

Jewish dispersion over the Empire in 1st century AD



be Alphaeus' son but the text isn't clear (Mt. 27:56). According to Mk. 6:3, Jesus was "the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas [=Jude] and Simon," as well as some unnamed sisters. This James also became the leader of the Christian community in Jerusalem by the 50s of the first century. At the Jerusalem council meeting in AD 48 ([Acts 15](#)), James, the elder, stands as the spokesman for the various house church leaders in and around Jerusalem, while Peter spoke at that meeting representing the apostles. One of the literary links between the letter of James and the Act 15 James is the construction of the Praescriptio part of the two letters. In Acts 15:23-29 the letter composed by James to be sent to the church at Antioch begins in the Praescriptio with "The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the believers of Gentile origin in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, *greetings*." The common link is the identical *Salutatio* ("greetings") of both letters. The single Greek word *χαίρειν* (*chairein*) is the traditional Greek letter *Salutatio*, but is found only three times in the entire New Testament. Two of these connect

the same James to the two letters.

Early in the second century the title James the Just begins showing up (Gospel of Thomas log. 12; Gospel according to the Hebrews). This terminology became the standard way of referring to this James. At the beginning of the 200s, the Clementine Recognitions ([1.43-72](#)) contains one of the most detailed accounts of early church tradition about James the Just. The common tradition is that James was martyred by the Jewish religious leaders in Jerusalem about AD 62 out of jealousy stemming from the intense piety of James that was attracting hundreds of Jews in Jerusalem to Christian faith (cf. Hegeisippus, *Memoranda*, as quoted by Eusebius, [Church History](#), 2.23.11). The Jewish historian Josephus records this account of the death of James: "Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he [Ananis II, the high priest] assembled the Sanhedrin of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others, [or, some of his companions]; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned..." (*Antiquities*

of the Jews, 20.200).

But this early church tradition about James did not guarantee a quick adoption of the book of James into the canon of the New Testament. Uncertainty over whether the James of Acts 15 was the same person mentioned in Jas. 1:1 persisted until the middle 300s when the link between the two prevailed and the book of James found a secure place in the canon of the NT at the head of the seven general letters section (Jas - Jude). This was more widely adopted in western (Roman Catholic) Christianity than in the eastern (Orthodox) branch of Christianity. Then with the Protestant Reformation in the 1500s questions about James arose again, in part driven by a view that 2:14-26 flatly contradicted the view of salvation advocated by Paul (salvation by grace through faith in Paul versus salvation by faith and works in James). Martin Luther resolved this issue by adopting the idea of the canon first found in the church father Origen in the early 200s. James, along with some other NT documents, were relegated to a secondary status and moved to an appendix position at the end of Luther's translation. Luther's idea of a "canon within the canon" is still debated in scholarly circles, although the revisions of Luther's German translation removed the appendix status of James in the 1904 revision.

Assuming the accuracy of the church tradition that links the Acts 15 and Letter of James to the Lord's brother, when was this material put together? And under what circumstances? Although various proposals can be found, I have been convinced for a long time that the material came together sometime from the end of the 50s to the middle 60s. As has been widely recognized for several centuries, the book of James has only an appearance of a letter. In fact, 1:1 (the Praescriptio) is the only identifiable letter aspect in the entire document. If not a letter, then what is it? It stands in the tradition of an ancient Jewish homily (see below under Literary Genre). As such, the material represents, most likely, segments of James' preaching to the Christian community in Jerusalem that have been brought together in a single document. This was done by disciples of James either shortly before or soon after his martyrdom in AD 62 as a way of preserving the amazing ministry of this Christian leader. The document is then distributed as a tractate with an epistolary introduction (1:1). The material was collected into a single document by disciples of James and targeted primarily to Jewish Christians located in Christian communities scattered over the eastern Mediterra-

nean world as the storm clouds of the Zealot revolt in Palestine in the 60s began casting uncertainty over the continued existence of the Jewish people in Palestine. About two decades before, Stephen's martyrdom had brought about a scattering of the Christian community from Jerusalem from persecution (Acts 11:19-20) and then later Herod came close to killing Peter in Jerusalem (Acts 12:1-19). It didn't take a rocket scientist's intellect to figure out that when the explosion came between the Jews and the Romans, the Jewish Christians would be caught in the cross fire and would be the first casualties of that explosion.

One of the aims of this document is shared with the Gospel of Matthew: to set forth the legitimate claims of Christianity to Jewish Christians as a religious commitment blessed by God and standing in the great Jewish tradition of relationship with God being interconnected to relationships with others. Thus, many parallels between principles advocated in James and by Jesus in Matthew's gospel can be detected; more than with any of the other gospel accounts.

Internal History. Internal time and place markers in 1:2-12 are very sparse, and play very little role in the interpretative understanding of the text. The place markers flow from the figurative reference to the waves of the sea to the scorching sun that quickly



wilts beautiful flowers through the hot summer time. For James the sea experiences most likely revolved around his childhood observance of storms on the Sea of Galilee. Of course, scattered all through Palestine would have been a wide variety of flowers. Growing up in Nazareth located in the farming

heartland of that part of the world, he would have had occasion to observe many species of flowers and plants. These background experiences provide a wealth of illustrative material which James draws upon in order to create a more lively and interesting presentation of his religious ideas.

b. Literary

Genre. The question of the genre of the book of James will impact the interpretive approach to its contents. Although James is traditionally classified as an ancient letter, it bears hardly any resemblance to an ancient letter past the first verse (1:1). The introductory epistolary Praescriptio (1:1) does have strong tones of an ancient Greek letter, but nothing else beyond that part does. The dominating tone of the contents, that reflect high frequency of admonitions containing broad generalized demands, push the document toward a pattern found in the existing ancient Jewish homily type documents. At this point James shares in common the same essential literary form with Hebrews which identifies itself as a Jewish homily in 13:22 (“word of exhortation”; ὁ λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως). Both documents are also targeting Jewish Christian readers.

