up fire in the last days." 3) It will consume your flesh as fire you have stored up in the last days" and 4) "It will devour your flesh. You have stored up fire in the last days." The little phrase, "as fire" is the cause of the problem. It can act adverbially, defining how the flesh will be devoured. This is how it is usually translated. But the word "stored up" or "laid up" seems to require an object; it is usual, but not necessary. The phrase can also act in ways which give rise to possibilities 2 and 3. On the whole, the text given seems best. But serious consideration should also be given to readings 3 and 4.

The questions raised by the first clause of this verse are answered by the word "fire" and the expression "last days." The testimony of the rust is given in the time of the last days and for the purpose of judgment. An interpretive key might be found in Mt. 6:1 ff. While the vocabulary differs slightly, the teachings bear a noteworthy similarity. The striking feature is to be found in Mt. 6:21, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." In Mt. the comparison is between heavenly treasure and earthly treasure; here, it is between the present state of worthlessness of wealth and the future judgment engendered by loving (and serving) a worthless master (Cf. Mt. 6:24).

The rest of the pericope leaves no doubt that the structure of thought can be thus explained.

5:4 "Behold the pay of the workers who mowed your fields, which was withheld by you." This sentence shows the servitude in which the rich were held. Their love of money was such that they would forsake love, justice and kindness, and resort to criminal behavior to obtain money. It is worth note that the word "fields" designates large tracts of land, whole estates which were often divided and sublet to others. Here, the rich are very, very rich. Yet they will rob the peons who mow their estates. This cannot apply to any other than those who desperately love wealth. The emphasis is on the love of money. The criminal behavior is merely illustrative of the depth of that love.

5:4 "(the pay . . .) cries out against you." That worthless wealth that was due your workers not only witnesses against you, it screams. The money which, in the hands of the rich, is so much worthless or rusty material, was prevented from being the just rewards for services rendered. The

money which might have bought milk and shoes now rests (rusts) idly in the treasury of the rich. It may be idle, but it does not lie silent; it screams a testimony against the rich, which only one can hear. And this is what it says: "my owner deems it more important that I lie here in his treasury than that I should buy the things needful for his poor working man. Widely circulated, how much milk might I buy? Lying here, how long must I rust?

5:4 "And the shouts of those who harvested." The witness of the wages (or the witness of wealth) are not alone; together with the more audible cries of the human plaintiffs, the witness forms a chant. (For the sake of blatant eisegesis, can it be doubted that the tears of the laborers' hungry children also join the chorus?

5:4 "The cries) have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." The witness of wealth, which consists of the cries of idle money, withheld wages and the shouts of those defrauded, reach the ears and are heard by the Lord of Sabaoth, or the Lord of Hosts. The term of course refers to God, but it designates Him as the King of Justice, with forces at His command to implement His every decision. It is a gross evil to be ill-spoken of to the Lord of Hosts.

5:5 "You have lived luxuriously upon the earth." James here charges the rich with their crimes. These four charges are the essence of the "rotteness" of wealth and the content of the witness against the rich. The first charge is to the effect that the rich live "luxuriously" or "delicately." The rich live pampered lives, and so grow soft and useless. Many would deny that a delicate life is necessarily one of vice. But that is not the issue. The issue is that of selfishness and pride. The rich care first for themselves. And there is thus created an inequality of resources which only a staunch capitalist will defend. Only one question needs to be answered: What, in the sight of God, makes one person more deserving of wealth than another? The question admits of no easy or pat answer.

The contrast here is between the living well upon the earth, and the settlement which awaits them at the Bar of Justice.

5:5 "And have taken excessive pleasure." They have taken every opportunity to pamper themselves, to meet their own desires, and to do so excessively or beyond their entitlement as human beings. The idea involves also wanton indulgence.

5:5 "You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter." The expression is thoroughly in the style of the Hebrew prophets, viewing a future event with such certainty as to predict of its finality. Two possibilities exist for the full explanation of the expression. The first is the figure of fattening cattle for the purpose of slaughter. The other is a reference, to Lk. 16:25.

If this is the case, it would mean that the rich, despite repeated warnings of this sort, will continue their reveling right up to the hour of judgment.

5: "You have condemned and executed the righteous man." The fourth element of the witness of the rusted gold is this: That in lying, idle, the money has let the poor starve, who might have been (and ought to have been) spared. This, in God's eyes, amounts to a deliberate condemnation

(sentenced to the ranks of the poor) and execution (of the poor and starving. To hinder the potential of money to do good is to condemn and execute those who need and deserve, but do not receive, those benefits.

5:6 "He does not resist you." Indeed, the righteous man (here equated with the poor) cannot resist, because he depends upon the rich. He takes what comes, and addresses his petitions, anguished cries and angry shouts to the Lord of Hosts. It is his only recourse.

Those who would separate wealth from the persons who have wealth are usually those who have a great deal to lose. (Cf. Mk. 10:22, "He went away sorrowful, for he was wealthy") James does not allow such a separation. He addresses the rich and tells them that the very essence of their position, i.e. their wealth, will witness against them. It is no good saying, "But money is not evil in itself." No, it is not. In fact, James pictures money as righteously witnessing against its possessor, the rich. Money can work good if properly distributed and handled.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

5:6 Another interpretation of this verse refers to Jesus as "the righteous man." While this is possible, it represents something of a "contextual lurch." If this is the meaning of the passage, the non-resistance of Jesus is perfectly obvious. But something further may be learned of James' view of the rich. For the rich in Jerusalem conspired with the Romans in many things, not the least of which was the crucifixion of Jesus. To them, the status quo was profitable; they did not care that the status quo effectively squandered the lives of the poor.

Now, it must be remembered that James did not have a Jerusalem audience, but wrote to "the twelve tribes in the dispersion." This being the case, the rich are addressed as that class which profits from (and therefore seeks to maintain) the status quo. This being the case, James is here picturing the non-Christian rich, those who profit from the world system without helping others (the righteous or the poor) as "Christ-killers;" those who exploit the poor would kill Jesus.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

Come on, you who are rich; lament and cry for the miserable fate which is coming upon you. Your riches and possessions are worthless and would not help you if they could. The gold and silver lying idle in your treasures have rusted out completely. And that rust will stand and bear testimony against you; and it will consume your flesh as the fire you have laid by for yourselves in the last days. And the wages of those who worked in your fields, and which you have fraudulently kept, even now scream their silent testimony against you. And the shouts and cries

of those who harvested your crops have been heard by the King of the universe. You have lived the life of an epicurean and a hedonist, mindful only of your life in this world. But your earthly prosperity is but a prelude to your destruction. For you, in your easy living, have thereby condemned and executed the righteous man; he offered you no resistance.

Twenty Third Pericope (James 5:7-11)

James 5:7-11 Μακροθυμήσατε οὖν, ἀδελφοί, ἔως τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου. ἵδον ὁ γεωργὸς ἐκδέχεται τὸν τίμιον καρπὸν τῆς γῆς μακροθυμῶν ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἔως λάβη προϊμον καὶ ὄψιμον.⁸ μακροθυμήσατε καὶ ὑμεῖς, στηρίξατε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν, ὅτι ἡ παρουσία τοῦ κυρίου ἔγγυικεν.⁹ μὴ στενάζετε, ἀδελφοί, κατ' ἀλλήλων ἵνα μὴ κριθῆτε. ἵδον ὁ κριτής πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν ἔστηκεν.¹⁰ ὑπόδειγμα λάβετε, ἀδελφοί, τῆς κακοπαθίας καὶ τῆς μακροθυμίας τοὺς προφήτας οἱ ἐλάλησαν ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι κυρίου.¹¹ ἵδον μακαρίζομεν τοὺς ὑπομείναντας: τὴν ὑπομονὴν Ἰώβ ἡκούσατε καὶ τὸ τέλος κυρίου εἴδετε, ὅτι πολύσπλαγχνός ἐστιν ὁ κύριος καὶ οἰκτίρμων.

A. Textual Criticism

5:7 The variant readings are: 1) It should receive; 2) it should receive rain; 3) rain it should receive; and 4) it should receive fruit. The first reading is shorter, and more difficult (because less explicit). The tendency of scribes to clarify such obscure readings is well attested. A short, obscure reading such as this is not only consistent with the rest of James, it also provides just the sort of passage scribes explained.

This explains the two methods of interpretation, one of rain and the other of fruit. Though either of the longer readings could account for the shorter reading (by an unlikely omission) neither can satisfactorily account for the other. Both longer readings, were likely explanatory, one referring to the climatic conditions, the other being a harmonization to the text.

There is only slightly more to favor "rain" than "fruit" but both intrinsic probability and transcriptional probability heavily favor reading one. External evidence, so far as the best early manuscripts are concerned, is divided between readings one and four. The first reading is practically certain.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

5:7 μακροθυμήσατε (I aorist, active, imperative, second person, plural) *To have patience; wait.* 2) *Be Patient; forbearing.* The meaning of this term is clear. It appears four times in this pericope, and is introduced by the preceding verses on riches. Because the rich ungodly will receive their "last day treasure" the Christians are not to concern themselves with the harm done them in the meantime, but are to wait patiently for that which ought to be uppermost in their minds.

The patience taught has two aspects. By the exhortation to be like the farmer, the Christians are taught that the "presence" they await will arrive when conditions are fulfilled; i.e. at the right time.

