Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament

This ambitious new series seeks to bring together classroom, study, and pulpit by providing the student or pastor with the information needed to understand and expound the Greek text of the New Testament. The Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament closes the gap between grammatical analysis and exegesis, leading the reader into an in-depth understanding of the New Testament Greek text by guiding him or her through the processes of thorough exegesis flowing into sermon construction.

Each of the twenty projected EGGNT volumes will provide the following for the biblical book or books on which they are written: a brief introduction on authorship, date, occasion, and purpose, an analytical outline of the book, a list of recommended commentaries, extensive exegetical notes, a translation and an expanded paraphrase of the whole book, a comprehensive exegetical outline, and a glossary of grammatical and rhetorical terms.

The rich exegetical notes make up the heart and bulk of the guide. Covering the text paragraph by paragraph, they provide the following: (1) a structural analysis of the Greek text; (2) a comprehensive discussion of each Greek phrase in turn, treating significant textual variants and vocabulary, giving detailed grammatical analysis (including parsing), exploring the options in disputed points of exegesis, and providing, in effect, an index to the standard reference works—the BDAG lexicon, grammars, and study-books; (3) a list (for most paragraphs) of exegetical and biblical-theological topics arising in the text and suggested for further study, with detailed bibliography given for each topic; and (4) homiletical suggestions, designed to help the preacher move from the Greek text to preaching that reflects careful exegesis of the text. Each volume ends with a translation and an expanded paraphrase, both incorporating the results of the exegetical discussion.

This resource is so complete that any given person will likely use only selected parts according to his or her needs. Indeed, the EGGNT will prove helpful for a wide readership: students tackling New Testament studies, teachers seeking an aid
EXEGETICAL GUIDE TO THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

for their students in reading the Greek New Testament, and preachers who wish
to use the Greek text in their sermon preparation but whose knowledge of Greek
has receded. No other available work in New Testament literature provides a
comparable combination of serious exegetical work and homiletical intent.

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Expanded Paraphrase
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VERE 1

'Ιάκωβος

In first century epistolary salutations the author’s name appears at the letter’s head and in the nom. (nom. abs., R 459). 'Ιάκωβος is the Gk. form of the Hebrew ya῾āqōb (Jacob). The name “James” came into English from the Old French “Gemmies,” a variation of the later Latin “Jacomus,” itself a variant of the early Latin “Jacobus” (see Johnson 93).

θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δούλος

The gens. θεοῦ and κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ are dependent on δούλος and express poss. or ownership. The gens. are emphatic, being one of only three places in James where a gen. precedes the governing noun (also in 1:17; 3:3). The gen. Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ stands in appos. to κυρίου. The NT epistles usually omit the art. with Χριστός when (as here, with Ἰησοῦς) it is a proper name (see BDF § 260[1]; R 760; T 167). The use of κυρίος in ref. to Christ evidences a high Christology (see also the honorific expression ὁ κυρίος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τῆς δόξης in 2:1; see Bauckham 138-39). It is unlikely, however, that θεός is being applied with κυρίος to Ἰησοῦς Χριστός; i.e., “a servant of Jesus Christ who is God and Lord” (Motyer 27). While divine titles are linked in Jas 1:27; 3:9, the formula θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου never occurs in the NT or LXX with ref. to one person, and the appellation κυρίος Ἰησοῦ Χριστός is a distinct and fixed formula in the NT (see Harris, Jesus As God, 266 n. 41). Nevertheless, though Jesus may not be called God, the chiasmic word order associates Jesus with God:

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  θεοῦ
 ιακωβος
 κυριου ιησου χριστου δουλος
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Δούλος is in appos. to Ἰάκωβος and is therefore in the same case (see T 206; on appos. in James, see Mayor cccxiv-chv). The absence of the art. with δούλος may stress quality (e.g., James’s subservient status) or indefiniteness, i.e., James does not claim to be the only servant of God and Christ (on the absence of the art. to express these notions, see Moulton 82-83; R 794). More likely, the noun is anar. in accordance with the preceding anar. gen. nouns.

taiz δωδεκα φυλαις

The dat. ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς indicates the recipients to whom the letter was addressed. The vb. γραφῶ may be implied since it takes the dat. as its indir. obj. The number δώδεκα, twelve, a combination of δῶ (two) and δέκα (ten), appears in the attrib. position. Like various other cardinal numbers, it is indeclinable (on numerals, see R 281-84). Φυλαῖς (dat. pl. fem. of φυλή, -ῆς, -ῆ, tribe) occurs without such modifiers as πόσαις or τῇ γῇ (as, e.g., in Rev 7:9). This and the absence of any metaphorical clues suggest that the phrase is used ethnically here of Jewish believers (most commentators). A conscious word association by James in 1:1 between his name and Jacob, the patriarch of the twelve tribes of Israel, is possible but unlikely since he nowhere depicts himself in a filial rather than paternal relationship with his readers.

taiz ev ti διασπορα

The second art. functions as a rel. pron. “that [are]” (on this use of the art., see Winer 133) and combines with the prep. phrase to form a rel. clause modifying ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς. The clause is perhaps best understood as applying to the whole rather than a part; i.e., all the “twelve tribes” mentioned are in the dispersion (Ropes 124; but see Bauckham 14; Martin 9). For a partitive sense we might have expected ταῖς εἰκ δώδεκα υφάλων ταίς εἰν τῇ διασπορᾷ (Ropes 124; cf. Rev 7:4).

