The meaning and teaching of νόμος in James

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DECLARATION

The content of this thesis is based upon an original compilation of material based upon a synthesis of primary and secondary sources to arrive at an original work of the author. The main argument of this thesis and arrangement of the supporting arguments is solely the work of the author.

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"**but** the one having looked into (the) perfect *Torah*, that of freedom
and continuing in it
not having become a hearer of forgetfulness
but a doer of work
this one will be blessed in his doing" (Jas. 1:25)

A prayer: *Heavenly Father, You are worthy of all worship and service. For You alone are God. All glory and honour be to You for Your creative power, continual care, and invariable goodness. Indeed, every good gift and perfect present is from You. Thank You for the gift of Your Son and the giving of Your Spirit. Thank You for the gifts of faith, salvation, and wisdom. Father, thank You for the perfect gift of Your Torah to guide us towards perfection in Christ and to safeguard our freedom. And thank You for this study. You know how much it means to me. Please receive it as an offering of thanksgiving. And please use it for Your purposes and glory.*

To Sonja, my wife: *Your faithfulness to the Lord and steadfastness in His Word inspire me. Thank you for being my hopeful, delightful, and prayerful companion.*

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ABSTRACT

Diverse theological allegiances and conflicting voices concerning the relevance and role of God's Law (i.e. the *Torah*)[1] makes it a complex, confusing, and even a controversial issue in the church. This is a serious matter because the way Christians view the Law profoundly impact on how they interpret God's will, discern between right and wrong, and how they relate to God and to other people. Clearly, sound teaching about the Law is critical for the unity, health, wellbeing, and witness of the Church.

For their doctrine of the Law, many lean heavily on the evidence in Paul's Letters, which can produce a rather negative view of the Law of God given through Moses (i.e. the *Torah*). James, however, speaks remarkably positively about the Law. And since he speaks infallibly as Scripture, his voice deserves to be heard. This Study carefully investigates James's Epistle in order to determine the "meaning and teaching of '*nómos*' (νόμος) in James". The purpose is to work out what James means by "*nómos*" and what can be derived about his doctrine about "*nómos*". This is done with the goal of gaining clarity about the Law of God from James, which in turn could clarify the New Testament's position about it, and thus clarify the orthodox Christian position.

Chapter 1 introduces the Study and outlines the Study plan. A three-pronged analytical approach is taken to answer the overarching research question, "What is James's doctrine of the Law of God?", with its five supporting questions. By answering them, the main aim of outlining James's doctrine of the Law, with its five supporting objectives, is achieved. The analytical processes include: Thought Structure Analysis, Semantic Discourse Analysis, and a survey of the Old Testament biblical roots of James. The results are documented in the successive chapters of the Study.

Chapter 2 documents the historical and literary context of James. This provides the framework within which to interpret the Letter. The framework includes the following key elements:

(1) The author is James, the brother of Jesus, leading apostle and pillar of the church, presiding over the headquarters of early Christianity in Jerusalem, and being renowned for his justness and *Torah* observance.

(2) The original recipients were predominantly Jewish Christians who met in their own synagogue where the *Torah* was doubtlessly cherished.

[1] The terms "Law", "Law of God", and "*Torah*" will be used interchangeably in this Study. However, the preferred term is "*Torah*" because its Hebrew roots more accurately convey its true meaning than the English word "Law", which could have overly "legal" connotations that could overshadow the more dominant sense of "God's fatherly instructions". Refer to "*Torah*" in the **Glossary of Terms**.

(3) The Letter was likely written very early, to displaced believers who were vulnerable socially, and who were spiritually in danger of becoming like the world (i.e. being worldly), possibly due to antinomian tendencies.

(4) Therefore, James wrote a passionate and pastoral Letter to them, replete with instructions, to protect and exhort them to avoid doubleness and strive for perfection and wholehearted devotion to God, in the face of trials and in the light of the coming judgment.

(5) The Letter is thoroughly Jewish and thoroughly grounded in the Hebrew Scriptures and thought.

(6) It is held together by the connecting themes of Law and wisdom at key locations.

Chapter 3 determines the extent to which the Old Testament and especially the *Torah* feature in James and how the original readers' conception of the OT and *Torah* would have most likely shaped their understanding of the word "*nómos*" in James. It is found that:

- The OT was their "Bible", with the *Torah* being foundational and central and the Prophets and Writings expanding and applying, rather than replacing or nullifying it. At the heart of the *Torah* is the Ten Commandments, which contain its most sacred, fundamental, absolute, and ultimate moral principles. Furthermore, the Greek Translation of the OT (i.e. LXX) was most likely their version of the "Bible", according to which "*nómos*" (νόμος) stands for "*Torah*".
- James refers to Old Testament Scriptures no less than 60 times in 108 verses. Closer examination, however, reveals many more connections with the OT. Clearly, therefore, James's teaching is deeply rooted and firmly anchored in the OT Scriptures. Six of James's seven citations and quotations are from the *Torah* (mostly the Decalogue) and the seventh is within the context of the Second Commandment of the Decalogue. James's most fundamental teachings are all rooted in the *Torah*, with allusions to the *Shema*, Holiness Code, Ten Commandments, and Abraham the father of faith.
- While James is silent on the ritual commandments, he entirely focusses on the "weightier matters" of the *Torah*, so much so that the entire contents of the Letter can be divided into sections that all fall, either under "justice"/"mercy" (i.e. loving neighbour), or under "faith"/"faithfulness" (i.e. loving God).
- It is concluded that James's readers would most likely and most naturally have understood "*nómos*" (νόμος) to refer to "*Torah*".

Chapter 4 closely examines and meticulously exegetes each passage in James in which the word "*nómos*" (νόμος) is used (incl. Jas. 1:19-27; 2:8-13; 4:11-12). The purpose of the analysis is to determine the contextual and intended meaning of "*nómos*" in James and what James

teaches about "*nómos*". The analysis includes outlining the exegetical context, translating the Greek text into English, analysing the thought structure, establishing the meaning structure, highlighting the meaning indicators, explaining the meaning of words and phrases, and outlining the absolutes. The analysis is done with extensive consultation of and engagement with secondary resources, including scholarly works. The meanings of the five "*nómos*" terms are as follows:

(1) "*nómon téleion*" (νόμον τέλειον) "*tòn tēs eleutherías*" (τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 1:25), translated: "perfect *Torah*, that of freedom", which means that the *Torah* is both perfect and liberating.

(2) "*nómon basilikòn*" (νόμον … βασιλικὸν), translated: "Kingdom *Torah*" (Jas. 2:8), which means the *Torah* instructs/guides those in God's Kingdom.

(3) "*toū nómou*" (τοῦ νόμου) (Jas. 2:9) or *"nómou*" (νόμου) (Jas. 2:11; 4:11) simply, translated the "*Torah*", which means God's Law (originally given through Moses).

(4) "*ʰólon tòn nómon*" (ὅλον τὸν νόμον) (Jas. 2:10), translated: "the whole *Torah*", which again means *Torah*, with emphasis on its entire body of instruction; and

(5) "*nómou eleutherías*" (νόμου ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 2:12), translated: "*Torah* of freedom", which means *Torah* is liberating. "*Torah* of freedom" (Jas. 2:12) is a short form of "perfect *Torah*, that of freedom" (Jas. 1:25).

It is concluded that with the five terms James has essentially one and the same *Torah* in mind: God's *Torah* given through Moses. James's teaching about the *Torah,* as expounded in Chapter 4, is outlined below.

Chapter 5 outlines the answer to the overarching research question, "What does James teach about the nature, content, and function of the Law of God?". The answer can be summarised, as in Chapter 7, as follows:

(1) Concerning the nature of the *Torah*: • God is the giver and source of the *Torah.* • It is perfect, righteous, and liberating in its essence. • And violation of it is sin.

(2) Concerning the content of the *Torah*: • The *Torah* is God's *Torah* given through Moses, the core of which is the Ten Commandments, the summary and purpose of which is the Two Greatest Commandments, the exposition and application of which are found in the rest of the Pentateuch and Scriptures as a whole, and the priority of which is to express and practice "justice", "mercy", and "faith". • James focuses on the "moral" commandments of the *Torah* and is silent on the "ceremonial" commandments. One has to look at the rest of the New Testament for clarity about the applicability of the latter.

(3) Concerning the function of the *Torah*: • The *Torah* reflects God's character and the righteous standards of His kingdom, and it mirrors the true moral state of the believer. • It delineates pure and useful religion, it defines sin, and it outlines God's standards for judgment. • The *Torah* instructs believers in their moral and social obligations, and trains them to practice "*ḥesed*" (or "lovingkindness") and to be God's merciful people. • Being implanted within, the *Torah* protects believers against transcendent danger, it is a means or guide for their own perfection, and a safeguard for their freedom.

Chapter 6 compares James's teaching concerning the *Torah* with that of the rest of the New Testament, in order to demonstrate the harmony between James and the rest of NT and to highlight James's contribution to the NT's teaching on the Law of God. For this, the following seven key NT passages are carefully exegeted: Matthew 5:17-20; 23:23-24; Romans 3:28, 31; 8:1-4; Hebrews 8:10-12; 1 John 3:4; and 5:1-4. These passages show remarkable agreement with James about the nature, content, and function of the *Torah*:

(1) Concerning the nature of the *Torah*: • Jesus teaches that *Torah* is permanent and connects it with right living. • Paul affirms that *Torah*'s standards are righteous, and John defines sin as "*Torah*-lessness". • By nature, *Torah* belongs in the hearts of God's people, as Hebrews implies. • And John adds that, to the believer, it is not a burden but a liberating delight.

(2) Concerning the content of the *Torah*: • Jesus' purpose was not to empty *Torah* of its original content, but to fill it up by giving it its true and full meaning. • Its key ingredients include "justice", "mercy", and "faith", without necessarily excluding the lesser matters such as giving. • And according to Hebrews, its core contents surely include the Decalogue.

(3) Concerning the function of the *Torah*: • Jesus expects His followers to keep and teach the *Torah.* • And that is why, as Hebrews imply, the *Torah* is written on their hearts so that they might know, understand, love, and obey it. • But, as Paul implies, it is not *Torah's* function to produce such obedience. • That is why Christ atoned for His people's sin (to free them from guilt against and condemnation by the *Torah*) and secured the Holy Spirit for them to indwell, liberate, and empower them to finally live out God's righteous standards (of the *Torah*) as they should.

While there seems to be a tension between James and Paul about justification by faith (alone), and while James is fairly silent about the vitally important role of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification, these two matters are not contrary to James and can be harmonized with his teaching. The points of difference are found not to be contradictions but areas where they complement one another for a fuller understanding of the NT's teaching about the *Torah*.

Chapter 7 concludes the study by recapping the meaning and teaching of "*nómos*" in James, critiquing common interpretations of "*nómos*" in James, drawing practical implications from the Study, and making suggestions for possible further research. Of the nine common understandings of "*nómos*" listed in the Study Introduction, the first is found to be possible, the next four quite likely (with preference for Options 2 & 3), and the last four very unlikely. Since James's meaning and teaching of "*nómos*" are reasonably well defined, the key implications from this Study are as follows:

(1) James's contribution to the NT's teaching about the *Torah* is significant and indispensable.

(2) Several common interpretations about "*nómos*" in James can and should be discounted.

(3) Common questions about the role of the *Torah* in Christianity can be answered with reasonable certainty.

(4) Commonly held doctrines about the *Torah* can be tested against James's teaching.

(5) James's voice needs to be heard and heeded by the church in the face of increasing antinomianism and moral decline.

OPSOMMING

Diverse theologiese lojaliteite en teenstrydige stemme oor die relevansie en rolle van God se Wet (d.w.s. die *Tora*)[2] maak dit 'n komplekse, verwarrende, en selfs kontroversiële kwessie in die kerk. Dit is 'n ernstige saak, veral omdat die manier waarop Christene die Wet beskou, het 'n diepgaande impak op hoe hulle God se wil interpreteer, hoe hulle tussen reg en verkeerd onderskei, en hoe hulle teenoor God en ander mense optree. Gesonde leering oor die Wet is duidelik krities vir die eenheid, gesondheid, welstand, en getuienis van die kerk.

Vir hulle leerstelling oor die Wet, steun baie persone op die bewyse in Paulus se briewe, wat nogal 'n negatiewe beeld kan gee van God se Wet (d.w.s. *Tora*) wat Hy deur Moses gegee het. Jakobus praat egter opmerklik positief oor die Wet. En aangesien Jakobus onfeilbaar as Skrif praat, verdien sy stem om gehoor te word. Hierdie Studie ondersoek Jakobus se brief noukeurig om die "betekenis en leering van '*nómos*' (νόμος) in Jakobus" te bepaal. Dit word gedoen met die doel om duidelikheid te kry oor die Wet volgens Jakobus, wat dan duidelikeid mag gee oor die Nuwe Testament se posisie daaroor, en dus duidelikheid oor die ortodokse Christelike posisie.

Hoofstuk 1 lei die Studie in en gee 'n uitlegging van die Studie plan. 'n Drie-voudige analitiese benadering word gevolg om 'n antwoord te verskaf op die oorhoofse navorsingsvraag, "Wat is Jakobus se leerstelling oor die Wet van God?", met die vyf ondersteunende vrae. Deur die vrae te beantwoord, word die hoof doelwit om Jakobus se leerstelling oor die Wet uit te lê, met die vyf ondersteunende doelwitte, bereik. Die analitiese prosesse sluit in: Gedagtestruktuur Analise, Semanitiese Diskoers Analise, en 'n opname van die Ou Testament bybelse wortels van Jakobus. Die resultate is gedokumenteer in die opeenvolgende hoofstukke van die Study.

Hoofstuk 2 dokumenteer die historiese en literêre konteks van Jakobus. Dit verskaf die raamwerk waarin the Brief geïnterpreteer word. Die raamwerk sluit die volgende elemente in:

(1) Die outeur van Jakobus, die broer van Jesus, leier apostel en pilaar van die kerk, voorsitter van die hoofkwartiere van vroeë Christenskap in Jerusalem, en beroemd vir sy regverdigheid en *Tora* nakoming.

(2) Die oorpronklike ontvangers was oorwegend Joodse Christene wat in hulle eie sinagoge byeengekom het waar die *Tora* ongetwyfeld gekoester was.

[2] Die terms "Wet", "Wet van God", en "*Tora*" word verwisselend gebruik in hierdie Studie. Die term "Tora" word egter verkies omdat the Hebreeuse oorsprong van die woord die ware betekenis beter kommunikeer as die Afrikaanse woord "wet" of the Englise woord "law", wat beide oordrewe "wetgewende" konnotasies kan hê wat die meer prominente sin van "God se vaderlike instruksies" kan oorskadu. Sien "*Tora*" in the **Woordelys**.

(3) Die Brief was waarskynlik geskryf vroeg, aan verplaasde gelowiges wat sosiaal kwesbaar was, en wat geestelik in gevaar was om soos die wêreld te word (d.w.s wêrelds te wees), moontlik as gevolg van antinomiaanse neigings.

(4) Daarom, het Jakobus 'n passievolle en pastorale Brief aan hulle geskryf, volgepak met instruksies, om hulle te beskerm en te vermaan teen dubbelheid en om te streef vir volmaaktheid en heelhartige toewyding aan God, te midde van beproewings en in die lig van die komende oordeel.

(5) Die Brief is deeglik Joods en deeglik gegrond in the Hebreeuse Skrif en denke.

(6) Dit word bymekaar gehou deur die verbindende temas Wet en wysheid by sleutel plekke.

Hoofstuk 3 bepaal die omvang van die Ou Testament en spesifiek die *Tora* se aanwesigheid in Jakobus en hoe die oorpronklike lesers se opvattings van die OT en veral die Tora mees waarskynlik hulle begrip van die woord "*nómos*" in James sou vorm. Dit word gevind dat:

- Die OT was hulle "Bybel", met die *Tora* fundamenteel en sentraal en die Profete en Geskrifte as uitbreiding en toepassing, eerder as vervanging of totnietmaking daarvan. Aan die hart van die *Tora* is the Tien Gebooie, wat die heiligste, fondamentele, absolute, en uiteindelike morele beginels insluit. Verder, die Griekse Vertaling van die OT (d.w.s. LXX) was mees waarksynlik hulle weergawe van die "Bybel", waarvolgens "*nómos*" (νόμος) staan vir "*Tora*".
- Jakobus verwys na die Ou Vertaling nie minder as 60 keer in 108 verse nie. By nadere ondersoek openbaar egter veel meer skakels met die OT. Daarom is Jakobus se leering duidelik diep en ferm geanker in the OT. Ses van Jakobus se sewe aanhalings is van die *Tora* (meestal van die Dekaloog) en die sewende is in die konteks van die Tweede Gebod van die Dekaloog. Jakobus se mees fundamentele leering is alles in die *Tora* gewortel, met sinspeling op die *Sema*, Heiligheidskode, Tien Gebooie, en Abraham die vader van geloof.
- Terwyl Jakobus stil is oor die rituele gebooie, hy veral fokus op wat die "gewigtigste sake" van die *Tora*, soveel so dat die hele inhoud van die Brief verdeel kan word in afdelings wat val onder, "geregtigheid"/"barmhartigheid" (d.w.s. liefde vir medemens), of onder "geloof"/"getrouheid" (d.w.s. liefde vir God).
- Die gevolgtrekking is dat Jakobus se lesers mees waarskynlik en heel natuurlik sou verstaan het dat "*nómos*" (νόμος) na "*Tora*" verwys.

Hoofstuk 4 ondersoek sorgvuldig en eksegeer noukeurig elke gedeelte in Jakobus waarin die woord "*nómos*" (νόμος) gebruik word (insl. Jak. 1:19-27; 2:8-13; 4:11-12). Die doel van die analise is om vas te stel wat die kontekstuele en bedoelde betekenis van "*nómos*" in Jakobus

is en wat Jabokus onderrig oor "*nómos*". Die analise sluit in die uiteensetting van die eksegetiese raamwerk, vertaling van die Griekse teks in Engels, analise van die gedagtestruktuur analise, bepaling van die betekenisstruktuur, uitligting van die betekenisaanduiders, verduideliking van die woorde en frases, en uiteensetting van die absolutes. Die analise word gedoen met uitgebreide konsultasie van en interaksie met sekondere bronne, insluitende vakkundige werke. Die betekenisse van die vyf "*nómos*" terme is soos volg:

(1) "*nómon téleion*" (νόμον τέλειον) "*tòn tēs eleutherías*" (τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (Jak. 1:25), vertaal: "perfekte *Tora*, die een van vryheid", wat beteken dat die *Torah* perfek en bevrydend is.

(2) "*nómon basilikòn*" (νόμον … βασιλικὸν), vertaal: "Koningkryk *Tora*" (Jak. 2:8), wat beteken dat die *Tora* hulle in God se Koningkryk onderrig, instrueer, en lei.

(3) "*toū nómou*" (τοῦ νόμου) (Jak. 2:9) of *"nómou*" (νόμου) (Jak. 2:11; 4:11) eenvoudig, vertaal die "*Tora*", wat beteken God se Wet (oorspronklik gegee deur Moses).

(4) "*ʰólon tòn nómon*" (ὅλον τὸν νόμον) (Jak. 2:10), vertaal: "die hele *Tora*", wat weereens *Tora* beteken, met die klem op die totale liggaam van instruksies; en

(5) "*nómou eleutherías*" (νόμου ἐλευθερίας) (Jak. 2:12), vertaal: "*Tora* van vryheid", beteken dat *Tora* bevrydend is. "*Tora* van vryheid" (Jak. 2:12) is 'n kort vorm van "perfekte *Tora*, die een van vryheid" (Jak. 1:25).

Die gevolgtrekking is dat, met al vyf terme, het Jakobus in wese een en dieselfde *Tora* in gedagte het: God se *Tora* geggee deur Moses. Jakobus se leering oor die *Tora,* soos uitgelê in Hoofstuk 4, word hieronder uiteengesit.

Hoostuk 5 sit uiteen die oorhoofse navorsingsvraag, "Wat onderrig Jakobus oor die aard, inhoud, en funksie van God se Wet?". Die antwoord kan opgesom word, soos in Hoofstuk 7, as volg:

(1) Aangaande die aard van die *Tora*: • God is die gewer en bron van die *Tora.* • Dit is perfek, regverdig, en bevrydend in wese. • En oortreding daarvan is sonde.

(2) Aangaande die inhoud van die *Tora*: • Die *Tora* is God se *Tora*, gegee deur Moses, die kern daarvan is die Tien Gebooie, die opsomming en doel daarvan is die Twee Grootste Gebooie, die uiteensetting en toepassing daarvan word gevind in die res van die Pentateug en Skrif as 'n geheel, en die prioriteit daarvan is om "regverdigeid", "barmhartigheid", en "gerouheid" uit te druk en te beoefen. • Jakobus is toegespits op die "morele" gebooie van die *Tora* en is stil oor die "seremoniële" gebooie. Vir duidelikeheid oor die toepaslikheid van die "seremoniële" gebooie moet mens die res van die Nuwe

Testament raadpleeg.

(3) Aangaande die funksie van die *Tora*: • Die *Tora* weerkaats God se karakter en die regverdige standaarde van Sy koningkryk, en dit weerspieël die ware morele toestand van die gelowige. • Dit omlyn suiwer en nuttige godsdiens, dit definieer sonde, en dit sit God se standaarde vir oordeling uiteen. • Die *Tora* onderrig en lei gelowiges op in hulle morele en sosiale verpligtinge, en dit lei hulle op om "*gesed*" (of "goedertierenheid") te beoefen en om God se barmhartige mense te wees. • Daarmee ingeplant, beskerm die *Tora* gelowiges teen transendente gevare, dit is 'n middel of gids vir hulle volmaaktheid, en 'n wag om hulle vryheid to te bewaar.

Hoofstuk 6 vergelyk Jakobus se leering oor die *Tora* met die van die res van die Nuwe Testament, ten einde die harmonie tussen Jakobus en die res van die NT te demonstreer en Jakobus se bydrae tot die NT se leerstelling oor God se Wet uit te lig. Daarvoor word die volgende sleutel NT gedeeltes sorgvuldig geëksigeer: Matteus 5:17-20; 23:23-24; Romeine 3:28, 31; 8:1-4; Hebreërs 8:10-12; 1 Johannes 3:4; and 5:1-4. Hierdie skrifgedeeltes toon merkwaardige ooreenkomste met Jakobus oor die aard, inhoud, en funksie van die *Tora*:

(1) Aangaande die aard van die *Tora*: • Jesus onderrig dat die *Tora* permanent is en verbind dit met hoe om reg lewe. • Paulus bevestig dat die *Tora* se standaarde regverdig is, en Johannes definieer sonde as "*Tora*-loosheid". • Van nature is die *Tora* bestem om in die harte van God se mense te wees, soos Hebreëus impliseer. • En Johannes voeg by dat, vir die gelowige, dit nie 'n juk is nie maar 'n bevrydende vreugde.

(2) Aangaande die inhoud van die *Tora* • Jesus se doel was nie om die *Tora* leeg te maak van sy oorspronklike inhoud nie, maar om dit op te vul deur dit sy ware en volle betekenis te gee. • Die hoof bestanddele van die *Tora* "geregtigheid", "barmhartigheid", en "getrouheid", sonder dat die mindere dinge soos tiendes noodwendig uitgesluit word. • En volgens Hebreërs, sluit die kern inhoud sekerlik die Dekaloog in.

(3) Aangaande die funksie van die *Tora* • Jesus verwag van Sy volgelinge om die *Tora* te onderrig en onderhou. • En dit is waarom, soos Hebreërs impliseer, die *Tora* op die hart gegrafeer word sodat hulle dit mag ken, verstaan, liefhê, en gehoorsaam. • Maar, soos Paulus impliseer, dit is nie die *Tora* se funksie om sulke gehoorsaamheid te produseer nie. • Dit is waarom Christus versoening gedoen het vir Sy mense se sonde (om hulle te bevry van skuld en veroordeling van die *Tora*) en die Heilige Gees vir hulle verseker en verkry het om in hulle te woon, om hulle te bevry, en om hulle te bemagtig om uiteindelik God se regverdige standaarde (van Sy *Tora*) uit te leef soos hulle veronderstel is.

Terwyl daar 'n spanning is tussen Jakobus en Paulus oor regverdigmaking deur geloof (alleen), en terwyl Jakobus redelik stil is oor die lewensbelangrike rol van die Heilige Gees in

wedergeboorte en heiligmaking, is hierdie twee sake nie in teenstelling met Jakobus nie en dit kan met sy leering vereenselwig word. Dit word gevind dat die punte van verskil nie weersprekings is nie, maar areas is waar hulle mekaar aanvul vir ‘n voller begrip van die NT se leering oor die *Tora*.

Hoofstuk 7 sluit die Study af deur die betekenis en leering van “*nómos*” in Jakobus op te som, kritiek te lewer oor die algemene interpretasie van “*nómos*” in Jakobus, praktiese implikasies van die Studie uit te wys, en voorstelle te maak oor moontlike verdere navorsing. Van die nege algemene interpretasies van “*nómos*” gelys in die Studie inleiding, is die eerste moontlik, die volgende vier is redelik waarskynlik (met voorkeur vir Opsies 2 & 3), en die laaste vier is baie onwaarskynlik gevind. Aangesien Jakobus die betekenis en leering van “*nómos*” in Jakobus redelik goed gedefineer is, is die hoof implikasies van die Studie is as volg:

(1) Is Jakobus se bydrae tot die NT se leering oor die *Tora* gewigtig en onmisbaar.

(2) Verskeie algemene interpretasies van “*nómos*” in Jakobus kan en moet verontagsaam word.

(3) Algemene vrae oor die rol van die *Tora* in Christenskap kan met redelike sekerheid beantwoord word.

(4) Die waarheid van algemene leerstellings wat oor die *Tora* volgehou word kan getoets word teen Jakobus se leering.

(5) Jakobus se stem moet gehoor en op ag geslaan word deur die kerk wat toenemend deur antinomianisme en morele agteruitgang in die gesig staar word.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Old Testament

Gen.	Genesis	Eccl.	Ecclesiastes
Exod.	Exodus	Song.	Song of Songs
Lev.	Leviticus	Isa.	Isaiah
Num.	Numbers	Jer.	Jeremiah
Deut.	Deuteronomy	Lam.	Lamentations
Jos.	Joshua	Ezek.	Ezekiel
Jud.	Judges	Dan.	Daniel
Ruth	Ruth	Hos.	Hosea
1 Sam.	1 Samuel	Joel	Joel
2 Sam.	2 Samuel	Amos	Amos
1 Kgs.	1 Kings	Obad.	Obadiah
2 Kgs.	2 Kings	Jon.	Jonah
1 Chr.	1 Chronicles	Mic.	Micah
2 Chr.	2 Chronicles	Nah.	Nahum
Ezr.	Ezra	Hab.	Habakkuk
Neh.	Nehemiah	Zep.	Zephaniah
Est.	Esther	Hag.	Haggai
Job	Job	Zec.	Zechariah
Psa.	Psalms	Mal.	Malachi
Prov.	Proverbs		

New Testament

Mat.	Matthew	1 Pet.	1 Peter
Mark	Mark	2 Pet.	2 Peter
Luke	Luke	1 John	1 John
John	John	2 John	2 John
Acts	Acts	3 John	3 John
Rom.	Romans	Jude	Jude
1 Cor.	1 Corinthians	Rev.	Revelation
2 Cor.	2 Corinthians		
Gal.	Galatians		
Eph.	Ephesians		
Phil.	Philippians		
Col.	Colossians		
1 Thes.	1 Thessalonians		
2 Thes.	2 Thessalonians		
1 Tim.	1 Timothy		
2 Tim.	2 Timothy		
Tit.	Titus		
Phlm.	Philemon		
Heb.	Hebrews		
Jas.	James		

BIBLE TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

AMP	The Amplified Bible, 1987.
CJB	Complete Jewish Bible, 1998.
ESV	English Standard Version, 2001.
GNB	Good News Bible, 1992.
KJV	King James Version, 1995.
M	Greek NT Majority Text, 1985.
MT	Masoretic Text, Lexham, 2004.
NASB	New American Standard Bible, 1995.
NIV	New International Version, 2011.
NKJV	New King James Version, 1982.
NLT	New Living Translation, 2015.
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version, 1989.
LITV	Literal Translation of the Bible, 1985.
LXX	Septuagint, Lexham, 2012.
OJB	Orthodox Jewish Bible, 2011.
RV	Revised Version, 1885.
NU	The Greek New Testament, 4th Revised Edition, UBS, 2012.
TLV	Tree of Life Version, 2015.
TR	Greek NT Textus Receptus, 1550.
TPT	The Passion Translation, 2018.
YLT	Young's Literal Translation, 1898.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

absolute: In philosophy, an absolute is 'a value or principle which is regarded as universally valid' (Oxford Dictionary, 2008:3). In ethics, absolutes are 'rules that are to be observed in all situations, regardless of contexts, and with no exceptions' (McKim, 1996:2). For the purpose of this Study an absolute is understood to be ***a biblical statement or instruction that is true or applicable for all people of all times***. Stated differently, absolutes are 'those parts of the [biblical] message' that are applicable to 'people of any time' (Wolvaardt, 2005:28, 38). See: "relative".

antinomianism: The term is derived from the compound noun formed by the Greek words "*antí*" (*ἀντί*) and "*nómos*" (*νόμος*), which literally means "against law" (McKim, 2014:15). According to González (2005:10), Martin Luther coined the term in response to John Agricola who 'objected to the use of the law of Israel, specifically the Decalogue, in instructing believers in their obligations'. For the purposes of this Study, antinomianism ***ranges from opposing God's Law to denying the need for it in the Christian's life***.[3]

commandments *(Hebrew: מִצְוָה, miṣwâ - mitzvah; plural: mitzvot; Greek: ἐντολή - entolē)***:** According to Swanson (1997), *mitzvah* is 'an authoritative directive' or 'a written legal condition'. For the purpose of this Study, *mitzvah* refers to that 'given by God' (HALOT, 2000:622). Benner (2009:116) contends that while God's *mitzvot* imply 'force or power',[4] they are really intended to be 'directives or landmarks that we look for to guide us'. Moreover, as Carpenter & Comfort (2000:35) insist, 'we must understand the commandments [of God] as the loving instructions of a father to his children'. Traditional Judaism has counted and codified 613 *mitzvot* within the Pentateuch (Lancaster, 2017:9.4). For this Study, however, a "commandment" can be any ***'biblical commandment'*** (Friedman, 2012:108) ***given by God as an authoritative expression of His will for (His) people*** - whether in *Pentateuch* or elsewhere in the Scriptures.[5] For more about "commandments" see **footnote**.[6] See: "*mitzvot*" and "*Torah*".

[3] See: Ferguson (2016:140); MacArthur & Mayhue (2017:924); Morgan & Peterson (2020:5); Packer (1993:178).

[4] See also Hartley (1999:757).

[5] According to Berkhof (1996:612), the corpus of Biblical commandments and prohibitions as revelations of God's will constitue the "Law" (i.e. *Torah*). See "Law" / "*Torah*" below).

[6] The LORD's commandments are synonymous with His voice (Exod. 15:26; Deut. 13:4, 18; 26:17; 28:1-2). His commandments are pure, enlightening (Psa. 19:8), faithful, true, and righteous (Psa. 119:86, 151, 172). Obedience to His commandments are associated with blessing, life, wisdom, and understanding (Deut. 4:6; 28:1-2; 30:15-20; Psa. 111:10; 119:73, 98; 128:1) (See also: Carpenter & Comfort (2000:35)). Disobedience

covenant: The word "covenant" translates the Hebrew word, "*b^{e}riyṯ*",[7] the root of which is commonly associated with, "bond" or "fetter", or even "eat with",[8] which would 'signify mutual obligation' (Payne, 1987:237). Looking at the usage of the word in the Old Testament,[9] more than its etymology, Williamson (2000:420) suggests that it conveys the idea of 'a solemn commitment, guaranteeing promises or obligations undertaken by one or both covenant parties'. Schlimm (2018)[10] explains that "making a covenant" is literally, "cutting a covenant",[11] in Hebrew, which refers to the covenant ritual of sacrificing an animal,[12] whose lot the covenant breaker should share. Therefore, covenants were not to be 'taken lightly' (Schlimm, 2018). Clearly, biblical covenants were more than mutual agreements.[13] Covenants were made between nations, individuals, sovereigns and subjects, and between God and people.[14] Of these, the latter is the most frequent and significant in Scripture, with the 'fundamental idea' of God and His covenant people being 'bound together in the closest imaginable ways' (Schlimm, 2018), by virtue of the covenant relationship. Louw & Nida (1996:451) explains that a covenant bond may be the 'most important and lasting interpersonal relationship' - one that 'binds a person for a lifetime' and 'even involves willingness to die for the sake of the covenantal relationship'. While 'there is no consensus about the number of divine covenants in Scripture' (Williamson, 2000:420), the following six are commonly listed as of primary interest: (1) the "Noahic" (Gen. 9); (2) the "Abrahamic" (Gen. 15); (3) the "Mosaic" (Exod. 19); (4) the "Levitical" (Num. 25); (5) the "Davidic" (2 Sam. 23); and, most significantly, (6) the "New Covenant" (Jer. 31).[15] Reformed theologians have identified an additional, overarching covenant, called "the Covenant of Grace", which 'serves to keep the continuity and

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brings about guilt, curse, death, and the need for atonement (Lev. 4; Deut. 28:15ff.; 30:15-20).[6] 'More often than not', as Carpenter & Comfort (2000:35) observe, *mitzvot* refer to the commandments given by God in the *Torah* (See also: See Hartley (1999:758).

[7] Which in turn is translated, "*diathēkē*" (διαθήκη) in the LXX and NT.

[8] See also Williamson (2000:420).

[9] The word "covenant" (*beriyṯ*) is used no less than 285 times in the OT (according the NASB). Understandably, therefore, it is 'one of the most important motifs in biblical theology', as Williamson (2000:419-420) rightly notes.

[10] Document has no page numbers, see section entitled "Covenant".

[11] See also Carpenter & Comfort (2000:41).

[12] For example: Gen. 15:9-17. See also Smick (1999:128).

[13] See also Williamson (2000:420).

[14] See: HALOT (2000:157-158); Payne (1987:238); Smick (1999:128).

[15] See: Baker & Carpenter (2003:165); Carpenter & Comfort (2000:41); Payne (1987:238); Williamson (2000:421).

relationship between the various divine-human covenants in focus' (Williamson, 2000:421). For the purpose of this Study, a covenant, particularly a divine-human covenant such as "the New Covenant", is understood to be ***a solemn commitment between two parties, who have willingly entered into a lasting bond and most intimate relationship, with its benefits and responsibilities***.[16]

Decalogue: Composed from the Greek words "*déka*" (*δέκα*) and "*lógos*" (*λόγος*),[17] Decalogue ***refers to the Ten Commandments*** (González, 2005:43) as recorded in Exodus 20:1-17 and Deuteronomy 5:6-21. See: "Commandments" and "*Torah*".

Evangelicalism: The term developed from the Greek word "*euangélion*" (*εὐαγγέλιον*), which is translated "Good News" or "Gospel". According to Grenz et.al. (1999:48), 'in its most general sense *"evangelical"* means being characterised by a concern for the essential core of the Christian message'. More specifically, as the historian Bebbington (1989:6) found, Evangelicals are: cross-focused, Bible-based, insist on personal conversion, and are mission-driven[18]. Stated simplistically, Evangelicalism refers to ***a diverse and trans-denominational Gospel-centred movement within Protestant Christianity***.

Gospel: The word "gospel" is 'derived from the Anglo-Saxon term "god-spell", meaning "good story"; which is a rendering of the Latin "*evangelium"* and the Greek "*euangélion"* (εὐαγγέλιον)' (Petruzzello, 2018). The Greek word "*euangélion"* (εὐαγγέλιον) is composed of the words "*eu*" (εὖ), which pertains to that which is 'good or beneficial' (BDAG, 2000:401), and "*angelía*" (ἀγγελία), which means 'message' (BDAG, 2000:8). Thus, it literally means, "good message" or "good news".[19] The Good News can be variously expressed.[20] Lemico (1988:6, 12-13) argues that throughout the New Testament there

[16] See Louw & Nida (1996:451).

[17] Thus "the decalogue" literally means, "the ten words".

[18] Or in his words, they are known for their: "crucicentrism", "biblicism", "conversionism", and "activism".

[19] See also BDAG (2000:402).

[20] For example:

- The Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed that, '*the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel*' (Mark 1:15, NASB). Thus essentially, the Gospel presents a summons for all people to turn from their sins and trust in Christ for entry into and life in God's Kingdom. This summons is followed by a call to discipleship (Mark 1:17; 10:38-40). And '*this Gospel shall be proclaimed in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come*' (Mat. 24:14, NASB).
- The word "*euangelion*" (*εὐαγγέλιον*) is used 75 times in the New Testament – two of which refer to "a different gospel" (εὐαγγέλιον ἕτερον) (2 Cor. 11:4; Gal. 1:6) and seventy-three of which refer to the authentic Gospel (see NOTE below about the 73 uses). Accordingly, the authentic Gospel is the true and eternal Good News

exists a core of the following six constant elements in the "*kērygma*"[21]: (1) God (2) sent/raised (3) Jesus, and (4) responding by repentance/faith (5) towards God (6) brings salvation benefits. More simply stated, the Gospel is the central message of Christianity that is 'centered on God's provision of salvation to the world in Jesus Christ' (McKim, 2014:137).[22] More broadly speaking, according to Gonzáles (2005:69) 'traditionally, Christian theology has understood' the "Gospel" as both 'the message that Jesus proclaimed' and 'the message about Jesus'. For the purpose of this study, the Gospel is defined as ***God's Good News to humanity about entry into and life in His kingdom, through the saving work of His Son, and according to the teaching of His Son***.

halakha: '***Application of biblical commandments*** to a community lifestyle' (Friedman & Friedman, 2012:108).

Judaism: The term is derived from the word "*Ioudaïsmós*" (Ἰουδαϊσμός) used in Galatians 1:13-14. In verse 14 (NASB) Paul testifies: "I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of

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of God and His Son Jesus Christ for salvation, peace and life in God's kingdom (to all who believe), according to the power and grace of God, and for the glory of Christ and of the blessed God forever.

- Alternatively stated, the biblical view of the Gospel is that from God, revealed by Him through the Prophets in the Holy Scriptures and proclaimed by His Apostles (Rom. 1:1-2). It is about Messiah, who was born in the line of David, and was proven to be the Son of God when He was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 1:3-4). Accordingly, '*Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures*', and '*He was buried and … raised on the third day according to the Scriptures*' (1 Cor. 15:3-4, NASB). And the Resurrected Lord Jesus appeared to numerous eye witnesses (1 Cor. 15:5-8). The purpose of the Gospel is for the obedience of faith among all the nations and for His name (Rom. 1:5-6).

  NOTE: Of the 73 uses that refer to the authentic Gospel, 31 (43%) qualify or describe it as: "the Gospel of the Kingdom" (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας) (x3: Mat. 4:23; 9:35; 24:14); "the Gospel of God" (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ) (x8: Mark 1:14; Rom. 1:1; 15:16; 2 Cor. 11:7; 1 Thes. 2:2, 8, 9; 1 Pet. 4:17); "the Gospel of the grace of God" (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ) (x1: Acts 20:24); "the Gospel of the glory of the blessed God" (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς δόξης τοῦ μακαρίου θεοῦ) (x1: 1 Tim. 1:11); "the Gospel according to the power of God" (τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ κατὰ δύναμιν θεοῦ) (x1: 2 Tim. 1:8); "the Gospel of Jesus Christ" (τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ) (x1: Mark 1:1); "the Gospel of His Son" (τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ) (x1: Rom. 1:9); "the Gospel of Christ" (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ) (x8: Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 9:12; 2 Cor. 2:12; 9:13; 10:14; Gal. 1:7; Phil. 1:27; 1 Thes. 3:2); "the Gospel of the glory of Christ" (τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς δόξης τοῦ Χριστοῦ) (x1: 2 Cor. 4:4); "the Gospel of our Lord Jesus" (τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ) (x1: 2 Thes. 1:8); "the truth of the Gospel" (ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) (x2: Gal. 2:5, 14); "the Gospel of your salvation" (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν) (x1: Eph. 1:13); "the Gospel of peace" (τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς εἰρήνης) (x1: Eph. 6:15); the "eternal Gospel" (εὐαγγέλιον αἰώνιον) (x1: Rev. 14:6).

[21] Transliteration of the Greek word "*κήρυγμα"*, which means "proclamation". In the current context, it refers to the Gospel message.

[22] See also Mounce (2000:513).

my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions." BDAG (1996:507) defines it as '***the Judean way of belief and life***'. According to Mason (2007:457), the term was understood 'until late antiquity', not so much as a "religion" per se, but as 'an ethnic group comparable to other ethnic groups, with their distinctive laws, traditions, customs, and God'.

Judaizers/Judaizing: theological terms (not used in the NT) describing the insistence that: "*Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved*" (Acts 15:1, NASB), and/or that Gentile converts are required to, "*observe the Law of Moses*" (Acts. 15:5, NASB). The former is clearly a legalistic perversion of *Torah*, as *Torah* teaches that it is by faith that one is justified (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3-5). The latter, as Stern (1996:273) points out, would have meant, 'both the Written and Oral *Torah*". And so, as Polhill (1992:321) explains: for initiation into and sustained fellowship with the Christian community, "Judaizers" required Gentile converts to, 'submit to Jewish proselyte requirements, especially to circumcision' and 'rituals of the *Torah'*, thus effectively requiring them to become Jews in conviction and lifestyle. Stern (1988:3) sums up "Judaizing" as '***one or a combination of' requiring Gentiles: (1) to 'convert to Judaism' for salvation; (2) to 'follow Jewish cultural practices'; (3) and/or to 'obey a perverted***[23] ***version of Torah'.*** See "Oral *Torah*".

judgments *(Hebrew: mišpāṭîm, plural; Greek: κριματα)*[24]**:** According to Kidner (1975b:454), these are, 'the decisions of the all-wise Judge about common human situations' (cf. Exod. 21:1; Deut. 17:8a, 9b),[25] and 'hence the revealed "rights and duties" appropriate to them'. He (Kidner, 1975b:454) adds that, 'the dominant sense' is that they are '***the standard given for fair dealing' between people***.

Law *(Greek: νόμος - nómos)*, Capitalised "L"**:** ***Greek equivalent for Torah***. See: "Law of God" and "*Torah*".

[23] For example, a legalistic distortion of the *Torah*, which includes human traditions and commandments (cf. Mat. 15:3-9). See also: "Legalism".

[24] Translated: "judgments of Your righteousness" in LITV; "righteous judgments" in NASB, NKJV, TLV; "righteous rules" in ESV; "righteous ordinances" in NRSV; "righteous laws" in NIV.

[25] See also VanGemeren (1991:737).

law *(Greek: νόμος - nómos)*, Lower case "l"**:** According to BDAG (2000: 677), "law" in this sense is, 'a procedure or practice that has taken hold', and can be translated, "custom", "rule", "principle", or "norm". In some instances, for example Romans 7:21-23[26] and 8:2, it could refer to an abstract 'governing power' (Louw & Nida, 1996:426)[27] that controls or influences behaviour. Therefore, this use of "law" (*νόμος*) can be defined as *a* ***prescribed or practised principle or a governing power***.

law of Christ *(Greek: νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ)***:** The term is found in Galatians 6:2. BDAG (2000:677) defines it as, 'life under the lordship of Jesus Christ' as 'a new law', 'system of conduct' or 'the standard set by Christ'. A similar term, literally "in law of Christ" (ἔννομος Χριστοῦ), is used in 1 Corinthians 9:21. It means 'in accordance with' (BDAG, 2000:337-338) or 'subject to' (Louw & Nida, 1996:427) the "law of Christ". This does not mean, as Fee (2014:475) contends, 'that in Christ a new set of laws has taken the place of the old'. Nor does it mean, as Pratt (2000:150) argues, that Christ's law is 'opposed to the law of Moses'. Pratt (2000:151) suggests that "the law of Christ" should be understood as God's Law for Christians, as 'interpreted in the light of Christ's coming' and 'moral teaching'. Stern (1996: 466) defines it as "the *Torah* of Moses", 'understood and modified in accordance with what the Messiah has said and done'. But then he clarifies by saying that it is not something that 'abrogates and supersedes' the *Torah* or the Prophets but that 'make[s] their full import clearer' and achieves their 'true intention'; as we see in Matthew 5:17-21ff. For the purpose of this Study, the "law of Christ" is defined as ***the Torah as interpreted and applied by Christ***.

Law of God: A ***synonym for "Law"***, ***making explicit that God is its author, source, or originator***. See: "Law" and "*Torah*".

law of Moses: Depending on the context, ***it refers to the Pentateuch*** *(first five books of the Bible)* ***or "Law of God"*** *(see "Law of God" above)* ***contained in the Pentateuch***. Calling it, the "Law of Moses", makes explicit that Moses was the means or instrument through whom God revealed His Law contained in the Pentateuch (cf. 2 Chron. 34:14).[28]

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[26] The TLV translation renders well the different uses and meanings of "*nómos*" in of Romans 7:21-23 as follows: *21 So I find "the principle" (τὸν νόμον) - that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. 22 For I delight in "the Torah of God" (τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ) with respect to the inner man, 23 but I see "a different law" (ἕτερον νόμον) in my body parts, battling against "the law of my mind" (τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοός μου) and bringing me into bondage under "the law of sin" (τῷ νόμῳ τῆς ἁμαρτίας) which is in my body parts.*

[27] See also Cranfield (2004: 346).