Literary Context. The literary setting of verses 2-12 of chapter one can be charted out as follows:

PRAESCRIPTIO		1.1
BODY	1-194	1.2-5.20
Facing Trials	1-15	1.2-12
God and Temptation	16-24	1.13-18
The Word and Piety	25-37	1.19-27

Faith and Partiality	38-55	2.1-13
Faith and Works	56-72	2.14-26
Controlling the Tongue	73-93	3.1-12
True and False Wisdom	94-102	3.13-18
Solving Divisions	103-133	4.1-10
Criticism	134-140	4.11-12
Leaving God Out	141-146	4.13-17
Danger in Wealth	147-161	5.1-6
Persevering under Trial	162-171	5.7-11
Swearing	172-174	5.12
Reaching Out to God	175-193	5.13-18
Reclaiming the Wayward	194	5.19-20

In the Body proper of this ‘letter’ verses 2-12 constitute the first set of admonitions to be presented to the readers. The subsequent pericope, 1:13-18, builds off the emphasis on facing trials to move the discussion to temptation. Consequently, it is closely linked conceptually to 1:2-12. But James moves on to other topics in the remainder of the document without returning directly to this theme.

II. Message

Literary Structure. The internal structure of the thought flow is clear and simple to define. The details of the Greek text are amplified by the [Block Diagram](#), [Semantic Diagram](#), and the [Summary of the Rhetorical Structure](#) in the larger internet version of this study. Four literary units of paraenesis are linked together by the boundary marking inclusio use of the Greek noun πειρασμός (*peirasmos* = trials) in verses 2 and 12: 1) admonition to joy, vv. 2-4; 2) admonition to seek wisdom in trials, vv. 5-8; 3) admonition to joy in trials, vv. 9-11; and 4) beatitude invoking of divine blessing for enduring trials, v. 12. These will serve as the organizing structure of our study of the passage.

a. Count it pure joy, vv. 2-4

Greek NT	NASB	NRSV	NLT
1.2 Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγήσασθε, ἀδελφοί μου, ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις, 1.3 γινώσκοντες ὅτι τὸ δοκιμίων ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως	2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4	2 My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, 3 because you know that the testing of your	2 Dear brothers and sisters, whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. 3 For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to

κατεργάζεται υπομονήν.
1.4 ἡ δὲ ὑπομονὴ ἔργον
τέλειον ἐχέτω, ἵνα ᾦτε
τέλειοι καὶ ὀλόκληροι ἐν
μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι.

And let endurance have
its perfect result, so that
you may be perfect and
complete, lacking in
nothing.

faith produces endur-
ance; 4 and let endur-
ance have its full effect,
so that you may be ma-
ture and complete, lack-
ing in nothing.

grow. 4 So let it grow, for
when your endurance is
fully developed, you will
be strong in character
and ready for anything.

Notes:

The ideas presented here in James have rough parallels in both Paul and Peter. A comparative analysis of the three texts is important for better understanding of James. Peter Davids (*New International Greek Testament Commentary*, Logos Systems) charts out a comparison of the Greek text of the three passages:

Similar statements in both form and content occur in Rom. 5:2b-5 and 1 Pet. 1:6-7:

Rom. 5:2b-5	Jas. 1:2-4	1 Pet. 1:6-7
καυχώμεθα ἐπ' ἐλπίδι τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ 3 οὐ μόνον δὲ ἀλλὰ καὶ καυχώμεθα	2 πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγήσασθε ἀδελφοί μου	(3 ἐλπίδα ζῶσαν)
ἐν ταῖς θλίψεσιν	ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις	ὀλίγον ἄρτι εἶδόν ἐστιν λυπηθέντες ἐν ποικίλοις πειρασμοῖς
εἰδότες ὅτι ἡ θλίψις ὑπομονὴν κατεργάζεται	3 γίνωσκοντες ὅτι τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως κατεργάζεται ὑπομονήν	7 ἵνα τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως πολυτιμότερον χρυσοῦ τοῦ ἀπολλυμένου, διὰ πυρὸς δὲ δοκιμαζομένου
4 ἡ δὲ ὑπομονὴ δοκιμὴν ἢ δὲ δοκιμὴ ἐλπίδα 5 ἢ δὲ ἐλπίς οὐ καταισχύνει	4 ἡ δὲ ὑπομονὴ ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω	

ὅτι ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκέχυται ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν διὰ πνεύματος τοῦ δοθέντος ἡμῖν ἵνα ᾦτε τέλειοι καὶ ὀλόκληροι ἐν μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι [ἵνα] εὐρεθῆ εἰς ἔπαινον καὶ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν ἐν ἀποκαλύψει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἀγίου

All of these passages, as J. Thomas points out, contain part of a common tradition of “eschatological anticipated joy,” a theme which James brings out even more clearly in 1:12 and 5:7-8 (Thomas, 183-185). All three also see a test of the genuineness of faith taking place. But there the similarities end. James is verbally closer to 1 Peter, but his thought is closer to Paul’s in that both he and Paul value the virtues produced by the trying circumstances rather than the test itself, which Peter values (perhaps because it produces a heavenly reward). (Peter comes a little closer to James in thought in 1 Pet. 4:12-13, but here Peter is christocentric and ends in hope, while James is theocentric and ends in a virtuous character.) The best explanation of both the similarities and the differences among these passages is that all three employ a common traditional form circulating in the early church. Each has modified the form to bring out his own emphases. This form, which probably stems originally from some saying of Jesus (e.g. Mt. 5:11-12; cf. below on 1:2), may have circulated as part of Christian baptismal instruction, having been taken





over from Judaism (so Daube, 113, 117–119). At any rate, James pieces this form into his epistle via the catchword device apparent in vv 2 and 4.