Διασπορά, -ας, -ῆ, dispersion. The term had become an almost technical term used of Jews living outside of Israel (e.g., John 7:35; see P Trebilco, DLNT 287; K. Schmidt, TDNT 2.99-101). Some EVV render the phrase εἰν τῇ διασπορᾷ in an abstract sense: “scattered among the nations” (NIV); “who are dispersed abroad” (NASB). The noun διασπορά, however, is art., which probably indicates that the dispersion mentioned by James is well known (Ropes 120; with the exception of nouns followed by a gen. noun or pron. [e.g., 1:9, 27], this is the only instance in James of an art. noun following εἰν). The phrase in 1:1 may thus be best understood concretely—“in the dispersion” (NRSV, ESV, NABRE). If we accept an early date of composition, it is possible that James is addressing the early Jewish Christian community that had experienced the all but total “dispersion” noted by Luke in Acts 8:1, 4; 11:19 (these three occurrences of the cognate διασπάρω in Acts are the only occurrences of the vb. in the NT).

χαίρειν

The pres. act. inf. χαίρειν (from χαίρω, lit. “rejoice”) common in the papyri but only here in NT epistolary salutations (see NewDocs 7.36; 8.127-28), occurs
in the Jerusalem Council letter, which may have been drafted by the same James (Acts 15:23; see also Acts 23:26). It can be understood

(1) as an impv. in the form of a complementary inf.: “[it is necessary] to rejoice!” (see BDF §§ 389, 480[5]; Moulton 179; T 78) or
*(2) as an inf. abs.: “Greeting(s)!” (most EVV; see R 394, 1093).

In light of the close proximity of χαίρειν to χαίρειν (v. 2), the root relationship between the terms, and the evident paronomasia, it is likely that the notion of joy is inherent in χαίρειν and that the term serves as an intentional transition to the body of the letter (Dibelius-Greeven 68). James will make sim. word transitions in the opening chapter in vv. 3-4; 4-5, 5-6, 12-13, 15-18, and 26-27.

1. Ancient Letters (1:1)


2. James, the Brother of Jesus (1:1a)


Byrne, Ryan and Bernadette McNary-Zak, Resurrecting the Brother of Jesus: The James Ossuary Controversy and the Quest for Religious Relics (Chapel Hill, UNC Press Books, 2009).


3. Slavery and Servitude as Metaphor (1:1a)

*Combes, I. A. H.,* *The Metaphor of Slavery in the Writings of the Early Church from the New Testament to the Beginning of the Fifth Century* (Sheffield: Sheffield University, 1998).


A. Weiser, EDNT 1.349-52.


Patterson, O., *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).


Spicq 1.380-86.

4. Christology (1:1a)


5. Chiasmus in the NT (1:1a)

BDF § 477[2]


Moule 193-94.

* T 345-347.

Turner, Style 97-99.


6. The Twelve Tribes and Diaspora Judaism (1:1b)


7. New Testament Benedictions and Greetings (1:1c)


HOMILETICAL SUGGESTIONS

Introductory Greeting (1:1)

1. The writer: James (v. 1a)
   a. Identification: James, the brother of the Lord
   b. Description: a slave of God and Jesus Christ

2. The addressees: The twelve tribes in the diaspora (v. 1b)
   a. Identification: early Jewish Christians
   b. Description: persecuted and scattered

3. The greeting: Rejoice! (v. 1c)

The Christian's Identity (1:1)

1. Who they are: slaves of God and Jesus Christ (v. 1a)
2. Where they are: outside their heavenly home (v. 1b)
3. What they are: joyful (v. 1c)

II. THE TESTING OF FAITH (1:2-18)

A. TRIALS IN PERSPECTIVE (1:2-4)

STRUCTURE

While most NT writers follow their salutations by expressing appreciation for their readers or by thanking God for his provisions, James, taking a cue from the notion of “joy” embedded in the term χαίρειν in v. 1, plunges immediately into exhortation regarding joy. The section contains two impv., the first of fifty-five in the epistle (assuming ἵστε is an impv. in 1:19)—the highest occurrence per verse of any NT book. The basis for the first exhortation is expressed in the form of a causal clause (v. 3). The second (v. 4), connected to the causal clause by the link words ὑπομονή and τέλειος, is motivated by a ἵνα purpose clause. The bold type and indentation in the outline below reflect the stair-step argument that characterizes the passage.

VERSE 2

Πάσαν χαράν ἡγήσασθε

Though the obj. usually follows the impv. in James, the phrase πάσαν χαράν is placed forward for emphasis with the adj., which occupies the first position in the phrase, receiving the most emphasis: “all joy” (see R 776). ἤγας functions here adjectively (see BDAG 783d; pace Martin, who considers it adv., “altogether” [12 n. a]). The adj., modifying an anar. noun may connote

* (1) intensity, i.e., sheer, utter joy (“full, greatest, all,” BDAG 783d; “great,” NJB, HCSB, NLT; “all,” NASB, ESV; “pure,” NIV; see also BDF § 275[3]; Dibelius-Greeven, 72 n. 11; McCartney 84; McKnight 72 n. 19; Z § 188) or (2) exclusivity, i.e., no reaction but joy (“nothing but joy,” NRSV).

In favor of connotation (1) is a parallel cstr. in Phil 2:29, where Paul exhorts the Philippians to welcome Epaphroditus μετὰ πάσης χαρᾶς (i.e., “with great joy”; cf. Rom 15:13). Trials would therefore not be viewed here as occasions for no other emotional response except joy, as though grief is never to be experienced or expressed (see 1 Pet 1:6; Heb 12:11). Trials, rather, would be viewed as occasions for great joy (Moo 53).
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James

This indef. temp. clause is punctuated with a triple alliteration where each word begins with π. This alliteration may be echoing off of πάς in the first clause. The clause is also crafted into an ABA'B' pattern in which the conj. at the beginning of the clause generalizes the vb. in the third position, and the adj. at the end generalizes the noun in the second position. Though ὅταν, “when,” with the subjunct. introduces contingency (R 972; T 112), the immediate and wider contexts of oppression in James suggest that the prospect of trials will indeed be realized (cf. 1:1; 2:6-7; 5:4-6, 7-11; etc.). The notion of indef. repetition that is inherent in ὅταν (see BDAG 730b; R 973), coupled with the adj. ποικίλος, -η, -ον, brings out the added implication that the trials will be recurrent.