[28] It (or at least the essential core) is also referred to as the "Book of the Covenant" (Exod. 24:7; 2 Kgs. 23:2, 21; 2 Chron. 34:30).

lawless *(Greek: ἄνομος - anomos)***:** Literally means "not" or "without" law (νόμος). The lexical meaning is, 'being without adherence to the law' (i.e. "without law"), 'violating moral standards' (i.e. lawless) (BDAG, 2000:85), or 'living without regard to law' (Louw & Nida, 1996:757). For the purpose of this Study, "lawless" will be taken to mean, ***disregarding or violating God's Law (or Torah)***.

lawlessness *(Greek: ἀνομία - amonia)***:** The ***state, condition or product of a lawless disposition***. (BDAG, 2000:85). See: "lawless".

legalism: It is commonly understood to refer to, 'a rigorous checklist adherence to a standard or law', or to a 'merit-based view of salvation' (Brower, 2011:477). According to Vickers (2013:100), this approach to God's Law, 'separate[s] the law from God the Lawgiver', it 'ignores its covenantal-redemptive purpose', and moves us 'toward self-obsessed pride in our own accomplishments, particularly over and against the moral failures of others'.[29] A second use of the term refers, as (Allison, 2016)[30] explains, to 'the approach that advocates obeying additional commands and prohibitions beyond biblical norms'. Or as Wolvaardt (2005:38) puts it, 'to regard as absolute what is not a biblical absolute'. Thus, legalism is ***to treat God's commandments as the means or basis for salvation or acceptance with God, and/or add to His commandments***. See: "absolute"; "liberalism"; and "relative".

liberalism: The term has different meanings, depending on the context (González, 2005:199). Theologically, according to McKim (2014:183), liberalism is 'a theological movement', originating from Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), which seeks to 'reformulate Christian doctrine in contemporary terms', by emphasizing the use of 'reason, science, freedom, and experience'. This typically causes people to treat as "relative" what is biblically "absolute" (see: "absolute" and "relative"). For the purposes of this Study, ***"liberalism" is practised when 'those parts of the message that are [indeed] absolutes, are perceived to be relatives'*** (Wolvaardt, 2005:38). See: "legalism".

Messianic Jews: 'The original ***Jewish believers in Jesus*** from the first century, with its ancient flagship community in Jerusalem' (Friedman & Friedman, 2012:108).

midrash: '***A type of Rabbinic commentary that plays off the literal (biblical) text***, in attempting to explain it' (Friedman & Friedman, 2012:109).

[29] See also Packer (1993:175-176).

[30] No page numbers printed, see "legalism" in Allison (2016).

Mishnah: ***'Collection of Oral Torah*****,** compiled and committed to writing around A.D. 200' (Bivin, 2007:157). See: "Oral *Torah*".

mitzvot: The ***biblical commandments*** (Friedman & Friedman, 2012:109). See: "commandments".

nasi *(נָשִׂיא)***:** 'The role of ***Chief Justice of the Sanhedrin***' (Friedman & Friedman, 2012:109).

Oral *Torah*: *'Rabbinic interpretations and rulings based on the written Torah'*; which in Judaism is considered just as binding at written *Torah* (Bivin, 2007:157).

precepts *(Hebrew: piqqūdîm; Greek: εντολας)***:**[31] According to Kidner (1975b:453), the word "precept" is drawn from 'the sphere of an officer or overseer' who is 'responsible to look closely into a situation and take action' (cf. Jer. 23:2). He (Kidner, 1975b:453) explains that "precepts" are ***God's 'particular instructions',*** as One who 'cares about the detail'.

Prophets (*Nevi'im)***:** Second division of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), which includes: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi (Tanach, 2013:Table of Contents). See: "Tanach".

rabbi: '*A respectful form of address**, meaning "my master" or "my teacher", to teachers of the Scriptures*** *in Jesus' day'* (Bivin, 2007:158).

relative: In hermeneutical (biblical application) terms, "relatives" are 'those parts of the message that were only applicable to the [original receivers]' (Wolvaardt, 2005:27-28, 38). As opposed to an absolute, a relative is ***a biblical statement or instruction that is true or applicable only in a particular context***. See: "absolute".

Sanhedrin *(Greek: συνέδριον - sunédrion)***:** A governing board or council. It could refer to the Jewish 'high counsel in Jerusalem'[32], 'a local counsel', or be applied to 'the Christian situation' (BDAG: 2000:967). Friedman & Friedman (2012:109) defines it as, a '***body of judges who deliberate on halakhic issues***'. In the Christian situation, Friedman & Friedman (2012:109) applies it to the 'Messianic Jewish leaders' found in Acts 15.

Septuagint (LXX): The Septuagint is the ***Greek version of the Old Testament*** / Hebrew Bible, translated (according to tradition) by seventy (or seventy-two, to be precise) Jewish

[31] Translated: "precepts" in LITV, NASB, NKJV, ESV, TLV, NRSV, and NIV.

[32] 'The great Sanhedrin of 71 judges' (Friedman & Friedman, 2012:109).

scholars (Porter, 2000:1099); hence the name/designation: LXX (70 in Roman numerals).[33] According to Porter (2000:1099), it was 'the Bible of the early church and of Judaism until the late first century A.D.' Furthermore, as Saldarini (2011:935) points out, the LXX was the 'the biblical text from which the NT writers, who wrote in Greek, quoted most often',[34] and its 'translation of Hebrew words into Greek resulted in Greek words taking on Hebraic meanings'; which is 'a fact of great significance for the interpretation of the NT'.[35] The LXX includes the twenty-four books of the Hebrew Bible (divided into 39 in the English OT), plus the so-called "apocryphal" or "deuterocanonical" books (Porter, 2000:1099-1100).[36] The Protestant church only accepts the books of the Hebrew Scriptures as canonical.[37] See: "Tanach".

Shema: Lit. "Hear", from the first word in Deuteronomy 6:4 ("Hear, O Israel!", NASB). According to Bivin (2007:159), the *Shema* refers to the citation of Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:13-21, and Numbers 15:37-41; and it is 'regarded by Jews as the ***supreme affirmation of God's oneness and uniqueness***'.

sin *(Greek: ἁμαρτία - hamartia)***:** 1 John states that, "everyone who does sin" (πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν) "also does lawlessness" (καὶ τὴν ἀνομίαν ποιεῖ); "and sin is lawlessness" (καὶ ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία) (1 John 3:4).[38] According to Stott (1988:125), this 'definition of sin' – though not the only in the NT, yet it 'is the clearest and most revealing'. Additionally, as Smalley (1984:154) points out, 'in the LXX the terms ἁμαρτία ("sin") and ἀνομία ("lawlessness") are used as if they are synonymous'.[39] In line with this understanding, Louw and Nida (1996:772) defines sin as, 'to act contrary to the will and law of God'. The understanding that ***sin is lawlessness (violating or disregarding***

[33] See also Saldarini (2011:935).

[34] Which is also the case for the Letter of James.

[35] This fact has relevance for the interpretation of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James.

[36] DeSliva (2000:58) explains that the Apocrypha 'designate thirteen to eighteen texts', which include: 1-4 Maccabees, 1-2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, an expanded Esther, additional tales about Daniel, Wisdom of Solomon, Wisdom of Ben Sira, Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, Prayer of Manasseh, Psalm 150, Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men. The Lexham (2012) Septuagint includes: 1-4 Kingdoms, Esdras A-B, Wisdom of Solomon, Wisdom of Sirach, Esther Chapter F (addition to Esther), Judith, Tobit, Baruch, Epistle of Jeremiah (addition to Lamentations), Susanna with Bel and the Dragon (addition to Daniel), 1-4 Maccabees, Psalms of Solomon, Enoch, and Odes.

[37] See: Douglas & Tenney (2011:247-248); Jones (2000:216); Sproul (2000:79).

[38] See also: Rom. 4:7; Heb. 10:17.

[39] (cf. Psa. 31[32]:1–2, quoted in Rom. 4:7–8; Psa. 50:4 [51:2]; and see Heb. 10:17).

God's Law) is also in line with the Hebrew understanding that sin is to miss the mark set by *Torah*. See: "*Torah*".

statutes *(Hebrew: ḥuqqîm; Greek: δικαιώματά)*[40]**:** VanGemeren (1991:738) explains that it is derived from a root, which means "engrave" or "inscribe". According to Kidner (1975b:453-454), "decrees"[41] speak of, 'the binding force and permanence' of Scripture, as '***laws engraved or inscribed' as 'a witness forever'*** (cf. Isa. 30:8).

Tanach (**T**a**N**a**K**h)**:** ***The Hebrew acronym for the three sections of Old Testament Scripture***: '*Torah*, *Nevi'im* (i.e. "Prophets"), and *K'tuvim* (i.e. "Writings") (Friedman, 2001:132). Jesus refers to these three sections in Luke 24:44. See: "*Torah*"; "Prophets"; and "Writings".

testimonies *(Hebrew: ʿēdôt; Greek: μαρτυρια)*[42]**:** The LORD instructed Moses to place the book of the Law beside the ark of the covenant, as an abiding "witness" (*e*d, MST; *μαρτυριον*, LXX) against God's people (Deut. 31:26). Kidner (1975b:453) explains that implied in the expression "testimonies", is the 'outspokenness of Scripture', with its '***high standards and frank warnings***', together with 'its dependability' ***as the 'faithful and true witness'***. VanGemeren (1991:738) adds that the observance of the LORD's "testimonies"[43] 'signifies loyalty to the terms of the covenant'.

Torah *(Hebrew:* תּוֹרָה*, tôrâ – torah; Greek:* νόμος[44]*)***:** The OT usage and meaning of the word "*Torah*" include: "direction", "instruction", "decision", or "rule" (HALOT, 2000:1711). Lancaster (2015:37) explains that the Hebrew word "*Torah*" comes from the Hebrew word "*yarah*" *(יָרָה, yārâ)*, which means to "cast", "throw", or "shoot"; and the same Hebrew root is used as an archery term, meaning to "take aim, to shoot".[45] Accordingly, Lancaster (2015:37) says that "*Torah*" is 'God's aim for us'. The opposite of "*Torah*" is "*chata*" *(חָטָא ḥāṭāʾ)*, which means to 'miss the mark', and which is translated "sin". "*Torah*" can also, mean "teaching". According to Hartley (1999:404), "teaching" is the basic meaning of the word - whether it is 'the wise man instructing his son or God instructing Israel'.[46] Benner (2009:159) emphasises the fatherly and loving aspect, by insisting that "*Torah*" is God's

[40] Translated: "statutes" in LITV, NASB, NKJV, ESV, NRSV; "decrees" in TLV, and NIV.

[41] VanGemeren (1991:738) refers to *ḥuqqîm* as "decrees" rather than "statutes".

[42] Translated: "testimonies" in LITV, NASB, NKJV, ESV, TLV; "decrees" in NRSV; and "statutes" in NIV.

[43] VanGemeren (1991:738) refers to *ʿēdôt* as "statutes" rather than "testimonies".

[44] See BDAG (2000:678).

[45] See also: Hartley et.al. (1999:403); Benner (2009:159); and VanGemeren (1997, vol.4:893).

[46] See also: Clements (2003:285); Benner (2009:159); and VanGemeren (1997, vol.4:893).

'teachings to His children which are given in love'.[47] Furthermore, Lancaster (2015:39) comments, "*Torah*" is God's 'direction, instruction, teaching, and guidance' – His 'instruction manual for life'. For the purpose of this Study, "*Torah*" is defined as ***God's fatherly standards (or aims) and instructions (or teachings) for His people for life.*** Depending on the context, either the "teaching" or "scriptural" aspect of "*Torah*" is in view. In the case of the former, the emphasis is on ***Torah as "instruction"***. In the case of the latter, the emphasis is on ***Torah as "Scripture"*** (e.g. Mat. 5:17; 7:12; 12:5), which is a reference to the Pentateuch;[48] which is the first division of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), which includes: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. In some cases, the emphasis on "*Torah* as Scripture" could refer to the OT Scriptures in a wider, and perhaps comprehensive, sense (e.g. John 10:34; 12:34; 15:25). Kidner (1975:453) helpfully explains that *Torah* 'can be used of a single command or of a whole body of law, especially the Pentateuch, or again of Scripture as a whole'. The core of the *Torah* is the "Ten Commandments" (see "Decalogue"), which can be summed up by the "two greatest commandments" (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18b; Mat. 22:37-40), and which is expanded and applied in the situations of life by the remaining commandments in the Pentateuch, and of Scripture as a whole.[49] This being the case, Berkhof (1996:612) seems to be right in his assertion that ***the "Law" (i.e. "Torah") 'comprises anything in Scripture which is a revelation of God's will in the form of commandment or prohibition'***[50]. For more about *Torah* see **footnote**.[51] See also: "Decalogue", "Law", and "Law of God". For the elements or nuances of *Torah* see: "Commandments", "Judgments", "Precepts", "Statutes", "Testimonies", and "Word".

[47] See also: Packer (2007:24); Richardson (2011:32-33); and Wilcock (2001:194-195).

[48] The Pentateuch obviously includes more than just God's instructions or commandments. It also includes His promises (e.g. Gen. 3:15; 12:1-3; Deut. 18:15) and redemptive revelation (e.g. Gen. 15:6; 22:18) (see Kaiser, 1999:189). It includes both "law" and "Gospel" (see Berkhof, 1996:612) (cf. Luke 24:27; Rom. 3:21; Heb. 4:2). It is critical, therefore, that the "*Torah* as instruction" be interpreted in the context of the promises and redemptive revelation in the *Torah* (see also "Context of the Ten Commandments" under **Section 3.4.2**).

[49] Refer to: Brown (2010:75); Miller (2009:3-4); Motyer (2011:237); Stuart (2006:441-442).

[50] This is regarded as an alternative definition for the "*Torah* as instruction" in this study, the preferred definition being: "God's fatherly standards (or aims) and instructions (or teachings) for His people for life".

[51] God's *Torah* is "righteous" (δίκαιος, LXX) (Deut. 4:8), "perfect" (ἄμωμος. LXX) (Psa. 19:7), and "truth" (ἀλήθεια, LXX) (Psa. 119:142). His *Torah* is "holy" (ἅγιος), "spiritual" (πνευματικός) and "good" (καλός) (Rom. 7:12, 14, 16). The commandments of *Torah* are "holy" (ἅγιος), "righteous" (δίκαιος), and "good" (ἀγαθός) (Rom. 7:12). *Torah* is universal (cf. Rom. 2:15) and eternal (cf. Psa. 111:7-8; 119:89, 142; 160; Mat. 5:18; Luke 16:17). God made the *Torah* great and glorious for the sake of His righteousness (Isa. 42:21). It is in the believer's heart (Psa. 40:8; Jer. 31:33; Heb. 8:10; 10:16) and it is the believer's delight (Psa. 119:77, 174). The "weighty things" (βαρύτερα) of the *Torah* are: "justice" (κρίσις), "mercy" (ἔλεος), and "faithfulness" (πίστις) (Mat. 23:23). And "love" (ἀγαπάω) is the "fulfilment" (πλήρωμα) of the *Torah* (Rom. 13:10).

Tripartite Division of the Law (*Torah*): The threefold division of the Law (into "moral", "civil"/"judicial", and "ceremonial"/"ritual") has been 'a long and widely held [theological] construction' in the Christian church (Rothenberg, 2018:822).[52] While the construction is reflected in several historic confessions,[53] it has been more comprehensively expounded in the Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) 1646 (chapter 19), the Savoy Declaration of Faith and Order (SDFO) 1658 (chapter 19), and the Baptist Confession of Faith (BCF) 1689 (chapter 19). Accordingly, ***the "moral law", reflected in the Ten Commandments, 'does forever bind all' people***. ***The "ceremonial law", 'containing several typical ordinances'*** – 'partly of worship, prefiguring Christ … and partly holding forth diverse instructions of moral duties' – ***are 'abrogated' under the NT***. And ***the "civil law", consisting of 'sundry judicial laws', 'expired' together with the [theocratic] state of [Israel]***', though ***'their general equity only being still of moral use'.*** While the WCF, SDFO, and BCF do seem to deny normative value for the "ceremonial law", Kaiser (1999:154) makes the agreeable point that both the "civil" and "ceremonial" laws doubtlessly 'carry principles within them that are still normative for our day'.[54] Kaiser (1999:199) helpfully explains that the "ceremonial" and "civil" laws are 'but illustrations, applications, or situationally-specific implementations' of the permanent "moral" law.

uses of the Law (*Torah*) *(Latin: usus legis)*: McKim (1996:180) explains that 'Protestant Theologians usually recognise three uses or purposes of the Law of God':[55] (1) 'to restrain sin in society'; (2) 'to show human sinfulness and point to Christ'; (3) 'to instruct Christian believers in the will of God and become a norm of conduct in the Christian life'. The first use is known as the ***"political" or "civil" use***, the second as the ***"pedagogical" use***, and the third as the ***"didactic" use*** (McKim, 1996:334).[56] Berkhof (1996:615) explains that while the "Lutherans" 'stress' the second use and the third use 'occupies no important

[52] See also: Bayes (2017:3-8); Calvin (1845c:537-538; IV:XX:14); Ross (2010:1).

[53] Including, amongst others: French Gallican Confession 1559 (article XXIII); Belgic Confession 1561 (article 25); Second Helvetic Confession 1562 (chapter XII); Thirty Nine Articles of Religion 1571 (article 7).

[54] See also Goddard (1987:587).

[55] See also Packer (1993:94-95).

[56] See also Berkhof (1996:614-615). Taking a more comprehensive view, based on all of Scripture, First Fruits of Zion distinguishes between the biblical function of the *Torah* towards unbelievers and believers respectively. They (HaYesod, 2017:1.11-1.12) propose that the function for unbelievers includes: '*Torah* is a witnessing tool' (Deut. 4:6-8), '*Torah* reveals sin' (Exod. 20:17; Rom. 7:7; 1 John 3:4), '*Torah* brings wrath' (Rom. 4:15), '*Torah* is a pedagogue' (Gal. 3:24), and '*Torah* points to Yeshua'. And they (HaYesod, 2017:1.13-1.14) propose that for believers it includes: *Torah* 'trains in righteousness' (2 Tim. 3:16-17), '*Torah* teaches the lifestyle of godliness' (Mal. 4:4), *Torah* is 'a source of blessing' (Psa. 1:1-2), and '*Torah* points to Yeshua' (Luke 24:44-45). However, for this study the classic protestant view will be of primary interest.

place in their system', "Reformed" Christians 'do full justice' to the second use and 'give even more attention' to the Law in sanctification (i.e. third use) – that is, 'they stand strong in the conviction that believers are still under the law as a rule of life and gratitude'.

views on the Law: refer to **Appendix A.**

Word *(Hebrew: dāḇār; Greek: λόγος)***:** Kidner (1975b:454) explains that this is 'the most general term of all, embracing God's truth in any form, stated, promised or commanded.' VanGemeren (1991:737), states that this is, '***any word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord***'.

Writings (*K'tuvim):* Third division of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), which includes: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, The Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles (Tanach, 2013:Table of Contents). See: "Tanach".

yalqut *(Hebrew:* ילקוט*)***:** A '**collection of writings or teachings** … often the highlighted *Torah* commentaries of a given rabbi, scholar or commentator' (Friedman & Friedman, 2012:110).

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Chapter Outline

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1.1. Background and Problem Statement

1.1.1. Conflicting Views on the Law within Evangelicalism

There is no consensus among Evangelical Christians about the role and relevance of the Law of God in the life of the Christian (Gundry, 1999:9).[57] In fact, there are radically different and even opposing beliefs concerning the New Testament's teaching about the Law (Gundry, 1999:9).[58] On the one side of the spectrum is the view ("Dispensational") that the Law is 'antithetical to' and 'has no part of' the Gospel (Strickland, 1999:279). On the other side is the view ("Theonomic Reformed") that the Old Testament Law (*Torah*), with the exception of its ceremonial requirements, are still binding upon Christians today (Bahnsen, 1999:142).

Some, like Moo (1999:376),[59] believe that Old Testament instructions are only authoritative for Christians if they are explicitly restated and commanded in the New Testament. Others, like Bahnsen (1999:142),[60] believe that all Old Testament commandments are still binding unless they are clearly set aside in the New Testament. According to Kaiser (1998:68-69), 'Christians[61] generally have [one of these] two views'; the first of which is basically consistent with Luther's view and the second with Calvin's.

The Reformed Traditions tend to hold to the continuity and validity of the OT Law, while the Dispensationalists tend to see it as no longer regulatory for NT believers.

None, however, can deny that believers in the New Covenant are under "the law of Christ" (1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2). But there are different conceptions of what "the law of Christ" is and what it means to be under it. According to Strickland (1999:277), the "law of Christ" does not consist in 'a concrete corpus of demands', but of 'basic principles' for loving our neighbour. Furthermore, Strickland (1999:277) claims that the indwelling of the Spirit removes the need for 'any means of external restraint as in the law of Moses'. Against this, Kaiser (1999:302-303) argues that Christ and the apostles cite and repeat what is found in the Law and the Prophets, and that it is 'impossible to show' that the "law of Christ" is essentially 'separate or different from the law the Father revealed to Moses'.

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[57] Kaiser (1998:68) comments that, 'the law of God is one of the most debated topics in the Christian world today'. And Karlberg (2011:250) adds that there are 'ongoing disputes' and there remains a need for 'further refinement and rethinking' in 'evangelical Protestant teaching' regarding the 'doctrine of the Mosaic covenant'.

[58] Dorsey (1999:1-4) outlines 7 views and then proposes his own as an 8th perspective (call the "Theocentric Approach"). Nelson (2006:4-17) identified five main views, including: "Christian Judaism", "Theonomy", "Moral Nomism", "New Covenant Theology", and "Antinomianism".

[59] "Modified Lutheran" view.

[60] "Theonomic Reformed" view.

[61] Presumably "Protestant Christians".

Some, like Rosner (2013:138, 160), go so far as to claim that the very category of "law" has become somewhat irrelevant since it has been reappropriated as "prophecy" and "wisdom" in the New Testament. Others, like Stern (1988:52), find it hard to understand, 'how Christian theology has even dared to propose that the Torah is no more'.

The rise of the New Perspective on Paul has added another dimension to the debate about the role of the Law in Christianity. The movement claims, amongst other things, that first century Judaism has been caricatured narrowly as "legalistic", when it is better understood in "covenantal nomistic"[62] terms.[63] Accordingly, Jews (generally) were not pursuing "works-righteousness".[64] Therefore, Paul's polemic was not so much against "legalism" as it was against the notion that Jewishness and certain Jewish practices (such as circumcision, purity laws, and sabbaths) marked out God's true covenant people.[65] According to Dunn (2005:87), this new perspective should lead us away from an interpretation of Paul's doctrine of Justification that 'depends on sharp antitheses between Judaism and Christianity, between the law and grace, and between obedience and faith'.

1.1.2. Diverse Views on the "law" in James

With such diverse theological views on the Law, it is not surprising that there are diverse understandings of the "law" (νόμος)[66] in the respective books of the New Testament, including the Letter of James. Not only so, but as Kamell (2011:22) and Morgan (2010:118) point out, there is 'no consensus' on what exactly "law" (νόμος) refers to in James. Suggested meanings

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[62] The view that one's place with God's people is established on the basis of the covenant that requires obedience to its commandments and that provides means of atonement for transgressions (Sanders, 1977:75).

[63] See also: Hagner (1996:622-624); Yinger (2011:5-7; 30).

[64] Ibid. 30.

[65] Ibid. 29-31.

[66] The semantic range of *nómos* (νόμος) in the New Testament includes (refer to the **Glossary of Terms**):

a) Law: Torah as Scripture (Pentateuch itself) – for example: Mat. 5:17. In exceptional cases it could refer to the Old Testament Scriptures in a wider sense – for example: John 10:34.

b) Law: Torah as instruction (God's Law contained in the Pentateuch) – for example: Mat. 5:18.

c) law: a prescribed or practiced principle or a governing power – for example: Rom. 7:21.

Disagreement on which of these meanings applies in each case contribute to the diverse understandings. Therefore, careful study of the intended meaning in each particular context is critical for an accurate understanding of what the respective books of the NT teach concerning God's Law. Other words and phrases in the semantic domain include: "command" (ἐντέλλω), "commandment" (ἐντολή), "commandment of God" (ἐντολὴν τοῦ θεοῦ), "commandment in the Law" (ἐντολὴ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ), "Lawgiver" (νομοθέτης), "instruct" (παραγγέλλω), "instruction" (διδασκαλία), "teaching" (διδαχή), "obedience" (ὑπακοή), "obey" (ὑπακούω), "lawless" (ἄνομος), "lawlessness" (ἀνομία), "sin" (ἁμαρτία).

include, but are not necessarily limited, to the following, as identified by Evans (1983:33-36) and Kamell (2011:20-22):

(1) *Torah* as a whole (the Law of the OT as it stands).

(2) *Torah*, excluding the ritual and ethnic commands.

(3) The Decalogue plus some or all of the ethical precepts in the Old Testament.

(4) *Torah* as interpreted, personified, and fulfilled by/through Christ.

(5) *Torah* as fulfilment of the New Covenant promise in Jeremiah.

(6) Christ's teaching or the Gospel as replacement of *Torah*.

(7) The requirement to love without absolute external commands.

(8) The "law of love" which subsumes under a single principle Christ's teaching and all that *Torah* demands.

(9) A combination of the Old Testament and the Gospel.

While there is overlap between some of these definitions, they all have different nuances and some of them leave readers with very different conceptions of what the "law" is that James expects his readers to be "doers" of (cf. Jas. 1:22, 25; 4:11). Surely not all these interpretations are equally feasible and reasonable. This begs the question as to which of these definitions are read into the text and which of them best fit the context and flow of thought of the Letter of James.

The problem, however, in interpreting what exactly James has in mind as regards the "law" is that he seems to refer to it only in passing (Jas. 1:25; 2:8-12; 4:11) and in the context of other issues,[67] as Allison (2013:91) and Moo point out (2000:30). Moo (2000:32) concludes that James provides, 'little concrete information about the exact identity and scope of "law"'.

While it might be true that "law" is not 'well defined' in James, it is certainly not 'undefined or abstract', as Evans (1983:39) asserts. And while the idea of the "law" does not seem to be so much in the forefront of James's mind (specific ethical concerns are), it does not disappear from his mind, since it clearly surfaces at various points in the Letter to provide the basis and backing for his instructions.[68] Even when the "law" is not explicitly mentioned, James evidently roots his ethics in the *Torah*, notably including Leviticus 19.[69]

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[67] Exhortations to be "doers of the word" (1:21-27), not to show "favouritism" (2:1-13), and not to "speak against" one another (4:11-12).

[68] Refer to **Footnote 67**.

[69] For example: pay your labourers (5:4; Lev. 19:13); "do not complain" against one another (5:9; Lev. 19:18); "Do not swear" (5:12; Lev. 19:12) (Kaiser, 1999:303).

Accordingly, Friedman & Friedman (2012:14) claim that James engages his students and hearers as a "rabbi",[70] and in 'very practical development and application of the commandments of the *Torah'*. If this is correct, then James's thought is very Jewish and his content is derived from, and is consistent with, the OT Law. Furthermore, while James does not offer a 'systematic statement' on the "law", he certainly makes several absolute statements about it.[71]

The above suggests that, when all the clues in the Letter are put together, clarity about what James means by "law" could be derived; at least to the point of ruling out several of the definitions that have been offered.[72] And even if a precise definition of "law" cannot be determined with absolute certainty in each case, a fair idea of James's theology of "law" might be reasonably formed; at least to the extent of refuting claims that clash with James, and of not being detracted from what James asserts concerning the Law.

1.2. Importance of the Research

1.2.1. Need for Clarity on the Right View of the Law

People's understanding of the New Testament's teaching about the Law has a profound impact on the preaching and teaching ministry of the church. It shapes people's ethical systems and the authority with which they view the Law in areas of divine instruction and personal sanctification. It also has a direct impact on how people understand both the relationship between the Old and New Testaments, and between the Law and the Gospel. Ultimately, people's doctrine of the Law will affect what they perceive to be sin and its consequences. This will affect how they relate to God, other believers, and the world. Those who believe that the Law has been abolished might consider those who don't to be "legalistic". The latter might think the former are "liberalists" or "antinomians". This is a serious situation. Clearly, sound doctrine about the Law of God is of critical importance for the unity, health, wellbeing, and witness of the church.

Dorsey (1999:1) remarked that 'the issue of the law's applicability has troubled the church throughout its history'. Cranfield (1964:43) bemoans this situation by saying, 'muddled thinking and unexamined assumptions continue to plague modern approaches to the law'. And Stern (1988:44) believes that Christianity has "gone far astray" in its dealings with the Law and it is "a most urgent task to get right its view" of the Law. Sadly, the indications are that things have not improved much, if at all. For, as Moo (1999:320) points out, despite a 'deluge of books and

[70] Martin (1998:58) also notes James's 'typical Jewish-Rabbinic style'.

[71] For example: "But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors" (Jas. 2:9, NASB); and "if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it" (Jas. 4:11b, NASB).

[72] A critique of the various definitions will be included in the Study conclusion (**Chapter 7**).

articles' on the topic, 'nothing even approaching a consensus has emerged'.

Moo (1999:320) reckons that, 'the most important' factor that accounts for 'the radically different conclusions' is the 'diverse theological and hermeneutical frameworks' used to integrate the exegetical evidence. He (Moo, 1999:321) uses a "salvation-historical" approach that basically relegates the Mosaic Law to a period of time before the coming of Christ. Moo (1999:323, 342) acknowledges that this approach leans heavily[73] on the evidence from Paul's Letters[74] and that it produces 'a rather negative picture' of the Mosaic Law.

A predominantly negative perspective on the Mosaic Law and stress on its discontinuity produce certain dichotomies between the Old and New Testaments. Two of these, which Barker (1982:5-6) believes to be false, are that 'the OT presents the letter of the law and the NT the spirit of the law', and that 'the OT is the Testament of law and the NT is the Testament of grace'.

1.2.2. Contribution from the Letter of James

The Letter of James, however, as Blomberg & Kamell (2008:258) observe, speaks very positively about the "law" (νόμος) (Jas. 1:25; 2:8, 12-13).[75] And since the Letter speaks infallibly as Scripture, its voice deserves to be heard. It is vitally important for the church to understand God's instructions through James, on its own terms, without imposing meaning on the text that suits a particular doctrinal conviction, but that is not true to the natural reading of the text. Once a fair and reasonable idea has been formed about what James means by "law" (νόμος) and how it relates to God's Law, it needs to be factored into the church's doctrine of the Law. It is presupposed that since all of the NT Scripture is God's inspired Word, James's particular perspective on the Law can only complement and not contradict what the rest of the New Testament books assert about the Law, and vice versa.

Therefore, in the interest of both the public teaching and private living of Christians, it is imperative that the conflicting messages and attitudes in the church concerning the Law of God be addressed and not be treated with indifference. It is postulated that James could provide much needed insights and wisdom to resolve some of the tension and confusion caused by the conflicting doctrines about the Law. There is evidently a need for a fresh, contemporary and comprehensive study of the Letter of James in which his thoughts about the

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[73] So heavily that Moo (1999:323) lets even the teaching of Christ Himself concerning the Law to be 'overshadowed by the evidence' in Paul's Letters. And in this framework, says Moo (1999:324), the OT witness first has to be interpreted in terms of the NT before it can be 'integrated theologically'.

[74] Strickland (1999:240) concedes that "dispensationalists" also base their teaching 'especially on the Pauline contribution' to the issue, and so 'emphasize the discontinuity between the Law and Gospel'.

[75] See also Gench (1996:82). Wall (1997:83) comments that, 'For many Protestant interpreters, it is its positive view of the law that "has made James most famous"'.

Law, and related to the Law, are thoroughly investigated and exegeted.

1.3 Research Questions

The **overarching research question** for this study is, "What is James's doctrine of the Law of God?" More specifically, what can be gleaned from James's Epistle about the nature, content and function of the Law (*Torah*)?[76]

The answer to the overarching research question would also give a fair idea of how James's theology would answer some of the popular claims made about the *Torah* today. For example, if James does in fact ascribe "freedom" to *Torah*, then what should we make of the notion that Christians are "free" from the 'supposedly oppressive rules and regulations' prescribed by the *Torah* of Moses (Stern, 2015:727)? And if God will indeed judge according to His *Torah*, then is it fair to say that the *Torah* has been abolished? James might well be making assertions that are critical for our understanding about the continuity of the *Torah*. And if we ignore or twist them, we will be making serious mistakes in our doctrine of the Law (*Torah*) – mistakes that may have far more serious ramifications than we imagine.

The answer to the overarching research question is informed by the answers to the following related questions:

1.3.1. What is the context of James?

Wolvaardt (2005:79-80; 85-86) explains that the same words or combination of words could have different meanings, depending on the situation and literary style of the communication and how the words or combination of words relate to their paragraph, pericope, and the entire text. A key interpretative question, therefore, is "What is the context of James?"

The context includes both the historical and literary contexts. The historical context includes, but is not limited to, consideration of social aspects of both the author and first recipients/readers. The literary context includes, but is not limited to, consideration of the overall purpose and structure of James. Concerning the structure of James, for example, very plausible proposals have been made by Ong (1996:3), Cheung (2003:273), Taylor & Guthrie (2006:702), and Varner (2011:117) that the overarching concerns of "doing the Law" and/or exercising "wisdom from above" best account for the overall thrust and message of James. If this is the case, then it is expected to have a great bearing on what James means by "*nómos*" (νόμος). Thus, the context of James is key to a correct understanding of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James.

[76] The terms "Law", "Law of God", and "*Torah*" will be used interchangeably in this Study. However, the preferred term is "*Torah*" because its Hebrew roots better convey its true meaning than the English word "Law", which could have overly "legal" connotations that could overshadow the more dominant sense of "God's fatherly instructions". Refer to "*Torah*" in the **Glossary of Terms**.

1.3.2. How much does Torah feature in James?

As discussed earlier, James roots his ethical system and exhortations in the OT Law (*Torah*). To what extent does he do that? Moreover, since James and his first readers were Jewish, to what extent would their knowledge and conception of the Hebrew Scriptures, and particularly the *Torah*, have shaped their understanding of "*nómos*" (νόμος)? Answers to these questions may be telling in what James means by "*nómos*" (νόμος).

1.3.3. How does James use "law" (νόμος) and what does he mean by it?

Clarity about **questions 1.3.1** and **1.3.2** is critical in answering the sub questions that follow.

James talks about:

(a) the "perfect law, the law of liberty" (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 1:25, NASB);

(b) the "royal law" (νόμον βασιλικὸν) (Jas. 2:8, NASB);

(c) "the law" (τοῦ νόμου) (Jas. 2:9, NASB) or "law" (νόμου/νόμον) (Jas. 2:11; 4:11);

(d) the "whole law" (ὅλον τὸν νόμον) (Jas. 2:10, NASB);

(e) the "law of liberty" (νόμου ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 2:12, NASB);

Are these terms referring to the same thing, or aspects of the same thing? Are the modifiers ("perfect", "of liberty", "royal", and "whole") used to distinguish between different things, or to describe aspects or qualities of the same thing? Or are some used one way and others in the other?

As Johnson (2008:30) observes, James says nothing about ritual observances of the Law. Does this mean that James is thinking primarily about the moral precepts of *Torah* when he is referring to "law" (νόμος)? Or is his ethic better explained as, '*Torah* observance through the lens of Jesus', as McKnight (2011:44)[77] suggests? Is it true, as Martin (1998:66) asserts, that when James uses simply "law" (*nómos*) that he is talking about the OT Law (*Torah*), and when he qualifies the term that he is referring to a 'Christian understanding' of "Law"? Is there an essential difference between the two? If there is, then does God have a different set of standards for His people today; something other than His "moral law"?[78]

1.3.4. What does James teach about the Law?

What does James teach about the Law in his statements containing the word "*nómos*" (νόμος)? And what does he teach concerning the Law where "*nómos*" (νόμος) is not explicitly mentioned?

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[77] Davids (1982: 51) concurs.

[78] Mackay (2017:59) denies that God's "set of standards" is different from His "moral law".

James calls his readers to be doers of the "word" (λόγος) (Jas. 1:22) and of the "perfect law, the law of liberty" (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 1:25, NASB). Do these two parallel statements suggest that the two terms ("word" and "perfect law") are synonymous,[79] or that the latter is of the same essence than, or is a part of, the former? Either way, the connection between the ideas, in James's thinking, is undeniable. Furthermore, when James talks about the "implanted word" (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον) (Jas. 1:21), can the adjective ("implanted") also be attributed to the "law"?

Both Martin (1998:51) and Kamell (2011:27) sense, in James 1:21-25 the language of the "New Covenant" in which the "law" is written on the human heart. This raises the question, "How much should James's conception of 'law' be understood in terms of the fulfilment of the New Covenant prophecies in passages like Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Ezekiel 36:26-27?"

James states that when "you are committing sin" (ἁμαρτίαν ἐργάζεσθε) you are "convicted by the law as transgressors" (ἐλεγχόμενοι ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου ὡς παραβάται) (Jas. 2:9, NASB) and "to the one who knows the right things to do" (εἰδότι οὖν καλὸν ποιεῖν) "and does not do it" (καὶ μὴ ποιοῦντι), "to him it is sin" (ἁμαρτία αὐτῷ ἐστιν) (Jas. 4:17, NASB). What does this teach us about the relationship between "sin" and "law", and between "law" and "to do good"? And what are the "works" (ἔργα) that James connects with "faith" (πίστις), "being justified" (ἐδικαιώθη) and "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνην) in James 2:14-26? Are they works prescribed/commanded in the "law"; as James 1:25 seems to suggest by connecting "a doer of work" (ποιητὴς ἔργου) with the "perfect law, the law of liberty"? Furthermore, James states that God is the One who is "Lawgiver and Judge" (νομοθέτης καὶ κριτής) (Jas. 4:12, NASB). Will God then not judge according to the Law that He has given?

1.3.5. How does James's teaching about the Law fit with that of the rest of Scripture?

Since the book of James is part of the overall message of the Scriptures, what contribution does James's teaching about the Law make to the broader understanding of the Christian faith?[80] And since it is presupposed that the Scriptures are internally consistent, how is James's teaching about the Law supported by the rest of Scripture, and particularly the New Testament?[81]

1.4. Aim and Objectives

The **main aim** of the study is to outline James's doctrine of the Law. Stated differently, it is to

[79] As Martin (1998:51) and Morgan (2010:2) suggest.

[80] See Wolvaardt (2005:123).

[81] Ibid.

identify absolutes[82] from the Letter of James that need to be honoured in the church's doctrine of the Law. **Supporting objectives** of the study include:

(O1) Determine the context (or framework) within which the respective passages of interest are to be interpreted.

(O2) Determine the extent to which the OT Scriptures, and especially the *Torah,* feature in James, and how that together with the original recipients' conception of both the OT and the *Torah* would most likely have shaped their understanding of the word "*nómos*" (*νόμος*) in James.

(O3) Closely examine the use of the word "*nómos*" (*νόμος*) in James in order to determine its meaning(s).

(O4) Analyse statements about or related to "*nómos*" (*νόμος*) in James in order to identify the concomitant absolutes and to produce a comprehensive doctrinal statement from James about the Law of God.

(O5) Summarise the meaning of "*nómos*" (*νόμος*) in James and outline James's teaching of "*nómos*" (*νόμος*) in terms of its nature, content, and function in order to answer the overarching research question.

(O6) Demonstrate the harmony between James's teaching about the Law and that of the rest of the New Testament. This is important in order to validate the findings from the above, and to strengthen corresponding doctrinal points found in the rest of the Scriptures generally and in the New Testament especially.

It is anticipated that the result of this study would be consistent with the **central theoretical argument** that New Testament believers are not just to study and teach God's Law (*Torah*), but they are also to obey it (Jas. 1:25; 2:12), for it is God's standard for judgment (cf. Jas. 4:12), it is the way of wisdom (cf. Jas. 3:13), and it leads to freedom and blessing (Jas. 1:25). Furthermore, God's Law is both informative and normative for Christians. God's Law is essentially continued in, and is foundational for, the New Testament.

1.5. Methodology

1.5.1. Three-pronged Analytical Process

To answer the research questions, and to develop clarity about James's definition of "law" and his doctrine of the Law, a three-pronged analytical process will be followed, as outlined below:

Process 1: To trace James's flow of thought and his arguments, "Thought Structure

[82] An absolute is *"a biblical statement or instruction that is true and applicable for all people of all times"* (Refer to the **Glossary of Terms**).

Analysis" (Coetzee, 1995) will be done. By doing TSA, serious attention will be given to the 'cohesion, structure, and line of thought' of the text in both the 'narrower and broader sense' of the text (Coetzee, 1995:7). In this way, the key passages for this study will be handled "as a whole" in their contexts, rather than as a series of disconnected ideas. The TSA will be done by (Coetzee, 1995:9-13): (1) presenting the "verb-units" line by line; (2) identifying the structure markers (both the conspicuous and less obvious ones); (3) visually presenting the structure makers and their relationships; and (4) synthesising the results.

Process 2: The meaning of each key passage will be carefully and contextually analysed by following Veritas College's steps of exegesis (Wolvaardt, 2005:75-125). The main steps include: (1) researching the communication situation or historical (incl. sociological) context, (2) establishing the literary context, (3) doing Semantic Discourse Analysis, (4) relating the message to the broader biblical and theological framework, and (5) reading the interpretation of others. Through this process the biblical absolutes from each chosen passage will be clearly identified and defined. These steps will be critical in determining, with certainty, the enduring truths and exhortations (imperatives) in James that pertain to the Law.

Process 3: A careful survey will also be done to determine the Scriptural roots for James's teaching.[83] It will be important for this study to identify the extent to which the absolutes in James originate from the OT Law (*Torah*) in particular, but also from the Wisdom literature and the Prophets. It is anticipated that such a survey would be essential for clarifying what James has in mind when he speaks about "*nómos*" (*νόμος*).

1.5.2. Steps of the Study

The three-pronged analytical process (outlined above) will be carried out in an integrated way by executing the following steps:

(M1) **Introduction**. This step will determine and document the background, problem statement, need for, objectives, and methodology of the Study.

(M2) **Historical and Literary context of the Letter of James**. In this step pertinent details about the author, recipients, occasion, purpose, key message, and type of literature of the Letter will be provided, together with an outline of the Letter. These details will provide an important interpretative framework for the Letter.

(M3) **Biblical Roots of James**. In this step a thorough survey will be done to determine the extent to which James draws from the Old Testament. Any replicas or resemblances of the OT Law will be identified. Links with the Wisdom Literature and the Prophets will

[83] Note Process 3 has a different purpose than that of step 4 in Process 2. Step 4 only seeks to validate the "absolutes" from the text by finding biblical support for them for the rest of the NT. Process 3 has a particular focus on the relationships, if any, between the absolutes and the OT and also Jesus' teaching.

also be noted. The purpose of this step is to trace the roots and development of James's ethics. From this a conclusion will be drawn about how James's use of the OT might inform the meaning of "*nómos*" (*νόμος*).

(M4) **Present the "verb-units" line by line**. This step involves rewriting the text to have just one verbal idea per line, while trying to preserve the order of words and form of the text. To enhance clarity in complex sentences, subordinating clauses will be placed in new lines and be shifted to the right of the ideas that they are modifying. In these cases, lines will contain "thought-units" rather than "verb-units".

(M5) **Identify and present the structure markers and their relationships**. This will be done by drawing lines between connecting ideas and by labelling the ideas and connections.

(M6) **Mark the significant meaning indicators**. Here the significant relating words and phrases, connecting words (like conjunctions), and patterns will be marked and/or highlighted using different colours and/or styles.

(M7) **Define words and phrases**. The meanings of important and difficult words and phrases will be given. In doing so, careful attention will be given to the context of the passage as well as related threads or concepts throughout the Letter. In the case of the word "*nómos*" (*νόμος*), possible meanings (refer to **Section 1.1.2**) will be tested and the most likely meaning(s) will be identified, considering the context and the findings from Step M3 (see above).

(M8) **Establish the meaning structure**. Each passage will be divided into sections, which will then be summarised. Repetitions, contrasts, or developments of ideas between sections will also be marked or labelled. This will complement, or at least confirm, the work done in Step M5 above.

(M9) **Identify the absolutes**. Following Step M6 above, the absolutes from the passage will be identified and defined. Each absolute will then be verified using the broader biblical and theological framework. This involves giving biblical support for the absolutes from the rest of the Scriptures, including both the Old and New Testaments.

(M10) **Interpretation of others**. This step will involve thorough engagement with the best relevant scholarly and pastoral ideas and insights in available commentaries, and articles. Practically, the bulk of this step will be carried out alongside Step M7 above.

(M11) **Synthesise and summarise the results**. The information from the steps above will be combined into a coherent whole and then summarised to present the teaching of each passage.

(M12) **Meaning of and teaching concerning "*nómos*" in James**. Drawing on the results of all the previous steps, this step is about presenting the most likely meaning of "*nómos*" in James. And it will outline James's doctrine of the Law in one coherent statement.