Understanding this is to come to the realization that in apostolic Christianity the New Testament apostles viewed the experience of trials in a different way than typically is the case in modern Christianity. Suffering persecution especially because of one's religious convictions was normative in a world where Christianity was born. The Greco-Roman world was tolerant, so long as a polytheistic attitude was a part of a new religious view. But Christianity was rigidly monotheistic from its Jewish heritage. Thus it stood as a *religio illicita*, an illegal religion, by the middle of the first century when it began separating itself from Judaism. Although sharing common belief in the God of Abraham, Christianity's passionate insistence on Christ as the exclusive means of salvation not just for Jews, but for all humanity, put it into conflict with the Jewish synagogue community. Thus for believers to experience hostility from both Greco-Roman and Jewish sources became normative. A theology of suffering emerged among early Christians, and is articulated with distinctive perspective by these three early Christian leaders.

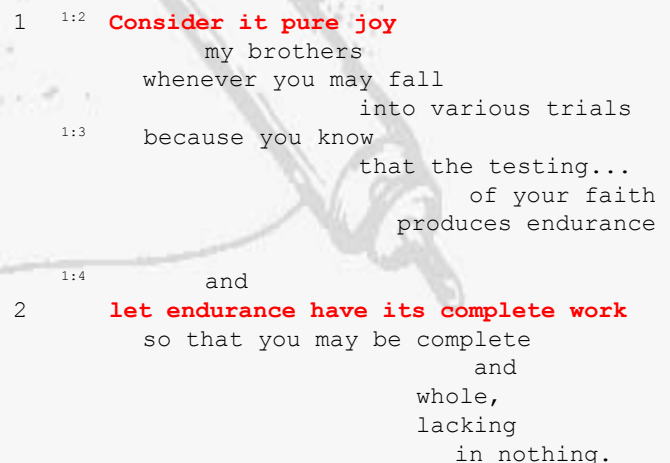
The eschatological perspective is shared by all three writers. That is, joy is something experienced now in anticipation of divine approval when Jesus comes again. The experience of final judgment and affirmation from God for standing true to the Lord against the hostility thrown will make all the pain and heartache now more than worthwhile. Thus out of that realization comes unmeasured joy and good feeling.

In English translation, these three texts read:

Rom. 5:2b-5	Jas. 1:2-4	1 Pet. 1:6-7
2b and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. 3 And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.	2 My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; 4 and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing	6 In this you rejoice, F1 even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, 7 so that the genuineness of your faith — being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire — may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

Suffering leads to something good: Christian maturity. And for that we as believers should look upon the positive features of suffering, rather than just dwelling on the negative pain and hurt it brings. The common benchmark is final judgment before God. When measured by this standard, the good that comes out of suffering outweighs any negative.

The structural arrangement of the ideas in this single sentence in the Greek text of James can be [diagrammed](#) out as follows:



Two core admonitions, (#s. 1 and 2), serve as the foundation for this compound-complex sentence.

The first one, Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγήσασθε, is expressed in the Aorist imperative Greek verb underscoring the need for a decisive adoption of an attitude at the outset of experiencing trials. The second core admonition, ἡ δὲ ὑπομονὴ ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω, is stated in the present imperative form of the Greek verb underscoring the responsibility of an ongoing stance.

1) Consider it pure joy: Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγήσασθε. What is the stance that James admonishes us to take? The Greek text simply says, Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγήσασθε. Believers are encouraged to adopt an attitude or stance with the verb ἠγήσασθε. The sense of the verb here is to think and to form an opinion, as Büchsel (*Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Logos System) notes:

ἠγέομαι means a. “to lead”; b. “to think,” “to believe,” “to regard as.” Sense a. occurs in the NT only in the pres. part. (==> 2.). In sense b. we find the word in Acts, Paul, the Past., Hebrews, James and Peter, but not in the Johannine writings (including Rev.).

The focal point of consideration is πᾶσαν χαρὰν. The noun with the adjective can be taken a couple of ways, as Loh and Hatton (*Translator's Handbook*, Logos Systems) note:

The force of the word *all* modifying *joy* is sometimes understood in terms of completeness, meaning that the joy should be pure and unmixed; for example, “nothing but joy” (Barclay's translation [BRC], NRSV), “pure joy” (Moffatt [Mft], NIV). Others take it to mean the intensity and quality of joy; for example, “greatest joy” (Goodspeed's American Translation [Gspd]), “great joy” (NJB), “supremely happy” (NEB/REB).

The idea of joy needs amplification, since it is often associated in modern American culture with a shallow emotional feeling. Peter Davids (*New International Greek Testament Commentary*, Logos Systems) provides helpful insight:

This joy, however, is not the detachment of the Greek philosopher (4 Macc. 9–11), but the eschatological joy of those expecting the intervention of God in the end of the age (Jud. 8:25). Suffering is really experienced as such, but it is viewed from the perspective of *Heilsgeschichte*. It is this perspective that Jesus gave the church in the Sermon on the Mount (cf. also 2 Cor. 8:2; 12:9).

The two modifying elements of this main clause define *when* and *how* the admonition becomes operative.

When: ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις.

The indefinite temporal clause (ὅταν) defines in broad terms potential situations of experience ‘testings.’ Additionally the adjective ποικίλοις extends the definition of testings to an all inclusive level. The meaning of πειρασμός itself covers a wide range of life experiences that place us under pressure. To be sure, the central experience that James anticipates is the pressure that comes with religious persecution. But his language is not limited to the one area.

The verb περιπέσητε underscores that testing comes to us, rather than we go out seeking it. Martyrdom, while valued in the NT, is never something the believer seeks. Instead, it is some that overtakes him. James characterizes testing as some we “fall into” as a part of ongoing Christian living.