By the comparison to Job, Christians are shown that their patience may have to endure many things (among them, persecution by the rich). The practical outworking of this patience involves Christian speech (a theme never far from the surface from James 3 onward). The ninth verse reiterates in slightly different language the teaching of 4:11-12. The reason given for Christians to cultivate

patience is that by so doing, God will be found compassionate and merciful.

Patience, here, means waiting until the parousia for vindication, doing. so without complaint, and doing so through suffering without "charging God foolishly.

5:7 παρουσίας (Noun, first declension, nominative, feminine, singular) 1) *Presence*; 2) *coming, advent*. Here the idea is that of the advent, or the presence of Christ at the second coming. This is when the oppression of the "righteous" poor might logically be expected to cease, even if it is not viewed as when they receive their reward." It is to be expected and awaited patiently, the preconditions of his coming being watched for, as in the case of the farmer with his crops.

5:9 στενάζετε (Present, active, imperative, second person, plural) *Sigh; groan; complain*. Here, obviously the term means complain. It sums up the "speaking against" and "judging" of 4:11-12.

"Complain" covers these meanings exactly. The idea may include, because of the preposition, complaining to a brother or complaining to others, when the object of the complaint is a "brother."

5:11 τέλος (Noun, third declension, nominative, neuter, singular) 1) *End*; 2) *rest, remainder*; 3) *tax, custom duties*. Here, the meaning is "end" specifically, in the sense of "outcome" or "conclusion." The reference is without doubt to the final blessing of Job after his faith and patience had been tried and found established.

5:11 πολύσπλαγχνός (Adjective, nominative, neuter, singular) *Sympathetic; compassionate; merciful*. The context of 5:1-6 is not too far removed to notice the contrast between how Christians will find God characterized, as opposed to His treatment of the rich.

5:11 οἰκτίρμων (Adjective, genitive, masculine, singular) *Merciful; compassionate*. Here, merciful is likely, as a complement to the above.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

A particularly interesting case of ellipsis occurs here. This is also a factor in the text's critical consideration, since the ellipsis involves the word "rain" at least once, and perhaps twice; for it is said that "it (should) receive the early and the late." This might have been expressed "until it (should) receive rain early and late" as one variant reading has it. But the expression "early and late" was very likely an idiom common among farmers of antiquity, denoting the early rain and the late rain. (Cf. Historical Data.) If this is the case, the word "rain" has been omitted twice. The fact that "early and late" is likely an idiom, also helps determine the textual question.

D. Translation

5:7 Therefore you should be patient, brothers, until the coming. Behold, the farmer expectantly awaits the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it until it receives the early rain and the late rain. 8. You also be patient; firmly fix your hearts, because the coming of the Lord is near.

Brother, do not complain about one another, in order that you might not be judged; behold, the judge is standing at the doors. 10. Take the prophets, brothers, as examples of perseverance and patience, who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11. Behold, we consider them blessed who endured; you have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the outcome of the Lord, that "the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

E. Historical and Background Information

The "early rain" begins in Palestine around the end of October or the beginning of November. These rains are eagerly awaited because they signal the time to plant. The "late rain" refers to the light showers of April and May. Without the Spring showers, all the rain of January cannot prevent a crop failure. It has been noted (Jas. 1:7 ff, with regard to the climate of Palestine, that the burning wind "Sirocco" comes in Spring and early Summer, and scorches the earth. The growing season commences in October and ends in April. It begins with the "early rain" and ends with the "late rain" (early and late with reference to the crops, not with reference to time of year, All this is to be awaited patiently by the farmer. Indeed, the early occupation of farming was characterized by three general tasks: planting, patience and harvest.

F. Exposition

5:7 "Therefore you should be patient, brothers." The content of this pericope results from the teachings of the previous one. In v. 1-6 James, in a mock address to the rich, charges them with certain financial immoralities, including persecuting of the pious poor (the righteous. The righteous are treated as a class (hence the singular) and are to be equated with the poor, particularly Christians (cf. Amos 2:67; 5:12; 8:4) The clear relation to worldliness" is seen by this fact. Here, the address is pointedly directed to Christians, and is a conclusion of the matter just discussed, thus confirming the notion that the oppressed of v. 6 are Christians. A paraphrase brings out the sense: You rich should even now be howling for the judgment which is to befall you. Your money is worthless, you are corrupt and you persecute the poor laborers. The prayers of these righteous men, whom you persecute, are heard by God. Therefore, my brethren, knowing that this is the case . . . "

5:7 "Until the presence." The second advent is in view here. The "presence" might have been used to denote the subjective experience of the indwelling common to Christians, except that it was 1) something, to be awaited; 2) was connected in some way with the judgment of the rich in the preceding pericope; 3) seems to indicate a permanent state of affairs connected with the Judge, who is "Standing at the door."

5:7 "Behold, the farmer expectantly awaits the precious fruit of the earth." The first example of patience is the farmer. The example of the precious crops illustrates patience with reference to something about which little could be done in any case. Though the crops (the fruit of the earth) were both joyously anticipated and contingent upon certain preconditions being met, little or nothing could be done to rush the crop or alter it for the better.

5:7 "Being patient about it until it receives the early rain and the late rain." The expectant waiting for the "precious fruit" is characterized by the wait for rain. Again, the example illustrates an attitude rather than a lifestyle. The patience enjoined here is that of peaceful anticipation without worry. For there is nothing a farmer could do to bring on rain by behaving differently. This example of patience involves a state of mind. The object of his patience is his crop. The farmer, by changing his behavior, can no more make the crop grow without rain than he can make it rain. The attitude is never to be anything but joyous expectation.

5:8 "You also be patient." The attitude enjoined, again, is one of joyous expectation. Just as the farmer awaits that over which he has no control, so the Christians are to await their vindication, which will certainly come.

5:8 "Firmly fix your hearts." An exhortation to prepare their hearts, to firmly establish their faith and to strengthen their relationship with God. This is what the Christian is to do while waiting patiently. It is analogous to the preparations which farmers might make prior to planting or, more likely, prior to harvesting.

5:8 "Because the coming (presence) of the Lord is near." This gives the reason Christians should be patient. As the farmer prepares to plant while waiting patiently for the "early rain" and makes preparation for the harvest while expecting the "late rain" the Christian is to prepare his heart for the presence of Christ, which "is near."

This is the first mention of behavior as it might apply to patience. It is consistent with the positive behavioral elements commended to Christians, and is fully in keeping with the governing thought of "friendship with the world is enmity with God."

The vindication of the Christians may not be so much in view here as the mere joy of His presence. Yet it does figure in the reasoning. For, however the "coming" or the "presence" is to be understood, whether the second advent *per se*, or the eternal state, the rich will no longer oppress the righteous poor. Whether they have received their judgment, or are merely being restrained from evil, is not the point.

5: "Brethren, do not complain about one another, in order that you might not be judged." This verse recalls the teaching of 4:11-12. It is the second characteristic here mentioned of "interim behavior." The connection of impatience with backbiting, complaining and other forms of "speaking against" one another, and their clearly worldly character are too clear to need explanation.

It should be noted that the word "complain" includes the notions of "speak against" and "Judge" (vs. 11, and that the reason here given explicitly for refraining from complaining was the implied reason in that context (vs. 12).

5: "Behold, the judge is standing at the doors." This ties "the coming (presence) of the Lord is near" (vs. 8) with the Judge who is "lawgiver" of 4:12. It also reinforces the notion of 5:4 of impending judgment.

5:10 "Take the Prophets, brothers, as examples of perseverance and patience." The notion of taking an example means "notice that something is worthy of imitation." This is no dry, intellectual comparison, but an attempt to behave as the Prophets in regard to "perseverance." The perseverance doubtless refers to the endurance of persecution, as well as temptations (1:2-41 12-15 and implied in 5:4-6) which characterized the Prophets. (Cf. 1:2-4, 12-15 and the example of persecution in 5:1-6)

5:10 "Who spoke in the name of the Lord." This clause 1) further identifies who the Prophets were (the Old Testament Prophets; 2) gives a further positive indication of behavior worthy of Christian imitation; and 3) contrasts nicely with the worldly practice of complaining about one another. "In the name of the Lord" amounts to an official designation as "spokesman."

5:11 "Behold, we consider them blessed who endured." Again, the implications of endurance include the sufferings of the Prophets, which were well known to the readers. (Jeremiah provides one excellent example) The idea is that their faith in, and persistent proclamation and practice of, the truth, despite temptations and trials, resulted in their vindication in the minds of those who returned to the ways of righteousness.

5:11 "You have heard of the endurance of Job." The common element linking, the last clause to this one is "endurance" not that Job was a prophet. Job provides an even more widely known example of endurance, although his troubles were of another kind. Thus, Christians are not merely to endure social, political and personal assaults, as did the Prophets, but also those false friends and the devil himself, as did Job. (cf. 4:7) These trials, through which patient endurance is enjoined, are unlike the patience of the farmer; for unlike weather conditions, these personal trials may well suggest different modes of behavior. While the farmer can neither hurry nor guarantee a crop, and so remains patient, conflict might make Christians change their behavior in order to alter circumstances. But even in such circumstances, they are exhorted to "be patient."