(M13) **Harmony between James and the rest of the NT.** This step will compare James's teaching about the Law with that of key passages elsewhere in the NT. In particular, it will seek to demonstrate how it corresponds with that of Jesus and how it can be harmonised with that of Paul.

(M14) **Conclusion**. The findings of the Study will be summarised in this step. A critique of the common interpretations of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James as outlined in **Section 1.1.2** will be provided. Furthermore, the step will also consider the practical implications of James's doctrine on the Law. For example, according to James: (1) Has the Gospel superseded or terminated the Law? (2) Is the Law's function only to condemn people? (3) Are Christians supposed to teach and obey the Law? (4) What will happen if the church ignores the Law and has a negative attitude towards it?

1.6. Outline of the Study

The provisional sections for the Study are outlined below:

List of tables

List of appendices

Glossary of terms

(S1) Introduction to the Study. This section will document Step M1 in the study methodology.

(S2) Historical and Literary Context of James. This section will document Step M2 in the Study methodology. The context of James will answer Research Question 1.3.1 and address Objective O1.

(S3) Biblical Roots of James. This section will document Step M3 in the Study methodology. This examination will answer Research Question 1.3.2 and address Objective O2.

(S4) Analysis of Key Passages in James. The key relevant passages (including Jas. 1:19-27; 2:8-13; 4:11-12) in the Letter of James will be thoroughly analysed in this section, using a combination of Thought Structure Analysis (TSA) and Semantic Discourse Analysis (SDA), as outlined in the methodology. The analysis section will document Steps M4-12 in the Study methodology. And it will answer Research Questions 1.3.3 and 1.3.4, and address Objectives O3 and O4. Therefore, it will outline the Meaning of and Teaching concerning the "*nómos*" (νόμος) in the Letter of James.

(S5) Meaning and Teaching of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James**.** This section will synthesize the findings of Section 4 and recast it in order to answer the main research question of this Study, in terms of the nature, content, and function of the Law (*Torah*). Its purpose is therefore to reach Objective O5 of this Study.

(S6) Harmony between James and the rest of the NT. This section will document Step M13 in the Study methodology. And it will answer Research Question 1.3.5 and address Objective O6.

(S7) Conclusion. In the conclusion of the Study, the findings from the Study, together with any recommendations will be presented. Essentially, Step M14 of the Study will be written out here.

References

Appendices

CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL AND LITERARY CONTEXT OF JAMES

Chapter Outline

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2.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the historical and literary context of the Letter of James, which is essential for an accurate understanding of the Letter as a whole, and for its parts in relation to the whole. The chapter, then, is aimed at achieving the first objective of the Study in determining the interpretive framework.

This chapter identifies who wrote the Letter of James (the Author) and to whom it was originally written (the First Recipients). It investigates their circumstances and what might have given cause for the Letter (the Occasion) and what the Letter was to achieve (the Purpose). The chapter also examines the type of literature and how it affects interpretation (the Type of Literature). Finally, the chapter considers the arrangement of, and relationship between the parts James, and how these may convey meaning and contribute to the central message or overall thrust of the Letter (the Structure of the Letter).

2.2. The Author

2.2.1. James, the slave of …

The author of the Letter identifies himself as "James,[84] a slave of God and (the) Lord Jesus Christ" (Ἰάκωβος θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοῦλος) (Jas. 1:1). In Biblical times a "slave" (Jas. 1:1) became the 'total property of an owner' (Louw & Nida, 1996:740) and was under the owner's 'total control' (BDAG, 2000:259). Who is James's owner? James belongs to "God" (θεός) and the "Lord Jesus Christ" (κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) (Jas. 1:1).

Three times James refers to God as "Father" (πατήρ) (Jas. 1:17; 1:27; 3:9). The Father created us in His "likeness" (ὁμοίωσις) (Jas. 3:9) and He is the immutable giver of all "good" (ἀγαθός) and "perfect" (τέλειος) things (Jas. 1:17). The title, "Lord Jesus Christ", is a full expression of Jesus' person as the Master Saviour Messiah, and it is a reference to His divine nature, especially since it is placed side-by-side with God.[85] As Johnson (2008:168) observes, though 'equal in essence and dignity' with the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ is 'distinct' in person from the Father.

So, at the outset, the author James expresses that his belonging/identity, calling/role, and loyalty/service are all in relation to the First and Second persons of the Godhead. What more could be gleaned about him from the rest of the Epistle?

When speaking about "teachers" (διδάσκαλοι), James says, "we will receive greater

[84] Most English Bibles renders it "James". The transliteration "*Jakōbos*" (Ἰάκωβος) or the Old Testament equivalent "Jacob" (Ἰακώβ, see Mat. 1:2) would have been a closer reflection of his Hebrew name (יַעֲקֹב). The Complete Jewish Bible chose to use "*Ya'akov*", which is a transliteration of the Hebrew form of his name.

[85] See: Hartin (2003:50); McKnight (2011:63-64); Richardson (1997:53–54).

judgment" (μεῖζον κρίμα λημψόμεθα) (Jas. 3:1). By implication, James also considered himself to be a "teacher". Moo (2000:148) points out that, in the early church, the "office of teacher" was 'roughly the equivalent' of the "rabbi" in the Jewish community. And since James the "teacher" is addressing other "teachers", it is reasonable to regard James as a "chief teacher", or perhaps even a "chief rabbi", as Friedman & Friedman (2012:1, 5) assert.[86]

The author's use of the plural personal pronouns "us" (ἡμᾶς/ἡμῖν) (Jas. 1:18; 3:3; 4:5; 5:17) and "our" (ἡμῶν) (Jas. 2:1, 21; 3:6) show that he closely associated with his readers:

- He mentioned that God the Father "brought us forth" (ἀπεκύησεν) (Jas. 1:17-18).
- He refers to Jesus as "our Lord Jesus Christ of glory" (κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης) (Jas. 2:1).
- Abraham was their "father" (πατὴρ) in the faith (Jas. 2:21).
- God caused the Spirit to dwell (κατῴκισεν) in them (Jas. 4:5).
- And the prophet Elijah was "of the same nature" (ὁμοιοπαθὴς) as them (Jas. 5:17).

The author's identification with the readers is strengthened by his use of first-person plural verbs (Jas. 1:18; 3:1-3, 9; 4:13, 15; 5:11). Despite his prominent position (see **Section 2.2.3**), James did not place himself above them, but humbly acknowledged that he was also prone to "stumble" (πταίομεν) (Jas. 3:2), and to use his tongue wrongly to both "bless" (εὐλογέω) and "curse" (καταράομαι) (Jas. 3:8-10). And positively, he also (with them) "considered" (μακαρίζομεν) blessed those who endured as Job did (Jas. 5:11).

James's close association with his readers echoes throughout the Epistle through the phrase "my brothers and sisters" (ἀδελφοί μου)[87] (Jas. 1:2; 2:1, 14; 3:1, 10, 12; 5:12, 19), and through its more intimate and affectionate form, "my beloved brothers and sisters" (ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί) (Jas. 1:16, 19; 2:5).

2.2.2. James, the Brother of Jesus

As noted earlier, the author of the Epistle is James the servant and property of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who closely associated with his readers as a fellow believer (ref. 2.1.1). But which James is it? The New Testament speaks of:

(a) James the son of Alphaeus – one of the Twelve (Mat. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15).

(b) James ("James the younger") the son of Mary and brother of Joseph (Mat. 27:56; Mark 15:40; Luke 24:10). According to Moo (2000:9), most scholars believe that this James is the same person as James the son of Alphaeus.

[86] For further discussion and development ref. **Section 2.1.3.**

[87] This Study uses gender inclusive references because, "and sisters", is implied in the term "*adelphoi*" (ἀδελφοί).

(c) James the father of Judas (the father of one the Twelve, not Iscariot) (Luke 6:16; John 14:22).

(d) James the son of Zebedee and brother of John (Mat. 4:21) – one of the Twelve (Mat. 10:2), and part of Jesus' inner circle, together with his brother John and Peter (Mark 5:37; 9:2; 13:3; 14:33).

(e) James the second son of Joseph and Mary, and brother of Jesus, Joseph, Simon and Judas (Mat. 13:55).

The first three candidates ((a) to (c) above) can be dismissed because of their relative obscurity and unimportance in the NT.[88] James the brother of John was martyred by Herod (Agrippa I)[89] in Acts 12:2; who himself died in A.D. 44[90] (Acts 12:23). It is doubtful that he was the author because the Epistle, according to most scholars, only appeared after this James's death.[91] The most likely candidate, therefore, is James the brother of Jesus ((d) above).[92] This is backed up by Origen, who according to Johnson (2008:93), was 'the first Christian writer[93] to explicitly cite' the Letter and who referred to the author as "the brother of the Lord".

The suggestion by scholars like Ropes (1916:47-52) that the Epistle was originally written by a pseudonymous Palestinian teacher early in the second century A.D. is to be dismissed. The first reason for this is because none of the arguments advanced for it are convincing.[94] Secondly, the suggestion goes against the traditional and established view of the church that the author was none other than James, the brother of Jesus.[95] And thirdly, the notion goes against the inspired testimony of God's Word itself, which states that the author is "James" (Jas. 1:1). It is therefore, as Motyer (2010:22) insists, 'inadmissible to search for an anonymous writer'.

According to Elwell & Beitzel (1988:1091), the traditional view of authorship (of James brother of Jesus) is supported by: (1) similarity in the language of the Letter and that of Acts 15, (2) the consistency between historical reports[96] and hints in the Letter about the life and

[88] See also: Dockery (1992:757); Moo (2000:9).

[89] Scholars agree that the Herod in question was Herod Agrippa I. See: Barrett (2004:573); Polhill (1992:277).

[90] Longenecker (1981:407).

[91] See: Dockery (1992:757); Vlachos (2013:3).

[92] See: Barclay (1976:9-10); Johnson (2008:36); Simmons (1986:8); Vlachos (2013:3).

[93] Ref: *Commentarium in Epistulam ad Romanos IV*, 8.

[94] For a rebuttal of the main arguments see: Moo (2000:13-20); Tasker (1973:20-30); Vlachos (2013:3-5).

[95] See: Moo (2000:11); Richardson (1997:39); Ropes (1916:45); Tasker (1973:21).

[96] Eusebius (1842:75) wrote that James was, "the most just of men".

character of the Lord's brother, (3) the distinctly Jewish flavour of the Letter (ref. **Section 2.6.4**), and (4) the fact that no other James fits the evidence as well as Jesus' brother.

2.2.3. James, the Leading Apostle and Chief Rabbi in Jerusalem

James (brother of Jesus) did not initially believe in Jesus (John 7:5). However, after His resurrection, the Lord Jesus appeared to James personally (1 Cor. 15:7), James became part of a select group of witnesses of the Resurrected Messiah (1 Cor. 15:5-8), James evidently became a strong believer and devoted follower of Jesus (cf. Acts 1:14; Jas. 2:1), and the leader of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13).[97] Moreover, according to the Apostle Paul, James became an "Apostle" (ἀπόστολος) (Gal. 1:19) and came to be regarded as a "pillar" (στῦλος) in the church, together with Peter and John (Gal. 2:9). And as Vlachos (2013:3) notes, James's prominence is highlighted in the fact that he is mentioned first, before Peter and John.

Evidence for James's prominent position in the early church is seen in the book of Acts:

- When an Angel of the Lord (ἄγγελος κυρίου) (Acts 12:7) delivered (ἐξείλατό) Peter from prison at the hand of Herod (Acts 12:11), he went where many believers were gathered together praying and bade them, "tell these things to James and the brothers and sisters" (Ἀπαγγείλατε Ἰακώβῳ καὶ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ταῦτα) (Acts 12:17).
- In Acts 15, the "Apostles" (ἀπόστολοι) and "elders" (πρεσβύτεροι) assembled (Acts 15:6) to consider whether "it [was] necessary" (δεῖ) for Gentile believers "to be circumcised" (περιτέμνειν) and "to keep the law of Moses" (τηρεῖν τὸν νόμον Μωϋσέως) (Acts 15:5). After Peter's address (Acts 15:6-11), and Barnabas and Paul's testimony (Acts 15:12), they all became silent (σιγῆσαι), and then James spoke with great authority, saying: "listen to me …" (ἀκούσατέ μου …) (Acts 15:13).
- And later on, in Acts 21:17-25, James and the "elders" (πρεσβύτεροι) in Jerusalem questioned Paul about accusations that he was teaching Jews among the Gentiles "abandonment from Moses" (ἀποστασίαν ἀπὸ Μωϋσέως) (Acts 21:21). Again, a ruling was made under James's leadership (Acts 21:23-25).

The picture from Acts 12, 15, and 21 is that James was a leading Apostle and leader of the Jerusalem church,[98] which was the mother church and headquarters of early Christianity

[97] According to Eusebius (1842:75), the 'episcopal seat at Jerusalem was committed to [James] by the apostles'. Barclay (1976:10) mentions that according to Clement of Alexandia, 'he was chosen to the office by Peter and John'; according to Jerome, he was 'ordained Bishop of Jerusalem by the apostles' immediately 'after the passion of the Lord'; and according to *The Clementine Recoginitions*, James was 'ordained Bishop of Jerusalem by none other than Jesus Himself'.

[98] According to Jerome (1999:8), James "ruled" the Jerusalem church for some 30 years. See also: Barclay (1976:10); Dunn (2009:1124).

(cf. Acts 1:8; 8:14; 11:22; 15:2).[99] The church in Jerusalem oversaw mission throughout Judea and Samaria (cf. Acts 8:14) and as far as Antioch (cf. Acts 11:20). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that James's influence would have been at least as wide. This is supported by the report in Galatians 2:12 that James sent emissaries to Antioch.

Furthermore, Acts 15 and 21 show, as Friedman & Friedman (2012:41) note, that James acted as the "*nasi*"[100] (chief justice) and chief teacher of "*halakah*" (application of *Torah*) in the early church. It seems as if, in some sense, he had authority over the other Apostles, including Paul who became the leading Apostle to the Gentiles (cf. Acts 9:15). According to Friedman & Friedman (2012:48-49), James's 'historical role' was that the "chief rabbi"[101] of the original Messianic Jewish community.

From the above, it is reasonable to conclude that James rose to become not just the leader of the Jerusalem church, but a prominent leader in the entire early Jesus movement. According to Varner (2017:6), 'any knowledgeable Christian' from Jerusalem to Antioch, in the years A.D. 40-62, would have regarded James as being 'in charge of [the] movement'.

2.2.4. James the Just

The Christian Historian Eusebius (A.D. 263-339) (1842:76, *Ecclesiastical History,* chapter XXIII)[102] quoted Hegesippus (A.D. 110-180), the Greek Christian historian and champion of orthodoxy, who claimed that James's dedication to the Lord was "naziritic" (see Num. 6:1-21), that he was so often on his knees before God interceding for others that 'his knees became as hard as a camel's',[103] and that he was 'surnamed Just by all' on account of 'his exceeding great piety'. While some question the veracity of the first claim, Myllykoski (2007:33) found in his survey on the history and tradition of "James the Just" that the 'reliable image' of James is that of 'a pious and ascetic man devoted to Mosaic Law'.[104] As Moo (2000:16) points out, James

[99] See also Wadge (2014:17).

[100] During Second Temple Judaism, this Hebrew title was used for the president or chief justice of the Sanhedrin (See "*nasi*" in Glossary of Terms). In this case it is applied to the supreme court of the original Messianic community.

[101] According to Friedman & Friedman (2012:95, 107) the "chief rabbi", 'though not an official title in the first century', was a 'community leadership role' of 'rabbinic, halakhic and political nature that dealt with jurisprudence and the formation of halakah, amongs other things'. Accordingly, James functioned in the community of believers as the authority in teaching the Scriptures and applying the biblical commands.

[102] According to Britannica (2019), Eusebius 'probably began' to write his 'landmark in Christian historiography', "Ecclesiastical History", during the Roman persecutions and revised it several times between 312 and 324 A.D.

[103] Hence the nickname, "Camel's knees" or "Old Camel's knees" (See Wadge, 2014:2-3).

[104] See also: Doriani (2007:5) and McKnight (2011:155, 157).

became a well 'respected and beloved figure' in the early church, and is famous in Christian tradition for his 'faithfulness to the law' and his 'devotion to prayer'.[105]

According to Eusebius (1842:75-76, *Ecclesiastical History,* chapter XXIII), James was martyred when, instead of renouncing 'the faith in Christ', he gave a 'firm' and 'full' confession that 'Jesus Christ was the Son of God, our Saviour and Lord'. While not all scholars are confident about this account, they mostly accept that of Josephus. Josephus (37-ca.100:1076, *The Complete Works of Josephus*, chapter 9) reported that Annas the high priest acted unlawfully when he 'delivered' James (and some of his companions) 'to be stoned' as 'breakers of the law', without the consent of the Roman procurator. Annas' act was all the more heinous since James was considered to be 'the most just of men' (Eusebius, 1842:75) who practiced righteousness (Osborne, 2019:5).

2.2.5. Conclusion about the Author

James, the brother of Jesus, is most likely the author of the Letter. Due to his divine calling (Jas. 1:1), his prominent position (ref. **Section 2.2.3**), and his outstanding character (ref. **Section 2.2.4**), the Letter comes with unquestionable authority. One would therefore expect that whatever James has to say, would be of utmost importance in understanding Christianity. One can ill afford to view James's teaching with scepticism or of inferior value than the writings of the Apostle Paul, for example.[106] Indeed, a case can be made that one's theology would be incomplete or unbalanced if it fails to heart God's teaching through His servant James.

2.3. The First Recipients

2.3.1. The Twelve Tribes, those in the Diaspora

The Letter of James is addressed to, "the twelve tribes" (ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς), those in "the diaspora" (τῇ διασπορᾷ) (Jas. 1:1).

The term "diaspora" could refer to, "the state of being" or "place in which" people are "scattered" or "dispersed" (BDAG, 2000:236). The term is used twice elsewhere in the New Testament (in John 7:35 and 1 Pet. 1:1). In John 7:35, the Jews asked whether Jesus was intending to go to "the diaspora of the Greeks" (τὴν διασπορὰν τῶν Ἑλλήνων). As Tasker (1995:106) comments, this is a reference to Jews who lived scattered throughout the Hellenistic world.[107] Peter addressed his first epistle to, the "elect living as strangers of (the)

[105] See also Osborne (2019:5).

[106] This is a grave mistake made by Martin Luther and others who share his view. In his preface to the NT, Luther (1962:19) claimed that, in comparison with the Gospels and other Epistles, the Epistle of James is, 'an epistle full of straw, because it contains nothing evangelical'.

[107] See also: Beasley-Murray (2002:112–113); Carson (1991:320).

diaspora" (ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς) (1 Pet. 1:1). In this instance, however, it is noted specifically that the recipients were geographically located in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. Commentators are divided as to whether this is a reference to believers (Christians) in Asia Minor who, in a literal sense, were Jews (including Jewish proselytes) who lived outside the Promised Land,[108] or to Christians who had the status of being God's chosen people (incl. Jews and Gentiles) and who lived as foreigners on earth, outside their heavenly homeland.[109] Regardless, as Pilch (2012:63, 70-71) points out, displaced persons were 'targets of discrimination and disadvantage', and they were often considered by natives to be of an 'inferior' class and had effectively 'no political rights'. And when these strange Christians, 'intolerantly forbade allegiance to or worship of any other god', they were 'reviled', incriminated and harmed (Pilch, 2012:70).

The New Testament uses the phrase, "the twelve tribes", three times outside the Epistle of James (in Mat. 19:28; Luke 22:30; and Rev. 21:12). In the Gospels the phrase is expanded to "the twelve tribes of Israel" (τὰς δώδεκα φυλὰς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ), and in Revelation it is expanded to "the twelve tribes of (the) sons of Israel" (τῶν δώδεκα φυλῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ). It could therefore be that James's phrase is shorthand for, "the twelve tribes of Israel". This is possibly strengthened by the fact that James's phrase is linked to the "diaspora". And so, the intention to reach Jews living outside Israel is very probable, together with God "fearing" (τοῖς σεβομένοις) Gentiles who gathered with them for worship.[110]

The twelve tribes represent "all of the people of God".[111] If "of Israel" is implied, then the primary recipients were all of God's people (Israel) who lived outside the land of Israel. If, however, "of Israel" is omitted deliberately, then James might have intended to ultimately address all of God's people (incl. Jews and Gentiles) as the "New Israel", scattered throughout the earth; even if the first recipients descended from Israel of the exile and lived outside Israel.[112] However, as Moo (2000:23) argues the Jewishness of the Letter (ref. **Section 2.6.4**) and the early composition of the Letter (ref. **Section 2.4.1**) makes it more likely that the first receivers were displaced Jews.[113] As Geyser (1975:26-27) contends, 'there is no need to spiritualise the meaning of "The Twelve Tribes"', since 'the expression had a clearly defined meaning' in Jewish eschatology - which points to the restoration of the Twelve Tribes of Israel,

[108] So Michaels (1998:6) and Stern (1992:743).

[109] So Schreiner (2003:51) and Grudem (1988:53).

[110] A phenomenon that was not uncommon in the book of Acts (see 13:43; 17:17).

[111] So Louw & Nida (1996:123).

[112] See Elwell & Beitzel (1998:1).

[113] See also Vlachos (2013:6).

according to Scripture like Jeremiah 3:18 and Ezekiel 37:19 and 24.[114]

Johnson (2008:170) reasonably infers that if the original readers were located outside Israel, then the writer by implication probably resided in Israel. This fits with the evidence in the New Testament (ref: Acts 15 and 21) about James, Jesus' brother, who presided in Jerusalem.[115] In support of this, Coker (2020:516) strongly argues that since James is, "a letter to the diaspora", it must have been 'written from [an] authority figure in Jerusalem and sent to Jews throughout the Greco-Roman world'. He (Coker, 2020:516-517) also convincingly argues that, as the authority figure in Jerusalem, James uses the imperatives in his Letter to form, 'an absolute social boundary' to establish 'social cohesiveness' and 'identity' in the diasporic community.

If the first recipients of James's Letter were Jews living somewhere in the Roman Empire of the day, then where exactly were they located? Martin (1998:lxxvi-lxxvii) suggests that they resided in Antioch of Syria. He references Geyser (1975:28) who proposed that these Jewish refugees migrated there as a result of the persecutions in the sequel to the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7:54-60.[116] He also referenced Zimmermann (1984:194-196) who argues 'in favour of an Antiochene provenance of the document' based on, amongst other things:[117] 'the witness of the letter in the latter church in Syria', and the 'evidence of James's presence and influence at Antioch' (cf. Gal. 2:12). Even though the first recipients were most likely Greek speaking Jews who fled Israel because of the waves of persecution since Stephen's execution, the fact that the Letter was addressed to, "the twelve tribes those in the diaspora" (ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ") (Jas. 1:1), points to a much wider intended ultimate readership.

2.3.2. Established (Messianic) Community of Believers

James addresses his readers as "brothers" (ἀδελφοί) fifteen times.[118] They are his, "brothers",[119] not biologically per se, but because of 'their close affinity' in the faith (BDAG, 2000:18). James 2:1 confirms this when his address (ἀδελφοί) is followed by the command, "let not have in partiality the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory" (μὴ ἐν προσωπολημψίαις

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[114] Cheung (2003:240) comments that the phrase, "the twelve tribes those in the diaspora", 'evokes a central point in Israel's eschatological hope' – 'the hope of the future restoration of Israel'. So to "spiritualize" the term is to deny Israel's hope and to diminish OT prophecy about restoration of Israel in the last days.

[115] See Martin (1998:xlv).

[116] Geyser (1975:28) contended that Acts 11:19-30 describes, 'the only known situation', which fits with the recipients being displaced 'Greek speaking Jesus believing Jews' before 60 A.D.

[117] Martin finds Zimmermann's reasons for Antioch "more plausible" than Geyser's.

[118] Jas. 1:2, 16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14; 3:1, 10, 12; 4:11; 5:7, 9, 10, 12, 19.

[119] Obviously including both male and female. Therefore, ἀδελφοί could be translated "brothers and sisters".

ἔχετε τὴν πίστιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης). They have faith in Christ and thus are 'fellow believers' in Him (Louw & Nida, 1996:124). Clearly, his readers are Jesus followers (Du Toit, 2020:283). As such James exhorts them to patiently wait for "the coming of the Lord" (τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου) (Jas. 5:7-8).

In the context of instructing his readers about not exercising or having in partiality the faith, James supposes the situation when a person would come, "into your synagogue" (εἰς συναγωγὴν ὑμῶν) (Jas. 2:2). This could be a reference to their actual "place of assembly", their "gatherings" (for worship, instruction, and possibly adjudication), or their "congregation" (i.e. their group) itself.[120] Commentators[121] have been intrigued as to why the word "synagogue" is used instead of the more regular NT term, "church" (ἐκκλησία) (as in Jas. 5:14); especially if one of the last two meanings (i.e. "gatherings" or "congregations") is intended. Therefore, it would seem as if James's (first) readers met in a (Messianic) Jewish synagogue[122] (somewhere in the diaspora),[123] which was theirs (i.e. under their control).[124]

Concerning synagogues, James himself (the brother of Jesus) mentioned in Acts 15:21: "For (the law of) Moses has from generations ancient from city (to city) those proclaiming it, being read in the synagogues from every Sabbath (to Sabbath)" (Μωϋσῆς γὰρ ἐκ γενεῶν ἀρχαίων κατὰ πόλιν τοὺς κηρύσσοντας αὐτὸν ἔχει ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς κατὰ πᾶν σάββατον ἀναγινωσκόμενος). If James's (first) readers maintained the Jewish practices that were passed on to them from one faithful generation to the next, then they would have continued reading the *Torah* every Sabbath during their worship gatherings;[125] which seems likely since they continued to meet in a synagogue (Jas. 2:2). Stern (1996:728) suggests that this Messianic congregation retained, 'most or all of the prayers, customs and style' of Jewish synagogues. Coker (2020:515), thus reasonably concludes: 'primarily, the letter was most likely written to more *Torah*-observant Jewish communities who were also followers of Jesus'.

This understanding (of the readers meeting in a synagogue) supports, as MacArthur (1998:102) contends, the view of the early composition of the Letter to a group consisting of

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[120] BDAG (2000:963); and Louw & Nida (1996:127).

[121] Incl. amongst others: Davids (1982:108); Hartin (2003:118); Johnson (2008:221); Moo (2000:103); and Varner (2010:87-88).

[122] See Stern (1996:728-729).

[123] Ref. **Section 2.3.1.**

[124] See: MacArthur (1998:102); Moo (2000:102-103).

[125] Barrett (2004:628) points out that the order of worship in the Synagogue, typically included: (1) recitation of the "*Shema*", (2) "the Prayer", (3) the reading of the Torah, (4) the reading of the Prophets, (5) the priestly blessing, and (6) a portion of Scripture (translated) read aloud and expounded 'by means of an elevating discourse'.

mostly Jewish Christians.[126] It also points to 'the Jewish-Christian nature' of the Letter, and to 'the continuity between "*Torah*-based" communities and "Jesus-based" communities in these early days of the movement', as Varner (2000:88) observes. Or as Stern (1996:728) suggests, it points to the 'Jewishness of New Covenant faith'. These are all plausible observations.

In James 5:14, the readers are exhorted to summon "the elders of the church" (τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας) to pray upon them if they fall ill (Jas. 5:14). In this context, the term "elders" (πρεσβυτέρους) most naturally refers to official leaders,[127] who had 'responsibility and authority in matters of socio-religious concerns' (Louw & Nida, 1996:541). By virtue of their age and experience, elders were vested with authority to rule and make major decisions in ancient societies.[128] Taylor (1996:305) traces the role of elders in the OT as family heads and representatives of Israel (cf. Exod. 21:1), governors and judges with Moses (cf. Num. 11:25; Deut. 19:12; 21:2; et.al.), and as chieftains under the Monarchy (cf. 1 Sam. 8:4f; 2 Sam. 5:3; et.al.). Taylor (1996:305-306) explains that, 'while their authority was originally civil', by NT times, they 'shared with the chief priests the power of determining religious affairs', including ruling over the synagogues.[129] Eventually, as Harrington (1987:300) explains, 'when churches came into being, elders were appointed for each congregation' to be responsible for 'spiritual oversight of the congregation and teaching the word'.[130] Since the role of elder was likely adopted from the synagogue model (especially in James's synagogue setting, Jas. 2:1),[131] it could be presumed that it did not only include pastoring (cf. Jas. 3:1; 5:14), but also ruling and adjudicating in the affairs of the church.

The term "church" (ἐκκλησίας) refers to a "community" or "congregation" of 'people with shared belief' (BDAG, 2000:303). Furthermore, the phrase "elders of the church" may be an indication that the community of believers was an established local congregation (i.e. a church in its own right) with its own leadership (i.e. the eldership) in place,[132] according to the New Testament pattern (cf. Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5). The church having a certain locality (somewhere within the diaspora), does not rule out the possibility of it including more than one congregation within the same general locality (the diaspora).[133]

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[126] See also: Moo (2000:23).

[127] So: Johnson (2008:330); Martin (1998:207); Richardson (1997:231).

[128] See: Harrington (1987:300); Taylor (1996:305).

[129] See also Chilton & Yamauchi (2000:1146). Harrington (1987:300) explains that after the exile, 'the elders made up the Sanhedrin, the governing council of the Jews'.

[130] See also Tenney (2006:322).

[131] So: Laws (1980:226) and Martin (1988:207).

[132] See: Davids (1982:193); Johnson (2008:331); Moo (2000:237); Laws (1980:225-226).

[133] See: Davids (1982:193); Moo (2000:7).

James cautions his readers against too many of them becoming "teachers" (διδάσκαλοι) (3:1). Several scholars note that "teachers" in the early church (especially in Christian Jewish churches - such as James's first readers who met in a synagogue) naturally occupied an office equivalent to rabbis in Jewish synagogues.[134] God "appointed" (ἔθετο) and "gave" (ἔδωκεν) "teachers" to the church (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11), and His Spirit "enabled" or "energised" (ἐνεργεῖ) them for the task (1 Cor. 12:11).[135] The task involved 'mastering the Scriptures and their application to faith and life' (Richardson, 1997:146). And so, as Martin (1998:108) points out, in the early church, "teachers" held an office with a high status and heavy responsibility.[136] The warning in James 3:1 is thus not surprising. Laws (1980:142) notes that while "apostles" had 'itinerant' ministries to establish churches, "teachers" were mostly 'resident members of local communities, working within its continuing life'. And for exercising their office, according to Laws (1980:143), "teachers" received 'material support' from the church. Thus, we have further evidence that James was probably writing to an established church or churches.

2.3.3. Conclusion about the First Recipients

It is concluded that the first recipients of the Letter were probably an established congregation (or possibly even a network of congregations), possibly located in or around Antioch, who had their own leaders (elders) and teachers. The congregation(s) consisted (predominantly) of Greek-speaking Jewish Jesus followers who lived outside their homeland of Israel, who met in a Jewish synagogue, who probably continued certain Jewish worship practices such as the weekly reading the *Torah*, and who were most likely *Torah* observant.[137]

2.4. The Occasion

2.4.1. Date of the Letter

Assuming James the bother of Jesus wrote the Letter, then it must have been before A.D. 62,[138] when he was martyred.[139]

Several indications in the Letter may point to an early date of composition, very possibly in the 40s. If this is correct, then James predates the Pauline Letters and would be the earliest

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[134] Including, inter alia: Adamson (1976:140; Hartin (2003:173); Moo (2000:148-149); Ropes (1916:226). Wadge (2014:115) sum up the role of the rabbi by saying that he is 'a teacher of God's instructions'.

[135] See also: Davids (1982:136); Moo (2000:148).

[136] See also: Davids (1982:136); Moo (2000:149); Ropes (1916:227); Wadge (2014:115).

[137] As such they would have been devoted to the *Torah* and would have followed its instructions closely.

[138] So: Moo (2000:25); Simmons (1986:8); Vlachos (2013:5).

[139] Josephus (37-ca.100:1076); see also: Burdick (1981:162); Johnson (2008:99).

New Testament document, as Tasker (1973:31) and Vlachos (2013:5) suggest. Arguments advanced for such an early date include:[140] the Jewishness of the Letter (ref. **Section 2.3.3**), its close affinity to the teaching of the OT and that of Christ, the simple order of the church,[141] the mention of "synagogue", and the absence of any mention of the issues in Acts 15.[142] While these reasons strongly support an early date, they can also be used to argue for a later date, though with less probability.

According to Tasker (1973:32), it is more reasonable to assume that James wrote the Letter towards the end of his life. In support of this view, he contends that James wrote 'to supplement' the Pauline 'doctrine of justification by faith' that became twisted in 'an antinomian direction'. However, as Moo (2000:26) argues, such a late date is not required, since James could have corrected misunderstandings of Paul's teaching soon after Paul began to "proclaim Jesus" (ἐκήρυσσεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν) in the synagogues (Acts 9:19-21; c.36-45). Or as Vlachos (2013:4) notes, it is possible that James responded to 'issues entirely independent of Paul'.

Once it is established that James the Lord's brother is the author, then the date of composition would be between 35 and 62 A.D. (Johnson, 2008:92). This is confirmed by evidence for the Letter of James, as pointed out by Wadge (2014:21), that was found among papyrus scraps in the Qumran caves, dated between 50-60 A.D. And although it is difficult to be sure, evidence in and about the Letter[143] does seem to favour an earlier rather than later date, around 45 A.D., after the Herodian persecution (Acts 11:28-12:4), as Elwell & Beitzel (1988:1) suggest; and before "the Jerusalem Council", as Kistemaker (1986:19) suggests. In line with this, Kaiser (1998:274) suggests that James is the first New Testament writing.[144]

2.4.2. Situation of the First Receivers

Apart from the first receivers being addressed as "the twelve tribes those in the diaspora" (ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ) (Jas. 1:1), who were "(beloved) brothers and sisters" (ἀδελφοί ἀγαπητοί) (Jas. 1:2, 16, 19, et.al.),[145] who met in their "synagogue" (συναγωγή) (Jas. 2:2), had "teachers" (διδάσκαλοι) (Jas. 3:1) and "the elders of the church" (τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους

[140] See: Burdick (1981:162); Moo (2000:25-27); MacArthur (1998:5).

[141] The leaders were "teachers" (Jas. 3:1) and "elders" (Jas. 5:14).

[142] Where believers from "the party of the Pharisees" (τῆς αἱρέσεως τῶν Φαρισαίων) said that "it is necessary" (δεῖ) for Gentile believers "to be circumcised" (περιτέμνειν) and "to be ordered to keep the law of Moses" (τηρεῖν τὸν νόμον Μωϋσέως) (Acts 15:5).

[143] Especially including: (1) close affinity of James's teaching to that of the OT and of Christ, (2) the mention of "synagogue", and (3) the absence of any mention of the issues at the "Jerusalem Council" (in Acts 15).

[144] See also Osborne (2019:5-6).

[145] Note: Gender inclusive use of *aldelphoí* is adopted for this study.

τῆς ἐκκλησίας) (Jas. 5:14),[146] Richardson (1997:38) asserts that James offers little information about the specific historical situation. And according to Davids (1997:28), the Letter does not seem to explicitly mention any defined spiritual or social crises.

A general idea could be formed of the original audience from the contents of the Letter. And much of it could be true of any church, including: they faced "the testing of their faith" (τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως) (Jas. 1:3) and "temptation" (πειρασμός) (Jas. 1:12); they needed to be "quick to listen" (ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι) (Jas. 1:19), and be "doers of the Word" (ποιηταὶ λόγου) (Jas. 1:22); they were not to "have in partiality the faith" (μή ἐν προσωπολημψίαις ἔχετε τὴν πίστιν) (Jas. 2:1) but have "faith" (πίστις) with "works" (ἔργα) (Jas. 2:14); they needed to "bridle" (χαλιναγωγῆσαι) their tongues (Jas. 3:2) and show "wisdom" (σοφία) by "good behaviour" (τῆς καλῆς ἀναστροφῆς) (Jas. 3:13); they needed to beware of their sinful "desires" (τῶν ἡδονῶν) (Jas. 4:1) and "be humbled" (ταπεινώθητε) before God (Jas. 4:10); they had to stop to "speak against" (αταλαλεῖτε) one another (Jas. 4:11) and "to boast" (καυχᾶσθε) about their (future) plans (Jas. 4:16); they needed to be warned about "riches" (ὁ πλοῦτος) (Jas. 5:2) and not to "swear" (ὀμνύετε) (Jas. 5:12); they had to be encouraged to "be patient" (μακροθυμήσατε) (Jas. 5:7); to "pray" (προσευχέσθω) and "sing praises" (ψαλλέτω) (Jas. 5:13); and to "turn" (ἐπιστρέφω) sinners (Jas. 5:20) back to God. To some extent, these topics and truths are universally applicable to all believers.[147]

However, if the Letter was addressed to 'real people' in the 'concrete historical situation'[148] of being 'refugees at Antioch', as Geyser (1975:26, 32) supposes, then it could be demonstrated that the Letter's contents provide instructions to them about how to respond to the trials that would 'inevitably arise in their social context'.[149]

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[146] Ref. **Section 2.2.**

[147] See Johnson (2008:81).

[148] Cheung (2003:59) concurs that James is 'a real letter … sent from a real author to certain real recipients …'

[149] Geyser (1975:29-32) argues that James's first exhortation about dealing with "trials" (Jas. 1:2-18) naturally applies to the situation of displaced people and that next section (Jas. 1:19-27) is a further logical development of the original exhortation. He (Geyser, 1975:30) also proposes that the instruction against preferential treatment of well-dressed visitors (Jas. 2:1-13) is also what that one might expect to be pertinent in a displaced community. Geyser (1975:31) posits that the sections about 'faith without works of Torah' (Jas. 2:14-26) and 'the teacher with the uncontrolled tongue' (Jas. 3:1-12) are 'polemic responses to wrong teaching'. He (Geyser, 1975:31) suggests that the 'admonition … against bitter strife' (Jas. 3:14-18) might apply to the 'Antioch-incident reported by Paul in Gal. 2:1ff', and the subsequent warnings (in Jas. 4:1-12) apply 'by logical association' to 'ordinary members who indulge in quarrels'. Geyser (1975:31) reckons that the graphic descriptions in the next section (Jas. 4:13-5:6) were for the 'benefit of the money-dreaming member' in the displaced community. He (Geyser, 1975:31) argues that the section on "patience" deals with 'another understandable weakness in the fabric of the displaced people community'. Again, according to Geyser

Even if one finds Geyser's historical reconstruction unconvincing, one has to concede that that the original recipients were more likely than not Jewish Christians who were displaced from their homeland and resided somewhere in the pagan Hellenistic world of the first century (Jas. 1:1, ref. **Section 2.3.1**). And this made them vulnerable in at least two ways. Firstly, as foreigners (some of whom were poor, Jas. 2:5), they were easy targets for exploitation, as indeed James 2:6 and 5:4-6 allude to. Secondly, as Christians, they were objects of scorn and spiritual harassment, as James 2:7 touches on. But as Moo (2000:24) cautions, it would not be entirely right to give this perceived socio-economic situation of the readers too much weight in understanding the Letter. The reason for this is that among the recipients there were evidently also wealthy people (rich, Jas. 1:10; and travelling merchants, Jas. 4:13).

With multiple references to it,[150] the antithesis between the rich and the poor is 'major preoccupation' for James, as Coker (2020:516) rightly observes. The rich are warned (Jas. 1:10-11; 5:1-6) and the poor are encouraged (Jas. 1:9; 2:5). But does this reflect an actual social conflict between the addressees? Perhaps, but not necessarily so. According to Stegemann & Stegemann (1999:305-306), for example, James might just use the 'crassly construed case' of the 'social elite' versus the 'absolutely poor' in James 2:2-3 hypothetically in order to bolster his paraenesis about not showing partiality (Jas. 2:1). Certainly, the propensity to show favouritism to the rich (Jas. 2:3) and to discriminate against the poor (Jas. 2:3, 6; 5:1-4) would have been something that James's readers had to be wary of in those days, as is the case today.

Perhaps the situation of the first recipients is best understood, not so much in terms of economic oppression and opposition to their faith by the world due to their displaced status, as Moo (2000:24-25) argues, as by the threat of 'the church becoming like the world'.[151]

And perhaps Tasker (1973:32) is right in that James is addressing an antinomian threat. Martin (1988:lxxii, cvii, 83, 100-101, 123, 164) and Lange & van Oosterzee (2008:79, 88) insist that James is indeed contending against a distortion or misunderstanding of Paul's teaching that led to antinomianism,[152] with its disregard for God's Law and resultant moral laxity.[153] While it can be debated whether or not James is responding to "hyper Pauline-ism" specifically, or

(1975:31-32), the instructions in Jas. 5:13-21 apply to the situation that one would expect to find in a 'refugee church'.

[150] Jas. 1:9-11; 2:1-7; 2:15-16; 5:1-6.

[151] See **Section 2.5** below for substantiation of this view.

[152] See also: Allison (2013:448-440); Keddie (1989:116).

[153] Thus, antinomianism may be the cause of worldliness.

even antinomianism as such, James's teaching certainly counters this.[154] James's emphasis on "*nómos*" (νόμος) at key points of the Letter (refer to **Section 2.7.4**), with his strong exhortations to be doers of it (Jas. 1:22-25; 2:12; (4:11)), is evidence of his stance against antinomianism. While Land (2019:80) may or may not be right that there is 'nothing in the wording of the epistle' that the addressees 'are rejecting *Torah* observance in principle', he certainly seems right that 'we should proceed on the assumption that James is exhorting *Torah*-conscious Jews[155] to obey *Torah*'.

The above seems more plausible than Du Toit's (2020:301) thesis that 'one of the central problems' that James seeks to address is 'the addressees' inclination towards the Mosaic law, and specifically that they probably judged others by using the Torah as yardstick'. The problem, he (Du Toit, 2020:296) argues, is that 'they did not live up to its standards themselves', and 'using the Mosaic law as yardstick for judgment, according to the letter's logic, all people are guilty and all people are judged by default'. He (Du Toit, 2020:296-298, 301) proposes that James 'offers them an alternative (the kingdom-principle of freedom)' to live by, according to which judging others is not 'on the basis of a list of specific requirements' but on 'the principle of love' which 'also involves the principle of mercy'. This thesis seems to set love (and mercy) against the specific requirements of the *Torah*; while, as Silva (2014c:418) rightly comments, 'the references to two of the Ten Commandments in Jas. 2:11 can hardly be viewed as opposing the love commandment'. And if the *Torah* cannot be rightfully used as a "yardstick" by those who ever fail to keep one of its requirements, would it not also be hypocritical for those who do not perfectly keep the "principle of love", and yet use it as a "yardstick" to judge the conduct of others? Besides, what exactly is the "principle of love" or the "kingdom-principle of freedom", if it cannot be expressed in terms of specific practical requirements, such as are commanded in the *Torah*? From the findings of this Study (refer to **Sections 2.8**, **3.5.6**, **3.7**, **4.5**, **4.6**, **5.2-5.4**), it seems more reasonable to conclude that, instead of guiding his readers away from the *Torah* and offering them an alternative rule of life, James takes them into the very heart of the *Torah*, which arguably is a reflection of the heart of God, as perfectly lived and taught by His Son Jesus Christ.

2.4.3. Conclusion about the Occasion

The Letter was most likely written by James in Jerusalem during the 40s A.D., possibly around the time of the Herodian persecution (45 A.D., Acts. 11:28-12:4),[156] to mostly Jewish Christians who were displaced (possibly as a result of persecution), and who were therefore vulnerable

[154] See also Evans (1983:39).

[155] i.e. the original addressees - refer to **Section 2.3.3**.

[156] Which makes it very likely that James is the earliest New Testament writing.

to abuse, oppression, and especially corruption by (or conformity to) the world. A possible cause for corruption or moral laxity is antinomian tendencies, which James's teaching counters or seeks to prevent. While the Letter speaks to them in their specific situation, it also speaks to all other Christians in their particular contexts. As Tasker (1976:33) comments, James 'proclaims a message specifically applicable' to those first Christian receivers, but that is also 'relevant to the Church in every age'.

2.5. The Purpose

2.5.1. Dominant Themes

An analysis of the Letter reveals several major themes (ref. **Appendix C**).

With no less that forty-five references to **God the "Father"** (πατήρ), the Letter is thoroughly God-focussed - which doubtlessly is meant to encourage a God-centred life.[157] Amongst other things, James teaches that:

- "God is one" (εἷς ἐστιν ὁ θεός) (Jas. 2:19), according to famous OT confession, the "*Shema*" (שמע) (Deut. 6:4).[158]
- The Father is "the One giving to all generously" (τοῦ διδόντος θεοῦ πᾶσιν ἁπλῶς) (Jas. 1:5), and "He promised" (ἐπηγγείλατο) the "crown of life" (τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς) to "those loving Him" (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν) (Jas. 1:12).
- The Father is "One who cannot be tempted by evil" (ἀπείραστός ἐστιν κακῶν) (Jas. 1:13), and He is "the Father of lights with whom there is no shadow of turning" (τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν φώτων, παρ' ᾧ οὐκ ἔνι παραλλαγὴ ἢ τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα) (Jas. 1:17).
- And while the Father is "Lawgiver and Judge" (νομοθέτης καὶ κριτής) (Jas. 4:12), "very compassionate is the Lord, and merciful" (πολύσπλαγχνός ἐστιν ὁ κύριος καὶ οἰκτίρμων) (Jas. 5:11).