Περιπέτειας is 2 pl. aor. act. subjunc. of περιπέτεω, “fall into,” NKJV, NET; “encounter,” NASB; HCSB; “come upon,” NJB; “meet,” ESV. The vb. lit. means to “fall among” or “fall into” (contrast ἐπιπέτεω in v. 11). This explains the locat. περιπέτεως ποικίλος, which answers the question “where?” (see BDAG 804a; W. Michaelis TDNT 6.173; NewDocs 4.31; R 524; Spicq 3.97-99). In tune with the indef. viewpoint of the clause, the aor. tense summarizes this recurrent action without specifying anything about the nature of the action. James is referring to adverse circumstances which are perennially encountered or stumbled upon. The trials that inevitably come, in other words, are unsought and, at least initially, unwelcome (see Spicq 3.99).

For περιπέτεως, -ον, ὁ, see BDAG 293d-94c; H. Haarsbeek, NIDNTT 3.798-800, 8

02; H. Seesemann, TDNT 6.23-36; Spicq 3.80-90). The term can denote either

(1) “temptation,” i.e., an inner enticement to sin (cf. Luke 4:13; 1 Tim 6:9) or

* (2) “trial,” i.e., an external affliction (cf. 1 Pet 1:6; 4:12).

The inherent mng. of περιπέτεω and the move from περιπέτεως to δοκιμέων (testing) in v. 3 favor the latter mng. here (so most commentators; “trials,” most EVV). As to what the specific afflictions were that James’s readers would inevitably suffer, the adj. ποικίλος, -η, -ον (diverse, manifold, various; lit. “multi-colored”) casts the net widely, and by its unusual position, it does so emphatically (Mayor ccxxviii; see sim. syntax where the noun and adj. are separated by the vb. in 4:6; 5:17). As ὅταν generalizes περιπέτεω by suggesting that trials will be encountered at various times, the adj. generalizes περιπέτεω by suggesting that these trials come in a variety of forms (“various,” HCSB, ESV; “all sorts of,” REB, NET; “of many kinds,” NEB, NJB, NIV). Illness (5:14), financial reverses (1:9-10), and religious, social, or economic oppression (1:1; 2:1ff., 6; 5:1-6) would all be included.

While most major EVV translate the acc. χαράν as an obj. of ἡγέομαι, the noun can be taken in an adv. sense, expressing the joyful manner in which trials are regarded (e.g., “with joy,” Dibelius-Greeven 69). However, since ἡγέομαι never takes an adv. acc. elsewhere in the NT and often takes a double obj. (cf., e.g., Phil 2:6; 3:7-8; 2 Pet 2:13; 3:15), χαράν is best understood here as a pred. acc., as in μακροθυμήσατε, be patient, in 5:7, 8 (Mayor 33; on the constative aor. impv., see R 856; T 77).

A voc. normally follows rather than precedes a 2 pers. vb., as here (see BDF § 474[6]). The warm designation ἀδελφοί, μου is best understood here as an obj. of ἡγέομαι. The warm designation ἀδελφοί is James’s favorite way of addressing his readers (with the poss. alone as here, cf. 2:1, 14; 3:1, 10, 12; 5:12, 19, the more endearing ἀδελφοί, μου ἀγαπητοί, cf. 1:16, 19; 2:5, or the simple ἀδελφοί, cf. 4:11; 5:7, 9, 10). Since the voc. is accompanied throughout the letter either by an impv. or a paraenetic question (cf. 2:14; 3:12), James is likely employing ἀδελφοί, μου to strengthen the hortatory appeal (Martin 14). The translation “brothers and sisters” (NRSV, NLT, NIV) is justified both by the general use of the term to include women as well as men (see BDAG 18c) and contextually here since the inclusion of ἀδελφή in 2:15 indicates that women were included among James’s readership (see Johnson 176).
VERSE 3

γινώσκοντες ὅτι

Nom. pl. masc. (agreeing with the pl. subj. of περιπέτειας of the pres. act. ptc. of γινώσκω, know). The cognitive γινώσκω, linked with the perspective ήγομαι in v. 2, marks a key theme in the opening chapter, having a proper understanding of reality. “Οὐτοί typically means “that” when it follows vbs. of thinking (see R 1035). Here the conj. introduces an obj. clause, describing the end result of trials (on this use, see BDAG 732b; BDF § 397[1]; MM 463b-d). Γινώσκω occurs slightly less often in James than οἶδα (the former here and in 2:20; 5:20; the latter in 1:19; 3:1; 4:4; 17). There does not appear to be a distinction in mng. between the two; both γινώσκω ὅτι and οἶδα ὅτι are used by James to introduce a fact that forms the basis of an affirmation or, as here, an exhortation. The ptc. is pres., describing here action contemporaneous with the impv. ἠγέρθηθε (Wallace 631 n. 45), and causal (rather than generic, pace McKnight 77 n. 41), indicating the reason why trials are to be regarded as occasions for joy (“because you know,” NRSV, NIV2; “for you know,” NLT, ESV; “in the knowledge that,” REB). The use of εἰς ὅτι in 3:1 to introduce a prior assumption upon which an imperative is based suggests that the participial phrase here is used similarly. James, it seems, reinforces a tradition regarding trials with which he assumes his readers are familiar (Matt 5:10-12; see Dibelius-Greeven 72; Johnson, 20; cf. γινώσκοντες ὅτι in Rom 6:6; Eph 5:5; 2 Pet 1:20; 3:3).

tὸ δοκίμιον ἦμων τῆς πίστεως

Δοκίμιον, -ου, τὸ, testing, means of testing, genuineness (as a neut. adj.). Although ὡςάριν and some later mss. (110 341 1241) read τὸ δοκίμιον (“genuineness”), τὸ δοκίμιον is to be preferred since it is supported by the best and the majority of mss., and its mng. seems to suit the context better (for the spelling of the noun, see BDF § 263 [2]).