5:11 "And you have seen the outcome of the Lord." This clause serves to reinforce the exhortation to the patience of the Prophets and Job, by reference to the outcome Job was allowed to enjoy. This should not be taken to mean that patience will necessarily result in economic prosperity (although it may. The Prophets certainly did not enjoy such "outcomes" yet they were "considered blessed." The main comparison is the *fact* of vindication, not the *type* of vindication. Christians expect (as the entire context suggests) an entirely different kind of vindication -- the coming/presence of the Lord and all that it entails.

5:11 That the Lord is compassionate and merciful." This is the element common to the vindication of Job, the Prophets and Christians alike. It characterizes the "outcome of the Lord" whether in time or in eternity. For in all His work, in His redemption, in the vindication of those who love Him, "the Lord is compassionate and merciful mindful of our failings, yet unwilling to judge the repentant. The rich, in that day, will meet God as the Lord of Hosts; Christians will find Him compassionate. However, Christians must bear this in mind constantly, as they have no great distraction such as wealth, fine clothing, and easy living, as do the rich. Here, they are told that God is compassionate, and the patience enjoined becomes easier.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

The teachings of this passage are primarily ethical in nature, and might be characterized as "interim behavior." The major emphasis is patience. This patience is shown to have two characteristics. The first point made about patience is that it should be cultivated because those (rich) who make life unbearable will receive their just reward. Again, ethical behavior is enjoined on the basis of a theological rationale.

The next thing taught about patience is that it should be patterned after the patience of the farmer, who is unable to alter his circumstances (the weather) by any means. This would come very near to fatalism, were it not controlled by the previous pericope, which dealt with wealth and the oppression of the poor by the rich.

The next factor of patience is that it is based on the hope of the parousia, i.e. the coming (or presence) of the Lord, in which the Christian heart delights. This hope of the parousia is contrasted with the sort of impatience which, despairing of its object, and faced with seemingly unalterable circumstances, seeks solace in backbiting, carping and making the petty problems the focus of attack. This results in judging a brother.

The final item about patience is that it is to be cultivated even in the adverse circumstances of such extreme persecution as can be produced by enemies, false friends or the devil himself, as the examples of the Prophets and Job attest.

In addition, there is a further admonition not to judge a brother because there is One who is the Judge. The Judge is said, in fact, to "be standing at the door" the more reason to cultivate patience and fixed hearts because of the parousia. Theologically, the Judge is linked to the coming Lord.

The end, seemingly so near at hand, is worth being patient for, because then the Lord Himself will manifest compassion and mercy which will overcome persecution and poverty, even as He vindicated Job's faith and patience.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

For this reason, my brothers, you should be patient until the advent. Look, the farmer patiently waits for the precious crop, knowing that nothing he can do will assure the conditions essential for success. You must also be patient; fully prepare your hearts, because just as the crops grow in their season, so the advent of the Lord is near. Remember, brothers, not to complain about each other. Thus you might avoid judgment. Our Judge is close at hand, even at the door. As examples of perseverance and patience that are worthy of imitation, consider the Prophets, who spoke in the

name of the Lord as His authorized spokesmen. We consider blessed and revere the names of those who were steadfast. And you know about Job, and what a favorable end followed his plight. God's results are always compassionate and full of mercy.

Twenty Fourth Pericope (James 5:12)

James 5:12 Πρὸ πάντων δέ, ἀδελφοί μου, μὴ ὀμνύετε μήτε τὸν οὐρανὸν μήτε τὴν γῆν μήτε ἄλλον τινὰ ὄρκον· ἦτο δὲ ὑμῶν τὸ ναὶ ναὶ καὶ τὸ οὐ οὐ, ἵνα μὴ ὑπὸ κρίσιν πέσητε.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

5:12 ὀμνύετε (present, active, imperative, second person, plural) *Swear; take an oath.* The word has about the same range of meanings as the English "swear" referring to profane use of the name of deity, basic affirmation, or sacred oath. Like the English "swear, here is no derivative noun.

5:12 ὄρκον (noun, second declension, accusative, masculine, singular) *Oath.* This word also covers approximately the same linguistic territory as its English equivalent. It provides a Greek noun counterpart to the verb "swear" as does the English "oath." The problem here is to determine (from the context, if possible) the exact nature of the forbidden oaths.

The first consideration involves the idea of the resultant "condemnation." Is eternal damnation or other divine chastisement in view, or is a purely human judgment upon one's character in mind? The first consideration itself rises or falls with the determination of the extent of the forbidden oath, and thus cannot aid in the solution of the problem.

The second consideration involves the fact that the alternative to the forbidden swearing is given, namely restricting speech to the unambiguously simple "yes" and "no" answers. This implies a response to a question rather than an emotionally evocative occurrence. Thus, court testimony, affidavits and official documents or testimony are in view.

The third consideration is that of the objects by which oaths are taken, indicating a general affirmation rather than a simple question. It also might apply to legal testimony, but is more frequently used in common speech (then as now) as assurance of truthfulness in general discourse.

The fourth consideration is an instructive argument from silence. There is nothing in the text which indicates that mere profanity is meant. James does deal with evil speech (which may well include profane swearing) when he declares that "the tongue is a fire" (Jas. 3:6).

It is most likely that the taking of oaths here means official, or semi-official, affirmations of truthfulness, as well as the personal bolstering of statements by recourse to oaths.

5:12 κρίσιν (noun, third, declension, accusative, feminine, singular) 1) *Judging; judgment.* 2) *Court or board of judges.* 3) *Justice.* Here, the word seems to carry with it an assumed verdict of

"guilty." The object of avoiding oaths is to avoid judgment, i. e. guilt or condemnation. Whether it is God's judgment or man's cannot be decided on the basis of the context alone, although the lack of explanation or modification favors the interpretation of God's judgment.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

5:12 πρὸ is used here, not with the temporal idea in mind, or with the rarer notion of location, but to indicate preference. The context has dealt with worldliness versus godliness, specifically where patience is concerned. Thus, the idea is that you should develop an attitude of patience, but with or without such an attitude (i. e. above all, taking oaths should be shunned).

5:12 The construction is peculiarly non-Semitic, with the accusative case used for that by which something is sworn. In Koine Greek, that by which something is sworn is usually in an oblique case with a preposition (ἐν, εἰς = εἰ, or κατά). Cf. Mt. 5:33-37.

D. Translation

5:12 But above all, my brothers, do not swear; neither by heaven nor by earth nor by any other oath. But let your "Yes be "yes" and your "no" be no!" so that you might not fall under condemnation.

E. Historical and Background Information

There were, in the first century, many of various religious and philosophical persuasions, both Jews and Greeks, who denounced the practice of taking oaths. The Essenes claimed that "One who is untrustworthy 7 except when he appeals to God is already under condemnation, believing that taking an oath was "worse than perjury." (Josephus, Wars of the Jews II: 8:6)

F. Exposition

5:12 "But above all, my brothers." This clause means "but especially; above all; most importantly" or some such emphasis. This passage is governed by 4:7-10, worldliness versus godliness, and is an additional exhortation. It fits well with the preceding pericopes, but the nature of swearing here under discussion is not to be determined by it. The teaching here is connected to the larger context by the idea of speech which becomes Christians . It is a subtopic of worldly versus Christian behavior, particularly in the realm of speech. (Cf. 4:11, 13, 15; 5:9). This pericope seems to stand at the beginning of a series of exhortations to behavior which involves, and is typified by, Christian speech. (Cf. 5:13, 14) It should be noted that the address" are still being spoken to, as the phrase "my brothers" clearly indicates.

5:12 "Do not swear." This command, as the lexical study indicates , may indeed mean any form

of swearing at all; but it certainly applies to judicial swearing.

5:12 "Neither by heaven, nor by earth, nor by any other oath." This entire exhortation is reminiscent of Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5:33-36. scholars are divided over the question of whether James preserves a more accurate, or more nearly original, form of Jesus' teaching. Such debate, besides being intrinsically worthless, is diversionary. Jesus doubtless taught against the use of oaths on many occasions, and He probably used different forms of expression each time, so that nothing can be gained by entering such a debate. What should be noticed, however, is that 1) either James is using a figure of speech to indicate all possible oaths, by forbidding swearing by heaven and earth (Cf. Gen. 1:1; Psa. 1:2; :1) and then forbidding any additional kind of oath as well; or 2) he is summarizing Jesus' teaching concerning swearing by Jerusalem or one's own head. In either case, the civil oaths, such as are given to officials taking office, as well as witnesses about to give testimony, provide good modern examples of what was foremost in James' admonition. Certainly foul speech and use of the Lord's name for common purposes were included in the teaching of 4:5b-12. And it may quite plausibly be argued that such a stricture is included here. Put it is not the primary meaning.

5:12 "But let your 'Yes' be 'yes' and your 'no' be 'no'!" This clause also serves to emphasize what sort of oath is foremost in the mind of James. It is that oath which results from a question by a second party. No oath which is characterized by vile speech or the profane use of God's name can possibly serve as a substitute for the words "yes" and "no" except in the case of answering, questions, and even this is somewhat less than common. Certainly one cannot seriously entertain the thought that James means to say that the words "yes" and "no" are adequate responses to hitting one's thumb with a hammer. It is much more likely that James has in mind that kind of oath which is in the form of a question and begins, "Do you swear . . . " or some such formula.