How: γινώσκοντες ὅτι τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως κατεργάζεται ὑπομονήν. Crucial to being able to adopt the stance of pure joy in moments of testing is our understanding. But it is not intellectual knowledge that is the key here. Instead, it is experientially based realization that a wonderful spiritual principle is at work during the experience of testing: “the testing of your faith produces endurance.” Important to understanding the text is to note the difference between ὁ πειρασμός and τὸ δοκίμιον. The first is broad and inclusive of every experience of feeling pressure. The latter is the experience of feeling pressure but with the goal of proving genuineness.

What is it that God is up to in our experience of testing? He is seeking to prove the genuineness of our faith. What impact does a genuine faith have? It produces a steadfast commitment to Christian principle from which the believer absolutely refuses to waver. As we grow in our endurance through each testing, we become more and more like the Lord who never wavered from the mission given Him by the



Heavenly Father. And that will be validated in dramatic fashion on Judgment Day with the Heavenly Father:¹

Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’

2) Let endurance have its complete work: ἡ δὲ ὑπομονὴ ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω. The second core admonition now urges the believer to give complete freedom to endurance so that it can accomplish its mission. That is, we are not to short circuit steadfast commitment by yielding to the pressure of the testing in actions betraying our Christ.

Why? The purpose ἵνα clause modifying the core verb defines the objective that endurance is striving to reach: ἵνα ᾗτε τέλειοι καὶ ὀλόκληροι ἐν μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι. In traditional Hebrew parallelism James lines out the objective:

¹Matt. 25:21, NRSV

```

--- complete +
---| and
| --- whole, +
|
----- lacking in nothing. -

```

The first pair stand as *synonymous parallels*, i.e., two ways of saying essentially the same thing. The third line then stands in *antithetical parallel* to the first set, i.e., saying the same thing through a reverse perspective. The effect of this thorough structure: to make an emphatic declaration of the goal of producing full Christian maturity.

Thus we are admonished to approach testing of all kinds, especially that due to our religious commitments to Christ, with a sense of unbridled joy. This because we know that God is seeking to use every experience of testing to make us more steadfast in our commitment. And steadfast commitment has as its objective Christian maturity that prepares us to stand before Almighty God in final judgment with the confidence of His approval.

b. Seek wisdom, vv. 5-8

Greek NT

1.5 Εἰ δὲ τις ὑμῶν λείπεται σοφίας, αἰτείτω παρὰ τοῦ διδόντος θεοῦ πᾶσιν ἀπλῶς καὶ μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος, καὶ δοθήσεται αὐτῷ. 1.6 αἰτείτω δὲ ἐν πίστει μηδὲν διακρινόμενος· ὁ γὰρ διακρινόμενος ἕοικεν κλύδωνι θαλάσσης ἀνεμιζομένῳ καὶ ῥιπιζομένῳ. 1.7 μὴ γὰρ οἰέσθω ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος ὅτι λήμψεται τι παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου, 1.8 ἀνὴρ δίψυχος, ἀκαταστατος ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ.

NASB

5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, 8 being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

NRSV

5 If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. 6 But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind; 7 8 for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

NLT

5 If you need wisdom – if you want to know what God wants you to do – ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking. 6 But when you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to answer, for a doubtful mind is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. 7 People like that should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8 They can't make up their minds. They waver back and forth in everything they do.

Notes:

A couple of contextual issues need to be addressed before exegeting the content of these verses, since the determination of context will shape the understanding of the content.

James employs for the second time a ‘catch word’ device between verses four and five. In v. 4b he ended the sentence with “in nothing lacking” (ἐν

μηδενὶ **λειπόμενοι**). He begins the next sentence (v. 5) with “But if any of you lacks wisdom” (Εἰ δὲ τις ὑμῶν **λείπεται** σοφίας.). A few older commentaries fail to see the literary device at work here as a ‘catch word’ linking the two units of material together. But most scholarship of recent decades have picked up on what James is doing. The importance of this is

to limit the major thrust of vv. 5-8 to addressing the lack of wisdom in knowing how to cope with times of testing. Although the saying has broader application, the focus in this context is wisdom in times of testing.

In 3:13-18, James will return to the topic of wisdom and present it from a different angle:

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. 15 Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. 16 For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace..

The connection between these two pericopes on wisdom may be described as follows. In 1:5-8 the need of wisdom is the point, but in 3:13-18 determining authentic wisdom from phoney wisdom is the point. In both discussions, James adopts the traditional Jewish view of wisdom. It has its origin in God and shapes one's character and behavior when implemented. It is "spiritual horse sense," i.e., the ability to see life from God's viewpoint. Unlike the standard Greek wisdom of that time (cf. 3:14-15), authentic wisdom is not concerned with successful living nor with intellectual prowess. Its focus is on coping with life in a such way that directs living in the paths of God. Thus 'success' is a life pleasing to God, rather than being top dog and always mastering the challenges that life throws at you.

The breakdown of the thought flow of 1:5-8 can be [diagramed](#) as follows:

```

1:5      Now
         if any of you lacks wisdom,
3      let him ask
         from God
         who gives to all
         generously
         and
         without finding fault,
         and
4      it will be given to him.

1:6      But
5      let him ask
         in faith,
         doubting nothing,

```

```

         for
6      the one who doubts is like the wave
         /-----|
         of the sea
         driven
         and
         tossed
         by the wind;

1:7      for
7      let not that man suppose
         /-----|
         that he shall receive anything
         from the Lord,

1:8      a man
         doubled-souled
         and
         unstable
         in all his ways.

```

The five core expressions revolve around the repeated admonition in statements 3 and 4: "Let him ask" (αἰτεῖτω). In the first instance (#s 3-4) a couplet structure following the ancient Jewish command/promise thought pattern is present: *do this and God promises that*. The second instance (#s 5-7), the repeated admonition to ask (#5) is based upon two foundations (#s 6-7). The qualifying elements of both admonitions provides the distinctive for each instance. First, we are to ask from God, and second, we are to ask in full faith.