Δοκίμιον is a rare term appearing elsewhere in Biblical Gk. only in 1 Pet 1:7; LXX Ps 11:7α; Prov 27:21α. There are three possible renderings of τὸ δοκίμιον:

1. “the result of testing,” i.e., genuineness (Turner, Insights 268-69; Robertson, Pictures 12);
2. “the means of testing,” i.e., trials (Davids 68; Dibelius-Greeven 72-73); or
3. “the process of testing,” i.e., “the testing of your faith” (McKnight 77; most EVV; see BDAG 256a; LN 27.45).

Rendering (1) comports both with Peter’s use of the substantivized neut. adj. in 1 Pet 1:7 (perhaps as a synonym of δοκιμίῳ; see Deismann, LAE, 295-62; Turner, Insights 168-69) to denote the result of testing and with LXX Ps 11:7, where the neut. form is likewise adjectival (ἀργύριον πεπορυμένον δοκίμιον τῇ γῇ, “silver is refined by fire in the earth”). However, this sense does not suit the logic well in James (see discussion in Dibelius-Greeven 73). In support of rendering (2), the noun in Prov 27:21α is used to denote the means of purging (δοκίμιον ἀργύριον καὶ χρυσῷ πύρῳς, “a crucible is for silver and fire for gold”). Furthermore, the idea of cause is often found in nouns possessing the verbal suf. -ου (MH 341). The rendering may also find support in Paul’s parallel statement in Rom 5:3 that ἥ ὀλίγης ὑπομονήν κατεργάζεται. There, suffering is the means by which endurance is produced. Nevertheless, if James is emphasizing the means by which endurance is produced, we might have expected a rdg. similar to Paul’s where he repeats the term: “Consider it an occasion for joy whenever you encounter various trials because trials produce endurance.” Such a rendering would seem to be particularly expected in light of James’s word-linkage of ὑπομονή in vv. 3-4. In rendering (3) James is not depicting the means of testing so much as the overall process of testing. This understanding fits nicely into the context since both the multiplicity of trials and the progressive notion inherent in κατεργάζομαι suggest that a process is in view.

While the gen. pers. pron. in the NT may stand before, between, or after the art. and the noun that it qualifies (see R 779), the gen. ὅμων regularly follows the head noun (see R 502-3; cf 1:21; 3:14; 4:1, 3, 9, 14, 16; 5:1, 2, 5, 8). Here, however, it is placed forward for emphasis. The pl. stresses James’s concern for the faith of the community, not just for that of the individual. This is the first occurrence of πίστες in the letter (“faith,” all EVV). The term appears sixteen times overall, clustering eleven times in 2:14-25. In James the noun refers to what one believes (cf. 2:1, 14, 17, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26). Here the term denotes belief (i.e., trust) in God (cf. 1:6; 2:5, 19, 23; 5:15). The phrase τῆς πίστεως is an obj. gen., being the obj. of the trans. verbal idea in δοκίμιον (for this use, see BDF § 163; R 499-501; T 210-12; Z § 36). The next clause indicates that this “testing of faith” is not intended to discover whether or not faith exists; the trial is intended to refine and strengthen the faith that already exists (Moo 54-55).

κατεργάζεται ὑπομονήν

2 sg. pres. mid. indic. of dep. κατεργάζομαι, “produce” (most EVV), bring about, achieve (see BDAG 531b,e). While the pres. tense is progressive, implying that a process is in view (for the progressive pres., see Burton §§ 8-10; R 879-80 (“descriptive present”), the κατά pref. is perfective, stressing the outcome of what is produced by the testing (“complete its work,” LN 68.23; see EDNT 2.271a-b;
The noun ὑπομονή, -ῆς, ἤ, patience, endurance, fortitude, is rare in the Gospels but is common in the epistles and Revelation as a virtue particularly vital for an oppressed community (cf., e.g., Rom 8:25; Heb 10:36; Rev 3:10). In general, ὑπομονή differs from μακροθυμία in that the former is used mostly in contexts of adverse circumstances, the latter of adverse people (see Trench, Synonyms 195-98). Etymologically, the term conveys the idea of “remaining under,” and this notion of “staying-power” is appropriate to the context (“endurance,” NASB2, HCSB; “steadfastness,” ESV; “perseverance,” NABRE, NIV2; “fortitude,” NEB; “patience,” NKJV). While the noun is usually art. in the NT, the anar. occurrence here perhaps places emphasis on fortitude as a quality or frame of mind as distinct from the act of enduring (Mayor 36; for the absence of the art. and a qualitative sense, see on 1:3).

Like the subj. of the impv. ἐχέω, the obj. ἔργον ἔχειν occupies an emphatic position (cf. 1:2). Playing upon the ἔργον-root, James expresses in noun form what he had conveyed in the perfective vb. form: as testing “produces” (κατεργάζεται) fortitude, so fortitude, when allowed to run its course, results in a perfect “product” (“effect,” ESV, NET; “result,” NASB2). As the sg. noun suggests, and the next clause will confirm, James does not describe the end of the testing process in terms of individual virtues but of totality of character (Davids 69; Martin 17).