The entire essence of this pericope is to encourage pure, honest and simple speech. It is given for the purpose of making Christian speech so pure and free of guile, so honest and straightforward, so godly and unworldly, as to make oaths not only unnecessary, but a reproach to be asked to take one. This is wholly in keeping with the character of Jesus' teaching.

It should be noted, with regard to the Sermon on the Mount, that the oaths Jesus forbids seem to involve personal promise, or the oath as a verbal guarantee. This also fits the notion here. One is to refuse to offer, even in response to a direct request, any promise or guarantee more than a "yes" or "no."

It should also be noted that this exhortation to honest speech has exactly the same character as that enjoined at Jas. 3:3-5a, that if one's word is to be good, so must his deeds be, and so his speech at all other times.

5:12 "So that you might not fall under condemnation." Though it would seem consistent with what has been said, to see this condemnation as that of man, such is likely not the case. For, while Christians are exhorted to be so honest and pure in their speech as to shame those who would request an oath, it seems highly unlikely that worldly men would condemn Christians for taking oaths, since they themselves deem oaths necessary. it is therefore God who condemns such

speech.

All oaths partake of the nature of sinfulness. Vile speech and taking the Lord's name in vain are obvious sins, and scarcely merit a place in New Testament writing. Oaths or promises such as have been dealt with here are also worthy of condemnation, because they make a division in Christian speech, i.e. between that which is probably true and that which is sworn to

Josephus states of the Essenes that "every statement of theirs is surer than an oath; and with them swearing is avoided, for they think it worse than perjury. For they say that he who is untrustworthy except when he appeals to God, is already under condemnation"

It is also noteworthy that Josephus claims that the Essenes Were exempt from taking oaths of loyalty to Herod and his government. This is precisely the nature of oaths here under discussion. Nor is it to be forgotten that the Essenes themselves required an oath of allegiance at initiation; apparently, once a man was a "sworn" Essene, his word was his bond. For the Christian, such is to be the case without an "oath of initiation."

The clause here under consideration also supports the notion that the purpose of the pericope is to enjoin honest speech, for in this way one can avoid condemnation or judgment.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

There is little doubt that this teaching came originally from Jesus, and there is a possibility that James reports the teaching with more accuracy than does Matthew (although it seems highly likely that Jesus used the same theme on numerous occasions, with slightly different emphases. The nature of the teaching is ethical, the justification seems to be theological. The admonition not to take oaths is simple and obvious. The justification is not.

The idea of not falling under condemnation is provocative, but less than informative. As was noted in the Exposition, the condemnation is likely that of God, not of men. The whole idea of taking, an oath presupposes basic untrustworthiness in unsworn statements, a condition deplored both in the Decalogue and in the New Testament generally.

Furthermore, the notions of either self-cursing, or vowing to pay (both functions of the oath) involve intense pride or ignorance, for man is unable to control his circumstances, as the admonition at Mt. 5:33-37 stresses.

Both the basic pride and tacit untrustworthiness which necessitate oaths are damnable sins in both Testaments; hence, an oath may either reflect condemnation, or bring it about as failure to perform that which is sworn.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

I. Paraphrase

But above all else, my brothers, don't swear; swear neither by heaven nor by earth; and use no other form of oath. Let your yes' mean only "yes" and let your "no" mean nothing but "no" so that you won't fall under God's judgment.

Twenty Fifth Pericope (James 5:13-16a)

James 5:13-16 Κακοπαθεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν, προσευχέσθω· εὐθυμεῖ τις, ψαλλέτω· ¹⁴ ἀσθενεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν, προσκαλεσάσθω τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ προσευξάσθωσαν ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἀλείψαντες [αὐτὸν] ἐλαίῳ ἐν τῷ ὄνόματι τοῦ κυρίου. ¹⁵ καὶ ἡ εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως σώσει τὸν κάμινοντα καὶ ἐγερεῖ αὐτὸν ὁ κύριος· καὶ ἀμαρτίας η̄ πεποιηκώς, ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ. ¹⁶ ἔξομολογεῖσθε οὖν ἀλλήλοις τὰς ἀμαρτίας καὶ εὔχεσθε ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων ὅπως ἰαθῆτε.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

5:13 κακοπαθεῖ (present, active, indicative, third person, singular) The basic lexical definition includes *suffering misfortunes* or *hardships*. Here, its connection with the word translated "cheerful" dictates that we understand the word in its subjective aspects rather than search for specific hardships. Not only are no specifics mentioned, but the frame of mind, with its corresponding reaction, is contrasted with "cheerfulness" and singing psalms. It might plausibly be understood to mean "heavy hearted" or even "depressed."

5:13 εὐθυμεῖ (present, active, indicative, third person, singular. *Cheerful; in good spirits.* The word, a verb, is translated by an English full predicate. The word means literally "be of good cheer" or "keep up courage."

5:14 πρεσβυτέρους (noun, second declension, accusative, masculine, plural) 1) *Old or older; of men, women, institutions or eras.* 2) As a designation of an office: *elder, presbyter.* The Jews designated a group within the Sanhedrin as "the elders" using this word when writing or speaking, Greek. They were distinct from the high priest and the scribes, and are mentioned with them in several New Testament texts.

Among Gentiles, the word was used to designate both associations with "old ones" as well as civic and religious officials.

The Christians adopted the term and applied it to a distinct group of men within the church. They were mentioned in connection with apostles, bishops and deacons. Preaching and exhortation in the church services were prominent among their duties.

5:14 ἐκκλησίας (noun, first declension, genitive, feminine, singular) 1) *Assembly, in the sense of a regularly summoned body.* 2) *Assembly or gathering, without the connotation of regularity or specifically political function.* 3) *Of the congregation of the Israelites generally, but especially when gathered for religious purposes.* 4) *Of the Christian church or congregation.* In this sense, the word can emphasize the act or fact of meeting, or the body of Christians which constitutes the

church, without special reference to actual meeting. This usage also has two applications. Pertaining to the local church, it denotes the church in a city, district or house; it is temporal, specifically referring to those Christians alive at the same time and constituting the body described in the context. In other contexts, it describes the "Church universal" the Body of (Christ) or the "Bride of Christ" in which the character of the Church is seen to be unrestricted by time or locality.

In this context, the local church is clearly implied by the presence within the context of temporality and locality, as well as a specific function of "the elders.

5:15 ἀφέθησεται (future, passive, indicative, third person, singular) 1) *Let go; send away; divorce.* 2) *Cancel; remit; forgive; pardon of debts, guilt or sin.* 3) *Leave; give up; abandon.* 4) *Let; let go; tolerate.* Here, the meaning is clearly that of "cancel" or "forgive" as a debt owed. It obviously assumes that restitution for sin constitutes a legitimate debt toward God. It is also clear that the sins which are forgiven may coincide with (or perhaps cause?) physical illness. (Cf. I Cor. 11:28-30) Whether such sin is a besetting vice, which is habitually indulged, a series of related actions, or even an unrelated jumble of isolated sins cannot be determined on the basis of the sort of forgiveness at issue here.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

5:15 "The one who is sick," or "the one being sick" is a predicate participle.

D. Translation

5:13 Is any among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing psalms. 14 Is any among you ill? Let him summon 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 will restore the one who is sick and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, it shall be forgiven him. 16. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed.

E. Historical and Background Information

The Jews also visited the sick for the purpose of mediating or praying for divine mercy and healing.

According to Nedarim 3, the man who "visits the sick lengthens his life, and he who refrains shortens it."

Other examples of exhortations and instruction concerning visiting the sick, or examples of the practice, can be found in Sanhedrin 101, 1; Shabbath 127b; Sota 14a; Samachoth Zutarti and Raba

F. Exposition

5:13 "Is any among you suffering?" The question is directed to those who might be undergoing misfortune in a social, economic or political way. Physical ills are not in view here. Nor does it seem likely that a general persecution is meant, for in times of persecution the statement would not so likely be a question, and it would not involve only one or two members of a local church.

5:13 "Let him pray." This is the response James views as proper in regard to unusual hardships or misfortunes. While the specific type of prayer is not mentioned, it likely includes both prayers for deliverance and prayers for further knowledge or divine wisdom.

Because of the contrast with the following question and response, it must be noted also that the hardships at issue here are producing a troubled or depressed frame of mind. The response, prayer, is the sort of therapy usually associated with emotional burdens, in the sense of talking over one's troubles. God listens, God cares, and God has a divine response.

5:13 "Is any cheerful?" This question provides an "improper" contrast. Are you "suffering hardship" (and therefore depressed) or are you cheerful (because of favorable outward circumstances? The contrast is thus one both of circumstances and frame of mind, each member of the contrast containing both an explicit and an implicit element. Here, the frame of mind is that of "cheer" or "good courage" which implies good (or at least hopeful) circumstances.

5:13 "Let him sing psalms." This, too, is a spiritual application of a natural response. Singing is a natural correlative of happiness or contentment. Directing such song to Him in whose hands all circumstances ultimately rest, is but to recognize in song God's sovereignty and its favorable effects on the lives of men.

Let him summon the elders of the church." The case of intercessory prayer for the sick involves the elders. This is no chapel prayer vigil, but a coming together of the spiritually strong men of the local church, in the presence and at the request of the sick person, specifically for intercessory prayer. It seems to be very personal and extremely intense. Such visits to the sick were probably among the duties of the office of elder.