What is the situation calling for wisdom? The first



class conditional protasis,² "if any of you lacks wisdom," assumes it is absent in times of testing. What is the content of the needed wisdom? In such times of testing, it is the ability to rise above the merely human angle on testing and see the deeper dynamic that God is working through the testing. This dynamic is sketched out in broad contours in vv. 2-4. Thus our

² Εἰ δέ τις ὑμῶν λείπεται σοφίας, The conditional 'if' clause sets up the assumed scenario of deficient wisdom. The use of the catch word 'lack' links it back to the situation of testing described in vv. 2-4.

prayer for wisdom is simply “God, help me see this moment the way You view it.”

The asking admonition is cast in the present imperative of the Greek. This carries with it the implication of asking for wisdom as an ongoing responsibility, not just a one time prayer. Implied here is that every situation of testing will demand fresh insight from God in order to fully comprehend its potential for character formation.

A graphic with the text "GOD is SO GOOD!" in a stylized, blue, serif font. The word "GOD" is large and bold, "is" is smaller and in a script-like font, and "SO GOOD!" is also large and bold, with an exclamation point.

Who is the source of such wisdom? It is the “God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly” (παρὰ τοῦ διδόντος θεοῦ πᾶσιν ἀπλῶς καὶ μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος). God as Creator of the world and of us stands as the fountain head of all wisdom. The divine Architect knows life far better than any mortal. And He is prepared to grant that wisdom to His children when they request it.

How? Generously and ungrudgingly. The antithetical parallelism here underscores the deep generosity of the Heavenly Father in granting the prayer requests of His children. Jesus underscored this principle in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 7:11, NRSV): “If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!” The Jewish background of James’ picture here is helpfully described by Davids (*NIGTC*, Logos Systems):

God, the author is saying, is the most gracious and perfect of givers; he is not a “fool,” whose “gift will profit you nothing, for he has many eyes instead of one. He gives little and upbraids much, he opens his mouth like a herald; today he lends and tomorrow he asks back; such a one is a hateful man” (Sir. 20:14–15; cf. Sir. 18:15–18; 41:22c–25; like James, all these passages use ὀνειδίζω). Rather, God fits the Jewish picture of the good giver (Pr. 3:28; ³Abot R.

³Abot R. Abot de Rabbi Nathan

⁴Nat. 13; ⁴Did. 4:7; ⁵Hermas ⁶Man. 9).

With such a God ready to grant our request for wisdom, do we bring responsibilities in making that request? Yes, comes the resounding answer from vv. 6-8. And what is that obligation? In a nutshell, it is unconditional trust in God to grant the requested wisdom. The antithetical parallelism of “in faith // nothing doubting” (ἐν πίστει // μηδὲν διακρινόμενος) stresses emphatically the full confidence in God we must bring with our request to Him for wisdom. To be clear, this faith is not belief that we’re going to get what we ask for. Not at all! Rather it is full confidence in the God to whom we bring our request. Confidence that God knows our situation far better than we, and that He will grant us access to that understanding. Once we have that divine understanding of our situation, we will then know the right decisions that lead us to realize the maximum spiritual growth from the testing.

This powerful emphasis on how to make the request is re-enforced by the two foundational declarations (#s 6 & 7 in above diagram). James picks up on failure to make our request for wisdom in full faith. In doubting, we become like the “wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind” (ὁ γὰρ διακρινόμενος ἔοικεν κλύδωνι θαλάσσης ἀνεμιζομένῳ καὶ ῥιπιζομένῳ). His appeal to an analogy in the natural world is typical of James’ writing style.

The point of the comparison is to stress the loss of control. The wave’s direction is controlled by the external force of the wind, rather than inwardly. Thus doubt exposes us to the dynamics of the testing circumstance, and robs us of the ability to grasp what is really taking place. We lose the inner focus of reaching down inside us where God can speak clearly His word of wisdom. The noise of the raging sea around us drowns out God’s voice.

The second foundational principle (# 7) moves to apply the preceding analogy in the strongest of terms: “the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord” (μη γὰρ οἰέσθω ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος ὅτι λήμψεταί τι παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου, ἀνήρ διψυχος, ἀκατάστατος ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ). Doubt nullifies prayer, and God’s ability to answer prayer requests. In this James echoes Jesus’ words in Mt. 21:21-22 (NRSV):

21 Jesus answered them, “Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only will you do what has

⁴Did. Didache

⁵Hermas The Shepherd of Hermas

⁶Man. Mandates

been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' it will be done. 22 Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive."

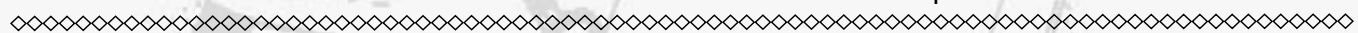
Through the use of hyperbole, both James and Jesus stress that God does indeed answer prayer, but how much confidence in God we have deeply impacts the way He can answer our requests. When we come to Him with unconditional trust and surrender, then He is free to answer our request in the best possible manner which He alone understands, and our deep faith stands fully ready to accept His answer, whatever it may be. In the pressure of testing, the answer is seldom escape from the testing. Spiritual maturity is refined gold produced by the fire of testing. Escape negates that refining process.

Our doubting makes us "double-minded and unstable in every way" (ἀνὴρ δίψυχος, ἀκατάστατος ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ). That is, it brings us into a "Mexican standoff" where we can't decide between trust and distrust of God (δίψυχος). Instability thus

follows. Actually, ἀκατάστατος is closer to anarchy. Our lives fly out of control and we lose the ability to walk clearly in God's paths. Our Christian life has sunk to the lowest of depths then.

What is the connection of these verses to us today?