The adj. τέλειος, -ας, -ον, perfect, complete, finished, stands in the attrib. position modifying ἔργον. As is the custom in James, the anar. attrib. adj. follows immediately after the noun it modifies, though cf. 1:12; 2:2; 3:2; 4:5 (see R 656 on the position of attrib. adjs.). The notion of something that is finished or
brought to completion is fitting for the final rung of James’s argument (cf. ἐργανωμενος, “having completed the work,” John 17:4). Elsewhere James uses the adj. of every gift that comes from God (1:17), of the law of liberty (1:25), and of the person who is capable of “bridling their tongue” (3:2). While the term can denote “maturity” (NIV; cf. 1 Cor 2:6; 14:20; Heb 5:14), this idea does not seem to fit James’s usage (pace Mayor 36-37). In each instance in the epistle, completeness or perfection is connoted (see G. Delling, TDNT 8.74; R. Schippers, TDNTT 2.63; Turner, Words 324-39). This would appear to be the sense in the present instance (“completeness,” HCSB; “perfection,” NET, NABRE). It is difficult not to hear an echo here of ἐπισκόπον σου ὑπερεχει οὕτως ὡς ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ αὐτός ἐστιν: “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matt 5:48).

2 pl. pres. act. subjunc. of εἰμι with τέλειοι καὶ ὀλόκληροι functioning as pred. nom. adjgs. (on the pred. nom., see R 457-58). ἡνω with the subjunc. usually introduces purpose (see BDF § 369; R 981-85), and this appears to be the case here since the clause, being dependent on the previous clause, reveals the intended goal of the testing process (see Burton § 219; T 101). For an impv. followed by a ἡνω clause, see below 5:9, 12. The recurrence of τέλειος and the synonymous language, however, suggests that the clause is not only telic, but appos., providing added definition to the phrase ἐργανωμενος τέλειον εχειω (for ἡνω in appos. clauses, see R 1078-79). The “perfect work” that endurance is meant to achieve, then, is not the full extent of the fortitude itself (pace Mayor 36); the end-result is the perfection and wholeness of godly character (“you are that perfect work,” Dibelius-Greeven 74).

The adj. ὀλόκληρος, -ον (a two-termination adj.), whole, complete, intact; lit., complete in all its parts (see BDAG 703d; MM 446c; Spicq, 2.376 n. 5). The pass. conveys the sense of “being divested” (cf. the passives: χωρίζομεν καὶ πειρασκοῦμεν καὶ ἐπηρεάζομεν, “of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need” (Phil 4:12 NASB)). The pres. tense denotes action that is ongoing. In view of the ref. to the dispersion in v. 1, it is not impossible that there is an association at play here between λειπον and the root-related λειμμα (remnant). Though presently dispersed and divested, at the end of their trials God’s people will experience no deficiencies whatsoever.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

8. Joy in the NT (1:2)
Berger, K., EDNT 3. 454-55.
Brownback, Lydia, Joy: A Godly Woman’s Adornment (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010).
Bultmann, R., TDNT 1.19-21; 2.772-75.


9. ἀδελφοί and Gendered Language in the NT (1:2)


10. From Disappointment to His Appointment (1:2-4)

Brand, Paul and Philip Yancey, *The Gift of Pain: Why We Hurt and What We can Do About It* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997).


________. “Suffering in James.” Pages 477-86 in *The Practical Calvinist: An Introduction to the Presbyterian & Reformed Heritage; in Honor of Dr. D. Clair Davis on His Seventieth Birthday and to Acknowledge His More Than Thirty Years of Teaching at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.* Edited by P. A. Lillback (Fearn, Ross-Shire, UK: Christian Focus, 2002.

11. Faith in James (1:3)


12. Christian Perfection (1:4)

Delling, G., TDNT 8.73-77.


*Turner, Words* 324-329.
HOMILETICAL SUGGESTIONS

Tacking Your Sails to Adversity (1:2-4)

1. Trials are to be viewed as occasions for joy (v. 2)
   a. Adjusting the perspective (ἡγήσασθε)
   b. Appreciating the opportunity (πάσαν χαράν)
      (1) Whenever trials occur (ὅταν)
      (2) Whatever the trials may be (πασιν οἷς)

2. Trials produce endurance (v. 3)
   a. The reason to rejoice—the knowledge of what trials produce
      (γινώσκοντες)
   b. The by-product of trials—stick-to-it-iveness (ὑπομονήν)

3. Trials must be allowed to run their course (v. 4)
   a. Not aborting the process (ἐξέλθω)
   b. Seeing the end-result—completeness (τέλειοι καὶ ὄλοκληροι)

A Perseverance Primer (1:2-4)

1. The inevitability of trials (v. 2)
2. The value of trials (v. 3)
3. The end-result of trials (v. 4)
4. Trials in Paradox (1:2-4)
   1. Pain as an occasion for joy (v. 2)
   2. Trials the pathway to perseverance (v. 3)
   3. Temporal suffering giving way to everlasting satisfaction (v. 4)
Sophia, wisdom, is a gen. of separation (“in need of,” LN 57.43; on the gen. of separation, see BDF § 180[4]; R 518; Moule 41). As is common with vbs. of departure (cf. 2:15; see R 518; T 235), λειπω normally takes a gen. as its dir. obj. For wisdom as practical insight, cf. Prov 2:6, 10-19; 3:13-14; 8:22-31; 9:1-6; Sir 1:1; 24:23; 39:5-6; etc. (see Bauckham 152; J. Goetzmann, NIDNTT 3.1026-33; U. Wilckens, TDNT 7.465-526 and futher reading below). Contextually, the “wisdom” here that some lack is the God-given insight that provides the perspective necessary to see past the trials to their end result, i.e., “to see history from the divine perspective” (Davids 71-72; see also Johnson 179). Cf. parallels thoughts in 2 Bar 44:14; 59:17; 2 Esd 8:52).