5:14 "And let them pray over him." As in the exhortations concerning "suffering hardships" and "being cheerful" (vs. 13) so also here, the Christian response involves close communion with God. Personal prayer, singing, praises and intercessory prayer (as opposed to oaths, for example) are the ways in which life's circumstances are to be met.

¹ Cited in Ropes *International Critical Commentary (James)* p. 3. Also interesting is the lengthy passage in Edersheim's *Sketches of Jewish Social Life*, p 167 ff.

5:15 "Anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." This whole procedure had a well known parallel in Jewish practice; it is probably given here (to the Church in the world) as a corrective to the pagan practice of sending for magicians or using charms or chanting over the sick person. The anointing with oil had a spiritual significance as well as a physical one. The prayer and anointing with oil is done "in the name of the Lord." This alone seems to separate it from Jewish practice, but only if it is assumed that the word "Lord" refers to Jesus rather than to God. Otherwise, the parallel with Jewish practice is almost perfect.

5:15 "And the prayer of faith will restore the one who is sick." The condition is illness. The response is to summon the elders of the church. The procedure is to pray over and anoint the one who is ill. The result will be the salvation of the ill person, or his restoration or his being preserved. As has been noted, this is primarily a reference to a physical condition, but does not preclude a causal or contributory spiritual state. In short, the restoration is as far-reaching as the ailment, the provision as the need. That a spiritual predisposition or precondition of the ailment is also in mind will be seen in the next clause.

It must first be pointed out that it is the "prayer of faith" which is instrumental in the deliverance of the sick. This is a different matter than hollow prayer or idle words somehow directed heavenward.

5:15 "And the Lord will raise him up." As the "prayer of faith" is the instrument by which the sick man is preserved, so the power and person responsible for raising him is the Lord. Again, if the Lord is understood to mean God, Christian practice as here advocated by James differs little from Jewish custom. But if it is understood to mean Jesus, the practice becomes unique. For both of these reasons, it seems likely that God is meant. This is in keeping with Jewish custom when speaking of God, and accords well with the continuity of Judaism and early Christianity.

It is not certain, from the grammar or lexicography, exactly how "raise up" is to be understood. It seems unlikely that a complete and permanent healing is always meant; on the other hand, it cannot be denied that this is precisely what happens in some cases. The modern concept of "remission" was probably also included in the idea of being raised up.

5:15 "And if he has committed sins" demonstrates both the possibility and the non-necessity of a relationship between sin and sickness. The clause is conditional, or it is a hypothetical syllogism of the form *modus ponens*.

The Pauline parallel found in I Cor. 11:17-22 is interesting, precisely for the fact that it is indisputably Pauline, and because it provides a striking example of sin resulting in sickness and even death. The Gospels make it clear not only that sin could cause sickness, but that it was not always necessarily so. It is fair also to include here the more obviously sin related illnesses, such as venereal disease, obesity and a host of others.

5:15 "It shall be forgiven him." There is certainly expressed here not mere potentiality. A man may sin himself sick; but the prayer of faith to a loving God assures his being forgiven.

It is noteworthy that the forgiveness is pictured here as applying not to the individual sins per se, but to the sinful nature, or set of circumstances deliberately conjured for the purposes of sin, or perhaps the surrender to the predisposition to sin. It is the fact of sins and their common surrounding circumstances which are forgiven. "If he commits sins, it will be forgiven." The forgiveness goes beyond the ledger sheet accounting of individual acts, to the ultimate cause of those acts.

5:16a "Therefore, confess your sins to one another." This is a far cry from a basis for "confession" as practiced in some quarters. Confession is not presented here as anything like a sacrament or even advocated as a common practice. The admonition is based upon what went before. That is, it is a conclusion to a teaching, not a new and independent thought. Because the prayer of faith" is effective against illness and weakness, and because the Lord is willing and able to "raise up" a penitent sinner, we should therefore confess our sins. The context makes it clear that such sins as are to be confessed are those relating, to a specific illness or weakness (whether spiritual or physical). The statement explicitly denies confession in secret to a priest or other church "officer." It is clear that "the elders" are summoned to the place of the sick man to anoint him and pray over him on his behalf. It proves no difficulty to admit that confession includes the elders. But confession is made "to one another" with no specific office or privileged position as a necessary prerequisite for "receiving" confessions. Rather, because sins related to weakness are primarily in view, it is most likely that confession is made to those against whom the sin is directed, although all whose prayers are sought probably receive such confession. Such confession has the character of repentance.

5:16a "And pray for one another." Again, while the context does limit those sins which are confessed, yet does not limit to whom confession is made, prayer "for one another" also is specifically delimited. It may be a fine point, but it must be observed that in a context dealing with sin and sickness, the absence of a limiting factor for the concept of sin makes it contingent wholly on the context itself. But both "confession" and "prayer" are limited by the idea of "one another." Those who pray for others do so in accordance with the confession of repentance.

5:16a "So that you might be healed." This clause explicitly reaffirms the fact that the whole sentence is a conclusion. The word "therefore" alone is sufficient to indicate that what immediately follows is for the purpose of being restored to health (certainly physical, and perhaps also spiritual. This clause merely makes certain what is intended by the "therefore.

This whole pericope aims itself squarely at communication from a man to God, allowing what differences circumstances may admit to determine the nature of that communication. The effectiveness of petition is assumed as the basis for confession to and prayer for one another. The effectiveness of prayer is itself taken up explicitly in the next pericope. (Cf. 1:12-16)

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

The main consideration derives from the contrast of the oaths which were forbidden and the prayer which was enjoined. Oaths, as a class, are forbidden, but close communion and communication

with God are encouraged in many adverse circumstances, the example given being illness.

Beyond this are 1) the practice of sending for the church elders in behalf of those who are ill, and 2) prayer for and anointing the sick.

Prayer is said to bring the restoration of health and the forgiveness of sins. This prayer and the anointing with oil "in the name of the Lord" are the reasons given for confessing sins to one another, and praying for one another. These actions are all justified on the basis of theological beliefs about God, His sovereignty and mercy.

The connection between sin and sickness has been noted, as has the fact that the reality and circumstance of having committed sin is itself forgiven, along with the sins and sickness.

The character of repentance which attaches to confession has also been mentioned.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

Is one of you enduring hardship or misfortune? Then let him pray. Is one of you cheerful? Then let him sing praises. Is one of you sickly or weak. Then he should summon the elders of his church, and they should come and pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer said in faith will restore the one who is ill and the Lord will uplift him. And if he has committed any sins, it shall be forgiven him. Therefore, confess your debilitating sins to one another, and pray for each other's weaknesses that you may be healed.

Twenty Sixth Pericope (James 5:16b-18)

James 5:16-18 Πολὺ ἴσχύει δέησις δικαίου ἐνεργούμενη. ¹⁷ Ἡλίας ἀνθρωπος ἦν ὄμοιοπαθὴς ἡμῖν, καὶ προσευχῇ προσηγένετο τοῦ μὴ βρέξαι, καὶ οὐκ ἔβρεξεν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐνιαυτοὺς τρεῖς καὶ μῆνας ἔξ. ¹⁸ καὶ πάλιν προσηγένετο, καὶ ὁ οὐρανὸς ὑετὸν ἔδωκεν καὶ ἡ γῆ ἔβλαστησεν τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῆς.

A. Textual Criticism

No major variants in this pericope.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

5:16b ἴαθήτε (I aorist, passive, substantive, second person, plural) *Heal; cure.* The word is susceptible of both a literal and a figurative meaning. Thus it only needs to be determined from the context whether actual illness is involved, or some symbolic or figurative state is in view. Here, real sickness is primary, but a certain sinful spiritual state is also clearly visible in the notion of possible acts of sin having been committed.

5:16b ἴσχύει (present, active, indicative, third person, singular) *Be in possession of one's powers; be in good health.* 2) *Have power; be competent; be able.* 3) *Have power; be mighty, have meaning; be valid.* The usage here is not nearly as difficult to determine as it is to translate. The term is intransitive, and has only an adverb modifier. The basic idea of the word is that of strength or power, i. e. the ability to accomplish something without the implication of its certainty. The word contains no suggestion of definite causality, but of potential or likelihood. In this case, translations such as "availeth" (AV) or "works" (J) fall short. "Can accomplish much" (NASV and here) is best. *Exerts a mighty influence* (Weymouth) is something of a paraphrase, but renders the idea perfectly.

5:16b δέησις (noun, third declension, nominative, feminine, singular) *Entreaty.* Almost always, in the Bible, as *prayer.* Supplication or petition is the basic concept of the word. Here, as elsewhere in the Bible, God is understood to be the one addressed, hence the idea of prayer. But prayer can also contain other elements, such as praise (vs. 13). The emphasis, both because of the word itself and the entire context, is unequivocally that of supplication made to God. English has no single word which both means "appeal" and is directed toward God; in English a choice must be made between the two.