Rather clear, I think. When the hardships of testing come at us, we need God's help! That help comes mainly in the form of His wisdom being granted to us so that we can see the situation from His viewpoint. In that more profound perspective, we can better cope and know how to respond to the difficulties of the trial. Critical in this is unwavering confidence in God and His willingness to lead us through the trial so that maximum spiritual development is achieved. How God chooses to achieve this we don't know, but we unreservedly trust His leadership.



c. Rejoice in trials, vv. 9-11

Greek NT

1.9 Καυχάσθω δὲ ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινὸς ἐν τῷ ὕψει αὐτοῦ, 1.10 ὁ δὲ πλούσιος ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου παρελεύσεται. 1.11 ἀνέτειλεν γὰρ ὁ ἥλιος σὺν τῷ καύσωνι καὶ ἐξήρανε τὸν χόρτον καὶ τὸ ἄνθος αὐτοῦ ἐξέπεσεν καὶ ἡ εὐπρέπεια τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ ἀπάλετο· οὕτως καὶ ὁ πλούσιος ἐν ταῖς πορείαις αὐτοῦ μαραινθήσεται.

NASB

9 But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position; 10 and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. 11 For the sun rises with a scorching wind and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away.

NRSV

9 Let the believer who is lowly boast in being raised up, 10 and the rich in being brought low, because the rich will disappear like a flower in the field. 11 For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the field; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. It is the same way with the rich; in the midst of a busy life, they will wither away.

NLT

9 Christians who are poor should be glad, for God has honored them. 10 And those who are rich should be glad, for God has humbled them. They will fade away like a flower in the field. 11 The hot sun rises and dries up the grass; the flower withers, and its beauty fades away. So also, wealthy people will fade away with all of their achievements.

Notes:

Several signals connect this pericope to the two that precede it in vv. 2-8. First, the admonition Καυχάσθω relates to the initial admonition to joy in verse 2 (Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγάσασθε). Secondly, the content of vv. 9-11 function as an illustration of two specific testings that had come to the ancient Christian communities of James' day. When James specified various kinds of testings in v. 2 (ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις), he wasn't speaking hypothetically without specific situations in mind. To

the contrary, he returns in verse nine with the illustration of the poverty of the Christian peasant, and the humiliating loss of wealth by the rich Christian. By setting up an economically based example from opposite ends of the spectrum, he lays out a typical range of examples with application to many other situations of testing that believers may encounter in serving God.

The thought flow of these verses can be [charted](#) out as follows:

1:9 Now
 8 **let the brother...take pride**
 in humble circumstances
 /--|
 in his high position,
 1:10 and
 9 **let the rich(brother)take pride**
 in being humbled
 as the flower
 of the grass
 because...he will vanish.
 1:11 For
 10 **the sun rises**
 with its burning heat
 and
 11 **--- --- withers the grass**
 and
 12 **its flower falls off**
 and
 13 **its lovely appearance perishes;**
 so also
 14 **the rich man will fade away**
 in the midst
 of his pursuits

The two admonitions (#s 8 & 9) focus on the two illustrations. The causal clause, “because...he will vanish,” prompts an elaboration (#s 10-13) drawn from Psalm 102:4, 11 and Isa. 40:6-7. This adds OT reinforcement to his point with commonly understood imagery, again also taken from nature. The application of this to the rich man is made in the last declaration (#14).

The brother in humble circumstance (ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινός) is admonished to καυχᾶσθω in his high position (ἐν τῷ ὑψει αὐτοῦ). The nature of James’ contrast is from extreme poverty externally to high exalted position spiritually before God. Many Palestinian Jews lived in extreme poverty during the first century world, and this included many who had become Christians. A day to day existence was not uncommon. Living from hand to mouth could become a severe test that had to be faced daily. According to the Jewish historian Josephus, much of Palestine underwent severe famine periodically during the mid-first century, thus adding to the difficulties of these folks. This is what prompted Paul’s relief offering for Jewish Christians that he spent considerable effort collecting during the third missionary journey in the mid-50s (cf. 2 Cor. 8-9). And living in the religious culture of first century Judaism which in certain streams had concluded that poverty was God’s punishment for sinful living made it even more of a test.

Their spiritual status is spelled out by James in 2:7 (NRSV): “Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him?” Though they might be considered as worthless to society as peasants, James reminds them of the unbelievable blessings that God had bestowed in them in salvation.

Thus he admonishes them to ‘take pride’ in their spiritual status before God. The [Greek verb καυχᾶμαι](#) is difficult to translate into English accurately. When used with its positive meaning, the verb stresses a deep inner joy flooding one’s self with a wonderful sense of well being. All of us have had these καυχᾶμαι moments when something good happened to us and we felt a profound sense of well being. By focusing on the spiritual rather than the circumstantial, these believers could find the profound sense of joy that they were okay with God.

The second example reverses -- almost -- the vantage point from the first. The outward circumstance is that of wealth (ὁ δὲ πλούσιος), and the opposite situation is the loss of that wealth (ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ). Most likely this was due to economic persecution of him for his Christian faith. Jesus was highly critical of the pursuit of wealth and saw in it a danger to genuine spirituality.⁷ When wealthy believers suffered the loss of some or all of their wealth, especially when because of their Christian faith, the experience became the opportunity to refocus their lives on the eternal values that transcended the material world. Given the dominant Jewish attitude toward wealth as a blessing from God, the loss of

⁷As a carpenter, Jesus probably came from the lower end of the small “middle-class” of the ancient world although by modern standards he would still be considered poor. The same is probably true of his fishermen disciples. Matthew would doubtless have been better off. Joseph of Arimathea is called rich (Matt 27:57). But the overriding thrust of Jesus’ teaching on wealth is to highlight “mammon” (material resources) as a major competitor with God for human allegiance (Matt 6:19-24; Luke 16:1-13). Wealth is “deceitful” (Mark 4:19) and can distract people from taking care of their spiritual condition, thereby causing them to forfeit eternal life (Mark 8:36). Hence, Jesus comes to announce God’s reversal of human standards concerning rich and poor. Luke in particular emphasizes this theme. The rich will be sent away empty (1:53), the poor will be blessed (6:20) and liberated from their oppression (4:16-21). Those who accumulate wealth with no thought for God or the destitute around them will be eternally condemned (12:16-21; 16:19-31).”