αἰτεῖτο

Αἰτεῖτο is 3 sg. pres. act. impv. of the epsilon contract vb. αἰτεῖω, request, “ask” (most EVV), perhaps with a notion of urgency (see LN 33.163). See further on the word on 4:2. The vb. introduces a phrase that pulls double duty as the apod. of εἰ δὲ τις οὐκ ἔχεται σοφίας and the prot. of δοθήσεται αἴτης (cf. 4:17; see R 1023; Burton § 269). Being addressed to God, αἰτεῖω functions here as a prayer request (cf. Matt 7:7-11; Mark 11:24; Luke 11:9-13; John 14:13-14; etc.). As with ἐρωτεύω in v. 4, the 3 pers. impv. expresses more than mere permission (McCartney 93); since wisdom “is the lack most critical to remedy” (Johnson 179), those in need must ask for it (cf. “must,” NJB; “should,” NET, NIV). The pres. impv. adds to this the idea of ongoing action: such a person (νῦν) must continually ask (see Robertson, Pictures 13; for the aspectual sense of the pres. impv., see Wallace 721-22).

παρὰ τοῦ διόδυτος θεοῦ πάσιν ἀπλῶς

The phrase παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ denotes source (on the gen./abl. of source, see Wallace 109-10). The prep. παρὰ with αἰτεῖω is rare in the NT (cf. John 4:9; Acts 3:2; 9:2; see BDAG 756b,c; E. Riesenfeld, TDNT 5.728) but is common throughout the LXX (cf., e.g., Deut 10:12; 1 Kgs 2:20; Ezra 8:22). The prep. likely bears its basic sense here, “from beside” (see Harris 1201), stressing the divine point from which the request is granted (cf. “of God,” NASB).

Διόδυτος is gen. sg. masc. of the pres. act. ptc. of διώκω, “give” (most EVV). The ptc. functions 1) adjectivally in the attrib. position as the modifier of θεός and 2) verbally with πάσιν as its indir. obj. and with the adv. ἀπλῶς as a modifier (for the attrib. ptc., see Burton §§ 427-28; T 151-52; on the adjectival and verbal nature of ptc.s., see R 1100-01). A more natural word-order would have been παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ πάσιν ἀπλῶς διόδυτος (see Mayor 39; BDF § 474[5a]). As it is, James, by way of three emphases, serves up the words in a manner that would encourage confidence in prayer:

καὶ μὴ ὀνειδίζοιτος

ὢνειδίζοιτος is gen. sg. masc. (agreeing with the sg. subj. of αἰτεῖτο) of the pres. act. ptc. of ὀνειδίζω. Though mss. K 049 69 read οὐκ, μὴ has better textual and grammatical support (for the neg. μὴ with ptcs., see T 284-85; BDF § 430). The ptc. functions substantively (on which, see BDF § 413; R 764-65; T 150-51) and provides a neg. counterpart to τοῦ διόδυτος θεοῦ, being governed by the art. τοῦ and linked by the conj. καὶ (cf. 4:11). This article-substantive-καὶ substantive pattern is typical of the pattern noted by Granville Sharp in his rule that in such csrs. (where each subst. is sg., pers., and non-proper) both subs. always refer to the same person (on the application of the rule, see BDF § 276; Wallace 270-90).
VERE 6

αἰτεῖτο δὲ ἐν πίστει

The δὲ here is a mild adversative introducing a caveat to James’s exhortation in v. 5 (“but,” most major EVV; “yet,” NAB1). For αἰτεῖτο, see 1:5. James again weaves together his train of thought by way of a link-word. The conj. and word-stitching indicates that the request for wisdom is still in mind, though the gnomic nature of the latter half of the verse suggests that the application would apply to any prayer. The 3 pers. impv. again carries full imperatival force: “he or she must ask.” For πίστει, see comments on 1:3 and 2:14-26. The phrase in πίστει (“in faith,” most EVV; “with,” NJB) could express sphere or means (on the dat. of sphere, see R 521; for the dat. of means, see R 532-35). More likely, since the phrase appears to function adverbially in tandem with μὴ δὲν διακρινόμενος, it is expressing the manner in which one is to ask, i.e., with full conviction (cf. κακοῦς αἰτεῖτοθε in 4:3; for the dat. of manner, Moule 78; R 530-32). While an anar. obj. of a prep. may be def. (R 791-92; see below, on 1:13), the noun here likely has a qualitative force (Wallace 247 n. 80).

The pres. tense, as with διδόμως, is likely gnomic, the pres. subst. ptc. being well-suited to a generic notion (see Wallace 620 n. 19 and above on διδόμως). The mng. of the vb. is to reproach, mock, scold (“without criticizing,” HCSB; “without scolding,” NJB; “without reproach,” REB, NASB2; “without finding fault,” NIV2; “ungrudgingly,” NRSV, NABRE). The sense of the word is brought out in Sir 20:14-15: “A fool’s gift will profit you nothing, for he looks for recompense sevenfold. He gives little and criticizes (κακώς) without scolding,” NJB; “without reproach,” REB, NASB2. The thought, then, would be that since it is in God’s character to give, those who lack wisdom need not fear being scolded for asking nor demeaned for their deficiency (Moo 59).

καὶ δοθῆται αὐτῷ

This phrase serves as an apod. of αἰτεῖτο παρὰ τοῦ διδόμως θεοῦ πᾶν ἀπόλος καὶ μὴ διακρίνομενος with the coordinating καὶ having the force of “and then” (cf. 4:7-8; on this use of καὶ, see BDAG 494-95d-a; BDF § 442[7]; on the uses of καὶ in general, see on 1:11). Δοθῆται is 3 sg. fut. pass. indic. of διδόμω, give; subj. “it” (= σοφία). The pass. here is a divine pass., denoting the hidden agency of God (on the divine or theological pass., see BDF § 130.1; Z § 236). Cf. Matt 7:7: αἰτεῖται καὶ δοθῆται ἵδιν, “ask and it will be given to you.” (parallel Luke 11:9). The pers. pron. αὐτὸς is the dat. sg. masc. of αὐτῶς, αὐτή, αὐτό. While it is in concord in gender and number with its antecedent τις, it is in the dat. case as the indir. obj. of the vb. in its clause. As is customary in Gk., the masc. gender is used when both males and females are included (cf. “and it will be given to you,” NIV2; see BDF § 135[2]; R 412; T 22).