5:17 ὄμοιοπαθὴς (adjective, nominative, feminine, singular) *With the same feelings, circumstances, experiences or nature.* The word has a broad field of meaning, and is difficult to translate unambiguously in this context. The comparison may be quite extended, but it is safe to say that it begins with the inward circumstances of a personal reliance on God. It would be futile to try to trace outward parallels, although many undeniably existed. Similarly, it would be difficult to deny that Elijah had a human nature which is common to man. But it must be the relationship

to God, which confesses and abhors human inadequacy before God, that links Elijah to those whom James addresses here, for it is not his circumstances James exhorts his readers to emulate, but his response, i. e. fervent, faithful prayer. Thus Elijah and James' readers are said to be alike in essential prerequisites, and on this basis the readers are invited to enjoy the same sort of fervent prayer.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

No grammatical anomalies.

D. Translation

5:16b The effective supplication of a righteous man can accomplish much. 17 Elijah was a man of like nature to us, and he prayed fervently concerning the rain, and it did not rain upon the earth for three years and six months. 18. And he prayed again, and heaven gave water and the earth yielded her fruit.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

5:16b "The effective supplication of a righteous man can accomplish much." This sentence requires some explanation. It has been noted that the word "supplication" renders literally a Greek term used in biblical literature to designate "petition addressed to God." It has also been seen that the word translated "can accomplish" does not connote certainty, but allows for potentiality. The major versions are divided between the position that the prayers are "effective" (e.g. NIV) and that such prayer is able to accomplish much "in its working." Grammatically, there is no doubt that the participle being treated refers to the subject, and not to the predicate. But being in the middle voice renders the word extremely awkward, and reduces English translation almost to the status of tautology.

In line with the grammatical and lexical considerations, the present translation is given. Several points should be made: 1) It cannot be inferred from this sentence that prayer itself is the effective element because the prayer must be "operational" or "effective" and it is the God to whom prayer is addressed who makes a prayer effective by answering it. God Himself becomes the operating agent. 2) The inclusion of the fact that prayer which "can accomplish much" is said to be that of "a righteous man" does not mean that a man must, in himself, be righteous in order to have his prayer heard and made operational. It is included, in the first place, to introduce the example of Elijah and, secondly, to indicate that the accomplishment of prayer is coextensive with the

character of the one who prays. Thus Elijah's prayer had profound effects, not because Elijah was profoundly righteous, but rather because being righteous he asked God for much. The more daring the request (and a righteous man knows few limitations) the more dramatic the results that can be accomplished. 3) God is under no obligation to make operational or effective every prayer addressed to Him, even by His righteous servants. Every saint has prayed amiss at one time or another, and God's failure to make such prayers operational becomes a cause of heartfelt thanksgiving.

More to the point is the fact that many righteous men do not pray boldly. The sense can be paraphrased as follows: "The answered prayer of a saint can have dramatic effects." This comports perfectly with the intent of the entire context, i. e. to exhort men to pray. James has just said that prayers were to be said for one another. This sentence refutes the unspoken objection that prayer is ineffective babbling. The example of Elijah follows as support for this refutation.

5:17 "Elijah was a man of like nature to us." The example of Elijah is advanced to support the contention that the effective supplication of a righteous man can accomplish much." The story, found in I Kings 17-18, was familiar to Christians throughout the world, and thus served as a good biblical example. That Elijah was "a man of like nature to us" means only that he was a human being, with failings and shortcomings which had to be overcome. Even understanding, the word "nature" to refer to "Passions" or "circumstances means only that he was a seeker after God, on the one hand, or that he had various trying situations, on the other. In any case, the lesson is clear. Elijah was in no way better than James' addressees, as far as his natural endowments or surroundings were concerned. But he proved by his life a truth which in James' day had come to be viewed with a degree of suspicion, i.e. that prayer has far-reaching effects. What sort of lesson might we draw today, when man believes that prayer is merely a reflection of subjective conditions and that no real God is even there to hear?

5:17 "And he prayed fervently concerning the rain." It is interesting to note that in I Kings 17-18 Elijah is not pictured as actually praying about the rain, although he may be assumed to have done so. Yet, during the three and half years without rain, Elijah twice demonstrated the remarkable nature of "effective supplication." On one occasion the widow's son was restored to life. On the second, his wet sacrifice was consumed by divine fire. Nor was this all that Elijah "accomplished" by his "effective supplication." He also asked that two "captains of fifty" and their soldiers be consumed by fire . . . and it was done (II Ki. 1:1-12. It is interesting that James' story cannot be checked without making these discoveries.

5:17 "And it did not rain upon the earth for three years and six months." One need not claim that it rained nowhere on the planet. A local drought is all that is required, and certainly there is no reason to press the language used to its absolute limits. It was Israel with whom God was dealing and who needed the lesson. It seems, therefore, that the drought was local. This point is important because it occurs in a context where the extensive effects of prayer are being demonstrated. But, while the result of "effective supplication" is the subject of discussion, in this clause it is the phrase "for three years and six months" that bears the weight. James is here dealing with the temporal effects of prayer, rather than the geographical effects. Elijah's prayer had its effects and they lasted for three and a half years.

5:18 "And he prayed again" gives the introduction to the contrast, or reversal. Elijah had prayed for drought and it lasted for three and a half years, "and he prayed again" and reversed the course of natural events.

5:13 "And heaven gave water and the earth yielded her fruit." Here is the geographical extent of the effects of Elijah's "effective supplication." And here it is not restricted to part of the earth, but to "heaven" as well. Elijah's prayer had effects in heaven (what we know as the stratosphere) and on earth. The heaven gave water and earth gave her fruit, showing how extensive were the results of Elijah's prayer, i.e. even into the sky. It demands of the readers the same sort of surprise registered by those who saw Jesus rebuke the wind and waves: "Behold, what sort of prayer is this that has effects for three and a half years and involves heaven and earth?" The answer, of course, has already been given: he was a man with "like nature to us." The conclusion has also already been given: pray for one another, for effective supplication . . . can accomplish much.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

Two points are noteworthy. The first is that which was begun in the previous pericope, i.e. that God answers prayer. He is a living God who is not beyond reach, but who hears and cares and answers.

The second point is that God answers the prayers of men such as ourselves. James points out that "Elijah was a man" like us. This would be wasted verbiage, were it not inserted to make the point that God hears "the likes of us."

While this is a theological ideal the ethical applications are profound and far-reaching, as both Elijah's prayer concerning rain and the elders' prayers for the sick illustrate.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

The answered prayer of a righteous man can have dramatic effects. Elijah was a man like us, with similar nature and passions. And he prayed fervently about the rain and for three and a half years it did not rain. Then he prayed again and heaven gave its rain and the earth gave its fruit.

Twenty Seventh Pericope (James 5:19-20)

James 5:19-20 Ἀδελφοί μου, ἐάν τις ἐν ὑμῖν πλαινθῇ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ ἐπιστρέψῃ τις αὐτόν, ²⁰ γινωσκέτω ὅτι ὁ ἐπιστρέψας ἀμαρτωλὸν ἐκ πλάνης ὁδοῦ αὐτοῦ σώσει ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐκ θανάτου καὶ καλύψει πλῆθος ἀμαρτιῶν.

A. Textual Criticism

The text has variant readings at two points, both within v. 20. In both cases, the accepted reading is given only a "D" rating in the U.B.S. text. The first involves the person and number of the verb, whether a second person plural, whose antecedent would be "my brothers" or a third person singular, whose antecedent would be the indefinite pronoun, "someone." The grammar is of no help in reaching a conclusion. The evidence of the context seems to favor the second person plural reading, in that it clearly fits a text of admonitions. The exhortation is simple and direct, "Know ye that . . . It While even on these grounds, the third person singular reading is not impossible, it is less direct, being, as it were, an exhortation to exhort; "Let that person know" or "May that person know (whether directly from this epistle, or from your own mouths)."

The second place in the text where variant readings occur is of very little practical consequence. The choices include the readings 1) "save his soul from death, 2) "save a soul from death" and 3) "save his soul." The first variant has itself two variants, the only difference being in the placement of the word *his*. The bulk of the manuscripts, including many of the best, have one or the other of these readings. The placement of this word can be explained in two ways. First, it might be claimed that they are both independent conflations of the other major readings. Or, it can be attributed to scribal error. Neither explanation is particularly appealing. Furthermore, the conflation thesis is based upon the existence of a manuscript tradition having, reading number three, "his soul" But the main witness to this tradition is weak. Thus, in order for the first reading to be accepted as authentic, scribal error must be posited for the non-authentic reading. Either reading produces the same English translation. The reading "save a soul" is sufficiently ambiguous to suggest to copyists an explanatory insertion. Put the word "his" is itself ambiguous. The ambiguity resides in the phrase "a soul" and more must be added than the indefinite pronoun which may refer either to the one who errs or to the one who returns the sinner to "the way." It is shorter than the first reading, and is early. The third reading, "his soul" is even shorter, but is witnessed only by Ambrosiaster. The decision is difficult and marked by uncertainty. But reading number two seems the best choice; it is shorter than the possibly conflationary readings of number one, and it is well enough attested in the manuscript evidence to make it a fair choice.

B. Lexical and Topical Studies

5:19 ἀληθείας (noun, first declension, genitive, feminine, singular) 1) *Truthfulness; dependability; uprightness*, whether in thought or deed. 2) *Truth* as the opposite of falsehood. 3) With reference to the content (ethical, spiritual and doctrinal) of Christianity as *The Way*. 4) *Reality* as opposed to appearance. Here, the concept is broad; it is conceived as a way of life from which it is possible

to err or wander. It is obvious that truth, as the opposite of falsehood, cannot here be intended. Furthermore, while "reality" is sufficiently broad as a basic definition for the term, there is nothing in the context to suggest that reality is the sphere from which one might wander, nor to which he might be restored. It is the idea of Christianity as "the way" which is here in mind. As such, no particulars need be given with reference to wandering, whether it be in ethics, spiritual reality or doctrine. This basic notion is also found (and thus confirmed) in the word "way" in v. 20.