According to Johnson (1998:181), it would be 'difficult to find a New Testament writing with as rich a collection of statements concerning the nature and activity of God'.

Moo (2000:28) helpfully notes that James 'frequently grounds his exhortations about appropriate Christian conduct in the nature of God'.[159] Or as Johnson (1998:181) observes,

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[157] According to Burdick (1981:164), the "doctrine of God" is the 'most prominent' doctrine in the Epistle, followed by the "doctrine of sin". Richardson (1997:48) observes that "God the Creator" 'receives praise throughout the body of the letter". See also: Allison (2013:89).

[158] See "*Shema*" in **Glossary of Terms**.

[159] For example: The reader who "lacks wisdom" (λείπεται σοφίας) is exhorted to "ask from God" (αἰτείτω παρὰ … θεοῦ), "the One giving to all generously and not reproaching" (τοῦ διδόντος … πᾶσιν ἁπλῶς καὶ μὴ

'James's theological statements serve as warrants for his moral exhortations'.

Secondly, James alerts his readers to the fact that, "we stumble in many ways" (πολλὰ πταίομεν) (Jas. 3:2). And he urges them, "do not be led astray" (μὴ πλανᾶσθε) or "be deceived" (ἀπατάω) (cf. Jas. 1:22, 26), and he wants them to be, "untainted from the world" (ἄσπιλον … τηρεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου) (Jas. 1:27). Very **strong warnings against "sin" (ἁμαρτία) and its consequences** can be seen in:[160]

- The several references to the "world" (κόσμος) (5 times), "temptation" (πειρασμός) (8 times), and evil "desires" (ἡδονή) / "lust" (ἐπιθυμέω) (5 times).
- Frequent (68 times) mentions of, and cautions against, "evil" (κακός) and "sin" (ἁμαρτία), with numerous expressions of it.
- The strong tone of the coming "judgment" (κρίσις), with about fifteen references to it. Warnings include not "judging the neighbour" (κρίνων τὸν πλησίον) (Jas. 4:12) and being careful "so that you may not fall under judgment" (ἵνα μὴ ὑπὸ κρίσιν πέσητε) (Jas. 5:12), knowing "the Judge has taken stand before the doors" (ὁ κριτὴς πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν ἕστηκεν) (Jas. 5:9).
- The added urgency, in that James is at pains to remind his readers of the transience of life and fleeting nature of wealth (Jas. 1:10-11; 4:13-14; 5:2-3).

Thirdly, these warnings about the future contributes to James's **strong eschatological perspective** as noted by several scholars, including: Allison (2013:92); Burdick (1981:165); Davids (1982:38); Moo (2000:29-30); Richardson (1997:42); and others.

Fourthly, James is packed with no less than 59 imperatives (in only 108 verses)[161] to instruct his readers in **pure and practical "religion"** (θρησκεία) and to put their **"faith"** (πίστις) **into action**. Supporting themes or threads include:

- Patient endurance towards perfection:[162] Since they do "fall into various trials" (πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις) (Jas. 1:2) and face "testing" (δοκίμιον) (Jas.1:3) and "temptation" (πειρασμός) (Jas. 1:12), James urges his readers to exercise "endurance" (ὑπομονή) (Jas. 1:4; cf. 1:12; 5:11) and "to be patient" (μακροθυμήσατε) (Jas. 5:7, 8,

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ὀνειδίζοντος) (Jas. 1:5). And the readers are exhorted: "let no one being tempted say that I am tempted by God" (μηδεὶς πειραζόμενος λεγέτω ὅτι Ἀπὸ θεοῦ πειράζομαι) because "God is One who cannot be tempted by evil and futher He Himself tempts no one" (ὁ … θεὸς ἀπείραστός ἐστιν κακῶν, πειράζει δὲ αὐτὸς οὐδένα) (Jas. 1:13).

[160] See Burdick's comment in **Footnote 157**.

[161] See: Doriani (2007:6); Johnson (2008:8). According to Laws (1980:27), James is 'the most consistently ethical document in the New Testament'.

[162] See: Blomberg & Camell (2008:255); Davids (1982:35-38); Martin (1998:lxxix).

10) "until the coming of the Lord" (ἕως τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου) Jesus (Jas. 5:7). They are to be "perfect and complete" (τέλειοι καὶ ὁλόκληροι), "lacking in nothing" (ἐν μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι) (Jas. 1:4).

- Wisdom from above:[163] For patient endurance, the readers are instructed to "ask in faith" (αἰτείτω ἐν πίστει), without "doubting" (διακρινόμενος) (Jas. 1:6-8; see also 5:15), for "wisdom" (σοφία) (Jas. 1:5). That is "wisdom from above" (ἄνωθεν σοφία) (Jas. 3:13-18).
- Faith with works:[164] The readers are to "have works" (ἔχειν ἔργα) with their "faith" (πίστις) (cf. Jas. 2:14, 17, 26) to "perfect" (τελειόω) their faith (Jas. 2:22). To the one who does so, God "reckons" (λογίζομαι) "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη) and "calls" (καλέω) them His "friend" (φίλος) (cf. 2:23). Both "faith" (πίστις) and (good) "works" (ἔργα) are key ideas in James, with related words numbering 19 and 28 respectively.
- For James there are at least three areas of special concern that interact with some or all of the themes above: **"wealth"** (riches) (πλοῦτος) (touched on 31 times),[165] the **"tongue"** (speech) (γλῶσσα) (touched on 20 times),[166] the **"fruit of righteousness"** (καρπὸς δικαιοσύνης) or virtues of "wisdom from above" (ἄνωθεν σοφία) (touched on 21 times).

Fifthly, heeding James's warnings against sin and following his instructions practicing their religion (or faith), provide practical expression to his overarching exhortations to "**be doers of the Word"** (γίνεσθε ποιηταὶ λόγου) (Jas. 1:22-25) and be **"doers of (the) *nómou*"** (ποιητὴς νόμου) of God (Jas. 4:12).[167] James refers directly to the **"Word"** (λόγος), **"*nómos*"** (νόμος), **"Scripture"** (γραφή), and **"truth"** (ἀλήθεια) 25 times. Clearly these provide the source and basis for the imperatives (both explicit and implicit) in the Letter of James.

2.5.2. Unifying Theme and Main Concern

As noted above, James focusses his readers on God, warns them about sin and judgment, gives them an eschatological perspective, and instructs them in practical Christianity. But what is his unifying theme and main concern?

It is 'difficult to isolate one main theme', as Simmons (1986:8) comments. He then goes

[163] This is a key theme in James, recognised by many scholars, including: Davids (1982:51-52); Moo (2000:33-34); Morgan (2010:47-54); Richardson (1997:46-47); Varner (2011:120-121).

[164] See: Blomberg & Camell (2008:258); Davids (1982:47-51); Moo (2000:37-43); Richardson (1997:42-44).

[165] See: Blomberg & Camell (2008:254-255).

[166] Ibid. 256-257.

[167] See: Allison (2013:91); Blomberg & Camell (2008:258-259); Moo (2000:30-33).

on to suggest that the main emphasis is on, 'the practical expression of the Christian faith'.[168] As Tasker (1973:33) suggests, the theme could be expanded to: 'under the pressure of trials of every sort', the Christians were not to fail 'to recognise or give practical expression to the moral implications of their faith'. And so, as Johnson (1998:178) remarks, 'to live up to the profession' of their faith in the 'glorious Lord Jesus Christ'.

According to Youngblood (1995),[169] James is 'a letter on practical religion' and adds that, according to James, 'true religion is moral religion and social religion'.[170] He (Youngblood, 1995)[171] believes that James, 'echoes clearly the ethical teaching of Jesus', especially in the Sermon on the Mount, with Matthew 7:21[172] being the key message. Adamson (1976:20) puts it like this: James's 'aim, as in the Sermon on the Mount, is to set forth the theonomic life in its essentials, that is, life according to God's Law'. Friedman & Friedman (2012:14) contend that James engages his students and hearers as a "rabbi",[173] and in 'very practical development and application of the commandments of the Torah'.

Ong (1996:158) believes that a "metaphorical reading" of the Epistle reveals that it is 'held together' by the 'overarching metaphorical concept' that 'life is a divine trial'. He (Ong, 1996:3) explains that these trials of life, 'test one's faith in God's laws' and they 'will perfect the subject to receive the ultimate reward'[174] that God will give to 'the faithful'[175]. According to Ong (1996:138, 159), James's message could be summed up as follows: 'the good life is obedience of God's Law', and faith results in obedience to God's Law.

Cheung (2003:162) proposes that, 'the goal of hermeneutics' in James is 'attaining perfection',[176] as opposed to 'doubleness'.[177] Along the same lines, Bauckham (2014:67) believes this is the 'overall aim' of James: 'to move his readers towards perfection (1:4; 3:2) through fulfilment of "the law of freedom" (1:25; 2:8, 10, 12), and through wisdom God gives

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[168] Simmons (1986:8). So also: Patterson (2003:868) and (Tasker, 1973:33). Elwell & Beitzel (1988:1092) agrees and adds that James's theology 'has a decided Jewish flavour'.

[169] No page numbers.

[170] So also: Dockery et.al. (1992:758); Tasker (1973:33).

[171] No page numbers.

[172] Matthew 7:21 (NASB) Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.

[173] Martin (1998:58) also notes James's 'typical Jewish-Rabbinic style'.

[174] "The crown of life" (τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς) (Jas. 1:12).

[175] Or "to those loving Him" (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν), as Jas. 1:12 says.

[176] Or 'wholeness'.

[177] Or 'dividedness'.

(1:5; 3:17). Cheung (2003:176-177) deduced seven features of "perfection" from early Jewish and Christian traditions;[178] of which he highlighted 'faithfulness and undivided loyalty to God' and 'complete obedience to Torah'. Concern for the former is captured in, what Moo (2000:45-46) refers to as, the 'emotional climax' (Jas. 4:4-10) of the Letter;[179] which confronts the reader with the stark choice: "friendship with the world" (ἡ φιλία τοῦ κόσμου) (which is spiritual "adultery") or being a "friend of God" (Jas. 4:4; cf. 2:23).[180]

According to Varner (2011:121) it is practicing "wisdom from above" that will enable the readers to be "whole" or "perfect"[181] in their 'undivided devotion to the One true God'. He (Varner, 2011:120-121) maintains that the 'overall thrust' of James's message is the choice between following 'the way of heavenly wisdom' or 'earthly wisdom', as expressed in the 'thematic peak' (Jas. 3:13-18) of the Letter.

To mention wisdom with no reference to the Law seems inadequate, since James explicitly mentions "law" (νόμος) ten times,[182] while he explicitly mentions "wisdom" (σοφία) only four times.[183] And the concept of "law" (νόμος) occurs (explicitly) in the prologue (Jas. 1:2-27) as well as in two of the main section of the Letter (Jas. 2:1-26; 4:11-5:12; refer to **Section 2.7**), while the concept of wisdom occurs (explicitly) only in the prologue (Jas. 1:2-27) and central section (Jas. 3:1-4:10). Furthermore, the Scriptures clearly connect the two concepts,

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[178] The seven features include: (1) 'To be perfect means to live an upright, righteous, truthful, trustworthy, honest and pure life in faithfulness and loyalty to God and His will' (OT, Wis., Philo, Qumran, Test. XII Patr., NT); (2) 'True perfection/integrity consists in obedience to the Torah and is the outcome or achievement of godly wisdom' (OT, Wis., Philo, Qumran, Test. XII Patr.); (3) Lev. 19:2 'lies behind the call to holiness and perfection' (OT, Qumran, NT); (4) 'Perfection/wholeness involves a process of growth or maturing …' (Philo, Qumran, NT); (5) 'Full perfection can only be achieved in the final eschaton' (Qumran, NT); (6) 'True perfection issues in character as well as good works' (OT, Philo, Qumran, Test. XII Patr., NT); (7) 'The perfection or holiness of the covenant community gives it its unique shape of religion' (OT, Qumran, NT) (Cheung, 2003:176-177).

[179] See also: Johnson (2008:86).

[180] The first is associated with ideas such as "doubting" (διακρίνω) God (Jas. 1:6), being "doubleminded" (δίψυχος) or "unstable" (ἀκατάστατος) (Jas. 1:8), being "led astray" (πλανάω) (Jas. 1:16), deceived (παραλογίζομαι) (Jas. 1:22, 26), have "partiality in the faith" (ἐν προσωπολημψίαις … τὴν πίστιν) (Jas. 2:1, 4, 9), or have "faith without works" (τὴν πίστιν … χωρὶς τῶν ἔργων) (Jas. 2:18). The second is associated with concepts such as "loving" (ἀγαπάω) God (Jas. 1:12; 2:5), being "doers" (ποιηταὶ) of His "Word" (λόγος) or "Law" (νόμος) (Jas. 1:22; cf. 4:11), "believing" (πιστεύω) Him (2:23), practising "wisdom" (σοφία) from Him (1:5; 3:13, 17), and being "humbled" (ταπεινόω) before Him (Jas. 4:10).

[181] As Varner (2011:121) rightly points out, 'this echoes our Lord's statement in Matthew 5:48', which reads: "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (NASB).

[182] Jas. 1:25; 2:8, 9, 10, 11, 12; 4:11 (x4).

[183] Jas. 1:5; 3:13, 15, 17.

for example: Israel is to "keep and do them [i.e. God's statutes and judgments]",[184] for that is your wisdom (σοφία, LXX)" (Deut. 4:6, NASB); and "The law (νόμος, LXX) of the LORD is perfect (ἄμωμος, LXX), restoring (επιστρεφων, LXX) the soul; the testimony (μαρτυρία, LXX) of the LORD is sure (πιστός, LXX), making wise (σοφιζουσα, LXX) the simple" (Psa. 19:7, NASB).[185] Notably, Cheung (2003:160) found that, in Jewish traditions, "law" and "wisdom" 'can be related in two different ways: (1) Law can be seen as the source of wisdom, and (2) wisdom can be seen as necessary for the understanding of the law.' And as Cheung (2003:162) found, 'many scholars' regard 'the concept of law and wisdom' to be 'closely tied' with the opposing themes of "perfection" and "doubleness" in James.[186]

2.5.3. Conclusion about the Purpose

James is profoundly Theocentric in his purpose, practical in his process, and eschatological in his perspective. In response to trials and testing, and in the light of the coming judgment, James urges his readers to practice pure religion and put their faith into action. Therefore, they need heavenly wisdom in order to be doers of God's instructions (*Torah*); which are grounded in His nature and character. Accordingly, the readers are to take heed to the many warnings against "doubleness" (and other sins) and take to heart the many positive exhortations towards "perfection" (or wholehearted devotion to God). Behind all this is a basic and fundamental choice: friendship with the world (which is spiritual adultery) or friendship with God.

2.6. The Type of Literature

2.6.1. Literary Type

While James is rich with illustrations and images[187] and is enlivened by an array of literary devices[188] to move its readers, its main content is presented as prose. Therefore, its teaching

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[184] In Deuteronomy 4:1-6, the terms "statute" or "rule" (δικαίωμα, LXX) and "judgment" or "regulation" (κρίμα, LXX) are used interchangeably with "commandment" (ἐντολή, LXX) of the Law.

[185] See also: Psa. 19:8; 119:98; Prov. 28:7; 2 Tim. 3:15.

[186] Among the scholars, Cheung lists: Zmijewski (1980:68–70, 76); Frankemölle (1985:163–64); Boccaccini (1991:223–25); Tsuji (1997:101); Konradt (1998:272, 309).

[187] Refer to **Appendix C (Analysis of the Letter)**. These include that in: Jas. 1:6, 8, 10-11, 23-24; 2:2-3, 15-16, 19, 21, 23, 25; 3:3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 12; 4:14; 5:7, 10, 11, 17-18.

[188] Allison (2013:82-85) identified the following: (a) 'Catchword connections' (1:1-2; 4-5, 12-13; 21-22; 26-27; 2:12-13, 13; 3:13-4:2); (b) 'Wordplays' (1:22; 2:4, 20, 22; 3:6, 17; 4:14); (c) 'Assonance, consonance, and alliteration' (1:2, 6, 11, 11-12, 14, 21, 24; 2:18; 3:5, 7 ,8, 17; 4:1, 13-14, 13-15); (d) 'Parallelism'' (1:9-10, 11, 19; 2:2, 3, 11, 18, 21 & 25, 26; 3:9; 4:7, 8, 8, 9; 4:13 & 5:1; 5:2-3, 13-14); (e) 'Aphoristic style' (1:17, 19; 2:13b, 17, 26; 3:16; 4:4, 7 ,8, 17; 5:16b); (f) 'Antithetical formulations' (1:5-7, 9-11, 13-15, 19 ,20, 21-25, 26-27; 2:1-7, 14-26; 3:9-10, 13-18; 4:4, 6, 7-8; 5:12).

can and should be taken as accurate and factual information.[189]

Allison (2013:81-82) observes that James's prose is 'graceful', and though his "koine" (Greek) is 'good', it 'features some very unGreek formulations'[190] and 'a significant number of Semitisms'.[191] Other examples of Semitisms, according to Morgan (2010:18-19), are the divine passive (avoidance of stating God's name)[192] and Hebrew parallelism.[193] Friedman & Friedman (2012:3) also highlight the Hebrew influences (Semitisms) in James by stating that, 'behind the Koine Greek' of James are 'thoroughly Torah-based concepts' and James's 'subject matter, tone, emphasis and … main expressed points' are Jewish.[194] And notably, as Morgan (2010:18) points out, the vast majority of the 63 *hapax legomena*[195] in James, 45 are found in the Septuagint. This underscores how much James's thinking is shaped by the OT Scriptures.

2.6.2. Genre

The address in the opening verse of the document indicates that it is a "letter" (Moo, 2000:6). Moo (2000:6) points out that though it lacks other features like 'customary greetings' and 'references to specific people and places' that are typical in other New Testament "letters", one has to bear in mind that, in the 'ancient world', the "letter" was a 'very broad literary category'.

Allison (2013:72) explains that 'the vast majority of Greek Manuscripts' include the word "epistle" (ἐπιστολή) as the inscriptions or subscriptions. And so, 'according to the Greek textual tradition', James is an epistle (letter). Furthermore, Allison (2013:73-74) demonstrates

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[189] See Wolvaardt (2005:86).

[190] Allison (2013:82) notes especially 'ἀκροατὴς ἐπιλησμονῆς' ("hearer of forgetfulness") of Jas. 1:25 and the 'ὁ κόσμος τοῦ ἀδικίας' ("the word of injustice") of Jas. 3:6.

[191] Allison (2013:86) lists and comments on the following: ἀκροατὴς ἐπιλησμονῆς* (1:25); ἁμαρτία αὐτῷ ἐστιν (4:17); ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος (1:7); ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ (5:15); γέεννα (3:6); δέησις δικαίου* (5:16); δίδωμι + ὑετόν (5:18); εἰς μαρτύριον (5:3); ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ (1:1); ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις (5:3); ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ (1:8); ἐν ταῖς πορείαις αὐτοῦ (1:11); ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτου (1:25); ἐν τῷ ὁμόματι (5:10, 14); ἐνώπιον κυρίου (4:10); ἔστω πᾶς ἄνθρωπος (1:19); τὸ καλὸν ὄνομα τὸ ἐπικληθὲν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς (2:7); καρπὸν τῆς γῆς (5:7); καρπὸς δικαιοσύνης (3:18); ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας (3:6); κρίμα λημψόμεθα* (3:1); κριταὶ διαλογισμῶν πονηρῶν* (2:4); κύριος σαβαώθ (5:4); λαλέω + ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι (5:10); μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὅς (1:12); μακροθυμέω + ἕως (?) (5:7); μισθός + ἐργατής (5:4); ποιήσαντι ἔλεος (2:13); ποιηταὶ λόγου (1:22); ποιητὴς νόμου (4:11); προσευχῇ προσηύξατο* (5:17); προσηύξατο τοῦ μὴ βρέξαι (5:17); πρόσω πολημψία/πτέω (2:1, 9); πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως (1:23); στηρίξατε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν (5:8); συλλαβοῦσα τίκτει (1:15); σῶσαι τὰς ψυχάς (1:21); σώσει ψυχήν αὐτοῦ ἐκ θανάτοῦ (5:20); ταπείνω + ἐνώπιον (4:10); ταχὺς εἰς τό* (1:19); τίς … ἐν ὑμῶν (3:13); τηρέω + ἑσυτοῦ + ἀπό (1:27); τὸ τέλος κυρίου (?)* (5:11); ὑπάγετε ἐν εἰρήνῃ (2:16).

[192] Jas. 1:5; 5:15.

[193] Jas. 1:9, 11, 13; 4:8-9; 5:4.

[194] Refer to **Section 2.6.4.**

[195] Words found only once in the New Testament.

convincingly that James shares striking 'family resemblances'[196] with Jeremiah 29 and other[197] so-called "Diaspora Letters". Coker (2020:516) explains that "diaspora letters" were written 'from authority figures in Jerusalem[198] and sent to Jews throughout the Greco-Roman world'. He (Coker, 2020:516) adds that these letters typically come with 'imperatival force' that constitutes 'social boundaries' and creates 'social cohesion' for the "diaspora" community. Therefore, it seems best to consider James as a "diaspora letter" to, as Vlachos (2013:6) suggests, an 'oppressed and displaced flock in order to encourage, instruct, and admonish them.' Additionally, as Cheung (2003:58) maintains, though James is 'a real letter … from a real author to certain real recipients'[199] it is 'a circular letter'.[200]

While it seems appropriate to regard James as a circular diaspora letter, it seems inadequate to define the genre simply as that. Resemblances in the style and ethical instructions have caused scholars to compare James with the Wisdom Books like Proverbs (Patterson, 2003:868)[201] and the Lord Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Youngblood, 1995).[202]

James's passion reminds others of an Old Testament Prophet (Dockery, et.al. 1992:758). Doriani (2007:8-11) agrees that James 'resembles wisdom books'[203] and 'sounds like a prophet of old'[204], and then adds that he 'constantly alludes to' Jesus' words[205] and 'applies them afresh'.

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[196] These include: address to Jews in the diaspora (Jas. 1:1); authorship by recognised authority (Jas. 1:1); strong didactic/paraenetic elements; strong prophetic features (cf. Jas. 4:13-5:6); consolation or encouragement in difficult circumstances (Jas. 1:2-4; 5:7-11); appeal to *Torah* (cf. Jas. 1:25; 2:8-12); appeal to God's generous/merciful nature (Jas. 1:5, 13, 17-18); hope for/promise of divinely wrought salvation (cf. Jas. 1:12; 2:5; 5:7-9); judgment on the unrighteous (cf. Jas. 2:13; 3:6; 5:1-6).

[197] These include: the Epistle of Jeremiah; 2 Maccabees 1:1-9; 1:10-2:18; 2 Baruch 78-87; 4 Baruch 6.16-25; t.Sanh 2.6; Tg. Jeremiah 10:11.

[198] This is further support for authorship of James, the brother of Jesus.

[199] 'diaspora Jewish communities'.

[200] A letter shared/circulated between messianic Jewish communities living in the diaspora.

[201] According to Dunn (2009:1131), 'there can be little dispute' that James 'belongs to the genre of Wisdom literature'.

[202] No page numbers.

[203] Resemblances, according to Doriani (2007:8-9) include: the recognition that wisdom is a 'gift we rightly seek from God', that wisdom involves 'meditation on Scripture and observation of the world', that wisdom 'observes the blessings of obedience and the price of disobedience', and that wisdom is the application of 'biblical themes' to the 'observations of daily life'.

[204] Especially when James denounces sin.

[205] Especially Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount.

Influential scholars like Dibelius (1976:1-7) advocate that James more closely resembles the ancient genre of "paraenesis",[206] because of its strong focus on exhortation, amongst other things. Johnson (2008:21) would rather call it "protreptic discourse"[207] because its 'moral teaching is defined in terms of a certain specific "profession" of life'[208] and is 'delivered with a passion'. Moo (2000:8-9) thinks of James as 'a sermon or homily' delivered in the form of a "letter". Hartin (2006:446) distinguishes between the "primary" and "secondary" genre of James, with the first being "Wisdom literature" and the second "Paraenetic Literature".

James clearly has features of "wisdom", "paraenesis", and "protrepsis". But which is dominant? According to Cheung (2003:49), in addition to its wisdom related vocabulary, literary forms, and wisdom themes, the 'deciding factor' in identifying James as "Jewish wisdom instruction" 'lies in its subject matter'. He (Cheung, 2003:49) regards James as a 'sage … offering new insights to his audience', drawn from 'the Jewish wisdom traditions, law and prophets and the Jesus tradition'. However, because of what we know about James (refer to **Section 2.2**) and because of the Jewishness of the Letter (refer to **Section 2.6.4**) and its structure (refer to **Section 2.7**), perhaps Raysman (Friedman & Friedman, 2012:xv) is more accurate in thinking of James as 'a Jewish rabbi teaching *Torah'*.

2.6.3. Form of Discourse

The Letter does not show signs of intent to present historical events according to their time sequence. The discourse is thus non-chronological. Furthermore, instructions (explicit and implied) are scattered throughout the Letter. And so, both descriptions and prescriptions occur in almost all sections of James. The form of discourse is thus non-chronological with both expositions and exhortations.[209]

The purpose of the communication, therefore, is to explain truth and to encourage action based on that truth.[210] Or more specifically in the case of James, as Friedman & Friedman (2012:10-11) contend, the purpose is 'to make *Torah* relevant' to the world of the reader and to 'instruct on how best to keep [*Torah*]'.

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[206] By paraenesis, Dibelius (1976:3) mean 'a text which strings together admonitions of general ethical content'. He (Dibelius, 1976:3) explains that 'paraenetic sayings ordinarily address themselves to a specific (though perhaps fictional) audience, or at least appear in the form of a command or summons'.

[207] Johnson (2008:20) explains that the "protreptic discourse" 'originated as an exhortation to follow a particular profession, arguing for the superiority of one profession over another'.

[208] The "profession", according to Johnson (2008:37) is that of a 'community defined in terms of being "heirs of the kingdom" or "faith" (2:5) "faith" (2:5) or in terms of "friendship with God" (2:23, 4:4) or in terms of "the noble name invoked upon you" (2:7)'.

[209] See Wolvaardt (2005:86-87).

[210] Ibid.

2.6.4. Jewishness of the Letter

According to Johnson (2008:169), the address ('the twelve tribes those in the diaspora' (Jas. 1:1) 'clearly locates the composition within the symbolic world of *Torah'*. Additionally, the Law (*Torah*) which was central to the LORD's dealings with Israel, is prominent in James; with several explicit references to it at various locations[211] in the Letter.

The Jewishness of the Letter can also be seen in distinctive OT concepts such as the belief that "God is One" (εἷς ἐστιν ὁ θεός) (2:19; see Deut. 6:4) and that those who are unfaithful to the LORD are "adulterous people" (μοιχαλίδες) (4:4; Jer. 3:20), spiritually speaking.[212] Furthermore, Friedman & Friedman (2012:51-80) present compelling evidence that, throughout his Letter, James uses concepts that originate from the OT Scriptures.[213] And McKnight (2011:40) comments that James, 'raises many themes central to the Jewish world'.[214] Not surprisingly, Gench (1996:82) considers James to be "the most Jewish of all the New Testament writings".[215] And Adamson (1976:19) would endorse Hayes' comment that the Epistle, 'from beginning to end burns with the passion of a sincerely Jewish Christianity'. Moreover, as Barclay (1976:21) observes, 'there is scarcely anything in the letter that a good Jew could not accept'.

2.6.5. Pastoral Nature of the Letter

It has already been noted that the Letter is replete with instructions, burns with passion, and weighs heavy with authority. Tasker (1976:33) notes that all of James's teaching comes with 'vividness, energy, and dramatic power'. This can be seen in James's rich use of around twenty emotive metaphors and illustrations,[216] as mentioned in **Section 2.6.1**. It can also be seen in

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[211] The *Torah* is referred to in several or all of the following verses: Jas. 1:25; 2:8, 9, 10, 11, 12; 4:11.

[212] See Moo (2000:23).

[213] At this stage, a sample from James 1 suffices to prove the point. Chapter 3 of this study will present a fuller treatment. At least the following OT connections are found in chapter 1 (Friedman & Friedman, 2012:51-58): "the Father of the lights" (τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν φώτων) (Jas. 1:17) – Exod. 14:20; Psa. 78:14; 104:2; 118:27; 119:105; Isa. 2:5; 45:7; Dan. 2:22; "with Whom there is no change of shadow of turning" (παρ' ᾧ οὐκ ἔνι παραλλαγὴ ἢ τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα) (Jas. 1:17) – Mal. 3:6; Psa. 102:26-27; "Word of truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) (Jas. 1:18) – Psa. 119:142, 151; "firstfruits" (ἀπαρχήν) – Lev. 23:10-11; "now then let every person be quick to listen" (ἔστω δὲ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι) (Jas. 1:19) and "but be doers of the Word and not hearers only" (γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταὶ λόγου καὶ μὴ ἀκροαταὶ μόνον) (Jas. 1:22) – Exod. 24:7; cf. Deut. 6:4; "to visit orphans and widows in their affliction" (ἐπισκέπτεσθαι ὀρφανοὺς καὶ χήρας ἐν τῇ θλίψει αὐτῶν) (Jas. 1:27) – Exod. 22:22; Deut. 16:14).

[214] These include: 'God, messianism, church/community, *Torah* and halakah, salvation, faith and works, socio-economic justice, speech, prayer, wisdom, and eschatology'

[215] See also: Dunn (1990:251) and Hayes (1915:1512).

[216] Jas. 1:6, 8, 10-11, 23-24:2:2-3, 15-16, 19, 21, 23, 25; 3:3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 12 x2; 5:7, 10, 11, 17, 18.

around sixteen direct and confrontational statements in the Letter.[217] Clearly, James spoke to challenge and move his readers.

Though James speaks the truth very directly, he also speaks very humbly (ref.: Jas. 3:2, 8-10, and comment in **Section 2.2.1**) and also sincerely and lovingly. Three times he addresses his readers as, "my beloved brothers and sisters" (ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί) (Jas. 1:16, 19; 2:5). Clearly, James speaks with the heart of a pastor who genuinely cares for his flock and fellow believers.

2.6.6. Conclusion about the Type of Literature

James is graceful Greek prose with a rich Hebrew literary base. It presents the passionate and pastoral "diasporic letter" from the rabbi James of Jerusalem to a displaced Messianic Jewish community; and from there to other Messianic communities. Being Jewish wisdom instruction, the Letter makes God's instructions (*Torah*) relevant to the world of the readers and encourages them in the practical application thereof.

2.7. Structure of the Letter

2.7.1. Unifying Motifs

Johnson (2008:11) comments that, 'the difficulty in determining its structure' has been 'one of the persistent problems in interpreting James's. The problem is related to the perceived degree of unity and coherence of the Letter's contents. According to Dibelius (1976:5), James lacks structure and unity. Adamson (1976:20) disagrees and insists that it has 'sustained unity'. And Porter (2019:67), having done a "cohesive harmony analysis" on the Letter, concluded that James 'constitutes a text' with 'high cohesive harmony'.

According to Ong (1996:113, 159) 'the commonly accepted' sections can be explained and are held together by 'the metaphoric concept' that 'life is a divine trial',[218] and each topic in James refers explicitly or implicitly to some aspect of God's Law (*Torah*).[219] Varner (2011:120) argues that the "thematic peak" (Jas. 3:13-18),[220] 'controls … the individual paragraphs of his [i.e. James's] discourse' - in each of which 'a moral behaviour is commended, and the opposite behaviour is condemned'. Cheung (2003:xi)[221] proposes that both the key

[217] Jas. 2:6, 20; 4:2 x3; 4:3, 12, 14, 16; 5:2-3, 4, 5 x2, 6 x2, 11 x2.

[218] MacArthur (1998:5) also see the sections of James as a 'series of tests' of faith.

[219] Similarly, Jackson-McCabe (2014:181) argues that the coherence of James 'centres on a dichotomy between human desire and a divinely given *logos* correlated with God's law'.

[220] Demonstration of "wisdom from above" as opposed to "wisdom that is earthly worldly demonic".

[221] As observed by Richard Bauckham in the foreword to Cheung's study. See also: Cheung (2003: 272-273).

themes of "*Tora*h" and "wisdom", together with "perfection",[222] 'relate together and constitute the unity and coherence' of the Letter's teaching. Taylor & Guthrie (2006:702-703) argue compellingly that, 'a clear overarching concern' of the Letter is 'obedience to the law/word of God', as 'an expression of righteous wisdom', in both speech and action.[223]

The perspectives above are complementary and could be combined as follows: each section in James could be seen as presenting a different life "trial" (occasion), in which the reader is to strive for "perfection" in their response (goal), by correctly applying God's "instructions" (*Torah*) with the help of His "heavenly wisdom" (means).

2.7.2. Sections

Some sections in James, as Johnson (2008:12-13) rightly points out, are 'easily recognized as units that are internally unified and capable of being topically defined'. But then not all agree as to exactly where these sections start and end. This is illustrated in **Table 1**, which shows a comparison of Johnson's sections and topics with that of Moo:

Table 1: General Sections with Topics

<table>
<tr><th>Johnson (2008:pix, 12-13)</th><th>Moo (2000:vi-vii, 45)</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Jas. 1:2-27 'epitome of exhortation'</td><td>Jas. 1:2-18 'The pursuit of spiritual wholeness: opportunity afforded by trials'</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Jas. 1:19-2:26 'The evidence of spiritual wholeness: obedience to the Word'</td></tr>
<tr><td>Jas. 2:1-26 'The deeds of faith' with topics:
• 2:1–11 'incompatibility of faith and discrimination'
• 2:14–26 'inadequacy of faith without deeds'</td></tr>
<tr><td>Jas. 3:1–12 'The power and peril of speech'</td><td rowspan="3">Jas. 3:1-4:12 'The community dimension of spiritual wholeness: Pure speech and peace' with topics: 'speech' and 'envy and violence'</td></tr>
<tr><td>Jas. 3:13–4:10 'Call to conversion' with topic: 'friendship with the world' vs. 'friendship with God'</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Jas. 4:11-5:6 'Examples of Arrogance' with topic: 'offenses involving property'</td></tr>
<tr><td>Jas. 5:7–11 'Patience in time of testing' with topic: 'appropriate eschatological attitudes'</td><td>Jas. 4:13-5:11 'The worldview of spiritual wholeness: Understanding time and eternity' with topics: 'arrogance', the 'rich', and 'patience'.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Jas. 5:12–20 'Speech in the assembly of faith' with topic: 'proper use of speech'[224]</td><td>Jas. 5:12-20: 'Concluding exhortations' with topics: 'oaths', 'prayer and healing' and a concluding summons.</td></tr>
</table>

[222] Moo (2000:vi-vii, 46) calls this "spiritual wholeness".

[223] This concern is seen in both parts of the introduction of the Letter (1:5-8 & 1:22-25) and at key points in the body of the Letter (2:8-11; 2:12-13; and 4:11-12).

[224] Perhaps better expressed as 'proper prayer and praise in the community'.

While there is a fair degree of overlap in the proposed structures above, there are also significant differences. This raises the question as to whether there are grammatical features or structural markers in the text that would give a reasonable level of confidence in the composition of the sections?

According to Varner (2011:126-128), "nominative addresses" (typically "my brothers and sisters" (Ἀδελφοί μου)) with "imperative commands" or "rhetorical questions" mark new sections.[225] This would yield the following sections: James 1:2-15; 1:16-18; 1:19-27; 2:1-13; 2:14-26; 3:1-12; 3:13-18; 4:1-10; 4:11-12; 4:13-17; 5:1-6; 5:7-11; 5:12-18; 5:19-20.[226]

Cheung (2003:272-273) found that the 'compositional structure' of James reveals that, the 'primary concern for perfection in the prologue and epilogue' is related to 'the importance of the theme of law and wisdom';[227] which is repeated in sections in between (Jas. 2:8-13, 3:13-18, 4:11-12), as well as in the prologue. He (Cheung, 2003:83) insightfully observes that the first two units, James 2:8-13 and 3:13-18, act as "bridges" that respectively link James 2:1-7 with 2:14-26 and James 3:1-12 with 4:1-10. And Cheung (20003:79) suggests that unity in James 4:11-5:11, 'consists in the common theme of impending judgement', for which James 4:11-12 sets the scene. Viewing James's structure from this perspective, highlights the fact that 'the law of liberty' (Jas. 2:8-13), 'wisdom from above' (Jas. 3:13-18), and 'God the Lawgiver and Judge' (Jas. 4:11-12) are the 'yardstick against which the Christian's speech and actions have to be measured and judged', as Cheung (2003:83-84) rightfully observes.[228]

Similarly, Taylor (2006:107) proposes that the Law (B, B') and wisdom (D) connect the

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[225] See also: Cheung (2003:71); Davids (1982:168); Johnson (1995:292).

[226] Varner's (2011:128-129) full list of sections with headings are as follows: 1. 'Be Joyful in Trials' (1:2-15); 2. 'Do Not Be Deceived about God's Goodness' (1:16-18); 3. 'Become a Good Hearer/Doer of the Word' (1:19-27); 4. 'Do Not Show Favoritism' (2:1-13); 5. 'Show Your Faith by Your Works' (2:14-26); 6. 'Be Consistent in Your Speech' (3:1-12); 7. 'Follow the Wisdom of God' (3:13-18) – the 'thematic peak'; 8. 'Become a Friend of God' (4:1-10) – the 'hortatory peak'; 9. 'Do Not Speak Against One Another' (4:11-12); 10. 'Do Not Plan Presumptuously' (4:13-17); 11. 'You Rich Should Treat the Poor Justly' (5:1-6); 12. 'Wait Patiently for the Lord's Coming' (5:7-11); 13. 'Do Not Swear but Pray' (5:12-18); 14. 'Convert the Erring Brother' (5:19-20).

[227] According to Cheung (2003:160), in Jewish traditions "law" and "wisdom" 'can be related in two different ways: (1) Law can be seen as the source of wisdom, and (2) wisdom can be seen as necessary for the understanding of the law.'

[228] Cheung's (2003:82) proposed structure is as follows: Jas. 1:1 'The Prescript'; Jas. 1:2-27 'The Prologue: The Programme of Perfection' (with subsections 1:2-18 and 1:9-27); Jas. 2:1-26 'The Testing of the Genuineness of Faith - Obedience to the Royal Law' (with subsections 2:1-7; 2:8-13; and 2:14-26); Jas. 3:1–4:10 'The Manifestation of Wisdom from Above' (with subsections 3:1-12; 3:13-18; 4:1-10); Jas. 4:11–5:11 'The Eschatological Judgement of God, the Lawgiver and Judge of All' (with subsections 4:11–12; 5:7–8; 4:13–5:6; 4:13–17; 5:1–6; 5:9; 5:10–11); Jas. 5:12–20 'Epilogue: The Concerns for Perfection' (with subsections 5:12; 5:13–18; 5:19–20).

major sections or essays of the body of James (A, C, C', A') together chiastically as follows: 'A 2:1-11 Violating the Royal Law through Speaking and Acting Inappropriately Towards the Poor'; 'B 2:12-13 So Speak and Act as one being judged by the Law of liberty'; 'C 2:14-3:12 Wrong Speaking and Acting in Community'; 'D 3:13-18 Righteous vs. Worldly Wisdom'; C' 4:1-10 Prophetic Rebuke: Wrong Speaking and Acting'; 'B' 4:11-12 Do the Law, Do Not Judge It'; 'A' 4:13-5:6 Twin Calls to the Arrogant Rich'. Furthermore, Taylor (2006:109) insightfully points out the strong thematic and lexical parallels between the introduction (in Jas. 1:22-25), the opening essay (in Jas. 2:8-11) and the 'inclusio framing the heart of the letter body' (in Jas. 2:12-13 and 4:11-12) with the words, "*poiéō*" (ποιέω) / "*poiētēs*" (ποιητής) and "*nómos*" (νόμος) / "*nomothétēs*" (νομοθέτης) occurring in each of the four key sections (Johnson, 2008:14).[229] James's emphasis on being doers of the Law is therefore clearly and undeniably visible from the structure of his composition.

Concerning the structure of James, Johnson (2008:14-15) helpfully observes that the first chapter, 'functions as something of a "table of contents" for the treatise, or as an "overture" of its themes'. These 'aphorisms of 1:1-27 can be aligned with the essays in 2:1-5:18 in fairly simple fashion' Johnson (2008:14). In each case the latter elaborates on the former.[230] Johnson (1998:179) regards James's final statement (Jas. 5:19-20) as 'an excellent conclusion' that encourages the readers to, 'do for others what the author has tried to do for them'. While Allison (2013:80) recognises several problems with it, he presents a structure that does make one wonder if the contents have a chiastic pattern. His (Allison, 2013:80) attempt appears as follows:

1:2-8 ('prayer of faith')
1:9-12 ('fate of rich + endurance')
1:13-15 ('the evils of desire')
1:16-18 ('divine gift from above')
1:19-21 ('teaching about the tongue')
1:22-24 ('deeds, not just words')
1:25-27 ('law of freedom/concern for poor')

[229] Taylor (2006:109) sets it out as follows:

Jas. 1:22-25	Jas. 2:8-11	Jas. 2:12-13	Jas. 4:11-12
ποιητής (3x)	ποιέω	ποιέω (2x)	ποιητής
ποιέω			
νόμος	νόμος (4x)	νόμος	νόμος (4x)
			νομοθέτης

[230] Johnson (2008:14-15) connects: James 1:5-7 with 5:13-18; 1:9-10 with 2:1-7 and 4:13-5:6; 1:2-4, 12 with 5:7-11; 1:12-18 with 3:13-4:10; 1:19-20 with 3:1-12; and 1:22-27 with 2:14-26.

2:1-13 (‘law of freedom/concern for poor’)
2:14-26 (‘deeds, not just words’)
3:1-12 (‘teaching about the tongue’)
3:13-16 (‘divine gift from above’)
4:1-12 (‘the evils of desire’)
4:13-5:11 (‘fate of rich + endurance’)
5:12-20 (‘prayer of faith’)

While Heil’s (2012:26-27) proposed chiastic structure of the Letter seems somewhat forced,[231] it does highlight the centrality of the theme of ‘worship in humility of wisdom that is from above’, which Varner (2011:120) believes is the “thematic peak” of the Letter. But it does miss the overarching concern of James to be doers of the *Torah*, which Allison’s (2013:80) structure clearly highlights.

2.7.3. Outline of James

The outline adopted, as shown in **Figure 1** (overleaf), combines the insights from the preceding subsection (**Section 2.7.1**). Varner’s (2011) section markers are used as a starting point. The structure is then adjusted, considering Cheung’s (2003) identification of the prologue and epilogue, with the sections and their tying units in between. Connections in the structure are then made, based on Johnson’s (2008) observations about repetitions of themes from the prologue in the main body. These connections are then adjusted, taking into consideration Allison’s suggestion about a possible chiastic structure.

The outline for James in **Figure 1** shows the connections, both obvious and possible, that are considered important for this Study, especially those for the key passages (Jas. 1:22-25; 2:1-13; 4:11-12). These are not the only connections. From the analysis, it is clear that the Letter has a web of thought connections (see notes in the “**Structure Summary**” column of the **Analysis of James** in **Appendix C**). The outline also shows how the concepts of “Law” and “wisdom” act as a chain that holds the main sections of the Letter together, as observed by both Cheung (2003) and Taylor (2006).

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[231] Heil’s (2012:26-27) proposed chiasm is as follows: ‘A 1:1-16: Do Not Be Led Astray by Sin that Brings forth Death’; ‘B 1:17-27: Be Slow to Speak Not Deceiving the Heart for Useless Worship’; ‘C 2:1-13: A Rich One Enters for Worship but the Poor Who Enters Is Rich in Faith’; ‘D 2:14-26: You Want to Know That Faith without Works Is Useless for Life’; ‘E 3:1-10: The Tongue Is Constituted a World of Unrighteousness within Our Members’; ‘F 3:11-18: Worship in the Humility of Wisdom That Is from Above’; ‘E' 4:1-10: Passions Battle within Your Members and an Enemy of God Is Constituted’; ‘D' 4:11-17: If the Lord Wants It Then We Will Live to Do What Is Praiseworthy’; ‘C' 5:1-6: The Cries Caused by the Rich Have Entered into the Ears of the Lord of Hosts’; ‘B' 5:7-11: Strengthen Your Hearts Like Prophets Who Spoke in the Name of the Lord’; ‘A' 5:12-20: Whoever Brings Back One Led Astray Will Save Him from Death’.