The basic mng. of διακρίνω is to differentiate (dia in the sense of “to-and-fro”) and is used in the sense of “creating distinctions” in 2:4. Here, however, the vb. is in the mid. voice, conveying the notion of disputing with oneself, i.e., “doubt” (most EVV; see BDAG 231c; LN 31.37; B. Gärtner, NIDNTT 1.503-5; F. Büchsel, TDNT 3.946-49). For James, asking must coincide with the way in which God gives—with unwavering intent (cf. 5:15-16). Syntactically, the phrase also serves as the opposite of ἐν πίστει (see B. Gärtner, NIDNTT 1.504). Cf. the same antithesis of πίστεις and διακρίνω in Matt 21:21-22 (also Mark 11:23-24; Rom 4:20).

ο ὁ γὰρ διακρινόμενος οὐκ ἔχει κλύδωνι θαλάσσας

The post-positive ὁ γὰρ (“for,” most EVV) originated as a combination of ὁ and ἄρα (see R 1190). The conj. introduces a reason for confident prayer by providing a simile that illustrates the instability of doubt. While διακρινόμενος is adv. in the previous phrase, it functions substantively here as the subj. of ἐχει. The pres. ptc. likely carries a gnomic sense, on which see 1:5. Ἐχει is 3 sg. perf. act. indic. of ἔχει, a perf.-pres. with a pres. mng., resemble, be like (elsewhere in the NT only in 1:23; see BDAG 355 b; LN 64.4; MM 226c; on the morphology of the vb., see MH 235). The term is a cognate of εἰκόνα, image. By virtue of its stative nature, the vb. is pres. in mng. though perf. in tense (for this usage, see BDF § 341; Burton §§ 75-76; Moultoun 147, R 894-95).

κλύδωνι, -ονος, ὁ, succession of waves, rough water (“surging,” HCSB; “wave,” ESV, NIV2; “surf,” NASB2). The word occurs elsewhere in the NT only in Luke 8:24 of Christ rebuking the wind and “the raging of the water” (εὐς κλύδωνι
The difference between rendering (1) and rendering (2) is minor; the latter merely places v. 8 as a parenthetical phrase within v. 7. Though (1) preserves the sentence structure (most EVV), both renderings convey a sim. sense. Rendering (3) takes “a double-minded man” of v. 8 to be the subj. of the vb. “receive” rather than a description of “that person” (so Hort 11-12). However, since the phrase “that person” appears to be derogatory language (see below), it would seem better, as in (1) and (2), to take both neg. characterizations in v. 8 as descriptions of “that person,” which, moreover, would be analogous to sim. two-fold descriptions in the epistle (cf., e.g., 1:2, 8, 4:12; see Dibelius-Greeven 80; Martin 13d).

The γάρ adds a note of certainty: “to be sure” (see BDF § 452[2]). The conj. is either epexegetical, explaining further the instability depicted in v. 6b (McKnight 90) or, more likely, introduces a second reason behind the instability depicted in v. 6 (Mayor 42; Ropes 142).

Οἴσθω is 3 sg. pres. impv. of dep. οἶσμαι, think, expect, suppose (“expect,” NRSV, NLT, “suppose,” ESV, NET, “think,” TNIV). Οἴσθω forms a paroekthesis with ζηκόν in v. 6. Elsewhere, the vb. occurs in the NT only in John 21:25 and Phil 1:17, δοκέω, apparently, taking its place in Koine Greek. The vb. and its noun counterpart οἴσμα occur frequently elsewhere with the neg. connotation of audacity (cf., e.g., Job 11:2; Phil 1:17; see LSJ 1208c-9a). This seems to be the sense here. The pres. tense indicates that one should not be characterized by such thinking (McKnight 91 n. 113).

The remote demonstrative ἐκεῖνος, as usual, stands in the pred. position when modifying a subst. (see R 708). ὁ ἀνθρώπος ἐκεῖνος is anaphoric, referring back to the doubter of v. 6, the pleonastic ἀνθρώπως being used in a general sense, “person” (HCSB, ESV; see BDAG 81b; on the pleonasm, see Turner, Style 120). The use of the remote demonstrative as opposed to the immediate οὗτος is perhaps a Sem., conveying an emphatic and disapproving tone: “that sort of person” (NJB; see Dibelius-Greeven 82; H. Vorländer, NIDNTT 2.565; on the contemptuous use of ἐκεῖνος, see BDAG 320a; R 707).

In general, μὴ + pres. impv. either demands the cessation of action already begun (“stop . . .!”) or addresses action that must always be avoided (see BDF §§ 335-36[3]; Burton § 165; Moulton 122-26; R 853-54, 890, 947; T 74-78). The notion of presumptuousness in the present context suggests the former idea here: “That sort of person must not continue to suppose” (so BDF § 336[3]; T 76; ZG 691).

Continue reading on the next page.
The phrase is the first of two independent nom. phrases modifying ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἄνεντις; “being a double-minded person” (NASB; see Winer 534; cf. 3:8 for sim. syntax). It would appear that ἄνηρ ἄνεντις in James the way ἄνθρωπος does in the other NT books. Here and elsewhere in the epistle the noun bears a generic connotation rather than its normal mng. of man or husband (as opposed to woman or wife; cf. 1:12; 20; 23; 2:1; 3:1). The phrase here may be a Sem. (cf. e.g., LXX Ps 11:1; 31:2).