5:20 ὁδοῦ (noun, second declension, genitive, feminine, singular) *Way*. 1) Literally: *a road; highway or other fixed path for transport*. 2) Figuratively: *method; manner; custom; conduct or lifestyle*. Here, the figurative sense is obvious, although the teaching draws heavily on the picture of a lost traveler. Several words in this pericope have both literal and figurative meanings, and contribute to this word picture. The words translated "departs/departure" turns back" way" and "death" are such words. Only the words "sinner/sins" and truth" guide the figure to a specific reality.

The term "way" means lifestyle or conduct. As used here, the word is contrasted with the word "truth" and denotes a departure from The Way of The Truth. A man may "depart" from the truth" this becomes "the departure of his way." His way has taken a wrong turn and has left the path of righteousness, pure doctrine or divine fellowship.

5:20 ψυχὴν (noun, first declension, accusative, feminine, singular) The possible meanings for this word include 1) *life* or *life principle*; 2) *soul*, as the seat of the inner life and 3) by metonymy, *that which possesses life, a living creature*. The context allows any of these meanings, all of which alter the word picture.

If the word is taken to mean "life" the picture shows a life wandering from the truth and into the way of error. The life can be preserved from death by restoration to the truth.

If the term is taken to mean "soul" the sort of death is clearly seen to be spiritual death; this is not to be confused with ultimate damnation, but the way of sin -- or death -- in the ethical realm. "Carnal Christianity" is then the subject.

If the term is taken by metonymy to mean simply "a man" the picture is no less dramatic, although the association with "a sinner" i.e. one who "departs from the truth" is more pronounced

The first example is striking, but perhaps a little too abstract. It would also seem to indicate a final death or damnation, which, while not impossible, must remain strictly secondary. "Soul" seems to best fit the picture, but must not be fixed so firmly as to disallow the latitude the picture naturally has.

5:20 θανάτου (noun, second declension, genitive, masculine, singular) *Death*. 1) Literally, *of a living body*; 2) figuratively, *of the spirit or spiritual life of man*, i.e. *spiritual death*. There can be no doubt that the word here has the figurative meaning. This is confirmed within the context by the simple fact that no person, by restoring a sinner to the truth, can prevent that sinner from ultimate physical death.

C. Grammatical Notes and Literary Devices

No grammatical anomalies.

D. Translation

5:19 My brothers, if one of you departs from the truth and someone restores him, 20. Know that the one who restores a sinner from the departure of his way saves a soul from death and hides a multitude of sins.

E. Historical and Background Information

No relevant data available.

F. Exposition

5:19-20 This pericope forms the conclusion. It is stated in the figurative language of a word picture. It is not specific in naming any particular sin or error, but must certainly refer to the preceding paragraphs. As such, ethics and doctrine seem to provide the "truth" from which one might "depart." The ethical admonitions particularly give added force to the final word picture, as it is obvious when one ceases to practice such behavior. But the doctrinal aspects of James' teaching on the law and mercy (1:13) and faith and works (2:14-26) are considered "Truth" and as such, must be adhered to, and concerning which, heresy is to be corrected.

5:19 "My brothers, if one of you departs from the truth." It is clear that James here views departure, or erring, as possible for his "brothers" or Christians. Indeed, it could be argued that *only* Christians can depart "from the Truth," since all others may be viewed as *ipso facto* alienated from the truth and steeped in error.

As has been noted, the language is figurative, and pictures a divergence from the true path, or The way. The departure means choosing and following another path, which, because it is not "the Truth" cannot but be error and sin. It is error because it is not truth, and sin because it is chosen in preference to the Truth. In fairness, it must be admitted that the notion of choosing error instead of truth is not stated explicitly in the text, although the word translated depart" seems to indicate premeditation. It is, however, conceivable that an error of ignorance might fall within the purview of this pericope.

5:19 "And someone restores him." This has occasionally been interpreted to mean conversion, but the picture will not permit this; nor will the word translated "turns back."

5:20 "Know that the one who restores a sinner." This admonition is "given to stress the importance of caring for one another (cf. 5:13-18) and shows the spiritual/ethical significance of mutual concern. This is the admonition clause, begun with the imperative mood. The "one who restores" can be anyone, and is the picture of love and concern. Such restoration is friendly and loving rather than coercive or vindictive. The picture is of one giving true direction to a friend who recognizes himself to be lost.

Again, an error of ignorance becomes less likely because of the presence of the word "sinner." Not only does the departure from the truth become obviously willful, but restoration can only follow the acknowledgment of sin.

The picture, again, is of a return to a prior state, not of a conversion from an old state to a new one. "Carnal Christianity is the subject.

5:20 "From the departure of his way." The sinner is restored, or turned back from "his way" or the way he has chosen to go. More specifically, he is turned from the departure or error of his way. His way, in short, constitutes a departure from The way. The "departure" and "his way" are synonymous, and cannot be viewed as a new way wherein a few things constitute error or departure.

5:20 "Saves a soul from death." This is the interpretation of the act of restoration as it is presented in the word picture.

The sinner is seen as a soul. As such, perhaps it is unwise to search for too narrow a meaning for "soul." The word picture can have several applications, such as spiritual being, physical being, or unity of spirit and flesh. As such, departure can cover both ethical and doctrinal error.

Restoration is interpreted as salvation. It must be noted again that this salvation is not the eternal salvation which marks true conversion, but the more basic sense of restore, preserve or deliver.

Death is equated with "the departure of his way." As such, he who departs from the truth to go his own way is said to be going in the way of death. Death, here, does not mean a final physical death, but may represent the eternal death, which in turn represents the end of the road for those who insist on traveling their own way.

The interpretation runs parallel to the deliverance clause. He who "restores" a "sinner" from his "departure" delivers or "saves a soul from death."

5:20 "And hides a multitude of sins." The last clause further parallels, defines, and thus interprets the picture. Not only is a soul saved from death, but a multitude of sins are covered or hidden.

It need only be pointed out that the sins are those thoughts, statements, and deeds which constituted a "departure from the truth." The "covered sins" parallels this "departure from the truth" and again emphasizes the fact of premeditation and deliberate commission.

The hiding or concealment of the sins does not mean that God cannot see them. It does, however, imply that for those in The Way of Truth, sins are no longer the essential issue.

G. Ethical and Theological Considerations

Mutual concern in behavior and prayer has figured prominently in the last few verses, and here reaches a climax and conclusion. As has been noted, the one who "departs from the Truth" can only be one who has had contact with the Truth. This cannot be any but the Christian.

Restoration is clearly equated with salvation from a ruinous carnality and the hiding of the many specific sins of that departure.

The ethical admonition comes from the prior notions of "pray for one another" and "confess to one another" (5:16, and prayer for the sick (5:14) Such community concern was a mutual aid society which ill describes anything less than the Church.

H. Subjective Implications – Psychological and Devotional

Non Emotive Text

I. Paraphrase

My brothers, if one of you should stray from the way of Truth, and another of you turns him back, I want you to understand that he who turns the sinner back from the error of his way delivers a soul from the Way of Death, and conceals a host of sinful thoughts and deeds.

Paraphrase of James

Chapter One

From James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to God's people throughout the world; greeting. Reckon it pure joy, my brothers, when trials beset you, remembering that a proven faith produces virtuous character. And let your virtuous character come to completion, in order that you might be both whole and wholesome, lacking no godly virtue.

But if anyone of you needs discernment, let him ask God, who is generous and ungrudging, and he will receive it. But let him ask in unwavering reliance. For he who wavers, resembles a rough sea, being wind-tossed and driven. So that man, having two conflicting allegiances, and being unstable in every way, should not imagine that the Lord will grant his desires.

But let the humble brother exult in his high estate and the rich brother in his humiliation, because he will wither as the blossom of a wild flower. For the heat of the sun and the dry wind come out of the east and parches the wild flower and its blossom falls and the beauty of its presence is destroyed. So also will the rich man in the midst of his pursuits fade away.

Blessed is he who faithfully withstands temptation. Because when he has been approved, he will receive the reward of life, which was promised to those who love Him. But let no one, when he is being tested, justify failure by saying "I am only doing what God made me to do." For God can neither be tempted to such evil, nor does He tempt men. But each one is tempted by his own lusts, and by them he is lured and baited. And when lust conceives, she can bring forth only sin. And sin, when he matures, produces death.

Make no mistake, my beloved brothers; every good gift and every gracious grant is from heaven, and is bestowed by the creator of the heavens, who neither repents, nor forgets and who deliberately brought us forth so that we might be a kind of first fruits of His work.

You already know this; but let every one of you be eager to listen and understand, but slow to react verbally and slow to become angry, because human anger cannot carry out divine righteousness. Therefore, discarding every personal vice and pervasive social evil, receive in meekness and docility the engrafted word which alone can sustain you.