Craig L. Blomberg, “Wealth,” [Baker’s Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)

blessing; 2) the condition for the blessing; and 3) the foundational basis for the blessing. These three elements are present here.

1) **The blessing:** Μακάριος. This virtually untranslatable Greek word underscores happiness and joy, but also the same sense of profound well being connoted by καυχάομαι in verse 9.

2) **The condition:** “a man who perseveres under trial” (ὁς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν). The NRSV is wrong in translating πειρασμόν as temptation, rather than testing. Both the NASB and the NLT are more accurate, and consistent with translating the same word in verse 2 as trial, testing. The word serves as a boundary marker defining the larger pericope of vv. 2-12 as hanging together.

The required condition for divine blessing is ὑπομένει, which stresses standing up under the weight of a heavy load. The blessed individual faces testing upon testing, but consistently stands up under their pressure without stumbling or falling.

3) **The foundation of the blessing:** “for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him”

(ὅτι δόκιμος γενόμενος λήμψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς ὃν ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν). The eschatological promise of blessing is the crown of life, that is, eternal life. The phrase “crown of life”⁹ is an image asserting that eternal life is the crown God will give His children in final judgment.

appropriate; it would be even better Greek to simply write μακάριος ὁς, as the LXX occasionally does). The phrase pronounces a blessing (certainly eschatological, for the situation precludes the thought of material blessing in this world) upon the person who endures a test of faith.

While the form is similar to the Psalms (and a host of other literature), Schrage correctly sees the background of this blessing in apocalyptic Judaism (thus it is most frequent in Revelation). Cantinat cannot have taken the context into account when he calls this sapiential.“

⁹τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς: “Of life” reflects the appositional Genitive case use of τῆς ζωῆς. More precisely translated, the phrase is “the crown which is life.”

Dauids (NIGTC) offers some helpful insight into the nature of the crown against the background of crowns in the ancient world:

Such a tested person will receive a crown of life as his reward. The future tense in λήμψεται reminds one that the author has his focus on the consummation of the age (as does the author in 1 Pet. 5:4, who promises τὸν ἀμαράντινον τῆς δόξης στέφανον when “the chief shepherd appears”). The actual reward is salvation itself, for (eternal) life is certainly the content of the crown (so Laws, Mussner, Mitton, Schrage). It is useless to speculate whether this is a victor’s crown (in battle or athletic competition, the normal use of στέφανος) or a royal crown (a use of στέφανος found in Revelation, e.g. 4:4; 6:2; 12:1), although the former would fit best in this context if 2 Tim. 4:8 is any parallel, for the image is a stock one in apocalyptic writings for the eternal reward (Rev. 2:10; the imagery of 10m. Ab. 6:7; Wis. 5:15; and elsewhere illustrates that “crown” could also be used of any generalized reward).

The one who endures trials successfully is now defined as “those who love Him” (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν). This shift is likely due to James employing stock Christian sayings

here with a beatitude that was already familiar to his readers.

Thus James reassures his readers with this divine blessing that faithful service in the midst of trials is worthwhile because eternity hangs in the balance. Life will throw all kinds of stuff at us, and sometimes just because we’re Christians. But, a response of steadfast resolve to serve Christ with unwavering faithfulness allows us to rise above the trial with a focus on the things that really matter, the spiritual realities at work even in trials. By asking for God’s wisdom, He promises to grant us understanding of His perspective so that we can see the value of trials: making us more like Jesus and thus getting us ready to stand before God in final judgment.

Thus we can indeed rejoice in trials!

¹⁰m. Mishna Aboth



Greek NT

1.2 Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγήσασθε, ἀδελφοί μου, ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις, 1.3 γινώσκοντες ὅτι τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως κατεργάζεται ὑπομονήν. 1.4 ἢ δὲ ὑπομονὴ ἔργον τέλειον ἔχεται, ἵνα ᾖτε τέλειοι καὶ ὀλόκληροι ἐν μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι. 1.5 Εἰ δὲ τις ὑμῶν λείπεται σοφίας, αἰτεῖτω παρὰ τοῦ διδόντος θεοῦ πᾶσιν ἀπλῶς καὶ μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος, καὶ δοθήσεται αὐτῷ. 1.6 αἰτεῖτω δὲ ἐν πίστει μηδὲν διακρινόμενος· ὁ γὰρ διακρινόμενος ἕοικεν κλύδωνι θαλάσσης ἀνεμιζομένῳ καὶ ῥιπιζομένῳ. 1.7 μὴ γὰρ οἰέσθω ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος ὅτι λήμψεται τι παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου, 1.8 ἀνὴρ διψυχος, ἀκατάστατος ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ.

1.9 Καυχάσθω δὲ ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινὸς ἐν τῷ ὕψει αὐτοῦ, 1.10 ὁ δὲ πλούσιος ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου παρελεύσεται. 1.11 ἀνέτειλεν γὰρ ὁ ἥλιος σὺν τῷ καύσῳ καὶ ἐξήρανε τὸν χόρτον καὶ τὸ ἄνθος αὐτοῦ ἐξέπεσεν καὶ ἡ εὐπρέπεια τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ ἀπάλετο· οὕτως καὶ ὁ πλούσιος ἐν ταῖς πορείαις αὐτοῦ μαρανθήσεται.

1.12 Μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν, ὅτι δόκιμος γενόμενος λήμψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς ὃν ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν.