Δύσηνος, -ης, -ον (doubting, hesitating,”double-minded,” most EVV: “indecisive,” HCSB; see BDAG 253c; E. Schweizer, TDNT 9.665; Turner, Words 116-18; for the pref. ο, see MH 300; R 580) stands in contrast to ἀπλότης in v. 5 (see B. Gärtner, NIDNTT 3.572). The adj., lit. “double-souled,” resembles ἐν καρδίᾳ δύσηνη, “with a divided heart” (Sir 1:28; cf. 1 Chr 12:34[33]); ὑδαθῷος, “double-tongued” (Sir 5:9); διαφύλασσας, “double-faced” (T. Asher 2.5); and ἐν καρδίᾳ καὶ ἐν καρδίᾳ, “with a double heart” (LXX Ps 11:3). The word, a BGK. hapax likely originates from the OT/LXX theme of unwavering and undivided commitment to God (cf. e.g., Deut 4:29; 5:8; 18.3; Hos 10:2), which is reinforced by Jesus’ teaching on loving God wholly (cf. Matt 22:37; see Davids 74-75). The term δύσηνος itself, however, is a BGK. hapax and occurs here and in 4:18 for the first time in extant Greek literature. It is probable that James coined the term to punctuate his depiction of doubt as an oscillation between certainty and uncertainty (see Porter, “‘Christian’ Word?” 469-98). The choice of a ψυχή root rather than καρδία is not unusual since ψυχή in the LXX translates άθροί, life (e.g.,

Gen 2:7; cf. Jas 5:20) and βίος, heart (e.g., LXX Ps 68:21, 33; Isa 7:2, 4; cf. Jas 4:8). See below on v. 21. For the position of the adj. relative to the head noun, see on v. 4 above.

άκατάστατος ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὀδοίς αὐτοῦ

James 1:8. The phrase εν πάσαις ταῖς ὀδοίς αὐτοῦ as is often the case with a dat. following an adj., is a dat. of ref./respect, “unstable regarding . . .” (see Wallace 144-46). The position of πάς here is typical of BGK. (see T 118). In the pred. position with an articular subst. (as here) πάς means “all” without exception. For the syntax of the art. with πάς, see BDF § 275; R 771-74; T 199-201; Z § 88.19-91. On ὀδός = conduct, manner of life, see BDAG 691d-692a; G. Ebel, NIDNTT 3.940. The phrase εν πάσαις ταῖς ὀδοίς αὐτοῦ is a Sem. referring to one’s entire conduct (“in all they do,” NIV; cf. Ps 96:11; 145:17; Prov 3:6; Jer 16:17; etc.). The gen. αὐτοῦ, like its antecedent ἄνηρ, is gender inclusive and is poss., modifying πάσαις ταῖς ὀδοίς.

VERE 8

The dat. phrase εν πάσαις ταῖς ὀδοίς αὐτοῦ is often the case with a dat. following an adj., as a dat. of ref./respect, “unstable regarding . . .” (see Wallace 144-46). The position of πάς here is typical of BGK. (see T 118). In the pred. position with an articular subst. (as here) πάς means “all” without exception. For the syntax of the art. with πάς, see BDF § 275; R 771-74; T 199-201; Z § 88.19-91. On ὀδός = conduct, manner of life, see BDAG 691d-692a; G. Ebel, NIDNTT 3.940. The phrase εν πάσαις ταῖς ὀδοίς αὐτοῦ is a Sem. referring to one’s entire conduct (“in all they do,” NIV; cf. Ps 96:11; 145:17; Prov 3:6; Jer 16:17; etc.). The gen. αὐτοῦ, like its antecedent ἄνηρ, is gender inclusive and is poss., modifying πάσαις ταῖς ὀδοίς.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

13. Praying for Perspective (1:4)


Wright, C. J. H., The God I Don’t Understand (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008).

See also For Further Study 10, 49.
14. Wisdom in James (1:5)

DOTWPW 842-912.


See also For Further Study 15, 45.

15. Wisdom and Endurance (1:5)


See also For Further Study 19.

16. God as Benefactor (1:5)


Tanner, Kathryn, Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001).

See also For Further Study 24.

17. Being in Two Minds (1:8)


*Guinness, Os, In Two Minds: The Dilemma of Doubt and How to Resolve It (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1976).


See also For Further Study 56.

HOMILETICAL SUGGESTIONS

Trials in Perspective (1:5-8)

1. Asking for perspective (v. 5b)
   a. The need for perspective (εἰ τις ἕμων λείπεται)
   b. The need to ask (ἀπεικόνιζον)

2. The way God gives perspective (v. 5b)
   a. Indiscriminately (πάνω)
   b. Wholehearedly (ἀπλούς)
   c. Ungrudgingly (μὴ ὄκεις ὀρείς)
   d. Assuredly (δυσθέρεται αὐτῷ)
3. The way we are to ask for perspective (v. 6a)
   a. With faith (ἐν πίστει)
   b. Without a doubt (μηδὲν διακρινόμενος)

4. The dilemma of doubt (vv. 6b-8)
   a. Instability (ἐοικεν κλίδωνι θαλάσσης)
   b. Uncertainty (μη γὰρ σιέσθω ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος ὅτι λήμψεται τι)

**Wisdom for the Asking (1:5-8)**
1. Ask (v. 5)
2. Ask in faith (v. 6)
3. Ask with focus (v. 6b-8)

**When Praying for Rain, Carry an Umbrella (1:5-8)**
1. When you pray for God to act, act in faith that God will act (v. 6)
2. If you pray for God to act and act as if God won’t act… (vv. 7-8)
   a. You pray in doubt
   b. You will receive nothing from God
3. If you pray for God to act and act as if God will act… (v. 5)
   a. You pray in faith
   b. You will receive from God

**The When, Why, and How of Prayer (1:5-8)**
1. When? In need of divine perspective (v. 5a)
2. Why? God gives generously and ungrudgingly (v. 5b)
3. How? With faith, and not doubt (vv. 6-8)