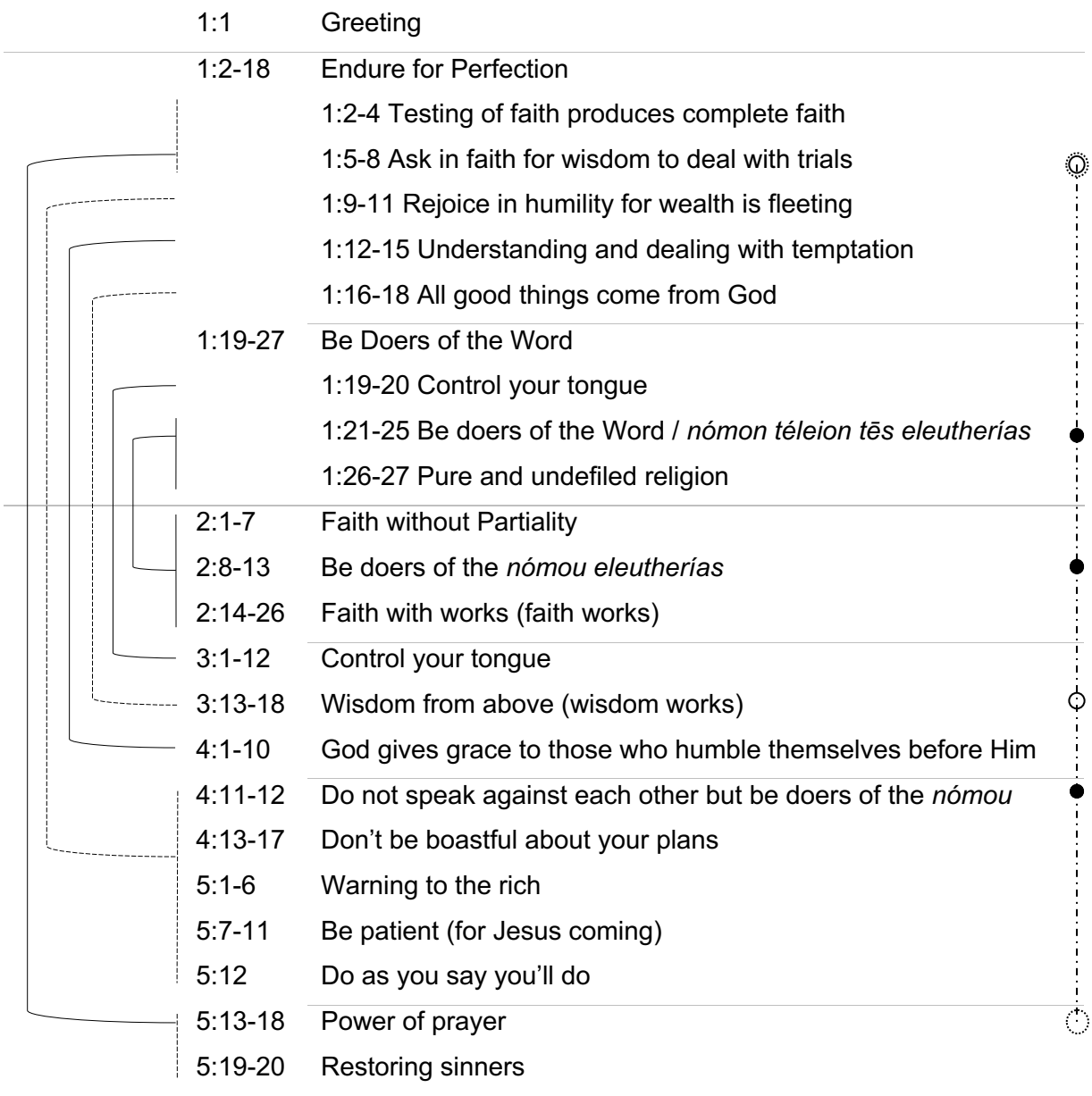


Figure 1: Outline of James

2.7.4. Conclusion about the Structure

The first chapter of James acts as a prologue that highlights key topics that are repeated and expanded on in the remainder of the Letter, in what appears to be a chiastic pattern. The body of the Letter is held together by key sections of which the fundamental concern is: to be doers of the Law (2:12-13; 4:11-12) and practitioners of heavenly wisdom (3:13-18) in all their speech and actions. The concern about wisdom and the Law *(Torah*) is raised in the introduction (1:5, 25). Each section in James could be seen as presenting a different life "trial" (occasion), in which the reader is to strive for "perfection" in their response (goal), by correctly applying God's "instructions" (*Torah*) with the help of His "wisdom" (means).

2.8. Study Objective 1 – Determining of the context or interpretive framework

The Study objective in this chapter has been to determine the context or framework of James. This is a critical step for interpreting the key "*nómos*" (νόμος) passages in James, which in turn will give substance to James's doctrine of God's Law. The context is summarised below:

- The Epistle of James was written by James, a man with exceptional credentials and unquestionable authority in the church. He was the brother of Jesus and was also known as "James the Just". He was the leader of the church in Jerusalem, which was the mother church and headquarters of early Christianity. He was a leading Apostle and pillar of the church - together with Peter and John, and in some respects more eminent that them.
- The original receivers of the Letter were (predominantly) Jewish Christians who were displaced from their homeland Israel, who met in their own synagogue, and who had their own teachers and elders. They therefore seem to have been an established church with leadership and lines of authority.
- The Letter probably reached the first receivers by the mid 40s A.D. who,[232] being displaced Jewish Christians, were vulnerable to exploitation and probably persecution. But perhaps their most significant threat was the danger of becoming like the world, possibly due to antinomian tendencies.
- James is a thoroughly Jewish Letter, grounded in the Hebrew Scriptures and thought, based on God's instructions (*Torah*), and dependent on God's wisdom for its application.
- James is a passionate and pastoral Letter, replete with biblical instructions (both warnings and exhortations), to a displaced flock of Jesus followers to encourage, exhort, and admonish them, in the face of trial and in the light of the judgment to come, to avoid "doubleness" and strive for "perfection", as they live God-centered lives and seek (above all) friendship with Him. Coming from James, "the" authority figure in Jerusalem, the

[232] Suggesting that James might well be the earliest New Testament writing.

imperatives in his Letter, defined “an absolute social boundary” that was meant to protect their unity and identity.

- Each section in James could be seen as presenting a different life “trial” (occasion), in which the reader is to strive for “perfection” in their response (goal), by correctly applying God’s “instructions” (*Torah*) with the help of His “heavenly wisdom” (means).
- The unity of the Letter is seen in the threads of “trial” and “perfection”, and the underlying and connecting themes of “Law” (*Torah*) and “wisdom” that link the sections together. It is also seen in theme in the prologue (Jas. 1) that recur and are expanded on in the main body of the Letter (Jas. 2-5).
- Finally, the structural composition of the Letter highlights, in four key locations (Jas. 1:22-25; 2:8-11; 2:12-13; and 4:11-12), the idea of the *Torah*. The *Torah* is shown to be central in the structure of the Letter through the idea to be “be doers” of God’s (instructive) Word.

CHAPTER 3: BIBLICAL ROOTS OF JAMES

Chapter Outline

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3.1. Introduction

From the character and credentials of the author,[233] the profile and location of the first readers,[234] the likely early date of the Letter,[235] the precarious circumstances of the first readers,[236] James's theocentric purpose replete with practical instructions,[237] the features of the literature,[238] as well as its structure,[239] there can be little doubt that James is a thoroughly Jewish document, grounded deeply in the Hebrew Scriptures and thought,[240] based on God's instructions (*Torah*) and dependent on God's wisdom for its application. This naturally or reasonably suggests that "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James may well mean "*Torah*", unless the immediate contexts demand otherwise.[241]

The idea that "*nómos*" (νόμος) means "*Torah*" in James, is further strengthened by the fact that James is regarded by prominent scholars as 'the most Jewish' writing in the New Testament.[242] It is so Jewish that Hayes (1915:1512) suggested that, apart from the few explicit references to Christ, it might be placed 'properly in the Canon of the OT as in that of the NT', as far as its contents and doctrine are concerned. Wadge (2014:2) observes that Essenes placed James's teachings in their library, 'alongside the other revered Jewish writings, including the *Torah*'. And Kugler & Hartin (2009:504) claim that 'James shows, as no other

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[233] Incl.: Slave of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, pillar of the church, leading Apostle, chief Rabbi in Jerusalem, "James the Just" who was martyred for his faith in Jesus (refer to **Section 2.2**).

[234] Incl.: The twelve tribes in the diaspora, consisting (mostly) of Jewish Jesus followers, who met in their own synagogue, with their own teachers (rabbis?) and elders, and who most likely continued in Jewish worship practices including weekly readings of *Torah* (refer to **Section 2.3**).

[235] Possibly as early as the mid 40s A.D. (and possibly the earliest NT document); which would have addressed the church in its infancy – when it was as Jewish as it could be (refer to **Section 2.4**).

[236] Jewish Christians who, being displaced in the Roman empire, were possibly victims of persecution and whose identity and beliefs would certainly have been challenged in a pagan society (refer to **Section 2.4**).

[237] Strive for whole-hearted devotion to God (as opposed to friendship with the world) by doing the law* and showing wisdom, in order to perfect (complete) their faith by practicing pure religion and putting their faith into action (refer to **Section 2.5**).

[238] Including its plethora of "Semitisms", family resemblance with "diasporic letters", wisdom vocabulary and statements, ethical instructions, prophetic passion, distinctively OT concepts, relevance to the world of the readers, moving metaphors and rich illustrations (refer to **Section 2.6**).

[239] Possible chiastic structure with the idea of being doers of the Word/law* at the center, and the concepts of law* and wisdom in key locations, acting as a chain that holds the various sections together (refer to **Section 2.7**).

[240] As will become even more evident in the chapter.

[241] See: Allison (2013:82); Friedman & Friedman (2012:11-12); Hartin (2006:449-252). See also: Ellenburg & Morgan (2008:228-229); Hartin (2003:26-27); Kistemaker (1986:6, 14).

[242] Including i.a.: Dunn (1990:251); Gench (1996:82); Hayes (1915:1562); and Wadge (2014:21-22).

New Testament writing does, that the heritage of Jesus' followers is rooted within Israel's religion'. Friedmann & Friedman (2012:3) go so far as to maintain that the subject matters of James, 'are all from the five books of Moses'.

However, Sloan (1986:14) cautions against treating James, 'as if it were merely a Jewish document', as it would not do justice the author's Christology, which he argues, is 'evidenced in the deep structures of [James's] thinking and belief'. Furthermore, according to Morgan (2010:31), 'the teachings of Jesus are seen in virtually every section and theme of James's. Moo (2000:27) asserts that, 'No NT document is more influenced by the teaching of Jesus than James's. And Selvaggio (2009) makes the bold claim that James is not so much the most Jewish as it is, 'one of the most distinctively Christian, and Christ-centered documents in the New Testament'. While James is undeniably Christian,[243] the claim that James is not so much "Jewish" as it is "Christian" seems to be stronger than the evidence, especially if it presupposes that "purely biblical Jewishness" and "genuine NT Christianity" are incompatible concepts. Could James not be most authentically Jewish,[244] whilst also being profoundly Christian?[245] And if James is both, does it not support the idea that "*nómos*" (νόμος) means "*Torah*" in James, and that "*Torah*" is as much a Christian concept as it is a Jewish one?

Therefore, the objective of this chapter is to determine the extent to which the OT Scriptures and especially the *Torah* feature in James, and how together with the original recipients' conception of both the OT and the *Torah* would most likely have shaped their understanding of the word "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James.

3.2. Approach

Having established that the Jewishness of James, in and of itself, naturally suggests that "*nómos*" (νόμος) means "*Torah*" in James, this chapter further assess the likelihood that "*nómos*" in James is best understood as "*Torah*". The assessment includes the following:

(a) Consideration of the Scriptures of the original recipients of James, and how this would have shaped their understanding of "*nómos*" (νόμος).

(b) Consideration of how the *Torah* functions in the Old Testament – how the Prophets and Writings interact with and relate to it - and the likely bearing it has on the meaning of "*nómos*" (νόμος), if any.

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[243] As is evidenced in Jas. 1:1 and 2:1. As Motyer (2010:23) puts it, James 'writes as a Christian to Christians'; and that under the Lorship of Jesus Christ (Jas. 1:1). Refer also to **Sections 2.2.1** and **2.3.2**.

[244] From Romans 2:25-29 it is understood that a true Jew is 'one inwardly' whose heart is circumcised by the Spirit and who practices the *Torah* as God intended it. They do not hold on to the "tradition" (incl. "Oral *Torah*") at the expense of neglecting the commandment of God (i.e. *Torah*) (cf. Mat. 7:3).

[245] See Gench (1996:82).

(c) James's use of the Old Testament, including: citations of, quotations of, allusions to, and echoes of the OT. This provides insight as to how the Hebrew Scriptures shapes James's thought and gives meaning to James's terms and teaching.

(d) The extent to which the absolutes[246] in James can be reconstructed from the *Torah*, and the remainder from the Prophets and Writings. This approach delves deeper than the citations, quotations, allusions, and echoes. It traces how much of James's ideas and teaching are rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures (i.e. OT). The more James's teaching originates from earlier revelation, the more likely it is that "*nómos*" (νόμος) means "*Torah*" in James. This part of the assessment will be done for James 1:2-21, capturing the immediate context for the first "*nómos*" (νόμος) passage (Jas. 1:19-27) in James.

This chapter thus examines how the first readers of James would most likely have understood "*nómos*" (νόμος) by considering their conception of Scripture and James's use of the Hebrew Scriptures (i.e. OT).

3.3. The Scriptures of the Original Recipients

3.3.1. The Old Testament as the Scriptures of the Early Church

From the fact that the Old Testament is bound up with the New Testament as part of the Christian Scriptures, one would assume that the full authority of the Old Testament as Scripture would have been universally accepted by everyone who called themselves, "Christian". Sadly, this has not been the case. As Achtemeier, Green & Thompson (2001:9) point out, in the early centuries of the church, 'voices were raised in opposition to retaining the Old Testament as a normative source for the life of the church'. A prime example of this was Marcion (85-160 A.D.).[247] According to Kelly (1977:57), due to Marcion's belief that there are, 'antithetically opposed concepts of religion' in the Old and New Testaments,[248] he 'rejected the Old Testament', viewed 'Christian writings … with a Jewish outlook as suspect', and sought 'to canonize an alternative set of Scriptures for use in his church'. Kelly (1977:57) points out that, from 'surviving evidence', Marcion (in 144 A.D.) was first to produce a draft list of NT writings that, what he reckoned, should constitute the Christian Canon.[249]

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[246] Biblical statements or instructions that are true or applicable for all people of all times (refer to the **Glossary of Terms**).

[247] Note: As Glenn Davis (1997-2010) explains, Marcion single work, "Antitheses", 'in which he set forth his ideas' has not been preserved. Hence the content of his teaching has to be deduced from the writings of opponents, like Tertullian.

[248] In particular, Marcion found 'the Old Testament impossible to reconcile with the Gospel of Christ' (Kelly, 1977:57).

[249] Marcion's list consisted of the Pauline epistles (excl. the pastorals) and Luke's Gospel, excluding all seemingly Judaizing passages (Kelly, 1977:57).

The positions that relegate the Old Testament to being mere background for the New Testament, or that the New Testament (or part thereof) has replaced the Old Testament as the Christian Scriptures, are unacceptable and untenable for a number of reasons.

- Firstly, as Nicole (1959:138) rightfully contends: 'From beginning to end, the New Testament authors ascribe unqualified authority to the Old Testament Scriptures'.[250] It does so in several ways.[251] Moreover, the New Testament writers constantly use the Old Testament Scriptures to authenticate and validate the New Testament.[252] Thus it is not so much the NT that gives authority to the OT, as it is the NT drawing authority from the OT. And Clearly, the authority of the OT as Scripture remains unchanged and it is unquestionable.
- Secondly, as Heine (2007:33-34) points out, 'there can be no question that the Old Testament was the Scripture of the earliest Christians', and what they looked at 'as authoritative Scripture' was the Old Testament.[253] In fact, as many scholars have observe,[254] it was only through a gradual process of at least a century that the books of New Testament became regarded as "Scripture", on a par with the Old Testament Scriptures. BDAG (2000:206) concurs by stating that, '"Scripture" in the early Christian period always means the OT, and only after some passage of time was this term used in reference to the writings of the NT'. So, for the first decades (and generations), the Old Testament was the 'complete Bible' of Christianity, as Westcott (1896:56) remarked.[255] Or as Birdsall (1996:170) puts it, 'the apostolic church was not without Scripture' – 'it looked for its doctrine to the Old Testament'.
- Thirdly, the very fact that the Old Testament has indisputably been regarded as holy "Scripture", and has formally been designated as such by God's people throughout

[250] See also Gooding (2013:1).

[251] Ways include but are not limited to: (1) The clear teaching of Scriptures like: Mat. 5:17-18; 2 Tim. 3:14-17; Rom. 15:4; (2) the fact that the NT frequently appeals to the OT for proof or confirmation of what is being asserted (Nicole, 1979:617); (3) and the way the NT cites the OT indicates ongoing currency and power to instruct to the OT Scriptures, with citation formulas such as: "it is (or has been) written" (γέγραπται), "Isaiah says" (ησαιας λεγει). A prime example of this is Matthew 4:4 (NASB) in which Jesus says, "*It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'*"

[252] Ref: Burnham (1885:160); Ellis (1977:199); Hill (2000:218); Kaiser (2001:12).

[253] See also Brown (1997:5).

[254] Scholars include the like of: Westcott (1896:1, 55-56); Heine (2007:31); Barton (1997:63-64); Gamble (2000:184).

[255] Sailhamer (2009:606) seconds this by stating that 'the only Bible' the early first century church 'knew was the OT Tanak'.

history, confirms that it has had an undeniable normative function for them,[256] and certainly no less so for the apostles and the primitive church.[257] This is so, notwithstanding the fact that the Old Testament was a growing body of sacred Scriptures, from the time of Moses (prior to 1400 B.C.) until Malachi (around 400 B.C.),[258] and had only been formally "canonised" later.[259] Even though the complete set of Scriptures (OT + NT) was only commonly referred to as the "canon"[260] since after the late fourth Century A.D. (Smith, 2002:118), the Scriptures (collectively) have (always) been regarded as the infallible rule for faith and practice for God's people,[261] including the church. And the fact that the complete OT canon constituted the Scriptures of the earliest church, 'not as something vague and incipient, but something which had taken [its] precise form for about two centuries' already, as Beckwith (2008:165-166) rightfully points out, is implied by the prologue to Ecclesiasticus,[262] the work of Judas Maccabaeus, and Jesus' 'acceptance of the three sections of the [OT] Scriptures for Himself' (ref. Luke 24:44).

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[256] See: Jones (2000: 215); Gamble (2000:183).

[257] Ref.: Rom. 15:4; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21.

[258] The position of this Study is that the so-called "apocrypha", written during the intertestamental period (i.e. after around 400 B.C. and before the NT books) are not canonical (refer to "Septuagint" in the **Glossary of Terms**). Reasons for their exclusion include: the Jewish church did not consider them canonical; they are not quoted as such by Christ or the Apostles; Christ approved the Jewish canon and excluded the Apocrypha when He divided the OT into three classes; the authors were neither prophets nor inspired men, and they were not written in the Hebrew language (see Sproul, 2000:78-80).

[259] According to Douglas & Tenney (2011:246-247), earliest evidence of a "closed" list of OT books include that by Josephus, Philo and the Rabbinical council at Jamnia – all during the first Century A.D. However, Beckwith (2008:164-166) argues convincingly that the OT Canon was already closed around 164 B.C. when Judas Maccabaeus and his associates collected the OT Scriptures in their three establish sections (the "*Torah*", "Prophets", and "Writings" or "Hagiographa") – this is at least 250 years earlier than the common modern hypothesis that the canon was only closed with the finalisation of the "Writings" around 90 A.D. Blenkinsopp (2003:1) concurs by stating that the formation of the OT canon was 'well on its way by the second century BCE'. And Williamson (2008:41) believes that 'it seems fair to conclude that certainly by the second century B.C., and possibly even earlier' the 'Writings were widely recognised as the third and final section of the OT canon'.

[260] From the Greek word κανών, meaning "rule", "standard" - 'a means to determine the quality of something' (BDAG, 2000:507). More specifically, in this case, it means "measuring rod" or "ruler" (Elwell & Beitzel, 1988:300; Douglas & Tenney, 2011:246; Dockery, 1992:12) – the standard for truth.

[261] Ref.: Dockery (1992:12); Smith (2002:118); Beckwith (2008:65).

[262] Written in around 180–175 B.C. by Ben Sira (Britannica, 2021).

3.3.2. The Old Testament as the Scriptures of the First Recipients of James

It is therefore reasonable to assume that when James referred his readers at various points (Jas. 2:8; 2:23; 4:5) to "the Scripture" (τὴν γραφήν), that he took it for granted that they did not only have knowledge of, but also access to, the OT Scriptures. Weight is given to this assumption, in particular, in James 4:5 which states, "Or do you think the Scripture says in vain" (ἢ δοκεῖτε ὅτι κενῶς ἡ γραφὴ λέγει) that "the Spirit … yearns jealousy" (πρὸς φθόνον ἐπιποθεῖ τὸ πνεῦμα). This, as Moo (2000:191) suggests, does not necessarily refer to a singular Scripture but to 'a biblical theme' in the OT Scriptures; which the first readers would only have been fully able to appreciate if they knew the corpus of the OT Scriptures. Furthermore, James's rich and liberal use of language and concepts from across the OT (refer to **Section 3.5**) strongly suggests that his readers were well versed in, and that they both possessed and treasured, the OT Scriptures.

According to Johnson (2008:7), James's 'diction as a whole is that of the LXX' (the Septuagint), the Third Century B.C. Greek translation of the OT – as can be seen from the fact that James explicitly cites the LXX (ref.: Jas. 2:8; 4:6) and that James is 'clearly dependent on the LXX' in the use of terms (e.g. Jas. 1:11; 2:25; 5:4, 5, 17, 20).[263] Evidently James used the LXX and it is most reasonable to assume that his readers did as well, especially since they were (mostly) displaced Jews in the Greek speaking Roman Empire of the First Century A.D. (refer to **Section 2.3**). This is supported by Law (2013:119) who claims that, 'the formation of Christianity … depended almost entirely on the Septuagint as the Old Testament', and that during the (late) first Century 'the Septuagint was the Bible of the church'.

It follows that the first readers of James most likely had the Greek Translation of the OT (the LXX) as their Scriptures; which served as their God-given rule for life, faith, and practice. This, together with the Jewishness of the readers, very strongly suggests the that readers' concept of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James would have been heavily shaped by the use and meaning of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in the LXX. And since "*nómos*" (νόμος) is the standard translation in the LXX for "*Torah*" (e.g. Exod. 12:49; 13:9; 24:12; et.al.), it is most natural to understand "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James (and the rest of the NT for that matter) in terms of "*Torah*",[264] unless the context clearly points to a different use or meaning of "*nómos*" (νόμος) (refer to "law" ("*νόμος*") in the **Glossary of Terms**). Certainly, if James had "*Torah*" in mind, then "*nómos*" (νόμος) would be the obvious equivalent word in Greek. Both the Tree of Life Version (TLV) and the

[263] According to Carson (2007:997), 'in almost all quotations from the OT the text quoted is the LXX'. Also see "Septuagint" in **Glossary of Terms**.

[264] This is strongly supported by the fact that the LXX's translation of Hebrew words into Greek 'resulted in Greek words taking on Hebraic meanings', as Saldarini (2011:935) rightly points out. See also Hegg (2020:59).

Complete Jewish Translation (CJB)[265] reflect this understanding by translating "*nómos*" (νόμος) as "*Torah*".[266] And in line with this, Hartin (2006:450) comments that the (Christian-Jewish) character of the Letter 'points to an understanding of the Law in a way in which the Law was understood in that society, namely as referring to the biblical *Torah* as the expression of God's will for God's people'. However, not all agree that "*nómos*" in James is best understood as *"Torah"*; especially where the term is qualified/modified, as in James 1:25, 2:8, and 2:12.[267] Refer to **Section 4.2.6 (18)** for further discussion on differing views.

3.4. Functioning of the *Torah* in the OT and in Jewish Thinking and Culture

It has been established that the OT constituted the Scriptures of both the author (James) and the original recipients (predominantly Jewish Christians in the diaspora), and that the OT already existed as the complete OT canon, divided into its three sections ("*Torah*", "Prophets", and "Writings"). Attention will now be turned to how these three sections fitted and functioned together, and to the implications of it for the meaning of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James.

3.4.1. Functioning of Torah in the OT

Schmid (2019:70, 76) rightfully contends that the *Torah* is the 'historical and functional core' of the Hebrew Scriptures (i.e. OT Scriptures, or *Tanakh*), and that within it there is 'a clear focus on the Torah'. Bullock (2009:5) explains, that the *Torah* is the 'basic paradigm' while the

[265] Both the TLV and CJB translations seek to restore the Jewishness and the rich Hebrew roots of the Christian faith. Preservation of rich Hebrew terms (such as *Torah*) by means of transliteration contributes to this goal.

[266]

Jas. 1:25	νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας	"the perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* that gives freedom" (TLV);	"the perfect *Torah*, which gives freedom" (CJB)
Jas. 2:8	νόμον … βασιλικὸν	"royal law" (TLV)	"Kingdom *Torah*" (CJB)
Jas. 2:9	τοῦ νόμου	"the *Torah*" (TLV)	"the *Torah*" (CJB)
Jas. 2:10	ὅλον τὸν νόμον	"the whole *Torah*" (TLV)	"the whole *Torah*" (CJB)
Jas. 2:11	νόμου	"the *Torah*" (TLV)	"the *Torah*" (CJB)
Jas. 2:12	νόμου ἐλευθερίας	"a *Torah* that gives freedom" (TLV)	"a *Torah* which gives freedom" (CJB)
Jas. 4:11	καταλαλεῖ νόμου καὶ κρίνει νόμον	"speaks evil against the *Torah* and judges the *Torah*"	"is speaking against *Torah* and judging *Torah*" (CJB)
	εἰ δὲ νόμον κρίνεις, οὐκ εἶ ποιητὴς νόμου ἀλλὰ κριτής	"But if you judge the *Torah*, you are not a doer of the *Torah*, but a judge" (TLV)	"And if you judge *Torah*, not a doer of what *Torah* says, but a judge" (CJB)
Jas. 4:12	εἷς ἐστιν νομοθέτης	"There is only one lawgiver" (TLV).	"There is but one Giver of *Torah*" (CJB)

[267] Scholars who believe that the modified "*nómos"* terms do not refer to the *Torah* per se, include for example: Blomberg & Kamell (2008:91); Du Toit (2020:289); Gutbrod (1964:1081).

remaining OT Scriptures are 'paradigms in support of *Torah'*. In line with this, Robinson (2009:1) comments that, 'The *Torah* … is the foundation for all subsequent revelation from the Prophets'.[268] This foundational and pre-eminent function of the *Torah* in the OT is underlined:

- Firstly, by *Torah's* teaching itself. For example, Deuteronomy 4:2 (NASB) and 12:32 (NASB) warn God's people (Israel) not to "add to" or "take away from" whatever the LORD commanded.[269] And Deuteronomy 13:1-5 teaches that the commandments and instructions of *Torah* provide the standard of orthodoxy for any subsequent "prophet" or "dreamer of dreams".[270] Juster (2013:21) affirms this teaching by stating that the early Jewish community 'properly sensed the foundational nature of *Torah'*, and that 'all further revelation must be in accordance with' *Torah*, because 'consistency to *Torah* teaching' was the standard by which it was judged whether further revelation was 'God-given or not'. Additionally, in Deuteronomy 30:1-10 (NASB), Moses foretold God's people that when they "return to the LORD [their] God" (v.2), while being in captivity (v.3), the LORD would "circumcise" their hearts to "love" Him with all their "heart" and "soul" (v.6), and they "shall again obey the LORD and observe all His commandments", which Moses commanded them (v.8). This points to the normative function of the *Torah* throughout the Old Testament - from Moses to the return from Exile, and beyond. Other Scriptures that support the normative function of the *Torah* include: Genesis 26:5; Exodus 12:49 (Num. 15:16); 20:5-6 (Deut. 5:9-10); 24:12; Numbers 15:39-41; Deuteronomy 27:26; 29:29; 31:26; 33:4; et.al.
- Secondly, in that the special place of the *Torah* is highlighted by the fact that it was kept in the holiest site, the Jerusalem Temple (cf. 2 Chron. 34:13-14). Furthermore, the

[268] Juster (2013:41) concurs by stating: 'Torah is foundational, all other revelation is tested by consistency to Torah.'

[269] Scholars differ on the exact application of this injunction. Craigie (1976:130) applies it to "the law which Moses was about to present" (from Deut. 4:3 onward). Keil & Delitzsch (1996, vol.1:874) comment that the Law 'should be kept as it was given' and be submitted to as the 'inviolable word of God'. Merrill (1994:229) applies this 'principle of canonization' to the 'the word of the Lord' generally and the 'covenant text' (or specifically). Block (2012:117) comments that 'the *Torah* itself is normative by definition' and that 'all that [Moses] (on Yahweh's behalf) prescribes is normative'. The injunction has also, as Craigie (1976:130) points out, been taken in the Christian Church, along with Revelation 22:18-19, as 'a commandment of God with reference to the canonical writings of both Testaments'.

[270] The loyalty of God's people to Him would be put to the test by "prophets" or "dreamers of dreams" whose signs come true but who entice God's people to "go after other gods" and "serve them" (vv.1-3). Being loyal to God means loving Him with one's whole heart and soul (v.3). But that, in turn, involves "following" and "fearing" the LORD, "keeping His commandments" and "listening to His voice", and "serving Him" and "clinging to Him" (v.4). It follows that any teaching that does not align with that in the *Torah* threatens people's loyalty to God, and thus undermines the first and greatest commandment.

"Testimony"[271] (i.e. the tablets of the Ten Commandments/Words) was kept in the Ark of the Covenant[272] (Exod. 25:16), which itself was kept in the Most Holy place (Exod. 26:34) in the tabernacle and then the temple.[273] And the complete "Book of the Law" (*Torah*) was placed beside the Ark of the Covenant, as a "witness" against God's people (Deut. 31:24-26). Furthermore, the permanence of the Law and its prominence within (OT) Scripture is confirmed by the fact that it's essence/core (i.e. the Ten Commandments/Words) was written "by the finger of God" on tablets of stone (Exod. 31:18; Deut. 9:10). Refer to **Section 3.4.2** for the core function of the Ten Commandments in the *Torah*.

- Thirdly, in that the *Torah* was not only the first part of the Hebrew Scriptures that was completed, it existed as a "complete canon"[274] for centuries before the "Prophets" or "Writings" were completed.[275]

- Fourthly, by the primacy of the *Torah*, its divine authority, and its being the rule of faith and practice are seen in the command to all of God's people (including men, women, children, and foreigners) to assemble "at the end of every seven years … at the Feast of Booths" for the public reading of the Law, so that they would "be careful to observe all the words" of the Law (Deut. 31:10-12, NASB). Examples of the public reading of the Law to the nation of Israel are found in each of the three sections of the OT, including: by Moses (Exod. 24:7; Deut. 5:1ff.) in the *Torah*, by Joshua (Josh. 8:34-35) and Josiah (2 Kgs. 23:3) in the Prophets, and by Ezra (Neh. 8:3) in the Writings.

- Fifthly, in that from the first (Joshua) to last Prophetic book (Malachi), God's people are consistently called to live according to the *Torah*, with statements like: *"be careful to do according to all the law* ("*Torah*", MST) *which Moses My servant commanded you"* (Josh. 1:7b, NASB), *"This book of the law* ("*Torah*", MST; "*νόμος*", LXX) *shall not depart*

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[271] Concerning the word "Testimony", Calvin (2010b:155-156) commented that in calling the Law "Testimony" (see also: Psa. 119, 19:7; and Isa. 8:20), 'the utility of the law is commended, because it contains all that God would have testified to His people'.

[272] Which was covered by the "Mercy Seat" (Exod. 26:34).

[273] According to Dempster (2008:93), the Ten Commandments were given 'hermeneutical prominence' by the fact that it was placed in the ark. And Beckworth (2008:81) helpfully observed that, 'One of the corollaries of the holiness of the Scriptures was that they were especially suitable to be kept and used in holy places.' By this principle, it follows that the Ten Commandments are "most holy" because they were not only kept in the holy Tabernacle and Temple, but in the most holy place in the Tabernacle and Temple.

[274] From Joshua 1:8, it is understood that Joshua had the "book of the Law" (i.e. *Torah*) prior to Israel crossing the Jordan and commencing the Conquest.

[275] See **Section 3.3.1**.

from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night" (Josh. 1:8a, NASB), *"Remember the law* ("*Torah*", MST; "*νόμος*", LXX) *of Moses My servant"* (Mal. 4:4, NASB), and many others beside.[276] Juster (2013:42) is thus correct in asserting that 'the message of the prophets was generally to call the people back to covenant faithfulness – or *Torah*'. Fee & Stuart (2003:185-187) regard this function as primary, calling the Prophets 'covenant enforcement mediators' who did not alter the message of God as originally given through Moses, nor did they change its doctrines. Moreover, the Prophets not only advocate covenant faithfulness by looking back to the Law engraved by the LORD in stone, they are also looking forward to the time when the LORD will engrave His Law on the hearts of His people, as Jeremiah 31:31-34 declares.

- Sixthly, because similar to the Prophets, the Writings consistently uphold the *Torah* as the blessed and wise way of life, with statements like: "*How blessed is the man … [whose] delight is in the law* ("*Torah*", MST; "*νόμος*", LXX) *of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night*." (Psa. 1:1-2); "*The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments"* (Eccl. 12:13); and numerous others.[277] God clearly revealed His requirement for Israel's kings to David, saying: *"You shall not lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your sons take heed to their way, to walk in My law* ("*Torah*", MST; "*νόμος*", LXX) *as you have walked before Me."* (2 Chron. 6:16). This was the undisputed paradigm for those who lead or shepherded God's people well and, by implication, for those who followed well. According to Bullock (2009:5), 'more and more OT scholarship' recognise that 'the theological paradigm of wisdom is an affirmation of *Torah* in a similar way as prophecy'. Blenkinsopp (2003:151, 153) argues that, in Rabbinic writings and Christian Theology, "wisdom" and "law" are as 'two great rivers which eventually flow together' and that "the law" is 'the expression of divine wisdom made available to Israel'.

- Seventhly, by the fact that the OT Scriptures are sometimes referred to in the NT simply as "the Law"[278] - implying that the *Torah* was taken as representative of the whole (*pars pro toto*) OT.[279]

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[276] Ref.: Josh. 22:3-5; 23:6; Jdg. 2:17; 3:4; 1 Sam. 13:13; 1 Kgs. 2:3; 3:14; 6:12; 8:58; 9:6; 11:34; 13:21; 14:8; 2 Kgs. 17:3, 37; 18:16; 23:3; Isa. 1:10; 2:3; 8:16, 20; 42:21; 48:18; 51:4; Jer. 6:19; Hos. 4:6; Amos 2:4; Mic. 4:2; Hab. 1:4; Zep. 3:4; Zec. 7:12; Mal. 2:6-9; 4:4; et.al.

[277] Ref.: 1 Chron. 22:12; 28:8; 2 Chron. 6:16; 7:19; 14:4; Ezr. 7:10-11; 10:3; Neh. 1:5; 8:3; 9:13-14; Job 22:22; Psa. 1:2; 19:7-8; 37:31; 40:8; 94:12; 112:1; 119:1, 44, 97, 136, 142, 174; Prov. 3:1; 6:20; 7:2; 28:4, 7, 9, 19; Eccl. 12:13; Dan. 6:5; 9:4-5, 10-14; et.al.

[278] For example, in John 10:34; 12:34; 15:25.

[279] See Schmid (2019:70).

According to Bullock (2009:5) scholarship recognises (increasingly) that "prophecy" and "wisdom" are 'affirmation of *Torah*' and ought to be read in 'the light of *Torah*'. Furthermore, according to Schmid (2019:77, 79-80), the Prophets (*Nevi'im*) accompany the *Torah* as its 'corresponding application and exegesis', and the Writings (*Ketuvim*) 'interface' with both the *Torah* and the Prophets 'in their mundane everyday application'.[280] As Bullock (2008:193) observes, "of the three paradigms[281] of OT faith", *Torah* is the "vertex of the triangle, with prophecy and wisdom being the two side flanks", and *Torah* lays out "the fundamental principles of Israelite religion".

It is clear, therefore that there is an internal coherency in the message and doctrine of the OT Scriptures, with the *Torah* being its foundation and at its core. Moreover, it can be argued as Lancaster, Janici and Michael (2017:1.22) contend, that the entire Bible is 'God's instruction[282] built upon the *Torah* of Moses'. In the same vein, Juster (2013:41) goes on to claim that, 'any interpretation of the New Covenant Scriptures which is inconsistent with the revelation of the *Torah* cannot be true'. And Robinson (2009:3) makes the insightful observation that, 'all concepts and doctrines' in the NT Scriptures are developments of what is in *Torah*, even if it is there only in shadow form. These assertions are consistent with our Lord Jesus' declarations: *"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfil"* (Mat. 5:17, NASB), and *"But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail"* (Luke 16:17, NASB).

It is concluded that the *Torah* (including all its narratives and instructions) constitutes the first and foundational part of God's Written revelation, which is built up and not nullified or denied by further revelation.

3.4.2. The Ten Commandments

Primacy of the Ten Commandments

The special and primary place of the Ten Commandments (literally: "the ten words", Exod. 34:28; Deut. 4:13; 10:4)[283] in the *Torah*, and indeed in Scripture, is underlined by the following facts, as outlined by Waltke (2007:412-414):[284]

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[280] Of which the Psalms 'likely form the core' (Schmid, 2019:79).

[281] Incl.: *Torah*, prophecy, and wisdom.

[282] Or "*Torah"*.

[283] Smith (2016:28) points out that "The Testimony" (cf. Exod. 25:16, 21), which is the most frequent designation for the Ten Commandments, 'points to something strongly affirmed'. The Decalogue is a faithful and true witness.

[284] See also Miller (2009:3).

(1) It is given and placed first in the Law;
(2) It was given directly by God;
(3) It was kept in the ark in the holiest of holies;[285]
(4) It is not restricted to geography or history (i.e. it applies to all people of all times);
(5) It is called "the covenant" (Deut. 4:13; 9:9, 11), and with the people's acceptance the Canon of Scripture originated;
(6) It is addressed by LORD personally to each individual in the whole of Israel.

Concerning the fact that the Ten Commandments were given - not through a prophet, nor even through an angel – but directly by God, it is important to note that God Himself did not only speak to them audibly, dramatically, and directly to His people (Exod. 20:1, 18-19), He wrote them with His finger (Exod. 31:18; Deut. 9:10). Of no other Scripture is this said. Thus, the Ten Commandments are clearly set apart in Scripture. Merrill (1994:193) is therefore right in commenting: 'Nowhere else in Scripture is God said to have written anything … The personal attention [of God] to the Ten Commandments underscores their fundamental importance to the entire covenant revelation'.

Permanence of the Ten Commandments

It is also important to note that when God personally wrote down the Ten Commandments, He did not do so on a scroll, nor even on clay, but on stone. In this regard, Calvin (2010b:329) helpfully observes: 'the Law was registered upon stones, in order that the perpetuity of its doctrine should be maintained in all ages.'[286] The unchanging nature and permanence of the Ten Commandments is also seen in the fact that God wrote on the second set of tablets the same words as on the first (Exod. 34:1); and that after Israel had broken the first when they worshipped the golden calf (Exod. 32). Their failure did not change God's standards.

Surely, the way in which God gave the Ten Commandments should invoke in us a sense of awe and complete submission. Rebellion is out of the question. Who would dare to tamper with or change what God has engraved in stone and preserved in the holiest place? Elliott (1884:128-129) made the following moving comment:

> *'Long should pause the erring hand of man before it dares to chip away with the chisel of human reasonings one single word graven on the enduring tablets by the hand of the infinite God … None but consecrated hands could touch the ark of God; thrice holy should be the hands which would dare alter the testimony which lay within the ark.'*

Completeness of the Ten Commandments

That God gave ten commandments exactly, must surely be significant. As Leithart (2020:2)

[285] Refer to **Section 3.4.1**, 2nd bullet point.

[286] See also Baker (2005:8).

points out, God also commanded "ten words" at creation, which hints at "the Ten Words" (i.e. Ten Commandments) being 'ten new-creative words'. Furthermore, Philo (1998:15, par. 20) the renowned Jewish Hellenistic philosopher of Alexandria (ca.20 B.C. – ca.50 A.D) insightfully wrote: 'Our admiration is at once aroused by their number, which is neither more nor less than is the supremely perfect, Ten.' According to both Bullinger (1967:243) and Johnston (1999:80), the number ten signifies, 'the perfection of Divine order'. Bullinger (1967:243) adds that it is, 'a type of the whole' and implies that 'nothing is wanting'.[287] Accordingly, the Ten Commandments 'contain all that is necessary' (Bullinger, 1967:243). It addresses the major areas of life: worship, work/time, family, violence, marriage/sex, property, speech/justice, and desire.[288] Thus the Ten Commandments stand for and promote completeness, wholeness, and order.[289]

Also, that God gave the Ten Commandments on two tablets is not without meaning. As Leithart (2020:16) points out, 'the Bible is full of pairs like the twin tablets', for example: the two cherubim in the most holy place (1 Kgs. 6:23-28), the two pillars at the temple door (1 Kgs. 7:15-22), and the two sets of five golden lampstands in front of the inner sanctuary (1 Kgs. 7:49). While different groupings have been suggested, two sets of five, according to the Jewish tradition,[290] makes most sense in terms of form and content.[291] Perhaps, as Baker (2005:6) suggests, we have two sets of five fingers to remind us of the Ten Commandments.

Context of the Ten Commandments

Wolvaardt (2018:14.3-9) rightly points out that God gave the Ten Commandments in the context of 'personal relationship' and 'completed salvation'; as can be seen in Exodus 20:2 and Deuteronomy 5:6. Many scholars note this critical fact for interpreting the Decalogue.[292] LaSor, Hubbard, & Bush (1996:75) spell out the implication:

> *'The Ten Commandments were never intended to institute a system of legal*

[287] After Moses recounted the Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy 5, he noted that "He (i.e. the LORD) added no more" (Deut. 5:22, NASB). This not only sets the Decalgue apart but highlights its completeness.

[288] See Leithart (2020:17).

[289] See also Smith (2016:28).

[290] See for example Philo (1998:31, par. 50); Josephus (37-ca.100:172, chap. 5).

[291] See Baker (2005:9-11). From a form perspective each of the first five commandments include the phrase, "the LORD your God", include a motive clause and/or literary expansions, and generally lead to capital punishment when broken (Baker, 2005:9, 12). And two pairs of five makes sense from a content perspective, especially if the fifth commandment is seen not merely as a matter of social responsibility but as part of repect for God (Baker, 2005:11). Then the first tablet is about love for God and the second love for one's neighbour. Leithart (2020:16) considers the first five to be "priestly" commandments and the second five to be "royal".

[292] Scholars include, among others: Durham (1987:284); Kaiser (1991:84-85); Longman & Dillard (2007:75); Motyer (2011:213); Stuart (2006:446-447).

observances by which one could earn God's acceptance. Rather they are stipulations of a covenant relationship anchored in grace.'[293]

Moreover, as Enns (2000:411-412) notes, God gave the Ten Commandments to His redeemed people to show them 'something of the nature of God' and to reflect 'the manner' in which they 'are to be holy'. As Brown (2010:81) so helpfully comments: 'The image of God and the standards he expects of his people are inseparably woven together in the fabric of the Ten Commandments.'[294] And since the Ten Commandments form the kernel of God's instructions (*Torah*), they are of first and fundamental importance for our understanding of what God is like and how He wants His people to live.

Universality and timelessness of the Ten Commandments

The fact that the Ten Commandments express the character of God is reason enough, according to Rooker (2010:198), that 'they are timeless and universally applicable'. Christensen (2001:115) strongly supports the claim about the universality of the Decalogue by stating that, it 'would no doubt have been understood, even in ancient Israel, as valid for all peoples in all times and places'. And the fact that the Ten Commandments were given in the wilderness, outside national boundaries, hints at or perhaps highlights (so Rooker, 2010:198) their universal nature.[295] The universality of the Ten Commandments might be alluded to in Romans 2:15, which states that "the work of the Law" is "written in their [i.e. nations/gentiles] hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them'.[296]

The Decalogue is not only universal but eternal, as can be inferred from the fact that it portrays God's immutable character. The presence of antecedents for each of the Ten Commandments in the book of Genesis, centuries before the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai, testifies to its timelessness. As Kaiser (1991:82) argues, 'all Ten Commandments had been part of the law of God previously written on hearts … for all ten appear, in one way or another,

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[293] Similarly, Ortberg (2014:144) observes: 'The Ten Commandments were never designed to be a stand-alone list of rules. They come within a relational context. They describe what living up to a cetain value and a certain identity and a certain destiny looks like.'

[294] Complementing this, Moyter (2011:212) comments: 'The law of God reflects the character of God. It is the likeness of God expressed in precepts, and obedience to the law of the Lord "triggers" in us "the image of God" (Gen. 1:26-28) which is our real nature. In other words, we live the truly human life when we obey the Lord's law.' See also: Rooker (2010:197-198).

[295] So Waltke (2007:413-414), as mentioned above. See also Smith (2016:29).