Be practitioners of that engrafted word, and not just auditors, fooling yourselves. Because if anyone is a mere auditor, and not a practitioner, he resembles a man contemplating his own face in a mirror: Because contemplate as he will, he has forgotten about his own image. But the one noticing the perfect law of liberty, and keeping his eyes fixed upon it, is not a forgetful auditor, but a willing practitioner who is blessed in his daily conduct.

If a person, pretends to be devout, but cannot control his tongue, he is deceiving his own heart, for his fruitless religion is a hollow mockery. The pure and unsullied worship of which God approves, consists in visiting and caring for orphans and widows in their distress, and in keeping himself from worldly values.

Chapter Two

My brothers, do not exercise partiality in the faith of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ. For if a rich man, wearing a gold ring and beautiful clothes should enter your meeting, and there also should come a beggar in dirty rags, and you highly regard the one wearing the fine clothes and say

to him, "Come here and sit comfortably" and to the beggar you say "You stand," or "sit here on the floor by my footstool," do you not pass judgment among yourselves, and set yourselves up as judges who render corrupt verdicts?

Listen, my beloved brothers; did not God choose those who are poor and inferior in the eyes of the world to abound in faith? And be heirs of the Kingdom which is promised to those who love Him? But you dishonored the poor! Do not the rich treat you shamefully and cruelly? Do they not drag you into court? Do they not blaspheme the precious name of Him who bought you and owns you?

If you really fulfill royal law in accordance with the scripture, which says, "you shall love your neighbor as yourself," you please God. But if you discriminate, you sin. Because if anyone should diligently obey the Mosaic Law, and even once fail in a minor matter, he is, in God's eyes, guilty of breaking the whole law. Because the same One who commanded us not to commit adultery also commanded us not to commit murder. So if you never commit adultery, but you one day murder someone, you become a transgressor of that legal system. Behave yourselves as befits those who will be judged under a law of liberty. Because judgment is without mercy to anyone who legalistically discriminates in neighborliness. But mercy triumphs over judgment.

My brothers, what is the profit for one to claim to have faith if he does not have deeds commensurate with that faith? Can such "faith" alone save him? If a poor brother or sister should be found naked and starving, and one of you kindly says, "go in peace brother; and may your needs be met," but you neglect to give him those necessities yourself, what is the profit? Faith without works is like that also; alone, it is as dead as a body without food or clothing.

But if you persist in such "faith" someone is sure to say, "You have faith and I have deeds; it is as impossible for you to manifest your belief as it is easy for me to manifest my faith. You believe in the existence and unity of God; and that is fine as far as it goes. But it is not enough to make you a Christian, because even the demons hold orthodox views. Yet they tremble." Don't you understand, o empty one, that "belief" is not "faith" but a shallow, deception?

Was not our father Abraham justified by works when he offered up on the altar Isaac, from whom we came? Do you see that his belief was manifested in his works and thus made complete? And the scripture was fulfilled which says "And Abraham trusted God and it was accounted to him as righteousness" and he was called "friend of God" So you see clearly that what justifies a man is works as well as belief. A similar case involved Rahab the harlot, who, although she was less virtuous, was also justified by works, aiding the messengers of Israel. Belief without works can profitably be compared to a body without spirit, in that both are incontestably dead.

Chapter Three

My brothers, not many should become teachers, because, as teachers, we will receive more critical judgment. For all of us fail in many ways; if anyone fails not in his speech although, he is at least consistent, being able to bring his behavior into line. Now, bits are put in the mouths of horses, so that they will obey us, because bodies are therefore easily led. Likewise, behold the ships, which, although they are quite huge, and are driven by rough winds, are yet steered and kept on course by a very small rudder, as the pilot desires. So also the tongue is a small member and must not be underestimated, but properly used.

Remember how a small match can burn an entire forest. And the tongue is just such a

match. The continuing and on-going fires of unrighteousness in our other members are ignited by the tongue, which, by its activity, contaminates the whole body, setting ablaze the course of life, and is itself inflamed by the sinfulness of hell. For man has exercised his dominion over the animal creation. But no one has ever been able to completely govern his tongue, which is a capricious evil and, in a sense, just as venomous as some reptiles. with the tongue we bless God, our Maker, and with it we curse other men, who are themselves His image-bearers. Out of the same mouths come both blessing and curses, My brothers, you know such inconsistencies should not exist. Natural fountains do not send forth from the same opening both bitter water and sweet, do they? Or would you expect to gather olives from a fig tree, or figs from a grapevine? Neither can salt make water sweet.

Who among you would be your teacher? Who claims to be understanding? Let him manifest by his example his credentials in the meekness of wisdom. But if your heart is contentious and divisive, do not glory or boast in your wisdom, and play false with the truth. Such wisdom is not godly, but is purely this worldly, human centered, and demonically inspired. For wherever this sort of wisdom appears, there will be found also a double-minded instability and every evil manifestation. Now divine wisdom is free of these gross impurities and is characterized by peacefulness, gentleness, compliance; it is full of mercy and good fruits; it is undivided in its aims and is not inconsistent. And the teachings of righteousness shall be sown in peace by those who are at peace.

Chapter Four

Whence arise clashes and contentions among you? Do they not begin with the hedonism which constantly seek expression? you crave and you have not; so you kill. And you envy and yet cannot attain; so you contend with one another until a full scale clash results. But the reason you do not have what you want, and cannot be satisfied is that you do not ask Him who is able both to give and to satisfy. Mind you, it is not that you don't go through the notions of prayer, but that you do so for the wrong reason, that of pleasure seeking and self-serving. You isolators! Haven't you been told that to be worldly is to be ungodly? Anyone, therefore, who does not fear but seeks the friendship of the world, by that act makes himself the object of God's anger.

Or do you think that without reason the scriptures plainly teach that God is like a jealous husband in regard to the Spirit He established in us? But He gives us a greater grace. For the scriptures say, "God resists the arrogant and proud, but He graciously accepts the humble." This is all the reason you need to submit to God. Stand fast against the devil, and you will see his backside; embrace God and He will embrace you. Let sinners clean up their acts, and those with conflicting allegiances purge their hearts of compromise. Let them be miserable, and mourn and cry; let their hollow laughter turn into mourning, and their petty joy into the sober dejection and contemplation. Humble yourselves before God, and He will exalt you truly.

Brothers, don't indulge in speech calculated to be harmful to one another. He who harms his brother by his speech, or finds fault with him, belittles and finds fault with the law; and if you belittle law you are not a practitioner of law, but a judge of it. But only the one who is able to save and destroy is really a judge. But what are your credentials, that you feel justified in finding fault with your brother rather than loving him.

Listen, those of you who say, "When the mood moves us we will go into town and stay for a while and do business and make some real money." You don't understand future circumstances.

What, after all, is life, but that which appears for a little while and then disappears? Instead of thinking, and acting, that way you should say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and work for His glory." As it is now, you are no different than the rest of the world. Your proud boast is in that which you arrogantly take for granted as your due. Such an attitude is evil and repulsive to God. You've been warned now; do what you know is right or you are sinning.

Chapter Five

Come on, you who are rich; lament and cry for the miserable fate which is coming upon you. Your riches and possessions are worthless and would not help you if they could. The gold and silver lying idle in your treasuries have rusted out completely. And that rust will stand and bear testimony against you; and it will consume your flesh as the fire you have laid by for yourselves in the last days. And the wages of those who worked in your fields, and which you have fraudulently kept, even now scream their silent testimony against you. And the shouts and cries of those who harvested your crops have been heard by the King of the universe. You have lived the life of an epicurean and a hedonist, mindful only of your life in this world. But your earthly prosperity is but a prelude to your destruction. For you, in your easy living, have thereby condemned and executed the righteous man; he offered you no resistance.

For this reason, my brothers, you should be patient until the advent. Look, the farmer patiently waits for the precious crop, knowing that nothing he can do will assure the conditions essential for success. You must also be patient; fully prepare your hearts, because just as the crops grow in their season, so the advent of the Lord is near. Remember, brothers, not to complain about each other. Thus you might avoid judgment. Our Judge is close at hand, even at the door. As examples of perseverance and patience that are worthy of imitation, consider the Prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord as His authorized spokesmen. We consider blessed and revere the names of those who were steadfast. And you know about Job, and what a favorable end followed his plight. God's results are always compassionate and full of mercy.

But above all else, my brothers, don't swear; swear neither by heaven nor by earth; and use no other form of oath. Let your 'yes' mean only "yes" and let your "no" mean nothing but "no" so that you won't fall under God's judgment.

Is one of you enduring hardship or misfortune? Then let him pray. Is one of you cheerful? Then let him sing praises. Is one of you sickly or weak? Then he should summon the elders of his church, and they should come and pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer said in faith will restore the one who is ill and the Lord will uplift him. And if he has committed any sins, it shall be forgiven him. Therefore, confess your debilitating sins to one another, and pray for each other's weaknesses that you may be healed.

The answered prayer of a righteous man can have dramatic effects. Elijah was a man like us, with similar nature and passions. And he prayed fervently about the rain and for three and a half years it did not rain. Then he prayed again and heaven gave its rain and the earth gave its fruit.

My brothers, if one of you should stray from the way of Truth, and another of you turns him back, I want you to understand that he who turns the sinner back from the error of his way delivers a soul from the Way of Death, and conceals a host of sinful thoughts and deeds.