NASB

2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. 5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, 8 being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

9 But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position; 10 and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. 11 For the sun rises with a scorching wind and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away.

12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

NRSV

2 My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; 4 and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. 5 If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. 6 But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind; 7 8 for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

9 Let the believer who is lowly boast in being raised up, 10 and the rich in being brought low, because the rich will disappear like a flower in the field. 11 For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the field; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. It is the same way with the rich; in the midst of a busy life, they will wither away.

12 Blessed is anyone who endures temptation. Such a one has stood the test and will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

NLT

2 Dear brothers and sisters, whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. 3 For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. 4 So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be strong in character and ready for anything. 5 If you need wisdom – if you want to know what God wants you to do – ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking. 6 But when you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to answer, for a doubtful mind is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. 7 People like that should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8 They can't make up their minds. They waver back and forth in everything they do.

9 Christians who are poor should be glad, for God has honored them. 10 And those who are rich should be glad, for God has humbled them. They will fade away like a flower in the field. 11 The hot sun rises and dries up the grass; the flower withers, and its beauty fades away. So also, wealthy people will fade away with all of their achievements.

12 God blesses the people who patiently endure testing. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

Greek NT Diagram

- 1 1.2 Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγήσασθε,
ἀδελφοί μου,
1.3 ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις,
γινώσκοντες
ὅτι τὸ δοκίμιον...κατεργάζεται ὑπομονήν.
ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως
- 2 δὲ
1.4 ἡ ὑπομονὴ ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω,
ἵνα ᾦτε τέλειοι
καὶ
ὀλόκληροι
ἐν μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι.
- 3 δὲ
1.5 Εἰ τις ὑμῶν λείπεται σοφίας,
αἰτεῖτω
παρὰ τοὺς διδόντος θεοῦ πᾶσιν
ἀπλῶς
καὶ
μὴ ὄνειδίζοντος,
καὶ
4 δοθήσεται αὐτῷ.
- 5 δὲ
1.6 αἰτεῖτω
ἐν πίστει
μηδὲν διακρινόμενος·
γὰρ
ὁ διακρινόμενος
6 ἔοικεν κλύδωνι θαλάσσης
ἀνεμιζομένῳ
καὶ
ῥιπιζομένῳ.
- 7 γὰρ
1.7 μὴ οἰέσθω ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος
ὅτι λήμψεται τι
παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου,
1.8 ἀνὴρ
δίψυχος,
ἀκατάστατος
ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ.
- 8 δὲ
1.9 Καυχάσθω ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινὸς
ἐν τῷ ὕψει αὐτοῦ,
1.10 δὲ
9 ὁ πλούσιος (καυχάσθω)
ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ,

ὅτι ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου παρελεύσεται.

1.11 γάρ
 10 ἀνέτειλεν ὁ ἥλιος
 σὺν τῷ καύσωνι
 καὶ
 11 ἐξήρανε τὸν χόρτον
 καὶ
 12 τὸ ἄνθος αὐτοῦ ἐξέπεσεν
 καὶ
 13 ἡ εὐπρέπεια τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ ἀπώλετο·
 οὕτως καὶ
 ἐν ταῖς πορείαις αὐτοῦ
 14 ὁ πλούσιος...μαρανθήσεται.
 15 1.12 (ἐστὶν) Μακάριος ἀνὴρ
 ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν,
 δόκιμος γενόμενος
 ὅτι...λήμψεται τὸν στέφανον
 τῆς ζωῆς
 ὃν ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν.

Semantic Diagram

	A-----	1	1 Aor	Act	Imp+	2	P	(ὕμεις)	
I--			δὲ						
	B-----	2	Pres	Act	Imp+	3	S	ἡ ὑπομονή	
			δὲ						
	1-----	3	Pres	Act	Imp+	3	S	(τις)	
	A--		καὶ						
	2-----	4	Fut	Pass	Ind	3	S	(αὐτό)	
II-			δὲ						
	1-----	5	Pres	Act	Imp+	3	S	(τις)	
	B--		γάρ						
		a-----	6	Perf	Act	Ind	3	S	ὁ διακρινόμενος
	2--		γάρ						
		b-----	7	Pres	Mid	Imp-	3	S	ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος
			δὲ						
	1-----	8	1 Aor	Dep	Imp+	3	S	ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινός	
	A--		δὲ						
	2-----	9	(1 Aor	Dep	Imp+	3	S)	ὁ πλούσιος	
			γάρ						
		a-----	10	2 Aor	Act	Ind	3	S	ὁ ἥλιος
III			καὶ						
		b-----	11	2 Aor	Act	Ind	3	S	(ὁ ἥλιος)
		1--	καὶ						
		c-----	12	2 Aor	Act	Ind	3	S	τὸ ἄνθος αὐτοῦ
	B--		καὶ						
		d-----	13	2 Aor	Dep	Ind	3	S	ἡ εὐπρέπεια
			οὕτως καὶ						
	2-----	14	Fut	Pass	Ind	3	S	ὁ πλούσιος	

IV-----		15	(Pres	---	Ind	3	S)	ἀνὴρ	

Summary of Rhetorical Structure

The rhetorical structure of this passage reflects a fourfold thought progression, with the boundaries of the pericope determined by the use of the word 'test' in verses 2 and 12.

The first subpericope, verses 2-4 (#s 1-2), admonishes the developing of a correct posture or stance toward the experience of trials or tests. The second pericope, verses 5-8 (#3-7), addresses the concern of finding sufficient 'wisdom' to be able to adopt the correct posture. The third pericope, verses 9-11 (#s 8-14), illustrates (and admonishes again) the correct posture through two economic extremes of experience. Finally, a beatitude (verse 12; # 15) invokes divine blessing in eschatological judgment upon the individual who faces the test correctly as set forth in this passage.