[296] Along these lines, Calvin (1845, Vol.1:430) wrote: *'Moreover, the very things contained in the two tables are, in a manner, dictated to us by that internal law, which, as has been already said, is in a manner written and stamped on every heart.'*

in Genesis'.[297]

Nature of Ten Commandments

As stated above, the Ten Commandments form the essence and core of the *Torah*. Philo (1998:15, par.19), in his treatise on the Decalogue, wrote that those commandments, 'which He (i.e. God) gave in His own person and by His own mouth alone' (i.e. the Ten Commandments) are the 'heads summarizing the particular laws' of the *Torah*. Similarly, Cole (1973:157) states that the Ten Commandments are the 'kernel' (i.e. central and most important part) of the *Torah* around which 'the whole of the rest may be grouped as expansion'.[298] These expansions, as Brown (2010:75) and Motyer (2011:237) explain, amplify and apply the Ten Commandments in the actualities or eventualities of everyday life. While the Ten Commandments constitute the core/kernel or summarizing principles of the *Torah*, its overarching or grand purpose is captured in the two greatest commandments: to love God first, foremost, and fully (Deut. 6:4-5; Mat. 22:37-38), and to love one's neighbour as oneself (Lev. 19:18; Mat. 22:39-40), as the Lord Jesus affirmed.[299]

Finally, Wolvaardt (2018:14.3-9) is right in noting that the Ten Commandments are like 'double-sided coin[s]' that require both refraining from 'the negative moral action' and doing the opposite 'positive' moral action.[300] Calvin (1845:438) concurs by commenting: 'if God commands this, he forbids the opposite; if he forbids that, he commands the opposite'.[301]

Summary

In summary, the Ten Commandments contain the most sacred, basic and fundamental moral principles that sum up the *Torah*, reflect the character of God, express His will for all His people at all times, and are applied to the various situations of life through the corpus of biblical commandments. Rooker (2010:199) is right in saying that the Ten Commandments are 'absolute and ultimate'.

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[297] Kaiser (1991:82) offers the following proof: 1st Commandment: Gen. 35:2; 2nd Commandment: Gen. 31:39; 3rd Commandment: Gen. 24:3; 4th Commandment: Gen. 2:3; 5th Commandment: Gen. 27:41; 6th Commandment: Gen. 4:9; 7th Commandment: Gen. 39:9; 8th Commandment: Gen. 44:4-7; 9th Commandment: Gen. 39:17; 10th Commandment: Gen. 12:18; 20:3. Kaiser (1991:82) acknowledges that not all are 'equally clear', but then rightfully argues that 'the text does not pause to moralize on the narratives, but each would appear to add to the orders of creation already given in the first chapters of Genesis.'

[298] See also: Ash (2014:39-41); Brown (2010:75); Kaiser (1991:81); Longman & Dillard (2007:75-76); Miller (2009:4). Motyer (2011:213); Smith (2016:30); Stuart (2006:442); Wolvaardt (2018:14.3-9).

[299] See: DeYoung (2018:20); Leithart (2020:16-17); Packer (2007:25); Stuart (2006:444).

[300] Calvin (1845:438) concurs by commenting: 'if God commands this, he forbids the opposite; if he forbids that, he commands the opposite'. See also Kaiser (1991:83).

[301] See also Kaiser (1991:83).

3.4.3. Functioning of Torah in Jewish Thinking and Culture

It is not surprising, then, that the *Torah* had such an important place in Jewish thinking and culture:

- As Young (2007:37) points out that, in Jewish thinking, the *Torah* 'holds a place of distinction in the canon' and that 'all subsequent writings' can be viewed as 'layers of commentary' on the *Torah*.
- Additionally, as Kibble (1979:149) observes, 'once revealed, the *Torah* was held to be immutable', quoting Philo in support. In his treatise on the life of Moses, Philo of Alexandria (1995:492) wrote: *'The provisions of this law alone, stable, unmoved, unshaken, as it were stamped with the seal of nature itself, remain in fixity from the day they were written until now, and for the future we expect them to abide through all time as immortal as long as the sun and moon and the whole heaven and the world exist.'*
- Among the various Jewish religious parties in the NT times, with all their respective differences, they were all agreed that the *Torah* should be held in highest esteem. Draper & Clayton (2003:918-919) outline their views of the *Torah* as follows:
    - The Pharisees 'viewed the entirety of [the] Old Testament (*Torah*, Prophets, and Writings) as authoritative'. They 'accepted both the written and oral law'. Yet, they 'believed that the study of the law (i.e. Written Law or *Torah*) was true worship'.
    - The Sadducees accepted only the *Torah*, and 'stressed strict observance' of it.
    - The Essenes 'rigidly adhere[d] to the law (including strict rendering of the ethical teachings)'. Nevertheless, they considered 'other literature as authoritative', 'in addition to the Hebrew Scriptures'.
    - The Zealots, being 'an extreme wing of the Pharisees', they were 'fanatical in their Jewish faith and in their devotion to the law - to the point of martyrdom'.
- Furthermore, Young (2007:30) points out that First Century A.D. Jews had a '*Torah*-centric culture' – as attested to by two institutions, in particular: the synagogue and "house of study" (*bet midrash*).[302] In the first institution, *Torah* was 'read and expounded', and in the second it was 'memorized and studied'.
- In conclusion, as Bivin (2007:5) points out, Judaism 'has always held that the study of *Torah* is one of the highest forms of worship'. And, as DeSilva (2004:74) observes, 'the importance of keeping the *Torah* as the fundamental expression of Judaism cannot be overstated'.

Comment concerning Judaism is pertinent at this point. As described in the **Glossary of**

[302] See also Bivin (2007:4).

Terms, Judaism has been characterised by four distinctives: God's "election and covenant" with Abraham and his descendants, God's "gift of the *Torah*", the "Temple" as a focal point, and the "Land" as part and parcel of the covenant. Judaism of the second temple, from the later post-exilic period until the emergence of Christianity, is of particular interest for this Study. During this period, as Hagner (1996:622-623) explains, Judaism turned to the *Torah* with 'a new, burning intensity' because of the 'tragedy' of the exile due to disobedience and the 'importance of maintaining [their] distinctives' - especially since Antiochus IV Epiphanes 'defiled the Temple' (168-167 B.C.), 'prohibited the practice of Judaism', and 'attempted to Hellenize the Jews thoroughly'. As a result, according the Hagner (1996:623), 'the balance of the covenant has now clearly shifted towards nomism'.[303] Arguably instrumental in this shift has been what would develop into and later be known as the "Oral *Torah*", to which many Jews, and especially the Pharisees, ascribed authority almost equal to the *Torah* itself.[304] The "Oral *Torah*" is a body of oral traditions about the interpretation of the *Torah* and rules for its application,[305] which was later consolidated in literary form in the "Mishnah" (c.200 A.D.);[306] which in turn was taken up in the "Talmud" (c.400 A.D.).[307] Some scholars[308] believe that Paul referred to the "Oral *Torah*" (or at least what developed into it) in Galatians 1:14, where he wrote: "I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries … being more extremely zealous for my 'ancestral traditions' (πατρικῶν … παραδόσεων)" . Jesus rebuked some Pharisees and Scribes for "teaching as doctrines the precepts of men" and "neglecting the commandments of God, [they] [held] to 'the tradition of men' (τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων)" (Mark 7:7-8, NASB). Lane (1974:248-249) helpfully comments that while the "Oral *Torah*" was intended to be 'a fence which safeguarded the people from infringing the Law', 'in actuality it presented a tampering with the Law which resulted inevitably in distortion and ossification of the living word of God'. In support of this, Browning (2003:1609) observes that, 'it went far beyond the bounds of the law as spelled out in the Torah', 'placing [the] tradition above the intent of the law'. To be sure, Jesus never denied the authority of the *Torah*

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[303] Apart for the 'distinctives' of the *Torah* being 'burned more deeply in the Jewish mind', as Hagner (1996:623) observes, a 'strong and wisdespread expectation for the coming king from David's line – the Messiah' developed, as Strauss (2016: no page numbers) notes.

[304] See: McConville (1994:38); Packer, Tenney, & White (1997:508); Silva (2014d:592).

[305] See: Silva (2014c:722); McConville (1994:38).

[306] While the orgins of the "Oral *Torah*" are debated, "Rabbinic Judaism" maintains that Moses received both the written "*Torah*" and the "Oral *Torah*" directly from God at Mount Sinai (see: Hauser (2016: no page numbers); Johnson (2016: no page numbers); Goldsmith (2000:357)).

[307] See: Johnson (2016: no page numbers); McConville (1994:38); Packer, Tenney, & White (1997:508); Silva (2014d:592).

[308] Including, amongst others: Longenecker (1990:30); Silva (ed.) (2014c:722) ref. "περισσεύω"; Stern (1996:523).

(Browning, 2003:1609),[309] but He did, as Lane (1974:249) rightly observes, 'categorically [reject] the authority of the oral law'.

3.4.4. Concluding Observations

The following observations emerge from the discussions in **Subsections 3.4.1** - **3.4.3**:

- Firstly, the *Torah* (the essence of which is the Ten Commandments) is indeed foundational and core in the Old Testament. Rather than the latter revelation (Prophets and Writings) replacing the *Torah*, it builds on and expounds the *Torah*. And rather than latter revelation undermining *Torah*, it accords with and applies *Torah*. *Torah* is essential to the Prophets and Writings. And the Prophets and Writings are latent (hidden in seed form) in *Torah*. This points to the unity and continuity between *Torah* and the Prophets and Writings. And it points to the permanence of *Torah*, as affirmed by the OT,[310] in Judaism, and by Jesus Himself (ref. Mat. 5:17 & Luke 16:17).
- Secondly, with what has been found regarding the Jewishness of original recipients of James, the fact OT Scriptures would have been their "Bible", and that the *Torah* is foundational and central within it, that those recipients would most naturally have revered *Torah* and used it as their primary or basic standard for truth and essential source of instruction. Again, this points to the reasonable assumption that "*nómos*" (νόμος) would most naturally have meant "*Torah*" for the first readers.
- One could ask, if *nómos*" (νόμος) does indeed mean "*Torah*" in James, then how else would "*Torah*" be named, except by its more explicit form, "ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως" ("the Law of Moses", e.g. John. 7:23)? But James does not use this fuller and more explicit expression. He simply uses "*nómos*" (νόμος) (Jas. 2:9, 10, 11; 4:11) - and each time the context supports "*Torah*" as the meaning. This will be further discussed and substantiated in **Chapter 4**.

3.5. Use of the Old Testament in James

Having found that the Septuagint (the LXX) translation of the OT Scriptures constituted the "Bible" of the author and first recipients, and that the *Torah* functions as its foundation and core, this section will examine James's use of the OT Scriptures.

3.5.1. The New Testament's Use of the Old Testament

Gooding (2013:1) asserts that, 'The New Testament everywhere declares its indebtedness, indeed its dependence on, the Old Testament, and accepts its divine authority.' Similarly,

[309] See also: Mat. 5:17-20.

[310] See the second bullet point under **Section 3.4.1**. And see Psa. 111:7-8; 119:144, 152, 160.

Nicole (1959:138) states that, 'From beginning to end, the New Testament authors ascribe unqualified authority to Old Testament Scripture. Whenever advanced, a quotation is viewed as normative. Nowhere do we find a tendency to question, argue, or repudiate the truth of any Scripture utterance.' And, as Hagner (1976:78) rightly points out, the NT writers, 'were thoroughly immersed' in the Holy Scriptures (i.e. OT), and they 'lived and breathed' its contents, showing in the Epistles 'the meaning of the story' of Christ in the Gospels, which in turn was the 'goal of Old Testament anticipation'. He (Hagner, 1976:78) added that, 'perceiving this unity of the Bible', the Christian Church has rightly affirmed what St. Augustine (Cf. St. Augustine, Quaest. in Hept. 2, 73: PL 34,623; Cf. DV 16.) observes, 'The New Testament lies hidden in the Old, and the Old becomes evident in the New'.

Concerning the New Testament's use of the Old Testament, Nicole (1979:617) explains: 'It appeals to the OT in order to provide proof of statements made, confirmation for positions espoused, illustration of principles advanced, and answers to questions raised'. This points to the fact that, as Burnham (1885:157-158) observes, 'all the New Testament writings can only be fully and truly interpreted in the light of Old Testament truths and facts', and 'the New Testament doctrine owes both substance and form to the same essentials that underlie and shape the teaching of the Old Testament'. Furthermore, Burnham (1885:158) rightfully maintained that, while revelation is 'a unity', there is also 'a development', with the New Testament containing the 'highest forms' of revelation, and the Old Testament the 'lower', yet the former is not 'separate or independent' from the latter. Yet still, as Nicole (1959:138) rightfully observes,[311] 'Our Lord, far from setting aside the commandments of the Old Testament, really engages in a searching analysis of the spiritual meaning and original intent of the divine precept, and from this vantage point He applies it in a deeper and broader way than had been done before Him.'

According to Nicole (1979:617), 'A very conservative count lists 295 separate quotations' of the Old Testament Scriptures in the New Testament'.[312] He (Nicole, 1979:617) continues by saying that when "allusions" are included, 'the count rises sharply', quoting counts by Toy (lists 613), Shires (lists 1,604), Dittmar (lists 1,640) and Huehn (lists 4,105 instances).[313] Kaiser (2001:3) safely concludes that, 'there are approximately 300 formal citations in the NT from the OT in addition to an almost incalculable influence on the language, modes of expression,

[311] Referring specifically to Matthew 5:21-43 and 19:3-9.

[312] 'Two hundred and seventy-eight different verses of the OT are cited (some of them several times): 94 from the Law, 99 from the Prophets, and 85 from the Writings' (Nicole, 1979:617).

[313] There are 7,957 verses in the New Testament. If a connection is made somehow (by way of citation/quotation, allusion, or echo) in say 4,000 verses, then a connection is made on average every 1.99 verses. This is a remarkably high level of intertextuality. And clearly the OT is woven into the fabric of the NT, and NT is saturated with OT language, expressions, precepts and concepts.

and thought in the NT.'

According to Moyise (2001:5), studies on the New Testament's use of the Old, 'have found it helpful to distinguish between quotations, allusions and echoes.'[314] However, there are no agreed definitions for the terms among scholars, nor is there agreement on the categories to be used.[315] For example, some scholars, like Jackson (2015) distinguish between "citations" and "quotations, the former being with an introductory citation formula (e.g. "It is written," or "the Lord says," or "the prophet says"), and the latter without it. And some scholars, like Beale (2012:30) do not believe the distinction between "allusions" and "echoes" is 'that helpful' because some scholars use them 'almost synonymously' and those who do make 'a clear qualitative distinction' do so on the basis of 'clear' versus 'subtle' references to the OT, or references that are 'clearly or probably' versus 'possibly' dependant on the OT. Nevertheless, for this Study the following categories and terms used by Jackson (2015) will be used:

- "Citation": 'An explicit reference to Scripture with a citation formula (e.g. "It is written," or "the Lord says," or "the prophet says").'
- "Quotation": 'A direct reference to Scripture, largely matching the verbatim wording of the source but without a quotation formula.'
- "Allusion": 'An indirect but intentional reference to Scripture, likely intended to invoke memory of the Scripture.'
- "Echo": 'A verbal parallel evokes or recalls a Scripture (or series of Scriptures) to the reader, but likely without authorial intention to reproduce exact words.'

3.5.2. James's Use of the Old Testament

According to Jackson (2015), James has 2 "citations", 5 "quotations", 28 "allusions", and 14 "echoes" of the Old Testament – totalling 49 references. Aland et.al (2012:890-901) distinguishes only between "quotations" and "allusions and verbal parallels", listing 7 of the former and 45 of the latter – totalling 52 references. The combined results are shown in **Appendix B**. With the combined results James refers to the *Torah* 14 times, to the Prophets 21 times, and to the Writings 25 times – a total of 60 references.[316] However, if only "citations"

[314] Moyise's (2001:5-6) definitions of the terms are: "Quotations: are quotations of the OT usually, but not always, 'indicated by a citation formula' such as "it is written' (e.g. Mark 1:2); "Allusions": 'are less precise, picking up on a few key words and usually woven into the new composition'; "Echoes": 'when the allusion is so slight that conscious intention is unlikely.'

[315] See: Moyise (2000:18).

[316] CITATIONS: Jas. 2:8 - Lev. 19:18; Jas. 4:6 - Prov. 3:34. QUOTATIONS: Jas. 2:11 - Exod. 20:14, Deut. 5:18, Exod. 20:13, Deut. 5:17; Jas. 2:23 - Gen. 15:6. ALLUSIONS: Jas. 1:5 - Prov. 2:3-6; Jas. 1:10 - Psa. 102:4, Psa. 102:11, Isa. 40:6-7; Jas. 1:11 - Isa. 40:6-7, Psa. 102:4, Psa. 102:11; Jas. 1:19 - Eccl. 7:9; Jas. 1:26 -

and “quotations” are considered then six of the seven (86%) are from the *Torah*.

The first OT quotation (citation) in James is the commandment to “love one’s neighbour as oneself” (i.e. the “love commandment”) from Leviticus 19:18 in James 2:8; which was cited by Jesus Himself (in Mat. 22:39) as the second greatest commandment, after the first and greatest commandment “to love the LORD your God”. The next four are quotations of two of the Ten Commandments - in the first instance from Exodus 20:14 and Deuteronomy 5:18 (the 7th commandment) and in the second from Exodus 20:13 and Deuteronomy 5:17 (the 6th commandment). All these citations are in the context of not having “in partiality the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory” (ἐν προσωπολημψίαις … τὴν πίστιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης) and “thus speaking and thus doing as those about to be judged by the *nómou eleutherías*” (οὕτως λαλεῖτε καὶ οὕτως ποιεῖτε ὡς διὰ νόμου ἐλευθερίας μέλλοντες κρίνεσθαι). Evidently, the Decalogue is foundational in James’s ethics (refer to **Section 3.4.2**).

The sixth OT quotation in James - that found in James 2:23 - is also from the *Torah*. In this case it is the famous Genesis 15:6,[317] which James brings up to argue that Abraham’s “faith worked with his works” (ἡ πίστις συνήργει τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ), and by his works his “faith was perfected” (πίστις ἐτελειώθη) (Jas. 2:22), and Genesis 15:6 “was fulfilled” (ἐπληρώθη) that said: “And Abraham believed and it was reckoned to him into righteousness” (Ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Ἀβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην).

It is striking in these first six OT quotations, that in dealing with two of the most fundamental doctrines in James and in Christianity,[318] that James is drawing both substance and authority from the teaching of the *Torah*.

In the seventh and last OT quotation (citation) in James, James is quoting from Proverbs; which are part of the Writings. James 4:6, “God opposes (the) arrogant but He gives grace to (the) humble” (θεὸς ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν), is basically[319] a quote from the LXX translation of Proverbs 3:34. It can be argued that the elements of this teaching are present in the *Torah*. For example, Noah “found favour[320] in the eyes of the LORD”

Psa. 34:13, Psa. 39:1; Psa. 141:3; Jas. 2:1 - Job 34:19; Jas. 2:9 - Deut. 1:17; Jas. 2:11 - Gen. 22:9, 12; Jas. 2:25 - Jos. 2:4; Jos. 6:17; Jos 2:15; Jas. 3:8 - Psa. 140:3; Jas. 3:9 - Gen. 1:26-27; Jas. 3:18 - Isa. 32:17; Jas. 4:8 - Isa. 1:15-17; Zec. 1:3; Mal. 3:7; Prov. 27:1; Jas. 4:10 - Job 5.11; Jas. 5:17 - 1 Kgs. 17:1; Jas. 5:18 - 1 Kgs. 18:42-45. ECHOES: Jas. 2:23 - 2 Chr. 20:7, Isa. 51:2, Isa. 41:8; Jas. 4:5 - Exod. 20:5; Jas. 5:5 - Jer. 12:3, Jer. 25:34; Jas. 5:11 - Dan. 12:12, Jon. 4:2, Exod. 34:6, Neh. 9:17, Psa. 86:15, Psa. 103:8, Psa. 111:4, Joel 2:13.

[317] Also cited in Psa. 106:31; Rom. 4:3, 9, 22; Gal. 3:6.

[318] That of “justification by faith” and “faith expressing itself through love in action”.

[319] The only variance is that *κύριος* (“LORD”) in the LXX is replaced with θεὸς (“God”) in James.

[320] Translated “χάριν” in the LXX.

as a "righteous man", "blameless", and one who "walked with God" (Gen. 6:8-9, NASB). And Pharaoh "refused to humble [himself] before the Lord" (Exod. 10:3, NASB) and the LORD clearly opposed him. Furthermore, the exhortation to "submit then to God" (ὑποτάγητε οὖν τῷ θεῷ) (Jas. 4:7) is in the context of a warning against idolatry (Jas. 4:4), and reminders of God's jealousy (Jas. 4:5) and "greater grace" (Jas. 4:6). The warning is certainly alluding to the warnings against infidelity in the Prophets (for example: Jer. 3:20 and Hos. 3:3), as several scholars[321] point out. But on a foundational level, all of these elements (prohibition against idolatry, the LORD's holy jealousy, and His abundant grace) are found in the Second Commandment (Exod. 20:4-6; Deut. 5:8-10).

3.5.3. The Shema and the two Greatest Commandments of the Torah

According to Cheung (2003:67), the prologue of James[322] 'centres on themes associated with the Shema'[323] (Jas. 1:2-18) and also 'centres on the obedience of *Torah*' (Jas. 1:19-27); both foci of which are 'related to the theme of perfection' (in Jas. 1:2-4). The second focus is centred on loving one's neighbour in James 2:8-13; which in turn is a citation and application of Leviticus 19:18, as mentioned above and further discussed in **Section 3.5.4**. Cheung (2003:189) suggests that the first focus is centred on loving God with 'all one's soul', 'all one's heart', and 'all one's might'; as commanded in the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-6). He (Cheung, 2003:188) points out that, in 'early rabbinic exposition' of the *Shema*,[324] 'all one's heart' includes both one's 'good' and 'evil inclinations'; 'all one's soul' includes loving God 'even if He takes your soul'; and 'all one's might' includes 'all your money'. Cheung (2003:188) proposes that these three aspects of the *Shema* are present in James 1:5-8 (further elaborated in Jas. 1:13-18), James 1:2-4, and James 1:9-10 respectively. Even if one finds these suggested connections with the *Shema* unconvincing, one cannot deny the strong possibility (and perhaps certainty) that the *Shema* is present in James's thinking. Allusions (likely and possible) to the *Shema* include:

- James 1:12 & 2:5: Johnson (2008:188) recognises in James 1:12, in the phrase "to those loving Him" (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν), the 'commitment expressed by the Shema' as well as that in the Second Commandment (Exod. 20:6; Deut. 5:10). The identical phrase, "to those loving Him" (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν) is also found in James 2:5, thus repeating the same allusion to the *Shema*.
- James 1:19: Friedman & Friedman (2012:56-57) suggest that there is a 'parallel'

[321] Scholars include, amongst others, Allison (2013:607); McKnight (2011:332); and Moo (2000:186).

[322] Which provides and interpretative framework for Epistle (ref. **Section 2.7.2**).

[323] Refer to "*Shema*" in the **Glossary of Terms**.

[324] Found in *m. Berakhot* 9.5.

between the instruction in James 1:19, which states, “let every person be quick to listen” (ἔστω … πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι) and the instruction in the *Shema*, “Hear, O Israel” (Ἄκουε, Ισραηλ) (Deut. 6:4, LXX). This is possible in the context since James 1:21 adds the instruction to “receive the implanted word” (δέξασθε τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον) and James 1:25 equates the person who does so to “one having looked into the *nómon téleion tēs eleutherías* and then continuing in it” (ὁ δὲ παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας καὶ παραμείνας).

- James 2:19: Scholars[325] widely recognize that James 2:19 refers to Israel’s fundamental monotheistic confession of the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-6) with the words “you believe that God is one” (σὺ πιστεύεις ὅτι εἷς ἐστιν ὁ θεός). In this regard, Moo (2000:131) rightly comments that, ‘the Shema would have been among the most basic of beliefs’, not only for the original Jewish Christian readers of James’s Letter, but also for the early Christians since they ‘appropriated’ the *Shema*’s confession (cf.: 1 Cor. 8:4–6; Gal. 3:20; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:5).
- James 4:12: Cheung (2003:188) sees another ‘Shema-like statement’ in James 4:12, which states: “One is Lawgiver and Judge” (εἷς ἐστιν νομοθέτης καὶ κριτής). Allison (2013:637) concurs by noting that, ‘the Jewish hearers of James would likely recall Deut. 6:4 ... especially as James has already referred to the Shema in [James] 2:19’.

If the abovementioned allusions to the *Shema* are correct, then both sections of the prologue (Jas. 1:2-18 and Jas. 1:19-27), and two of the three main sections of the Letter (Jas. 2:1-27 and Jas. 4:11-5:12) all make connections with the *Shema*. Furthermore, one could argue that the other main section (Jas. 3:1-4:10) is at least true to the *Shema* in its warning against idolatry (Jas. 4:4-6); which is undoubtedly meant to spur the reader on to loving God above all else; as instructed in both the *Shema* and the first two of the Ten Commandments.

It follows that James’s teaching is deeply rooted in the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-6) and “love commandment” (Lev. 19:18) - the two greatest commandments (Mat. 22:36-40). James is thus firmly grounded in the teaching the *Torah*. Furthermore, as Cheung (2003:274) rightly observes, this ‘shows considerable parallel with the emphasis of the double commandments of love[326] in the Jesus tradition’.

3.5.4. The Holiness Code

According to Kamell (2009:158) there is a ‘close comparison’ between Deuteronomy 10:12-22

[325] Including: Cheung (2003:188), Davids (1982:125), Johnson (2008:240), and others.

[326] Loving God and living your neighbour (Mat. 22:37-40).

and the Epistle of James.[327] While she does not argue for 'direct dependence' on Deuteronomy 10:12-22, Kamell (2009:158) does suggest that it influences James, at least concerning his 'treatment of the poor as a justice issue'. Whether James drew specifically from Deuteronomy 10:12-22, is not clear. But what is certain is that James's teaching is consistent with it and there are several parallels, including: the *Shema* language (Deut. 10:12 and Jas. 1:12; 2:19), obeying (the commandments of) the *Torah* (Deut. 10:13 and Jas. 1:25; 2:12; 4:12), not showing partiality (Deut. 10:17 and Jas. 2:1, 9), and administering justice to the fatherless and the widow (Deut. 10:18 and Jas. 1:27).

While there are parallels between the themes of James and that of Deuteronomy 10:12-22, it does seem as if there are even stronger links with Leviticus 19 (the so-called "Holiness Code").[328] In his study on the use of Leviticus 19 in the Letter of James, Johnson (1982:399) concludes that 'the evidence … strongly suggests that James made conscious and sustained use' of Leviticus 19:12-18. Apart from the direct citation in James 2:8 of Leviticus 19:18b, Johnson (1982:399) argues that James contains four to six 'verbal or thematic allusions' to Leviticus 19:12-18, including: Lev. 19:12 in Jas. 5:12, Lev. 19:13 in Jas. 5:4, Lev. 19:15 in Jas. 2:1 & 9, Lev. 19:16 in Jas. 4:11, Lev. 19:17b in Jas. 5:20, and Lev. 19:18a in Jas. 5:9; with the first four being 'certain' and the last two 'likely'.

In line with Johnson, Kaiser (1998:74, 217) proposes that the Letter of James, 'is built on a homily from the law of holiness' (Lev. 19:12-18), and functions as a 'commentary, either by direct citation or by allusion' on the selection from Leviticus. Johnson (1982:401) puts it like this, 'James engages in halachic midrash'[329], with the text being Leviticus 19:12-18. Friedman & Friedman (2012:2), comment that James 'expounds upon … subjects found in Leviticus 19-22',[330] which 'constitutes a single Sabbath reading'.

This finding of James's use of Leviticus 19 (and the Decalogue) has the following 'exegetical consequences', as Johnson (1982:399-401) rightly points out:

a) 'James regarded the "Royal Law" by which Christians were to live, and the "Law of Liberty" by which they were to be judged, as explicated concretely and specifically' by the Decalogue and the commandments found in Leviticus 19:12-18; which are all

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[327] The 'close comparison' includes James's discussions on: (1) 'God's electing grace of His people' in James 1:18; (2) 'justice for widows and orphans' in James 1:27; (3) 'impartiality' in James 2:1-11 and 3:17; and (4) 'caring for the needy' in James 2:14-26.

[328] Derived from the opening and overarching instruction: Lev. 19:1-2 (NASB) *Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: (2) "Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.*

[329] A type of Rabbinic explanation and application of the Law. (see "halakha" and "midrash" in **Glossary of Terms**).

[330] The bulk of the topics are found in Leviticus 19.

expressions of loving one's neighbour as oneself.

b) That James who 'has long been seen as a NT representative of the wisdom and prophetic traditions', 'reshapes as well the inheritance of *Torah*'.

Considering James's use of Leviticus 19, the following observations can be made:

- Holiness is paramount for James. This can be seen in his extensive use of the "Holiness Code" (Lev. 19). It is supported by statements about holy living, including: "Pure and undefiled religion with the God and Father is this …" (θρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος παρὰ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ αὕτη ἐστίν) (Jas. 1:27), and "But the wisdom from above, first indeed is pure" (ἡ δὲ ἄνωθεν σοφία πρῶτον μὲν ἁγνή ἐστιν) (Jas. 3:17).
- Carrying out or fulfilling the "*nómon basilikòn*" (νόμον βασιλικὸν) (Jas. 2:8; Lev. 19:18b) is an essential part of living a holy life.
- The "*nómon basilikòn*" (νόμον βασιλικὸν) or the command that "you shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν) (Jas. 2:8; Lev. 19:18b) is fulfilled by keeping the very practical commandments of the *Torah*, such as: not to "show partiality" (προσωπολημπτέω) (Jas. 2:1, 9; Lev. 19:15), not to "speak against" (καταλαλέω) one another (Jas. 4:11; Lev. 19:16), not to "hold back" (ἀποστερέω) wages (Jas. 5:4; Lev. 19:13), not to "complain" (στενάζω) against one another (Jas. 5:9; Lev. 19:18a), not to "swear" (ὀμνύω) by any oath (Jas. 5:12; Lev. 19:12), and to "turn" (ἐπιστρέφω) a sinner from error (Jas. 5:20; Lev. 19:17b). This applies to the NT believer, just as it did to the OT believer.

3.5.5. Weightier Matters of the Torah

As mentioned in **Section 1.3.2**, James says nothing about ritual observances of the *Torah* (Law). Johnson (2008:30) rightly points out that James shows 'no concern' for 'circumcision', 'special days or feasts', or 'dietary or purity regulations'.[331] It would be wrong, however, to simply deduce from the silence that James no longer saw value in the "ritual law". Rather, as Allison (2013:353-354) and Moo (2000:18) rightly argue, it is better to conclude that the "ritual law" was not a particular issue for James's readers that needed addressing, and that James concentrated on the "weightier matters of the *Torah*", as Jesus did (cf. Mat. 23:23).[332]

Hagner (1995:670) explains that the all-important and significant matters of "justice" (κρίσις), "mercy" (ἔλεος), and "faith"/"faithfulness" (πίστις) (Mat. 23:23) are 'at the heart of the

[331] This omission has caused some scholars, like Dibelius (1976:121-122), to rule out James the bother of Jesus as the author since he was known for his *Torah* observance. This, as Allison (2013:353) rightly points out, is 'a tenuous argument from silence'.

[332] See also Cheung (2003:116, 119).

OT' and show 'close affinity' to Jesus' twofold summary of the *Torah* (cf. Mat. 22:37-40). As France (2007:873) observes,[333] they are 'strongly reminiscent of the famous summary' in Micah 6:8 (TLV): "practice justice" (ποιεῖν κρίμα, LXX), "love mercy" (ἀγαπᾶν ἔλεον, LXX), and "walk humbly with your God" (ἕτοιμον εἶναι τοῦ πορεύεσθαι, LXX).[334] Waltke (2009:734) explains that practicing "justice" (*mišpāṭ*, MST) and "mercy" (*ḥesed*, MST) both pertain to caring for the 'oppressed' – with the 'accent' of the first on the 'action' and the second on the 'attitude'. Furthermore, as Waltke (2007:734-735) points out, "justice and mercy" expresses 'covenant solidarity on the human level' and "walk humbly with your God" expresses it 'to God'. Or as Keil & Delitzsch (1996:336) maintain, the first two 'embrace all commandments of the second table'. Arguably, the third embrace the commandments of the first table of the Decalogue.

James's concern for "faith/faithfulness" is seen at the outsets in both the introduction and body of the Letter (Jas. 1:2; 2:1). His concern for "justice" and "mercy" is explicit in several places, including James 1:27; 2:4, 9, 15-16; 5:4-6. The need for "mercy" is distinctly stressed (see: Jas. 2:13; 3:17). So pervasive is his focus on the "weightier matters of the *Torah*" that each section of James may fall under "faith/faithfulness" (or loving God, 1st Table) or "justice"/"mercy" (or loving neighbour, 2nd Table), as demonstrated in **Table 2** below. With the proposed division, it is recognised that some sections do not neatly fit exclusively into either Table, but could fit into both. This is not surprising since one's love for God does show in one's love towards one's neighbour (cf. 1 John 3:17; 4:12, 20).

Table 2: James's content as "Weightier Matters of the *Torah*"

Section in James	Love God (1st Table)	Love Neighbour (2nd Table)
	Faith/Faithfulness	Justice and Mercy
1:2-4 Rejoice in Trials	X	
1:5-8 Pray without doubting	X	
1:9-11 Rejoice in humility	X	
1:13-15 Blessed is the one who endures temptation	X	
1:16-18 Do not be deceived – all good things are from God who never changes	X	
1:19-27 Continue in and do the *nómon téleion* …		X
2:1-7 Have not in partiality the faith		X

Note: Table continues on the next page.

[333] See also Davies & Allison (2004c:294).

[334] Micah 6:8 in turn can be traced back to Deuteronomy 10:12-13 (NASB): *"Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, (13) and to keep the LORD'S commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?"*

Table 2: James's content as "Weightier Matters of the Torah" (continues)

Section in James	Love God (1st Table)	Love Neighbour (2nd Table)
	Faith/Faithfulness	**Justice and Mercy**
2:8-13 Speak and do the *nómou eleutherías*		X
2:14-26 Faith is shown in action		X
3:1-12 Control your tongue		X
3:13-18 Wisdom shown in behaviour		X
4:1-10 Friendship with the world or God	X	
4:11-12 Be doers of the *nómou* not judges of it		X
4:13-17 Do not boast about your plans	X	
5:1-6 Warning to the rich		X
5:7-11 Be patient for the Lord's coming	X	
5:12 Do as you say you'll do		X
5:13-18 Power of prayer	X	
5:19-20 Restore sinners		X

Another observation from **Table 2** is that the key sections about practicing *nómos* (Jas. 1:19-27; 2:8-13; 4:11-12) and wisdom from above (Jas. 3:13-18) are about "justice" and "mercy" (or loving one's neighbour). Again, theologically, this is a product of loving God.

3.5.6. Concluding Observations

The following findings flow from the discussion in **Subsections 3.5.1 – 3.5.5**:

- James refers (by way of citations, quotations, allusions, and echoes) to at least 60 OT Scriptures (from the *Torah*, the Prophets, and the Writings) in 108 verses. Clearly James's thought is immersed in and shaped by the OT.[335] Clearly James is to be interpreted in the light of those Old Testament references.
- Each citation or quotation from the OT authenticates what James is asserting or teaching. In turn James's teaching proves that the OT Scriptures referred to are in force and are normative. Moreover, in none of the references to the OT does James display anything apart from complete respect for and total submission to the OT Scriptures. Perhaps his view of the OT Scriptures can be summed up in his statement in James 4:5, "Or do you think the Scripture says in vain …" (ἢ δοκεῖτε ὅτι κενῶς ἡ γραφὴ λέγει …).
- In citing or quoting the Old Testament, James grounds his fundamental teachings of

[335] See again **Sections 2.6.1.** and **2.6.4**. See also Morgan (2010:25-27).

"justification by faith" (Jas. 2:23) and "you shall love your neighbour as yourself"[336] (Jas. 2:8) in the *Torah*.

- The "*nómon basilikòn*" (Kingdom *Torah*) (Jas. 2:8) is grounded in the Ten Commandments (two of which are quoted in James 2:11) and further expounded by several instructions in the "Holiness Code" (Jas. 2:1, 9; 4:11; 5:4, 9, 12, 20).
- By alluding to the *Shema* (Jas. 1:12, 19; 2:5, 19; 4:12), James recalls the most fundamental confession[337] and the greatest commandment[338], as stipulated in the *Torah*. And in support of the greatest commandment, James cites the Writings (in Jas. 4:6), in the context of allusions to the second of the Ten Commandments (Jas. 4:4-6).
- While James is silent on the ritual commandments of the *Torah*, he seems to concentrate solely on the moral commandments and weightier matters of the *Torah*: "justice", "mercy", and "faithfulness/faith" (refer to **Table 2**) – the first two expressing love for one's neighbour and the last love for God.
- It can thus be concluded that, as Morgan (2010:27) observes, 'the teachings of James are firmly anchored in the Old Testament, including the Law, which he considers trustworthy, unified, and authoritative for Christians.'

3.6. OT Roots of the Absolutes in James 1:2-21

Having found that James's thoughts are thoroughly shaped by the OT and his most fundamental teachings are well grounded in the *Torah*, this section will examine, in more detail, the constituent elements of his absolutes from the OT Scriptures in James 1:2-21. This part of the prologue provides the flow of thought and immediate context for the first key passage on *nomos* (νόμος), which in turn will be key to interpreting succeeding passages on *nómos* (νόμος).

3.6.1. Believers are to rejoice in trials, knowing that their faith is tested and perfected (by the Lord) through trials (Jas. 1:2-4).

(a) Whenever you fall into various trials:

According to BDAG (2000:973), "trial" (πειρασμός) could mean either 'an attempt to learn the nature or character of something' (translated: 'test' or 'trial') or 'an attempt to make one do something wrong' (translated: 'temptation' or 'enticement to sin'). Clearly, in the context of James 1:2-4, the former meaning is intended. The latter meaning is used in James 1:12.

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[336] The "*nómon basilikòn* ("Kingdom *Torah*" or "Kingdom Law").

[337] Deut. 6:4 (NASB) Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!

[338] Deut. 6:5 (NASB) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your might.

The Septuagint (LXX)[339] uses the same word (πειρασμός) to refer to two major events in Israel's history that are referred to repeatedly in the OT: (1) Israel's "testing" or "tempting" ("πειρασμός", LXX) of the LORD at "Massah" when they quarrelled or contended with Moses because there was no water to drink (Exod. 17:1-7; Deut. 6:16; 9:22; Psa. 94:8); and (2) the LORD taking Israel for Himself from within another nation (i.e. Egypt) by "trials" ("πειρασμῷ", LXX), by "signs and wonders" etc. (Deut. 4:34; 9:19; 29:3). While the first event relates more to "temptation" (the idea in Jas. 1:12),[340] the latter relates to "testing" in James 1:2-4. Keil & Delitzsch (1996:878) observe that, 'Pharaoh's relation to the [LORD] was put to the test' by the events (plagues) in Egypt. The plagues exposed Pharaoh's hard-hearted character towards God (Exod. 8:32; 9:43).

(b) The testing of your faith:

In the OT Scriptures, particularly in the *Torah*, that LORD used various trials[341] to "test" (ἐκπειράζω, LXX)[342] whether or not His people would "walk in His instructions[343]" (Exod. 16:4, NASB; Deut. 8:2), to "know what was in [their] heart[s]" (Deut. 8:2, NASB)[344], to "find out if [they] love[d] the LORD [their] God with all [their] heart and with all [their] soul" (Deut. 13:4, NASB), and to "do good for [them] in the end" (Deut. 8:16, NASB).[345]

The LORD "tested" ("επειραζεν", LXX) Abraham when He instructed him to offer Isaac, his only son whom he loved, as a burnt offering (Gen. 22:1-2). In the divinely inspired commentary on this event, Hebrews states that, "by faith", Abraham obeyed God, 'considering that God is able to raise people even from the dead' (Heb. 11:17, 19, NASB). Thus, God tested Abraham's faith in and loyalty to Him, and through the trial Abraham was afforded the

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[339] The Greek translation of the Old Testament Hebrew Bible.

[340] Although, in Jas. 1:12-15, "temptation" applies not to people trying to "tempt" God, but someone being "tempted by his own lusts" (πειράζεται ὑπὸ τῆς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας).

[341] These included, but were not necessarily limited to: Israel finding bitter water at Marah (Exod. 15:23-25); the LORD providing manna to Israel in quotas (Exod. 16:3-5); the LORD delivering the Ten Commandments to His people (Israel) with thunder, lightning flashes, trumpet sound, and the mountain smoking (Exod. 20:18-20); the LORD leading His people for forty years through the wilderness (Deut. 8:2); the appearance of "prophets" and "dreamers" whose signs and wonders come to pass and yet call Israel to go after other gods (Deut. 13:2-3).

[342] While the LXX uses a different Greek word (ἐκπειράζω rather than δοκιμάζω, which is the verb form of δοκίμιον ("testing") in Jas. 1:3), the basic idea testing with the purpose of proving character or genuineness is clear from the context.

[343] תּוֹרָה (tô·rāh) – 'instruction - which is (or is not) followed' (HALOT, 2000:1712).

[344] This principle is echoed in the Writings where it is said concerning king Hezekiah: "… God left him alone only to test (πειρασαι, LXX) him, that He might know all that was in his heart" (2 Chron. 32:31b, NASB).

[345] See also: Exod. 15:25; 20:20. And for texts beyond the *Torah*, see: Judg. 2:22; 3:1, 4; Psa. 26:2.

opportunity to express his trust and confidence in almighty God, who can reverse even death.

King David understood the need for and even asked the LORD to "put [him] to the test", when he prayed: *Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try* (δοκίμασόν, LXX)[346] *me and know my anxious thoughts; (24) And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way* (Psa. 139:23-24, NASB). Williams & Ogilvie (1989:476) comment, 'As God knows David, David will know himself' - he wants to know 'those things that would challenge his faith and lead him into sin', and he wants to know what 'needs to be changed in him', because 'his goal is righteousness' and 'he wants to go [home] to God'.

Consistent with the *Torah* and the Writings, the Prophets teach that the LORD of Hosts, "who see[s] the mind and the heart" also "test[s] (δοκιμαζων, LXX) the righteous" (Jer. 20:12, NASB).[347] And, concerning the (remnant) of His people, the LORD will "Refine them as silver is refined, and test (δοκιμω, LXX) them as gold is tested" (Zec. 13:9, NASB).[348] Job echoed the same idea when he testified, "When He has tried (διεκρινεν, LXX)[349] me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job 23:10, NASB). Interestingly, in the context, Job said, "my foot has held fast to His steps; I have kept His way" (Job. 23:11, NASB) and "I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth" (Job. 23:12, NASB). Thus, Job's faithfulness to God's instructions gave him confidence during the time of testing.

While the LXX mostly translates the above cases of "testing" with the word *ekpeirazō* (ἐκπειράζω)[350] rather than *dokimazō* (δοκιμάζω)[351] - the verb form of δοκίμιον ("testing") (in Jas. 1:3), the basic idea of testing with the purpose of proving 'genuineness'[352] is clear from the contexts in each case. Besides, the same idea in the form of *dokimazō* (δοκιμάζω) is used

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[346] Jas. 1:3 also uses δοκίμασόν.

[347] See also Jer. 17:10.

[348] Smith (1998:283) rightfully observes that, 'Whatever the historical setting of the oracle was, Jesus interpreted it eschatologically' (cf. Mat. 26:31; Mark 14:27).

[349] διακρίνω – 'to evaluate by paying careful attention to, evaluate, judge' (BDAG, 2000:231). The MST uses נסה (nsh) which means, 'to put someone to the test' (HALOT, 2000:702).

[350] According to (BDAG, 2000:307) ἐκπειράζω could mean: (1) 'to subject to test or proof', (2) 'to entrap someone into giving information that will jeopardize the person' (i.e. "entrap"), or (3) 'to entice to do wrong by offering attractive benefits' (i.e. tempt). In the Scriptures referred to, the first meaning clearly best fits the contexts.

[351] According to BDAG (2000:255), δοκιμάζω either means, (1) 'to make a critical examination of something to determine genuineness' (i.e. "put to the test" or "examine"), or (2) 'to draw a conclusion about worth on the basis of testing' (i.e. "prove" or "approve"). In the case of James 1:3, it is hard to choose between the options because although the examination itself (first meaning) is in view the results (second meaning) may not be excluded.

[352] See: BDAG (2000: 255-256) for δοκιμάζω and δοκίμιον.

several times in the LXX in the Writings[353] and Prophets[354].

The simile of testing faith and character for the purpose of proving and refining them as metalsmiths would do gold or silver is scripturally strong, being employed in the Writings, Prophets, and Epistles.[355] Though not employed explicitly in James 1:3, the idea is present there, especially with the addition of the *hina* (ἵνα) clause in verse 4, stating that being "perfect" (τέλειος) and "complete" (ὁλόκληρος) are the purpose of the testing.

(c) Consider it all joy:

The "communal thanksgiving" song[356], Psalm 66, which likens 'divine testing and purification of the faithful' to the 'smelting of precious metals' (Psa. 66:10) (Wilson, 2002:918), does so in the context of the call to "shout joyfully to God" (Psa. 66:1, NASB), to "rejoice in Him" (Psa. 66:6, NASB), and to "bless" Him and "sound His praise abroad" (Psa. 66:8, NASB). Calvin (2010c:473) comments that the Psalm conveys the truth that although God 'visit[s] His children with temporary chastisements … [He] will ultimately crown them with joy and prosperity'. As Wilson (2002:919) points out, the metaphors used in Psalm 66:10-12 allow application to the 'pains and hopes associated with the Diaspora'. Thus, just as Psalm 66 would have encouraged the believers in the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles to rejoice in their trials, so James 1:2-4 did for his original readers; with the latter arguably drawing inspiration from the former.

(d) Conclusion:

The *Torah* demonstrates and teaches that God tests His people through trials (Deut. 4:34; 9:19; 29:3) in order to expose their hearts, refine their faith, and do them good in the end (Exod. 16:4; Deut. 8:2, 16; 13:3-4). This is clearly seen in the lives of Abraham and God's people Israel (Gen. 22:1-2; Deut. 8:2). It is also echoed in both the Prophets and the Writings (Jer. 20:12; Zec. 13:9; Job 23:10; Psa. 94:8; 139:23-24). Since God's design is good, the Writings call God's people to rejoice in Him in their trials (Psa. 66:1, 6, 8, 10-12).

[353] Ref.: Psa. 16:3; 25:2; 65:10; 80:8; 138:1, 23; Prov. 17:3; 27:21.

[354] Ref.: Jer. 6:27; 9:7; 11:20; 12:3; 17:10; 20:12; Zec. 11:13; 13:9.

[355] Ref.: Psa. 66:10; Prov. 17:3; 27:21; (Isa. 1:25; 43:1-2; 48:10); Zec. 13:9; Mal. 3:3; (1 Cor. 3:13); 1 Pet. 1:7.

[356] See: Ellsworth (2006:110).

3.6.2. Believers are to pray for wisdom (during trials), in faith without doubting, to God who gives generously (Jas. 1:5-8).

(a) If anyone of you lacks wisdom let him ask from God:

In the *Torah*, the LORD 'put skill[357] (σοφία, LXX) and understanding (ἐπιστήμη, LXX)' in Bezalel and Oholiab 'to perform all the work in the construction of the sanctuary … in accordance with all that the LORD has commanded' (Exod. 36:1, NASB).[358] The idea of "skill (or wisdom) and understanding" is echoed in the question in James 3:13, "who (is) wise (σοφὸς) and understanding (ἐπιστήμων) among you?" Though two different Greek words are used in Exodus 31:6 (ἐπιστήμη, LXX) and James 3:13 (ἐπιστήμων), according to BDAG (2000:381), their meanings are closely related, with the first nuanced towards 'possession or gaining of knowledge with focus on understanding', and the second 'being knowledgeable in a way that makes one effectual in the exercise of such knowledge'. The first could be translated, "understanding" or "knowledge" and the second could be translated "expert", "learned" or "understanding". Furthermore, the exact same idea of James 3:13 (σοφὸς and ἐπιστήμων) is alluded to in Deuteronomy 4:6 where the LORD instructs Israel to "keep and do" His commandments, 'for that is your wisdom (σοφὸς, LXX) and your understanding (ἐπιστήμων, LXX)' (NASB). Beckwith (2008:71) observes that twice in the Apocrypha (Ecclus. 24:34; Baruch 4:1), 'the book of the Law of Moses is effectively identified with the personified wisdom of God'. Thus, according to the teaching of *Torah*, "wisdom and understanding" are given by God to His people as the skill and knowledge they need in order to carry out His instructions (*Torah*), and so prove themselves to be 'a wise (σοφὸς, LXX) and understanding (ἐπιστήμων, LXX) people' (Deut. 4:6, NASB).

In the Prophets, the LORD appeared to king Solomon, saying, "*Ask what you wish Me to give you*" (1 Kgs. 3:5, NASB). In reply, Solomon asked (prayed) for "*an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil*" (1 Kgs. 3:9, NASB). God was pleased with Solomon's request (1 Kgs. 3:10, NASB) and said, "*Behold, I have given you a wise* (σοφήν, LXX) *and discerning* (φρονίμην, LXX) *heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you.*[359] Thus the Prophets clearly demonstrate that God gives "wisdom" generously in answer to prayer. Like Bezalel and Oholiab in the *Torah*, so Hiram in the Prophets was "*filled with wisdom* (επιγνωσεως, LXX) *and understanding* (συνεσεως, LXX) *and skill* (τεχνης, LXX)" for performing work for king Solomon (1 Kgs. 7:14,[360]

[357] Translated, "wisdom" in the LITV, YLT, KJV.

[358] See also: Exod. 35:31, 33, 35; 36:2.

[359] See also: 1 Kgs. 4:30, 34.

[360] 1 Kgs. 7:2 in the LXX.

NASB). The Prophets also look forward to Messiah (a shoot … from the stem of Jesse), "*The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom* (σοφίας, LXX) *and understanding* (συνέσεως, LXX)*, The spirit of counsel* (βουλῆς, LXX) *and strength* (ἰσχύος, LXX)*, The spirit of knowledge* (γνώσεως, LXX) *and the fear* (εὐσεβείας, LXX) *of the LORD.*" (Isa. 11:2, NASB).

The fact that "wisdom and understanding" come from the LORD is reiterated in Proverbs 2:6 (NASB), which states: "*For the LORD gives wisdom* (σοφίαν, LXX)*; From His mouth come knowledge* (γνῶσις, LXX) *and understanding* (σύνεσις, LXX)."[361] Earlier on in Proverbs 2, in verse 3 (NASB), the believer is urged to "cry for discernment" and "lift your voice for understanding". And in verse 4 (NASB) is the implied answer to prayer with the words, "*Then you will discern the fear of the LORD and discover the knowledge of God.*" The Writings repeat King Solomon as a prime example of someone who prayed for wisdom and who received liberally from the LORD (in 2 Chron. 1:10, 12). Earlier on in Solomon's life, his father the great king David,[362] taught him: *"Only the LORD give you discretion* (σοφία, LXX) *and understanding* (σύνεσις, LXX), *and give you charge over Israel, so that you may keep the law* (*Torah*, MST; "νόμος, LXX) *of the LORD your God"* (1 Chron. 22:12, NASB).[363]

(b) But let him ask in faith:

The Old Testament Scriptures present several examples of people of faith who prayed to the LORD and He granted their prayers, in the *Torah* (e.g. Abraham, Gen. 20:17; and Moses, Num. 11:2), the Prophets (e.g. Elijah, 1 Kgs. 17:20-21), and the Writings (e.g. David, Psa. 18:6). The Writings make explicit the need to pray prayers of faith, for example in Psalm 37:5 (NASB), "*Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He will do it.*"[364] Conversely, the Writings also clearly state the fact that the LORD will not answer prayer of those who "*regard wickedness in [the] heart*" (Psa. 66:18, NASB).[365]

(c) Conclusion:

The *Torah* teaches that "wisdom" and "understanding" are from God (Exod. 36:1; Deut. 4:6). Both the Prophets and the Writings affirm this and make explicit that they are to be prayed for, and that they are given (liberally) by the LORD in answer to prayer (1 Kgs. 3:5; 9-10; 7:14; Isa. 11:2; Prov. 2:3-4, 6; 1 Chron. 22:12; 2 Chron. 1:10, 12). Furthermore, while the *Torah* teaches that it is "wisdom" and "understanding" to keep the *Torah* (Deut. 4:6), the Writings teach that "wisdom" and "understanding" are needed in order to keep the "*Torah*" (1 Chron. 22:12).

[361] See also: Job 12:13; Daniel 2:21.

[362] Obviously under the inspiration of the Spirit.

[363] See also: Psa. 119:34, 125.

[364] See also: Psa. 34:17.

[365] See also: Prov. 15:8.

Finally, through the examples of several people of faith, the *Torah*, Prophets, and Writings encourage believers to pray prayers of faith, and to expect answers to such prayer (Gen. 20:17; 1 Kgs. 17:20-21; Psa. 18:6). The Writings explicitly state the need for faith and the avoidance of wickedness in prayer (Psa. 37:5; 66:18).

3.6.3. Rejoice in humility because wealth is fleeting (Jas. 1:9-11).

(a) Let the humble brother/sister boast:

The "humble" (ταπεινός) brother or sister described in James 1:9-10 is 'lowly, undistinguished, of no account', most likely due to 'being of low social status or relative to inability to cope' (BDAG, 2000:989). The related verb form, "to humble" (ταπεινόω), is what happened to Israel when they were 'enslaved and oppressed (ταπεινόω, LXX)' in Egypt for four hundred years (Gen. 15:13, NASB).[366] But the LORD made good His promise, to "judge" Egypt and "afterward" to bring Israel out "with many possessions" (Gen. 15:14, NASB).[367] This dramatic reversal of fortunes recorded in the *Torah* is a powerful paradigm for God's people to encourage them to cultivate a humble disposition.[368] Not surprisingly, the LORD instructs His people several times in the *Torah* to "humble (ταπεινόω, LXX) your souls" before Him (Lev. 16:29, 31; 23:27, 32). This is the very same instruction James gives his readers in James 4:10: "Be humbled (ταπεινώθητε)[369] before the Lord and He will lift you up." The *Torah*'s account of Jacob's ordeal with Laban has relevance. Jacob served Laban for twenty years, during which time Laban "cheated" him (Gen. 31:7, NASB) and Jacob endured "affliction" (ταπεινωσιν, LXX) (Gen. 31:41, NASB). Therefore God "has taken away" Laban's "livestock and given them" to Jacob (Gen. 31:9, NASB).

The Prophets echo *Torah*'s teaching, that the LORD requires and prizes humility in His people, with declarations such as: "*But to this one I will look, to him who is humble* (ταπεινὸν, LXX) *and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word*" (Isa. 66:2, NASB).[370]

The Writings also affirm the LORD's affinity with the humble, with statements such as: "*The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit* (τοὺς ταπεινοὺς, LXX)" (Psa. 34:18, NASB).[371] The same Psalm says, "*My soul will make its boast*

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[366] See also: Deut. 26:6.

[367] See also: Exod. 12:35-36; Psa. 105:37.

[368] Christ is the ultimate example in that "*He humbled* (ἐταπείνωσεν) *Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (9) For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,*" (Phil. 2:8-9, NASB).

[369] ταπεινόω: 'to cause to be or become humble in attitude, *humble*, *make humble*' (BDAG, 2000:990).

[370] See also: 1 Sam. 2:1, 7-8; Isa. 49:13; Micah 6:8.

[371] See also: Job. 5:11; Psa. 137:6; Prov. 3:34.

in the LORD; The humble will hear it and rejoice" (Psa. 34:2, NASB).[372] The *Torah* presents Moses as the most humble man (Num. 12:3) and he found favour in the LORD's sight (Exod. 33:12-23).

(b) He (the rich) will pass away:

The fleeting nature of wealth is seen in the *Torah* in Laban's loss of livestock (Gen. 31:9), as discussed above.[373] This principle is confirmed and taught in the Writings, as follows: "*Do not weary yourself to gain wealth … For wealth certainly makes itself wings like an eagle that flies toward the heavens*" (Prov. 23:4-5, NASB).[374]

(c) Conclusion:

The *Torah* presents the "humble" position that Jacob had when he was afflicted by Laban and that Israel had when they were enslaved in Egypt, and how God (in both cases) saw the injustice and reversed their fortunes (Gen. 15:13-14; 31:7, 9, 41). And then the *Torah* calls God's people to have a "humble" disposition before Him (Lev. 16:29, 31; 23:27, 32). Moses is presented as the humblest man (Num. 12:3) who clearly found favour in the LORD's sight (Exod. 33:12-23). The need for humility and the LORD's favour upon the "humble" are echoed in the Prophets and Writings (Isa. 66:2; Psa. 34:2, 18). The *Torah* (Gen. 31:9) demonstrates and the Writings declare the fleeting nature of wealth (Prov. 23:4-5).

3.6.4. Blessed is the person who endures temptation because they will receive the "crown of life" (Jas. 1:12-15).

(a) Blessed is the man:

The formula, "blessed (is the) man …" (Μακάριος ἀνὴρ …) (Jas. 1:12) is used twelve times in the Writings[375] and twice in the Prophets[376]. "Blessed is the man":

- "Who *does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, not sit in the seat of scoffers.*" (Psa. 1:1, NASB).
- "*But his delight is in the law* (*Torah*, MST; νόμῳ, LXX) *of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.*" (Psa. 1:2, NASB); and "*whom You chasten, O LORD, And*

[372] See also: Psa. 69:32.

[373] It is also seen in the life of Pharaoh who refused to humble himself before the LORD (Exod. 10:3) and, as a result he lost crops (Exod. 10:15), his firstborn (Exod. 12:29-30), many possessions (Exod. 12:35-36; Gen. 15:14), his chariots and army (Exod. 15:4).

[374] See also: Eccl. 5:13-15.

[375] Psa. 1:1; 32:2; 34:8; 40:4; 84:5, 12; 94:12; 112:1; 127:5; Prov. 3:13; 8:34; 28:14.

[376] Isa. 56:2; Jer. 17:7.

whom You teach out of Your law (*Torah*, MST; νόμου, LXX)*;*" (Psa. 94:12, NASB); and "*who fears the LORD, Who greatly delights in His commandments.*" (Psa. 112:1, NASB); and "*who does this*[377]*, And the son of man who takes hold of it; Who keeps from profaning the sabbath, And keeps his hand from doing any evil.*" (Isa. 56:2, NASB).

- "*Who finds wisdom And the man who gains understanding*" (Prov. 3:13, NASB); and "*who listens to me*[378], *Watching daily at my gates, Waiting at my doorposts*" (Prov. 8:34; NASB); and "*fears*[379] *always, But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity*" (Prov. 28:14, NASB).
- "*whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!* (2) *How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit!*" (Psa. 32:1-2, NASB).
- "*who takes refuge in Him*[380]" (Psa. 34:8, NASB); "*who has made the LORD his trust*" (Psa. 40:4, NASB); "*whose strength is in You*[381]" (Psa. 84:5, NASB); "*who trusts in You*[382]" (Psa. 84:12, NASB); and "*who trusts in the LORD And whose trust is the LORD*" (Jer. 17:17, NASB).

(b) Who endures temptation:

Thus "blessed in the man" who avoids sin, who delights in, meditates on, and keeps the *Torah*, who finds wisdom and fears sinning, who is forgiven and freed from sin, and who trusts in the LORD. These ideas would naturally come up in the minds of readers who knew the OT Scriptures, such as James's first readers most likely were.

James 1:12 identifies (and probably equates) "the man who endures temptation" (ἀνὴρ ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν) with "those loving Him" (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν). Those who love God keep His commandments, even when they are tempted not to. This absolute is firmly

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[377] This is described in Isa. 56:1 (NASB) as follows: "*Thus says the LORD, "Preserve justice and do righteousness, For My salvation is about to come And My righteousness to be revealed.*"

[378] "wisdom" (Prov. 8:12, NASB).

[379] The preceding verse, Prov. 28:13 (NASB), says, "He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion." Thus, in the immediate context, "fear" (v.14) could mean 'fear of sin', as Ross (1991:1106) suggests.

[380] "the LORD" (v.8, NASB).

[381] "LORD of Hosts" (v.1, NASB), "the living God" (v.2, NASB), "LORD of Hosts, my King and my God" (v.3, NASB).

[382] "LORD of hosts" (v.12, NASB).

established in the Ten Commandments (Deut. 5:10)[383] and the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-6)[384].[385] It follows that the love of the believer for God is the motivation for their *Torah* keeping, and their *Torah* keeping is the practical expression of their love for God. Furthermore, the *Torah* instructs the believer how to avoid sin and how to love God. Both the Prophets[386] and the Writings[387] affirm the truth that loving God means observing His *Torah*.

(c) He will receive the crown of life:

The "*man who endures temptation*" is "*blessed*" because "*he will receive the crown of life that He promised to those loving Him*" (Jas. 1:12).[388] If the term, "crown of life", is understood as an "epexegetical genitive",[389] as Ropes (1916:152) argues, then "life" is the "crown",[390] and the "crown" becomes a metaphor for the reward and honour of divinely given (eternal) life.[391] In support of this interpretation, Moo (2000:70) quotes Revelation 2:10 (NASB) where the Lord Jesus says to the church in Smyrna, "*Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*"[392] Even though the term, "crown of life", does not seem to refer to a particular OT text, the idea of a "crown" (στέφανον, LXX) as metaphor for a reward, blessing, or honour from the LORD is present in the Writings, in for example, Psalm 8:5, 21:1-7 and 65:11. The idea that the person who is blessed is blessed with eternal life is present in both the Writings and the Prophets, in for example Psalm 1:4-5 and Isaiah 56:1-2. Towards the end of the *Torah*, Moses said to the people of Israel in Deuteronomy 30:15-16:

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[383] Deut. 5:10 (NASB) 'but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.'

[384] Deut. 6:4-6 (NASB) "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! (5) "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (6) "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.

[385] See also: Deut. 11:1, 13, 22; 19:9; 30:16.

[386] See: Josh. 22:5; 1 Kgs. 3:3; (2 Kgs. 23:25); (Isa. 56:6).

[387] See: (2 Chron. 31:20-21; 34:31); Neh. 1:5; Psa. 18:1 & 21-23; (Psa. 119:47, 97, 113, 127, 159, 163, 167).

[388] In James 2:5, God "promised to those living Him" (ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν) to be "heirs of the kingdom" (κληρονόμους τῆς βασιλείας). This is clearly a parallel phrase, and it fits with the interpretation proposed below.

[389] Which seems very reasonable.

[390] Wallace (1996:95) provides a 'test' for the "epexegetical genitive". Applied in this case, one could rephrase "the crown of life" as "the crown, which is life"

[391] Moo (2000:70) supports this interpretation.

[392] And in support of this interpretation, Martin (1988:33) quotes the Wisdom of Solomon 5:15-16a, "*But the righteous live for ever, and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them. Therefore they will receive a glorious crown, and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord.*"

(15) "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; (16) in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it. (Deut. 30:15-16, NASB).

Combining the above with Deuteronomy 30:20a[393], one could say: God's voice is in His *Torah*, and keeping His *Torah*, as an expression of love towards Him and a means of clinging to Him … and such a life holds the promise of life, especially since God is such a person's life.

(d) God is One who cannot be tempted by evil:

The *Torah* also presents the LORD as "perfect" and "without injustice" (Deut. 32:4, NASB).[394] Both the Prophets and Writings affirm this by saying respectively, that the LORD's "eyes are too pure to approve evil" or "look on wickedness with favor" (Hab. 1:13, NASB);[395] and "You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; No evil dwells with You." (Psa. 5:4, NASB).[396]

(e) When lust conceives it brings forth sin and the sin having completed it gives birth to death:

The *Torah* presents the genesis for fatal sequence of "temptation" (πειρασμός) leading to "sin" (ἁμαρτία) leading to "death" (θάνατος) (Jas. 1:14-15) when "the serpent of old who is call the devil and Satan" (Rev. 12:9, NASB) tempted Eve (Gen. 3:1-5), and she and her husband Adam ate from the tree that the LORD God "commanded [them] not to" eat (Gen. 3:6, 12-17, NASB), and the curse of death came upon them as a consequence (Gen. 3:19; 2:16-17). From this early event in the *Torah*, the meaning of "sin" is evidently to break God's commandment, or as Louw & Nida (1996:772) define it: 'to act contrary to the will and law of God'.[397] "Temptation" is Satan attempting to persuade someone to break God's commandment, or as BDAG (2000:793) defines it: 'an attempt to make one do something wrong, … an enticement to sin'.

(f) Conclusion:

The *Torah* lays the foundation for understanding the nature of sin (violating God's instructions) (Gen. 3:6, 12-17) and temptation (Satan's attempts to get people to violate God's instructions)

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[393] Deut. 30:20a (NASB) "*by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, ...*"

[394] See also: Gen. 1:31; 18:25; Exod. 3:5; Lev. 11:44, 45; 19:2.

[395] See also: Isa. 6:3; 57:15.

[396] See also: Job 34:10.

[397] 1 John 3:4 (NASB) defines sin as follows: "*Everyone who practices sin* (ἁμαρτία) *also practices lawlessness* (ἀνομία)*; and sin* (ἁμαρτία) *is lawlessness* (ἀνομία)." James 4:17 gives a complementary perspective by teaching: "*Therefore, knowing to do good* (καλὸν ποιεῖν) *and not doing it to him it is a sin* (ἁμαρτία)."

(Gen. 3:1-5), the reason for keeping God's instructions (expressing love to God and holding on to Him) (Deut. 5:10; 6:4-6; 30:20), and the benefits of doing so (preserving and enhancing life) (Deut. 30:15-16). The Prophets and Writings affirm these truths (Isa. 56:2; Jer. 17:17; Psa. 1:1-2; 94:12; 112:1; Prov. 3:13; 8:34; 28:14: 32:1-2; 34:8; 40:4; 84:5, 12). The LORD's perfection and purity (separation from evil) is presented in the *Torah* (Deut. 32:4) and echoed in the Prophets (Hab. 1:13) and Writings (Psa. 5:4).

3.6.5. Do not be deceived, all good things (incl. birth through the word of truth) are from God, who never changes (Jas. 1:16-18).

(a) Do not be led astray:

The OT Scriptures are replete with warnings against and examples of being "led astray" or "deceived" (πλανάω, Jas. 1:16). For example, in the *Torah*, the LORD warns His people about being deceived or led astray (πλανάω, LXX) from worshipping and serving Him (Deut. 4:19), to follow after other gods (Deut. 11:28), being seduced from walking in the way the LORD commanded (Deut. 13:5), and having their hearts turned away (Deut. 30:17). In the Prophets, God's people are confronted about being led astray (πλανάω, LXX) through prophets who prophesy through their own inspiration and their own spirit (Ezek. 13:2-3, 10), to cause people to depart from the LORD by "a spirit of harlotry" (Hos. 4:12, NASB), to reject the *Torah* of the LORD by lies (Amos 2:4), and like sheep to each turn their own way (Isa. 53:6). And in the Writings, the wilderness generation is presented as a people who "erred" (πλανάω, LXX) in their heart (Psa. 94:10, NASB), and warnings are given about not consenting when sinners "entice" (πλανάω, LXX) you (Prov. 1:10, NASB), since those who "wander" (πλανάω, LXX) "from the way of understanding will rest in the assembly of the dead" (Prov. 21:16, NASB). The prototype and most tragic example of being deceived or misled about the goodness of God is found in the *Torah*, where Eve doubted the goodness of God, and as a result ate the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:1-6).[398]

(b) Every good gift and every perfect present:

Allison (2013:266-267) insightfully and helpfully observes that James's phrase, "every good gift and every perfect present" (Πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ καὶ πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον) (Jas. 1:17) contains two 'near synonyms in parallel' as 'a way of being emphatic' and 'comprehensive', and could be taken to mean that 'all true blessings are from God' or 'there is no good thing … which is not from God'.[399]

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[398] 1 Tim. 2:14 (NASB) speaks of the "woman being deceived (απατάω)". James uses a different but related word in Jas. 1:16 (πλανάω). He does use ἀπατάω in Jas. 1:26.

[399] For this second phrase, Allison quotes Philo (Philo, Sacr. 63.).

The Psalmist (David) says to the LORD in Psalm 16:2 (NASB), "You are my Lord; I have no good (αγαθων, LXX) besides You." This means that the LORD Himself is his greatest goodness and, as Boice (2005:132) comments, 'that God is the source of all good'; which Boice then rightfully connects with James 1:17. According to Allison (2013:268), "good gift" was a 'traditional Jewish expression …, often used of divine gifts'. As an example, he (2013:268) references Proverbs 4:2 (NASB), which states: "*For I give you sound teaching; Do not abandon my instruction.*" The LXX uses the phrase "good gift" (δῶρον ἀγαθὸν). And the "good gift" in Proverbs 4:2 is νόμον (in the LXX) and "*Torah*" (in the MST). Moreover, Psalm 19:7 (NASB) says, "The law (*Torah*, MST; νόμος, LXX) of the LORD is perfect (αμωμος)". Commenting on Psalm 19:7-9, Brueggemann et.al. (1993:215) observe that 'the *Torah* is God's perfect gift, a perfection reflected in the perfect balance of vs. 7-9'. And since James uses the word "perfect" (τέλειος) in connection with "*nómos*" (*νόμος*) (Jas. 1:25), Hartin (2003:112) seems right in asserting that, for James, it (i.e. *Torah*) is 'also a perfect gift that has come down from above' – a gift that his readers should therefore 'take seriously', not 'simply by glancing it, but by obeying it and carrying out its directional pointers'.

(c) Is from above:

James's concept, "*from above*" (ἄνωθεν) (Jas. 1:18), is used twice again in relation to "*wisdom*" (σοφία) (Jas. 3:15, 17) which, could be argued, is also a "good gift and perfect present" from the LORD. But as argued above, there is a connection between "wisdom" and "*Torah*" in that the former is the "knowledge and skill" to keep or apply the latter (see **Section 3.6.2** above).

The truth about God's goodness is further enforced with two more concepts, both of which are firmly founded in the OT Scriptures.

(d) Coming down from the Father of the lights:

- Firstly, every good gift and every perfect present is from above, coming down from "*the Father of the lights*" (Jas. 1:17). Scholars[400] agree that this is an allusion to Scriptures (in the *Torah*, Prophets, and Writings) such as Genesis 1:14-16; Jeremiah 31:35; Psalm 136:7-9. These connections, according to Allison (2013:274), Moo (2000:78), and Davids (1982:87), bring up associations of the 'creative power', 'continuing care', and 'the good' of God as "Father".

(e) With Whom there is no change or shadow of turning:

- Secondly, there is "*no change or shadow of turning*" with the Father of the lights (Jas. 1:17). The point here is, as Allison (2013:278) notes, that 'God's invariable goodness is easily rooted in the … notion of God's immutability'. The Prophets attest to this by

[400] Incl. Davids (1982:89); Moo (2000:78).

God's own declaration in Malachi 3:6 (NASB): "*For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.*" Further support for God's immutability and faithfulness are found in the *Torah* (Exod. 15:18; Num. 23:19), the Prophets (1 Sam. 15:29; Isa. 46:9-11), and the Writings (Psa. 9:7; 33:11; 102:25-27).

(f) Having willed He gave birth to us by the Word of truth:

Another proof of God's goodness is that "*He gave birth to us by the word of truth*" (Jas. 1:18). Scholars have proposed that "He gave birth to" could refer to: creation, redemption, or the "birth" of Israel. Martin (1988:40) insists that 'the background here … is the spoken word which God uttered at creation (Gen. 1:3; Psa. 33:6; 107:20; 147:15; Isa. 55:11; …)'. Allison (2013:281-283) presents a well-reasoned argument for the third option, including referencing Deuteronomy 32:18 as validation. However, since the "us" refers not to Jews per se but to Jewish Christians,[401] Moo's (2000:79) interpretation cannot be discounted according to which, "gave birth to" (ἀπεκύησεν) is used 'metaphorically with reference to spiritual birth', and "the Word of Truth" is 'the instrument through which God brings people to life'. But then the next issue is what exactly, "the word of truth" refers to. In the Prophets, king David says to the LORD, "You are God, and Your words are truth" (2 Sam. 7:28, NASB). The Writings declare in Psalm 119, the *Torah* Psalm:

- Psalm 119:43-48 (NASB) *And do not take the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, For I wait for Your ordinances. (44) So I will keep Your law continually, Forever and ever. (45) And I will walk at liberty, For I seek Your precepts. (46) I will also speak of Your testimonies before kings And shall not be ashamed. (47) I shall delight in Your commandments, Which I love. (48) And I shall lift up my hands to Your commandments, Which I love; And I will meditate on Your statutes.*
- Psalm 119:142 (NASB) *Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, And Your law is truth.*
- Psalm 119:151 (NASB) *You are near, O LORD, And all Your commandments are truth.*
- Psalm 119:160 (NASB) *The sum of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting*.

The Writings also declare:

- In Proverbs 22:20-21 (NASB) *Have I not written to you excellent things Of counsels and knowledge, (21) To make you know the certainty of the words of truth That you may correctly answer him who sent you?*
- And in Ecclesiastes 12:10 (NASB) *The Preacher sought to find delightful words and to*

[401] As Jewish Christians they are the original recipients of the Letter (see **Section 2:3**).

write words of truth correctly.[402]

From the Old Testament connections above, "the word of truth" (Jas. 1:18) could refer to the OT Scriptures entirely (which includes the *Torah*) or to the *Torah* specifically. Psalm 119 teaches that the LORD gives life through His Word and *Torah*:

- Psalm 119:50 (NASB) *This is my comfort in my affliction, That Your word* (λογιον, LXX) *has revived* (εζησεν, LXX) *me*.
- Psalm 119:93-94 (NASB) *If Your law* (νομος, LXX) *had not been my delight, Then I would have perished* (απωλομην, LXX*) in my affliction. (93) I will never forget Your precepts* (δικαιωματων, LXX)*, For by them You have revived* (εζησας, LXX) *me.*[403]

Messiah Himself affirmed (in Mat. 4:4) what the *Torah* teaches in Deuteronomy 8:3 (NASB), "*man does not live* (ζησεται, LXX) *by bread alone, but man lives* (ζησεται, LXX) *by everything* (παντι ρηματι, LXX) *that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD.*"

Davids (1982:89) acknowledges that, 'while one has precedent … for calling God's word (i.e. the law) a word of truth' he contends that 'only Christian and post-Christian sources provide real parallels to James's "bringing forth by the word of truth"', and that 'this fact secures the reference to the gospel and regeneration'. Granted, elsewhere in the NT in "the word of truth" is equated with "the Gospel" (in Eph. 1:13 and Col. 1:5).[404] However, whether "the word of truth" means "Gospel" is questionable at this stage because the word "Gospel" is not mentioned once in James, nor is there a hint in the context[405] that James is taking specifically about the "Gospel" in Pauline terms. Moo (2000:83) makes a pertinent point by saying that since James was most probably written before any of Paul's Letters, 'James must be read against the background of the OT, Judaism, and the teaching of Jesus - not the apostle Paul'. Moore-Keish (2019:57) contends that 'a Christological reading is almost certainly not James's original intent, but a later canonical interpretation'. She rightfully cautions contemporary readers 'not to practice replacement theology that completely supplants the *Torah* with Christ as the "word of truth"' (Moore-Keish, 2019:57). Therefore, rather than importing Pauline

[402] Three verses later, in Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 (NASB), the preacher writes: *The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. (14) For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.*

[403] See also Psalm 19:7.

[404] The phrase "the word of truth" is also used in 2 Cor. 6:7 and 2 Tim. 2:15. Whether in these cases it means narrowly "Gospel" or more broadly "the teachings of the NT" or yet more broadly "the teachings of all of Scripture" is less certain.

[405] Apart, perhaps, from the understanding that "He gave birth to" refers to "regeneration".

formulations at this point and interrupting James,[406] it seems better and more natural to follow James's line of thought closely until at least James 1:25 before any firm conclusions are drawn about what "the word of truth" most likely refers to.

In the context of James 1:19-25, there seems to be strong case for "the word of truth" to refer to the "*Torah*", or at least for it to include the "*Torah*". In support of "the word of truth" meaning "*Torah*", Allison (2013:283) provides the following reasons:

- In several OT texts, "The Word of Truth" refers to *Torah*.[407]
- The "word" (λόγου) in James 1:22 is the same as "the perfect law, that of freedom" (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) in James 1:25. The "word" (λόγου) in James 1:22 is naturally the same as "the implanted word" (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον) in James 1:21; which in turn is naturally the same as "the Word of Truth" in James 1:18. While it is possible that James might be using the same word "word" (λόγος) in 'multiple senses in [a] brief space', Alison (2013:283) asks the fair question: 'if a proposed single meaning – *Torah* - unites them, should it not be preferred?'
- 'In an attempt to unify vv. 16–26, "every good gift and every perfect present" includes or envisages above all the law' because: 'it was: (a) thought of as "given" and sometimes called a "gift";[408] (b) said to be "from heaven";[409] (c) associated with "light";[410] and (d) reckoned to be 'good' and 'perfect'.[411]

While the context certainly seems to relate (and perhaps even equate) the "Word of truth" with the "*Torah*", it seems unnecessary to exclude the other options. Perhaps Moore-Keish (2019:57-58) is right stating in that James ultimately has 'one complex life-giving Word' in mind, which includes: God's creative Word (i.e. "let there be light …"), His instructive Word (i.e. *Torah*), and His redemptive Word (i.e. Gospel).[412]

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[406] This is not to say that James and Paul gave conflicting messages and taught contradictory doctrines.

[407] As demonstrated above, Scriptures include: Psa. 119:43-48, 142, 151. Other possible references include: Neh. 9:13; Eccl. 12:10-14.

[408] Ref.: Exod. 24:12; Neh. 9:13; 1 Esd. 8:3; 9:39; Wis 18:4); Jn 1:17; 4 Ezra 3:19; Tg. Psa. 68:19; Midr. Psa. 68.11.

[409] Note Philo, Cher. 106 (νόμους ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ) and recall the rabbinic term, תורה מן השמים, as in Sifre Deut. 102; m. Sanh. 10.1; y. Sanh. 27c

[410] Note. Psa. 119:105, 130; Wis 18:4; T. Levi 14.4; b. Ketub. 111b.

[411] For the latter see on 1:25. For the *Torah* as 'good' note Neh. 9:13 (LXX: ἀγαθάς); Psa. 119:72 (LXX: ἀγαθόν); 4Q369 1 2.5 (הטובים); T. Ash. 6.1–3 (καλόν); Rom. 7:12 (ἀγαθή); etc.

[412] See also **Footnote 48**.

(g) So that we could be some firstfruit of His creatures:

"He gave birth to us by the Word of truth so that (εἰς τὸ) we could be (εἶναι) some firstfruit of His creatures" (Jas. 1:18). As Wallace (1996:591-593) explains, the "εἰς τὸ + infinitive" construction indicates either a purpose[413] or result[414] clause; and since the former occurs about three times more in the NT than the latter, 'if in doubt, label a given infinitive as purpose'. In this instance it does seem as if the clause marks purpose or intent 'with the implication of expected result', as Louw & Nida (1996:783) advise. Thus, the purpose and expected result of the Father "giving birth" through "the word of truth" is for "us" to be "some firstfruit of His creatures".

The concept of "firstfruit" (ἀπαρχή) originates from the *Torah*; which has multiple references to it.[415] The "firstfruit" was first and the best of the produce, and it was due to the LORD as a sacrifice (ref. Num. 18:12, 29-32). As Gerig (1988:791) explains, the "firstfruit" is the 'firstborn child or animal or first parts of any crop which, in Hebrew thinking, were considered as holy and belonging to the Lord'.[416] References include: (Exod. 13:2, 12); 22:29; Lev. 23:10-11; Deut. 18:4.

There are also several references in the Prophets[417] and Writings[418] to "firstfruit" (ἀπαρχή). The LORD declares in Jeremiah 2:3 (NASB), "*Israel was holy to the LORD, The first of His harvest.*" Thus, from the OT Scriptures, the LORD's people are to offer the first and best of their labours and produce to Him as a token of their worship of Him. Moreover, they themselves are His "firstfruit" in the sense that they are wholly dedicated to His service.

When James states, "*so that we could be some firstfruit of His creatures*" (Jas. 1:18b), which of His creatures do the "we" refer to? Is the reference to the nation of Israel or the first Jewish Christians, of which the readers were part? While there is certainly OT precedent for the first (ref. Jer. 2:3), the second seems more likely since the word "we" clearly reapplies the

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[413] Expressed in English as: "in order to", "for the purpose of", or "in order that".

[414] Expressed in English as: "so that", "so as to", or "with the result".

[415] In the LXX, the term "firstfruit" (ἀπαρχή) is used 27 times in the *Torah*, including in: Exod. 22:29; 23:19; 25:2, 3; 35:5; 36:6; 39:1; Lev. 2:12; 22:12; 23:10; Num. 15:20, 21; 18:1, 8, 11, 12, 29, 30, 32; 31:29; Deut. 12:11, 17; 18:4; 26:2, 10; 33:21.

[416] See also: Davids (1982:90).

[417] In the LXX, references to "firstfruit" (ἀπαρχή) in the Prophets include: Ezek. 20:31, 40; 44:30; 45:1, 6, 7, 13, 16; 48:8, 9, 10, 12, 18, 20, 21; Mal. 3:8

[418] In the LXX, references to "firstfruit" (ἀπαρχή) in the Writings include: 2 Chron. 31:5, 10, 12, 14; Psa. 77:51; 104:36. Other references to the idea of "firstfruit" include, for example, Proverbs 3:9 (NASB), which states: "*Honor the LORD from your wealth And from the first of all your produce*;"

concept of “firstfruit” to the author (James) and his first readers.[419] While they can be viewed, as Moo (2000:80) concludes, as ‘a foretaste, or down payment (“firstfruits”), of a redemptive plan that will eventually encompass all of creation”, it can be argued that all believers are “firstfruit” to the LORD in the sense of being set apart for Him among all people.

(h) Conclusion:

The prototype for deception is found in the *Torah* where mankind doubted the goodness of God (Gen. 3:1-6). Furthermore, the *Torah* warns God's people against being deceived or led astray from Him and from the way He commanded (Deut. 4:19; 11:28; 13:5; 30:17). This is affirmed in the Prophets and Writings (Isa. 53:6; Ezek. 13:2-3, 10; Hos. 4:12; Amos 2:4; Psa. 94:10; Prov. 1:10; 21:16). The Writings teach that the LORD is the source of all good and is Himself the greatest good (Psa. 16:2). It presents the *Torah* as a good and perfect gift from the LORD (Prov. 4:2; Psa. 19:7). The unchanging goodness of the LORD is taught in the *Torah*, Prophets, and Writings (Gen. 1:14-16; Exod. 15:18; Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29; Isa. 46:9-11; Jer. 31:35; Mal. 3:6; Psa. 9:7; 33:11; 102:25-27; 136:7-9). According to the Writings, God’s words and *Torah* are “the truth” and thus are “the word of Truth”, through which the LORD gives life (Psa. 19:7; 119:43-48, 50, 93-94, 142, 151, 160; Prov. 22:20-21; Eccl. 12:10).[420] The *Torah* teaches God’s people to give their “firstfruit” (i.e. their first and best) to the LORD as a token of their service and devotion to Him (Num. 18:12, 29-32; Exod. 13:2, 12; 22:29; Lev. 23:10-11; Deut. 18:4). This is echoed in the Prophets and Writings (Ezek. 20:31, 40; 44:30; 45:1, 6, et.al.; 2 Chron. 31:5, 10; Psa. 77:51; 104:36). The Prophets make it clear that the LORD’s people are themselves the LORD’s firstfruits (Jer. 2:3). This is echoed in the *Torah* (Exod. 13:2, 12; 22:29).

3.6.6. Be quick to listen (slow to speak, slow to anger) and having put aside all impurity and wickedness, in humility receive the implanted word (Jas. 1:19-21).

(a) Let every person be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger:

As Moo (2000:82) rightfully points out, James’s parallel instruction to “quick to listen” (ἔστω … ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι) and “slow to speak slow to anger” (βραδὺς εἰςτὸ λαλῆσαι, βραδὺς εἰς ὀργήν) (Jas. 1:19) shows ‘obvious dependence on Jewish wisdom teaching’. For example:

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[419] Support for the second option can be found from Revelation 14:3-4 (NASB): *“And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth. (4) These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.”*

[420] From the *Torah* see Deut. 8:3; and from the Prophets see 2 Sam. 7:28.

- "*A wise man will hear* ("ακουσας", LXX) *and increase in learning*" (Prov. 1:5, NASB); and "*Incline your ear and hear* ("ακουε", LXX) *the words of the wise*" (Prov. 22:17, NASB).[421]
- "*A man of understanding keeps silent*" (Prov. 11:12, NASB), and "*even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise*" (Prov. 17:28, NASB).[422]
- Prov. 18:13 (NASB) "*He who gives an answer before he hears* ("ακουσαι", LXX)*, It is folly and shame to him.*"
- Prov. 29:20 (NASB) "*Do you see a man who is hasty* ("ταχὺν", LXX) *in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.*"
- Prov. 15:1 (NASB) *"A gentle answer (φρονιμουςαποκρισις, LXX) turns away wrath (ὀργή, LXX), But a harsh word (θυμονλογος, LXX) stirs up anger (ὀργή, LXX)."*
- "*He who is slow to anger has great understanding*" (Prov. 14:29, NASB), "*calms a dispute*" (Prov. 15:18, NASB), "*is better than the mighty*" (Prov. 16:32, NASB), and "*A man's discretion makes him slow to anger*" (Prov. 19:11, NASB).[423]

Friedman & Friedman (2012:56) insightfully observe that the word "*akousai*" (ακουσαι) is describing 'a state of being where one is in a position to both hear and then do what is written'. And in context, they (Friedman & Friedman, 2012:56) believe that 'it refers to being quick to hear the … *Torah*".[424] This is a fair observation since there is a clear progression of thought in James 1:19-25, which includes the following:

- Jas. 1:19 "be quick to listen" (ἔστω … ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι).
- Jas. 1:21 "receive the implanted word" (δέξασθε τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον).
- Jas. 1:22 "be doers of the word and not only hearers" (Γίνεσθε … ποιηταὶ λόγου καὶ μὴ ἀκροαταὶ μόνον).
- Jas. 1:25 "but the one having looked into (the) *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías"* (ὁ δὲ παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας), and continuing in it" (καὶ παραμείνας).

[421] See also: Prov. 1:8, 33; 4:1, 10; 5:7, 13; 7:24; 8:32; 19:17; 23:19, 22.

[422] See also: Prov. 10:19; 13:3.

[423] See also: Eccl. 7:9.

[424] Friedman & Friedman (2012:56) contends that, "*Torah* was the constant study text used by both Ya'akov's home community in Jerusalem, and to the recipients of his yalqut in the Diaspora." As found in **Section 2.3.2**, this is a reasonable comment.

Quickness or eagerness to "hear" (and do) is what the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4, NASB) calls God's people to do with the words, "Hear ("Ἄκουε", LXX), O Israel!". This parallel thought or allusion becomes clearer as the reader progresses from James 1:19 through James 1:25. Friedman & Friedman (2012:56-57) propose that there is also a parallel between James 1:19a and Exodus 24:7 (NASB), which says: "*Then he [Moses] took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, 'All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient* ("ακουσομεθα", LXX)*!'*"

(b) For anger of a man does not work out God's righteousness:

James 1:20 provides the following reason for the instruction in verse 19: "for anger of a man does not work out God's righteousness" (ὀργὴ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ οὐκ ἐργάζεται). This truth is painfully illustrated in the *Torah* when Israel contended with the LORD at the waters of Meribah (Num. 20:1-13). So, in Numbers 20:10 (NASB), Moses said to them, "*Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?*" In Numbers 20:12 (NASB), the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "*Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.*" The Writings, in Psalm 106:33 (NASB) interprets Moses action as follows: "*He spoke rashly with his lips.*"

(c) Having put aside all moral impurity and abundance of wickedness:

There is a parallel between James's instruction, "having put aside all moral impurity and abundance of wickedness" (ἀποθέμενοι πᾶσαν ῥυπαρίαν καὶ περισσείαν κακίας) (Jas. 1:21a) and that in Proverbs 4:24 (NASB), which instructs: "*Put away from you a deceitful mouth And put devious speech far from you.*"[425] In line with this, the *Torah* instructs God's people to sanctify themselves, to rid themselves of all forms of impurity and idolatry, and to worship the LORD God only (see: Gen. 35:2; Exod. 19:15; 20:3; Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2; Deut. 5:7). This is echoed in the Prophets (see: Josh. 24:14, 23; Isa. 1:6; 55:7; Ezek. 18:31-32; 20:7; 43:9).

(d) In humility receive the implanted word:

In James 1:21b is the instruction: "in humility receive the implanted word" (ἐν πραΰτητι δέξασθε τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον). While there is not an exact equivalent for "the implanted word" (τὸν ἔμφυτον[426] λόγον) elsewhere in the Scriptures, the concept strongly alludes to the LORD's (new) covenant promise in Jeremiah 31:33 (NASB),[427] where He declares: "*I will put My law*

[425] See also: Job 11:14; 28:28; Psa. 34:14; 37:27; Prov. (6:12); 16:17.

[426] According to Louw & Nida (1996:726), *ἔμφυτος* means 'to be permanently in place' and it can be translated: "placed in", "permanently established in", or "implanted".

[427] Explicitly restated in the NT in Hebrews 8:10 and 10:16.

(*Torah*, MST; νομους, LXX[428]) *within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*"[429] That the *Torah* is to be in the heart, from where it can be treasured (loved) and observed (obeyed), is clear from Scriptures such as: Deuteronomy 6:6; 11:18; 30:6-8; and 30:14-16. Not only the *Torah* itself, but also the Writings assign the special place of the heart for the LORD's commandments, for example, in Psalm 119:9-11 and Proverbs 3:1-3.[430]

Johnson (2008:202) asserts that, 'in the light of James's use of *logos alētheias* in 1:18, there can be little doubt that the "implanted word" here also refers to the Gospel.'[431] However, this strong assertion fails to adequately account for the allusion to the *Torah* (as demonstrated above) and to the chain of concepts ending with "the perfect law" in James 1:25. Scholars[432] recognise the connection (and perhaps equivalence or at least overlap) between the following chain of concepts: "the word of truth" (Jas. 1:18), "the implanted word" (Jas. 1:21), "the word" (Jas. 1:22, 23), and the "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (Jas. 1:25).

Whatever the exact content of "the implanted word", the readers are instructed to "in humility receive" it (Jas. 1:21), which arguably in the light of James 1:22-25 includes:

- To "be doers of the word" (Γίνεσθε … ποιηταὶ λόγου) and "not hearers only" (μὴ ἀκροαταὶ μόνον) (Jas. 1:22).
- And to be like "the one having looked into the *nómon téleion*" (ὁ … παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον) and "continuing in it" (παραμείνας), "not having become a hearer of forgetfulness but a doer of work" (οὐκ ἀκροατὴς ἐπιλησμονῆς γενόμενος ἀλλὰ ποιητὴς ἔργου) (Jas. 1:25).

(e) The one able to save your souls:

Furthermore, to "in humility receive the implanted word" has a redemptive function[433] (Jas. 1:21) and (arguably) the one who rightly receives it "will be blessed in his doing" (Jas. 1:25). Psalm 19:7-11 (NASB) assigns perfection and a redemptive and blessed function to the *Torah*:[434]

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[428] Jer. 38:33 in the LXX. See also: Ezek. 36:27.

[429] This allusion is also detected by, inter alia: Blomberg & Kamell (2008:88); McKnight (2011:143); Moo (2000:87).

[430] See also: Psa. 40:8.

[431] Others who also equate the "implanted word" with "Gospel" include: Blomberg & Kamell (2008:89); Davids (1982:95); Vlachos (2013:57).

[432] Including, inter alia: Allison (2013:283); McKnight (2011:144); Moo (2000:87).

[433] In James 1:21 it is said about "the implanted word" that it is "the one able to save your souls" (τὸν δυνάμενον σῶσαι τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν).

[434] See also Psa. 1.

(7) The law (*Torah*, MST; νομος, LXX) *of the LORD is perfect* (ἄμωμος, LXX)*, restoring* (επιστρεφων, LXX)[435] *the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. (8) The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. (9) The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. (10) They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. (11) Moreover, by them Your servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward* (ανταποδοσις, LXX).[436]

(f) Conclusion about the implanted word:

From the discussion above and that in **Section 2.6.5**, there seems to be a good case for associating (or perhaps equating) "the implanted word" (ἔμφυτος λόγος) with the *Torah*, which James accentuates in James 1:22-25 and 2:8-13. This understanding is well argued by Allison (2013:283; 313). McKnight also (2011:143) comes close to the same understanding with his comment about "the implanted word": 'It describes letting the Word have its way with one's heart and life so that a person learns to live in accordance with that Word as a *Torah*-observant person.' And in favour of this understanding, some scholars also equate[437] "the implanted word" (ἔμφυτος λόγος) (Jas. 1:21) with the "perfect law" (νόμον τέλειον) (Jas. 1:25), but they are hesitant to equate it to the *Torah*. For example:

- Ropes (1916:173) comments that '*the ἔμφυτος λόγος itself is called … νόμος τέλειος*' (in Jas. 1:25) and '*is described as something to be done*' (in Jas. 1:22f.) … '*It seems to mean the sum of present knowledge of God's will … which is 'inwrought into a man's nature and speaks from within, but this does not exclude that it should also exist for man's use in written or traditional form, whether in the law of Moses or in the precepts of Jesus*' … In Jas. 1:25, '*as was natural for a Jew, the writer seems to have turned in his thought to the external expression in the law.*'
- Moo (2000:94) comments that, '*Granted James's background and context, a reference*

[435] ἐπιστρέφω: 'to cause a pers. to change belief or course of conduct, with focus on the thing to which one turns, *turn*' (BDAG, 2000:382). The same word is used in James 5:19-20. Wilson (2002:266) proposes that the Hebrew term ("šwb"), may well have an intended double meaning here, namely: "restore/revive" and "repent/return".

[436] ἀνταπόδοσις:'that which is given to someone in exchange for what has been done, *repaying*, *reward*' (BDAG, 2000:87).

[437] Scholars beside Allison (2013:283) and McKnight (2011:144), include inter alia: Ropes (1916:173); Moo (2000:87). With Allison (2013:283) and McKnight (2011:144), Johnson (2008:202) equates "the implanted word" (Jas. 1:21) with "the word of truth" (Jas. 1:19), asserting: 'are undoubtedly to understand the "implanted word" as that "word of truth"'.

to the law of Moses seems certain. The law God gave to Israel through Moses at Sinai was a center point in OT revelation and absolutely basic to the life of Jews at the time of Christ. For Jews, "law" meant Torah, … Like James, Jews often described the law of Moses as "perfect" (cf. Psa. 19:7) and even as liberating (e.g., m. Abot 6:2). Moreover, James quotes an OT command to exemplify the law in 2:8. But we must hesitate before simply equating "law" for James with the law of Moses'.

Concerning "the implanted word", Moo (2000:87) asserts that 'James must be referring to the word of the Gospel'. Similarly, Davids (1982:95) contends that it 'is the preaching of the gospel', which he then describes as consisting of 'both a word about Jesus and ethical content'. With the following comment, Adamson (1976:81) moves closer again to the *Torah*, but then without clear explanation or justification equates "the implanted word" with the "*Torah* of the Messiah"[438]: '*… Torah was said to be implanted in God "from the very beginning," and then rooted in every Jew from the earliest years … Like the Torah, the implanted Word was redemptive, uniquely so since this was the "Torah of the Messiah*."' This is doubtful, if by the "*Torah* of the Messiah" is meant something essentially or substantially different from the *Torah* given by God through Moses, for two reasons: (1) James does not use the term, "the *Torah* of the Messiah"; and (2) nowhere in James is there even a hint that James distinguishes between the "the *Torah* of the Messiah" and the "*Torah*" itself, and that he wants his readers to think of the first as opposed to the second.

(g) Conclusion:

The instruction to "be quick to listen" is rooted in the Writings (Prov. 1:5; 14:29; 15:18; 16:32; 17:28; 18:13; 19:11; 22:17; 29:20). In the *Torah*, God's people are called upon to be eager to listen to His instructions (Deut. 6:4; cf. Exod. 24:7). In the *Torah* and Writings, Moses is presented as an example of one who had spoken rashly (Num. 20:10-12; Psa. 106:33). Both the *Torah* and Prophets urge God's people to put aside impurity (Gen. 35:2; Exod. 19:15; 20:3; Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2; Deut. 5:7; Josh. 24:14, 23; Isa. 1:6; 55:7; Ezek. 18:31-32; 20:7; 43:9). Both the *Torah* and the Writings teach that the LORD's commandments are to be received and treasured in the heart (Deut. 6:6; 11:18; 30:6-8; 30:14-16; Psa. 119:9-11; Prov. 3:1-3). The Writings assign perfection, and a blessed and redemptive function to *Torah* (Psa. 1; 19:7-11).

3.6.7. Concluding Observations

The following observations are made from the discussions in **Subsections 3.6.1 - 3.6.6**:

- James 1:2-21 has numerous roots in the OT (refer to **Appendix B** for a summary overview).

[438] Is "the *Torah* of the Messiah" fundamentally or essentially different from the *Torah* given by God through Moses?

- Each of the teachings (with its supporting absolutes) in James 1:2-21 has several connections (including ideas, statements and examples or illustrations) with the *Torah*. This confirms that James's thought is thoroughly informed by the *Torah* and his instructions are substantially shaped by the *Torah* (or are at least consistent with it).
- Wherever a link for one of the constituent elements of a particular teaching (in James 1:2-21) was not found in the *Torah*, one was found in the Prophets and/or Writings. This proves that James's thought is saturated in the OT Scriptures and his teaching is in accord with the OT Scriptures.
- Links in James 1:2-21 with the Prophets and Writings either confirm, expand, or apply those in the *Torah*. They never contradict or replace those with the *Torah*. This reaffirms the understanding that the *Torah* is foundational and that the Prophets and Writings are complementary to the *Torah* in the OT (and in James). Johnson (1998:179) rightfully and insightfully observes that James 'resembles a commitment to the world of *Torah*' and that he 'appropriates the multiple dimensions of *Torah*', which include: a 'positive view of the law', applying the 'voice of the prophets', and representing 'the wisdom tradition of *Torah*'.

3.7. Study Objective 2 – Extent to which the OT and *Torah* feature in James

This chapter investigated how much the OT, and especially the *Torah*, feature in James. It also considered how the conception of James's first readers (who were predominantly or entirely Jewish Christians) concerning the OT and *Torah* would probably have shaped their understanding of "*nómos*" (νόμος), and thus their interpretation of James's "*nómos*" terms. The findings from this chapter include:

- The (entire) Old Testament, and in particular its Greek translation (the LXX), most probably constituted the Scriptures of the author (James) and the first recipients (Jewish Christians in the diaspora). In the LXX, "*nómos*" (νόμος) stands for "*Torah"*.
- The *Torah*, with the Ten Commandments at its heart, is foundational and central in the OT Scriptures, with the Prophets and Writings expanding and applying rather than nullifying or replacing its teaching. And with the original readers being Jewish, they would have most naturally revered the *Torah* and regarded it as their most basic standard for truth.
- The combined results from surveys done by Jackson (2015) and Aland et.al (2012:890-901) indicate that James refers to Old Testament Scriptures no less than 60 times. From a closer examination of the teachings (incl. absolutes) of James 1:2-21 alone, at least 170 connections were found. This proves that James's teaching is profoundly shaped by and remarkably consistent with the Old Testament Scriptures. As Morgan (2010:25) observes,

James's teaching is 'deeply rooted' and 'firmly anchored' in the OT.[439]

- Six of James's seven OT citations and quotations are from the *Torah*. And the seventh is within the context of the Second of the Ten Commandments in the *Torah*.
- James's most fundamental teachings, including the confession about God's oneness/uniqueness (Jas. 2:19; 4:12), highest devotion to Him (Jas. 4:4-10), justification by faith with works (Jas. 2:20-24), and loving one's neighbour as oneself (Jas. 2:8-13) are all rooted in the *Torah* - with references (including at least allusions and echoes) to the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-9) (in Jas. 1:12, 19; 2:5, 19; 4:12), the Holiness Code (Lev. 19:12-18) (in Jas. 2:1, 8; 4:11; 5:4, 9, 12, 20), the Ten Commandments (Exod. 20:1-17; Deut. 5:1-21) (in Jas. 2:11; 4:4-6), and Abraham the father of faith (Gen. 15:6; 22:1-14) (in Jas. 2:20-24).
- While James is silent on the ritual requirements of the *Torah*, he focusses entirely on the weightier (moral) matters of the *Torah* – "justice"/"mercy" and "faith/faithfulness" – so much so that the whole contents of the Letter may fall under them.
- All of James's teachings (Jas. 1:2-21) leading up to the first passage that uses the word "*nómos*" (νόμος) (Jas. 1:22-25) has multiple connections with the *Torah*, and the absolutes can mostly be reconstructed with teachings from the *Torah*. Gaps are filled with teachings from the Prophets and Writings. Those teachings, however, do not overrule the *Torah* but build upon, expand and apply the teachings from the *Torah*. Friedman & Friedman's (2012:3) assessment thus seem correct that James 'does not present us with new teaching, but with a uniquely Messianic Jewish view of *Torah*-based concepts', and 'one of his main thrusts' is the 'practical application of *Torah*'s teachings'.

From the above, it is concluded that it is most reasonable to assume that when James uses the word "*nómos*" (νόμος), he is most likely referring to *Torah*, and his readers would most likely have understood it as such.

[439] Refer to **Section 2.6.1** for more Hebrew influences behind James's Greek text.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF KEY PASSAGES IN JAMES

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4.1. Introduction

Having completed the interpretative framework (refer to **Chapter 2**) and having investigated the biblical roots (refer to **Chapter 3**) of James, this chapter analyses in detail each of the three key passages in James on *nómos* (νόμος). The passages are: James 1:19-27; 2:8-13; and 4:11-12. The analysis of each passage includes the following steps:

(1) Outlining the exegetical context and flow of thought.

(2) Translating the Greek text into English.

(3) Analysing the thought structure.

(4) Establishing the meaning structure.

(5) Highlighting the meaning indicators.

(6) Explaining the meaning of words and phrases.

(7) Outlining the absolutes.

The objective of this chapter is to closely examine the use of the word "*nómos*" (νόμος) and statements concerning "*nómos*" (νόμος) in order to determine its meaning(s) in James and James's teaching concerning "*nómos*" (νόμος).

4.2. Analysis of James 1:19-27

4.2.1. Exegetical Context and Flow of Thought of James 1:2-18

The broader context of the Letter has been explored in **Chapter 2**. The purpose here is to build on that by seeking to understand the immediate context in order to fully and correctly interpret James 1:19-27. To that end this subsection traces James line of thought or argument from the beginning to James 2:18.

(a) Rejoice in trials since the testing of faith perfect and complete you (1:2-4)

James's teaching starts with an exhortation to his believing "brothers and sisters" (ἀδελφοί) to "consider it all joy" (Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἡγήσασθε) when "you [they] fall into various trials" (ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις) (Jas. 1:2), knowing that "the testing of your faith" (τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως) "brings about endurance" (κατεργάζεται ὑπομονήν) (Jas. 1:3).

James's second exhortation is to let "the endurance" (ἡ ὑπομονὴ) "have perfect work" (ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω) so that "you may be perfect and complete" (ἦτε τέλειοι καὶ ὁλόκληροι), "lacking in nothing" (ἐν μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι) (Jas. 1:4).

(b) Ask in faith from God for wisdom (1:5-8)

What might the *adelphoi* (ἀδελφοί) be lacking in order to be "perfect and complete" (τέλειοι καὶ ὁλόκληροι) through the process of "trials" (πειρασμοῖς) and "testing" (δοκίμιον) of their "faith"

(πίστεως)? The answer is, wisdom (σοφία) (Jas. 1:5), specifically "wisdom from above" (ἄνωθεν σοφία), as becomes clear in James 3:13-18.

Not surprisingly, then, in the third place, James exhorts the *adelphoi* (ἀδελφοί), who face "trials" (πειρασμοῖς) and "testing" (δοκίμιον), to "ask" (αἰτείτω) for "wisdom" (σοφία) from God, and "it will be given to him [them]" (δοθήσεται αὐτῷ) (Jas. 1:5). God's character of being "the One giving to all generously and not reproaching" (τοῦ διδόντος … πᾶσιν ἁπλῶς καὶ μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος) (Jas. 1:5) provides the basis for the next two complementary instructions, in James 1:6 and 7-8 respectively.[440] The instructions qualify and emphasise the kind of prayer God seeks and answers positively. This is done by means of two imperatives, each of which are powerfully illustrated. The imperatives are: to "let him [them] ask in faith" (αἰτείτω δὲ ἐν πίστει) "doubting nothing" (μηδὲν διακρινόμενος) (Jas. 1:6), and to "let not that person suppose" (μὴ … οἰέσθω ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος), the one who doubts, "that he will receive anything from the Lord" (ὅτι λήμψεταί τι παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου) (Jas. 1:7). Not only, will "the one doubting" (διακρινόμενος) God in prayer receive nothing, he (or she) is "a doubleminded person" (ἀνὴρ δίψυχος) "unstable in all his (or her) ways" (ἀκατάστατος ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ) (Jas. 1:8); which is a far cry from being perfect and complete.

So important is the need for "prayer of faith" (εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως) that it is picked up again in James 5:13-18; where it is expounded and applied to the testing of faith in the particular trials of anyone who "suffers bad" (κακοπαθεῖ) (Jas. 5:13) and who "is ill" (ἀσθενέω) (Jas. 5:14). In chapter 5, James ends with an exhortation to "let him/her know" (γινωσκέτω) that "the one turning a sinner" (ὁ ἐπιστρέψας ἁμαρτωλὸν) "who strayed from the truth" (πλανηθῇ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας) "will save his/her soul out of death" (σώσει ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐκ θανάτου) and "he/she will cover a multitude of sins" (καλύψει πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν). This is possibly paralleling Jas. 1:2-4. Consequently, we might have James being bookended in chiastic fashion with enduring in trial (Jas. 1:1-4) and prayer (Jas. 1:15-8) in the beginning and prayer (Jas. 5:13-18) and restoring those who stray (Jas. 5:19-20) at the end of the Letter (ref. **Section 2.7**).

(c) Boast in humble circumstances because riches are fleeting (1:9-11)

James's 6th exhortation is for "the humble *adelphos*" (ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινὸς) to "boast" (καυχάσθω) in his/her "high position" (ὕψει) (Jas. 1:9), and for "the rich" (ὁ … πλούσιος) in his "humiliation" (ταπεινώσει) (Jas. 1:10). The lowly (poor) social circumstances of the "humble" brother/sister and the humiliation (supposedly material losses) of the "rich" (brother/sister,

[440] James will pick up again on God's giving and good nature in James 1:16-18, stressing His immutability. In James 1:5 it is the basis for God giving "wisdom" and in James 1:16-18 it (with the stress on His immutability) is the basis for Him giving "every good gift" (Πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ) and "every perfect present" (πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον). A key example of this is Him giving His "Word of truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας), through which He "gave birth" (ἀπεκύησεν) to both the author (James) and his beloved *adelphoi* (Jas. 1:18).

presumably) are typically among the "various trials" (πειρασμοῖς … ποικίλοις) into which a believer can fall (cf. Jas. 1:2); which obviously put their faith to the test (cf. Jas. 1:3). The reason for the exhortation is the fleeting nature of the rich, their riches, and their pursuits; which is vividly and soberingly illustrated in James 1:10b-11, and further expounded in James 4:13-17 and 5:1-6.

James 2:5 may shed further light on why the "humble" (or poor) brother/sister should 'take pride' (BDAG, 2000:536) or have 'an unusually high degree of confidence in [their] exceptionally noteworthy' (Louw & Nida, 1996:430) "high position". The reason is that God chose them to be "rich in faith" (πλουσίους ἐν πίστει) and to be "heirs of the kingdom" (κληρονόμους τῆς βασιλείας) (Jas. 2:5). By implication, the humiliation of the rich brother/sister may be an opportunity for him/her to gain riches in faith and a greater share in God's kingdom.

(d) Blessed are those who endure temptation (1:12-15)

Another "trial" (πειρασμός) (cf. Jas. 1:2) that acts as a "test" (δοκίμιον) of "faith" (πίστις) (Jas. 1:3) is "temptation" (πειρασμός) (Jas. 1:12). The one who "endures" (ὑπομένει) it, is "blessed" (μακάριος) because he/she "will receive" (λήμψεται) "the crown of life" (τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς) from God, "having been approved"[441] (δόκιμος γενόμενος) as "those loving Him" (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν) (Jas. 1:12). James's seventh exhortation is to "let no one being tempted say" (μηδεὶς πειραζόμενος λεγέτω) that "I am tempted by God" (Ἀπὸ θεοῦ πειράζομαι) since God "cannot be tempted by evil" (ἀπείραστός ἐστιν κακῶν) and He Himself "tempts no one" (πειράζει … αὐτὸς οὐδένα) (Jas. 1:13). James 1:14-15 explains temptation's working and its end. The functioning of sin and its idolatrous nature are further expounded in James 4:1-5.

(e) All good things come from God who never changes (1:16-18)

James's eighth exhortation is the imperative, "do not be led astray" (μὴ πλανᾶσθε) (Jas. 1:16) by doubting that God the Father is (always) good (Jas. 1:17). As a matter of fact, "every good gift" (πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ) and "every perfect present" (πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον) are from Him, "the Father of the lights" (τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν φώτων) with Whom "there is no change of shadow of turning" (οὐκ ἔνι παραλλαγὴ ἢ τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα) (Jas. 1:17).[442] God's goodness has already been proven in James 1:5 in that He is "the One giving to all generously and not reproaching" (τοῦ διδόντος … πᾶσιν ἁπλῶς καὶ μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος) when they ask for wisdom. Now God's goodness and generosity are proven beyond doubt in that, "having willed" (βουληθεὶς), "He gave birth to us" (ἀπεκύησεν ἡμᾶς) by the "Word of truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) (Jas. 1:18). As proposed by Moo (2000:79) and as argued in **Section 3.6.5**, "gave birth to us" is probably best understood 'metaphorically with reference to spiritual birth', with the "Word of

[441] Or for having "stood the test" (NRSV; TLV).

[442] Refer to **Section 3.6.5** for the possible OT roots of the terms used in James 1:16-17.

truth" being 'the instrument through which God brings people to life'. However, to simply equate the "Word of truth" to the Gospel, as Moo (2000:79-80) does, overlooks the connection that James makes with the "*nómon téleion* …" (νόμον τέλειον …) in James 1:25. As reasoned in **Section 3.6.5 (e)**, the "word of truth" might embrace the whole "complex life-giving Word" (Moore-Keish, 2019:58), which certainly includes the *Torah*.

(f) Summary of James 1:2-18

In summary, the *ἀδελφοί* (believing "brothers and sisters") face various "trials" (πειρασμοῖς) and "testing" (δοκίμιον) of their "faith" (πίστις), such as: doubting God when asking for the things (such as wisdom) that He promised to give (Jas. 1:5-8), humbling circumstances (Jas. 1:9-11), temptation to sin (Jas. 1.12-15), and doubting the unchanging goodness of God (Jas. 1.16-18).

In the face of such trials and tests, the *adelphoí* (Christian brothers and sisters) are to "consider it all joy" (Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἡγήσασθε), because in patient "endurance" (ὑπομονή), they become "perfect" (τέλειος) and "complete" (ὁλόκληρος) (Jas. 1:2-4). To this end, God gives "wisdom" (σοφία) (from above) (Jas. 1:5; cf. 3:13-18) and the "Word of Truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) (Jas. 1:18) to the "beloved" (ἀγαπητοί) *adelphoí,* since "every good gift" (Πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ) and "every perfect present" (πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον) is "from above" (ἄνωθεν) (Jas. 1:17).

4.2.2. Translation[443] of James 1:19-27

1:19 a ῎Ιστε,[444] ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί·
Know my beloved brothers and sisters:
b ἔστω δὲ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι,
now then let every person be quick to listen,
c βραδὺς εἰς τὸ λαλῆσαι,
slow to speak,
d βραδὺς εἰς ὀργήν·
slow to anger
1:20 a ὀργὴ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ οὐκ ἐργάζεται.
for anger of a man does not work out God's righteousness.
1:21 a διὸ ἀποθέμενοι πᾶσαν ῥυπαρίαν καὶ περισσείαν κακίας
Therefore, having put aside all moral impurity and abundance of wickedness,

[443] The Greek New Testament text for this study was taken from the 4th Revised Edition, UBS, 2012. Revisions were made to Scripture Directs' (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015) English translation to reflect a more literal rending. Refer to **Appendix C**. The changes are indicated in highlighted (additions/replacements) and in strikethrough (deletions/replaced) text.

[444] M & TR read "ωστε" (therefore) instead of "῎Ιστε" (know).

b ἐν πραΰτητι, δέξασθε τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον
in humility receive the implanted Word,
c τὸν δυνάμενον σῶσαι τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν.
the one able to save your souls.

1:22 a Γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταὶ λόγου
And be doers of the Word
b καὶ μὴ μόνον ἀκροαταὶ
and not only hearers,
c παραλογιζόμενοι ἑαυτούς.
deceiving yourselves.

1:23 a ὅτι εἴ τις ἀκροατὴς λόγου ἐστὶν
Because if someone is a hearer of the Word
b καὶ οὐ ποιητής,
and not a doer,
c οὗτος ἔοικεν ἀνδρὶ
this one is like a man,
d κατανοοῦντι τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ·
looking intently at the face of his birth in a mirror.

1:24 a κατενόησεν γὰρ ἑαυτὸν
For he looked intently at himself
b καὶ ἀπελήλυθεν
and he has gone away
c καὶ εὐθέως ἐπελάθετο ὁποῖος ἦν.
and immediately he forgot what sort he was.

1:25 a ὁ δὲ παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας
But the one, having looked into (the) *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*,[445]
b καὶ παραμείνας,
and continuing (in it),
c οὐκ ἀκροατὴς ἐπιλησμονῆς γενόμενος
not having become a hearer of forgetfulness,
d ἀλλὰ ποιητὴς ἔργου,
but a doer of work,
e οὗτος μακάριος ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ ἔσται.
this one will be blessed in his doing.

[445] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

1:26 a Εἴ τις δοκεῖ θρησκὸς εἶναι[446]
If someone supposes to be religious,
b μὴ χαλιναγωγῶν γλῶσσαν αὐτοῦ
not bridling his tongue
c ἀλλὰ ἀπατῶν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ,
but deceiving his heart,
d τούτου μάταιος ἡ θρησκεία.
the religion of this one (is) useless.
1:27 a θρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος παρὰ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ αὕτη ἐστίν,
Pure and undefiled religion with the God and Father is this:
b ἐπισκέπτεσθαι ὀρφανοὺς καὶ χήρας ἐν τῇ θλίψει αὐτῶν,
to visit orphans and widows in their affliction
c ἄσπιλον ἑαυτὸν τηρεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου.
to keep oneself untainted from the world.

4.2.3. Thought Structure Analysis of James 1:19-27

James's instruction/teaching in James 1:19-27 shows remarkable integration and interconnectedness of thought, as illustrated in **Figure 2** (refer to **Appendix D** for the complete analysis of James). Five features, in particular, that have a bearing on the meaning of the passage are discussed below:

(a) Encircling Parallelism around James 1:22-25

Firstly, James 1:19-21 gives instructions about speech[447] (vv.19-20) and moral purity[448] (v.21), which connects with the teaching about speech[449] (related to useful religion) (v.26) and "pure and undefiled religion" (θρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος) (v.27) in James 1:26-27. This forms an encircling parallelism around James's instruction/teaching in James 1:22-25 to "be doers of the Word" (γίνεσθε … ποιηταὶ λόγου).

Viewed as a whole, the passage might well have an A1-B-A2 chiastic structure, with "doers of the Word" (Γίνεσθε … ποιηταὶ λόγου) (B) being at the centre or heart of "God's righteousness" (δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ) (A1) and "pure and undefiled religion with the God and Father" (θρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος παρὰ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ) (A2). This seems to answer

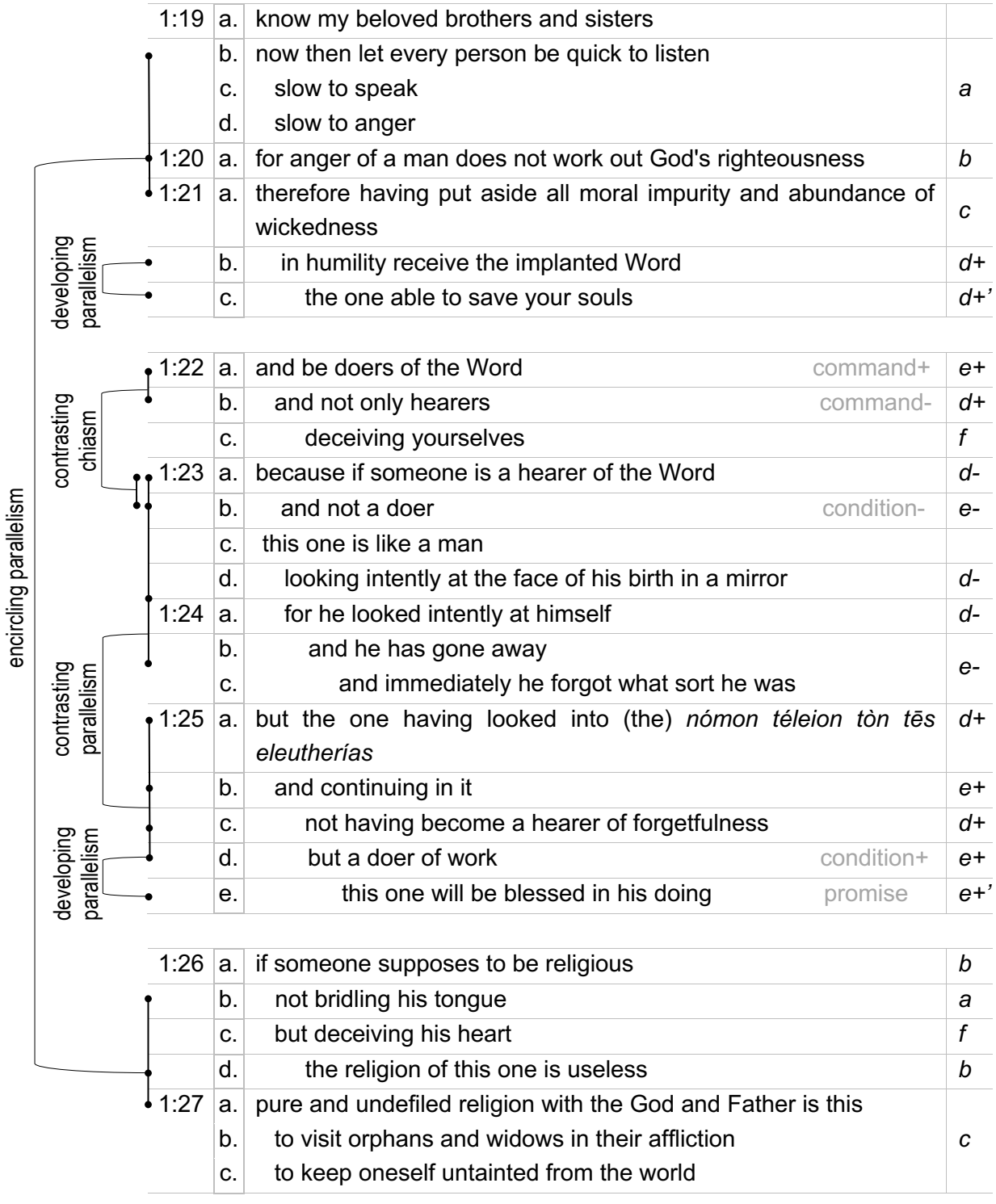
[446] M & TR adds "ἐν ὑμῖν" (among you).

[447] "be quick to listen, slow to speak" (ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι, βραδὺς εἰς τὸ λαλῆσαι).

[448] "having put aside all moral impurity and abundance of wickedness" (ἀποθέμενοι πᾶσαν ῥυπαρίαν καὶ περισσείαν κακίας).

[449] The "religious" (θρησκός) person (not) "bridling his tongue" (χαλιναγωγῶν γλῶσσαν αὐτοῦ).

the question: “how does a man work out God’s righteousness” (cf. v.20) or “how could religion be pure and undefiled with the God and Father” (cf. v.27)? The answer, then, is: “be doers of the Word” (Γίνεσθε … ποιηταὶ λόγου), and not only “receive the implanted word” (δέξασθε τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον) (v.21).



1:19	a.	know my beloved brothers and sisters		
	b.	now then let every person be quick to listen		
	c.	slow to speak		*a*
	d.	slow to anger		
1:20	a.	for anger of a man does not work out God's righteousness		*b*
1:21	a.	therefore having put aside all moral impurity and abundance of wickedness		*c*
	b.	in humility receive the implanted Word		*d+*
	c.	the one able to save your souls		*d+’*
1:22	a.	and be doers of the Word	command+	*e+*
	b.	and not only hearers	command-	*d+*
	c.	deceiving yourselves		*f*
1:23	a.	because if someone is a hearer of the Word		*d-*
	b.	and not a doer	condition-	*e-*
	c.	this one is like a man		
	d.	looking intently at the face of his birth in a mirror		*d-*
1:24	a.	for he looked intently at himself		*d-*
	b.	and he has gone away		*e-*
	c.	and immediately he forgot what sort he was		
1:25	a.	but the one having looked into (the) *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*		*d+*
	b.	and continuing in it		*e+*
	c.	not having become a hearer of forgetfulness		*d+*
	d.	but a doer of work	condition+	*e+*
	e.	this one will be blessed in his doing	promise	*e+’*
1:26	a.	if someone supposes to be religious		*b*
	b.	not bridling his tongue		*a*
	c.	but deceiving his heart		*f*
	d.	the religion of this one is useless		*b*
1:27	a.	pure and undefiled religion with the God and Father is this		
	b.	to visit orphans and widows in their affliction		*c*
	c.	to keep oneself untainted from the world		

Figure 2: Thought Structure Analysis of James 1:19-27

(b) Chiasm and Parallelisms in James 1:22-25

Secondly, the instruction to "be doers of the Word" is held together and developed through a series of repetitions comprising a contrasting chiasm (vv.22-23b), a contrasting parallelism (vv.23-25d), and a developing parallelism (v.25d-e).

(i) Contrasting chiasm (vv.22-23b):

The contrasting chiasm (vv.22-23b) sets being "doers of the Word" (ποιηταὶ λόγου) (e+) (v.22a) and "not only hearers" (μὴ ἀκροαταὶ μόνον) (d+) (v.22b) against being "a hearer of the word" (only)[450] (ἀκροατὴς λόγου) (d-) (v.23a) and "not a doer" (οὐ ποιητής) (e-) (v.23b).

Those who do not heed the instruction are "deceiving" (παραλογιζόμενοι) (f) (v.22c) themselves. This clause (f) does not merely function as a statement of fact but also an implied warning against being "only hearers" and an implied motivation for being "doers of the Word". Added weight is given to clause (f) by virtue of it being in the center of the chiasm.

(ii) Contrasting parallelism (vv.23-25d):

The contrasting parallelism (vv.23-25d) juxtaposes the person who is "a hearer of the word" (ἀκροατὴς λόγου) (d-) (v.23a) and "not a doer" (οὐ ποιητής) (e-) (v.23b) with "the one having looked into the *nómon téleion tēs eleutherías*" (παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (d+) (v.25a) and "continuing" (παραμείνας) in it (e+) (v.25b).

Furthermore, the contrasting parallelism juxtaposes the illustration of the man "looking intently at the face of his birth in a mirror" (κατανοοῦντι τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ) (d-) (v.23d) "for he looked intently at himself" (κατενόησεν γὰρ ἑαυτὸν) (d-)[451] (v.24a) and having gone away "immediately he forgot of what sort he was" (εὐθέως ἐπελάθετο ὁποῖος ἦν) (e-) (v.24b-c) with the one "not having become a hearer of forgetfulness" (οὐκ ἀκροατὴς ἐπιλησμονῆς γενόμενος) (d+) (v.25c) but "a doer of work" (ποιητὴς ἔργου) (e+) (v.25d).

Grouping the elements of the parallelism together and setting the groups against one another (d- & e- vs. d+ & e+), produces the following contrasting effect:

- The one who is only "a hearer of the Word" (ἀκροατὴς λόγου) (d-) (v.23a), is like one "looking intently at the face of his birth in a mirror" (κατανοοῦντι τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ) (d-) (v.23d) "for he looked intently at himself" (κατενόησεν γὰρ ἑαυτὸν) (d-) (v.24a) and having gone away "immediately he forgot of what sort he was" (εὐθέως ἐπελάθετο ὁποῖος ἦν) (e-) (v.24b-c). This man is "not a doer" (οὐ ποιητής) (e-) (v.23b) of the Word.

[450] Implied.

[451] Clarification for added emphasis.

- The opposite is “the one having looked into *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*” (παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (d+) (v.25a), the one “not having become a hearer of forgetfulness” (οὐκ ἀκροατὴς ἐπιλησμονῆς γενόμενος) (d+) (v.25c) but is “a doer of work” (ποιητὴς ἔργου) (e+) (v.25d). This one is “continuing” (παραμείνας) in *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías* (e+) (v.25b).
- It follows that, in order to heed the instruction to “be doers of the Word” (γίνεσθε … ποιηταὶ λόγου) (e+) (v.22a) and “not only hearers” (μὴ ἀκροαταὶ μόνον) (d+) (v.22b), a persone has to be “the one having looked into *nómon téleion tòn tēs* (παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (d+) (v.25a) and “continuing” (παραμείνας) in it (e+) (v.25b).

The parallelism in James 1:23-25 draws a subtle, yet unmistakable, analogy between “looking intently” (κατανοέω) at oneself “in a mirror” (ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ) (v.23d & v.24a) and “having looked into “*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*” (v.25a). This may suggest that a function of “*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*” is to let those who look intently into and continue in it, will see of what sort they really are (i.e. it reveals their true character).

(iii) Developing parallelism (v.25d-e):

The developing parallelism (v.25d-e) completes the reason for heeding the instruction “be doers of the Word” (v.22) that begins in James 1:23. The person who is a “doer of the Word” (ποιηταὶ λόγου) (e+) (v.22a) is “a doer of work” (ποιητὴς ἔργου) (e+) (v.25d) and “this one will be blessed in his doing” (οὗτος μακάριος ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ ἔσται) (e+’) (v.25e).

The implication from the above, is that the “work” (v.25d) is that according to “*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*” (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (d+) (v.25a) and that doing the “work” of “*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*” results in being “blessed” (μακάριος) (v.25e). Conversely, those who do not “hear” and “do” “*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*” are not just disobedient (cf. v.22a-b), they are “deceiving” themselves (v.22c) and may even bring a curse upon themselves (cf. v25e).

(c) Command-Condition-Promise Composition of James 1:22-25

Thirdly, the full instruction “be doers of the Word” (vv.22-25) has a “command-condition-promise” composition.

The command is stated upfront as both a positive command (“but be doers of the Word” (γίνεσθε δέ ποιηταὶ λόγου)) (v.22a-b) and a negative command (“and not hearers only” (καί μὴ ἀκροαταὶ μόνον)) - thus expanding and enforcing the command. The readers are commanded to be both “hearers” and “doers” of “the Word”.

The condition, which spans James 1:23-25d, further clarifies the command by presenting a negative condition (vv.23-24) (to be avoided) and positive condition (v.25a-d) (to be heeded).

The negative condition illustrates the person who is "a hearer of the Word" (ἀκροατὴς λόγου ἐστὶν) (v.23a) and "not a doer" (οὐ ποιητής) (v.23b). The positive condition explains that the "hearer" and "doer" of "the Word" is precisely "the one having looked into *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (v.25a) and "continuing" (παραμείνας) in it (v.25b), "not having become a hearer of forgetfulness" (οὐκ ἀκροατὴς ἐπιλησμονῆς γενόμενος) (v.25c) but "a doer of work" (ποιητὴς ἔργου) (v.25d).

The promise to the one who heeds the command by fulfilling the positive condition is that he "will be blessed in his doing" (μακάριος ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ ἔσται) (v.25e).

(d) Chain of Concepts in James 1:18-25

Fourthly, there is a development of thought in James 1:18-25, which includes the following chain of concepts (discussed in **Section 3.6.6**): "Word of Truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) (v.18b) – "the implanted Word" (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον) (v.21b)[452] – the "Word" (λόγου) (vv.22a, 23a) – "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (v.25). Working from the last term to the first, the following observations are made:

- From James 1:22-25, the specific "Word" (λόγος) that the hearers are to "be doers" (ποιηταὶ), in addition to "hearers" (ἀκροαταὶ), of (v.22) is specified as the "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (v.25).
- The above explains how to heed the exhortation in James 1:21, which states: "in humility receive the implanted Word" (ἐν πραΰτητι δέξασθε τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον). Whatever the "implanted Word" (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον) is, it cannot be effectively received without "looking" (παρακύψας) into the "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" and then "continuing in it" (παραμείνας), nor can it have its (full) salvific effect on the soul of the listener without it; as the latter part of James 1:21 implies, considering its context. What, then, is the "implanted Word" (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον)? As argued in **Section 3.6.6 (d)-(f)**, there is a strong case for associating it with "*Torah*". This is underlined by the fact that the closest scriptural equivalent is found in the New Covenant promise in Jeremiah 31:33, which is restated in the New Testament, in Hebrews 8:10 and 10:16.
- If the "implanted Word" (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον) (Jas. 1:21) is the same as the "Word of truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) (Jas. 1:18), then it follows from the above that it can be associated with the "*Torah*", or at least with "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*".

As argued in **Section 3.6.5 (f)**, there is clear Old Testament precedent for associating the

[452] "the implanted Word" (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον) (v.21b) is qualified or modified by the next clause, "the one able to save your souls" (v.21c) (τὸν δυνάμενον σῶσαι τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν); which together form a kind of developing parallelism.

"Word of truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) with the *Torah* and certainly for including the *Torah* in it. Thus, while the "Word of truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) is equated with the Gospel in the Pauline writings (Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:5), James seems to focus on the *Torah* specifically and increasingly. Evidence for this includes:

- James does not use the term "Gospel" (εὐαγγέλιον) anywhere in his epistle, nor is there any hint in the context (James 1:2-17) that he is talking specifically about the Gospel in Pauline terms.[453] Instead, James does talk about "*nómos*" (νόμος) multiple times (Jas. 1:25; 2:8, 9, 10, 11, 12; 4:11 (x4)) and there is a strong hint coming up (in Jas. 1:25) that he might have "*nómos*" rather than "Gospel" (εὐαγγέλιον) in mind.
- James has most likely been written before any of Paul's Letters and should be read against the background of 'the OT, Judaism, and the teachings of Jesus – not the apostle Paul', as Moo (2000:83) argues.
- As argued in **Chapter 3** and shown in **Appendix B**, James's teaching in James 1:2-18 is thoroughly rooted in the OT Scriptures; in which the *Torah* is central and foundational. Readers who are well versed in the OT, would most naturally have their minds filled with concepts and truths from the OT as they read through James.
- The first readers were exactly such kind of people (well versed in the OT). As argued in **Section 2.3.**, they were Jewish Jesus followers who met in a Jewish synagogue. And they most probably continued in Jewish worship practices such as weekly reading of the *Torah*. Furthermore, as argued in **Section 3.4**, the OT Scriptures would have been their "Bible" - with the *Torah* being their primary or basic standard for truth and essential source for instruction.
- God's Word generally and His *Torah* specifically are referred to as "the Truth" in 2 Samuel 7:28; Psalm 19:7; 119:43-48, 50, 93-94, 142, 151, 160; Proverbs 22:20-21; and Ecclesiastes 12:10. When James mentions the "Word of truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) (Jas. 1:18), he starts a train of thought that is richly rooted in the OT Scriptures and that ends with "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 1:25). Thus, the likely and strong probability that James has the "*nómos*" in mind, specifically, cannot be dismissed. In line with this, Ropes (1916:167) comments, 'the "word of truth" is for James mainly the Law (v.25)'.[454]
- Based on the testimony of Scripture (Psa. 19:7 and Prov. 4:2), as argued in **Section 3.6.5 (b)**, the *Torah* can certainly be viewed as a "good gift" and "perfect present" "from

[453] This is not to say that James's teaching is inconsistent with the Gospel in any way. Consideration will be given later on how it is in perfect harmony with the Gospel.

[454] So also: Allison (2013:283); Lyle (2018, see comment on Jas. 1:18); Moore-Keish (2019:57-58).

above" (ref. v.17).

- Finally, as demonstrated in **Sections 3.6.5 (f)**, **3.6.6 (d-f)**, there is reasonable, if not clear, Biblical precedent for associating each and every one of the terms in the chain of concepts in James 1:18-25, with the *Torah*. Allison (2013:283) asks the fair question, "if a proposed single meaning – *Torah* – unites them, should it not be preferred?

(e) Catchwords in James 1:19-27

Sixthly, James uses important key or catchwords in the passage (Jas. 1:19-27), including the words: "word" (λόγος) (Jas. 1:21, 22, 23), "*nómos*" (νόμος) (Jas. 1:25), "perfect" (τέλειος) (Jas. 1:25), and "blessed" (μακάριος) (Jas. 1:25).[455] Wall (1997:22) suggests that, from an "intratextual" perspective, 'a fuller meaning of its [i.e. James's] most important catchwords can be discerned by their repetition in different locations'; and this, in his view, 'would naturally expand or clarify how an auditor or reader should understand an important thematic interest of the composition as a whole'.[456] Accordingly, the following observations are made in regard to the catchwords in James 1:19-27:

- Firstly, concerning the "word" (λόγος) and *nómos* (νόμος): The connection between these two concepts has been discussed in **subsection (e)** above. Additionally, James 1:18 talks of the "word of truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας). Since the noun in the genitive ("truth") can be converted to an attributive adjective (i.e. "word of truth" converted to "truthful word"), it is very likely an "attributive Genitive",[457] which expresses the attribute or innate quality ("truth") of the head substantive ("word") sharply and distinctively (see Wallace, 1996:86-87). Thus the "word" is the "truth" because it is the "truthful word". Naturally, then, when James talks about "the truth" (τῆς ἀληθείας) against which the "wise and understanding" (σοφὸς καὶ ἐπιστήμων) person, by implication, would not "lie against" (ψεύδεσθε κατὰ) (Jas. 3:13-14), both the "word of truth" (Jas. 1:18) and the "word" (Jas. 1:22-23) can be implied. Equally, the same can be implied when James discusses someone who "strayed from the truth" (πλανηθῇ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας) (Jas. 5:19-20). Thus, in both cases (Jas. 3:13-14 and 5:19-20) the "truth" (ἀλήθεια) can be synonymous

[455] The words: "word" (λόγος) (Jas. 1:21, 22, 23), "*nómos*" (νόμος) (Jas. 1:25), "perfect" (τέλειος) (Jas. 1:25), and "blessed" (μακάριος) (Jas. 1:25) are used 4 (Jas. 1:28, 21, 22, 23), 10 (Jas. 1:25; 2:8, 9, 10, 11, 12; 4:11 (x4)), 5 (Jas. 1:4 (x2), 17, 25; 3:2), and 2 (Jas. 1:12, 25) times respectively. Each of these words is arguably an important motive in James; they act as catchwords that connect their passages together. See Wall (1997:22, 81, 83, 88).

[456] Allision (2013:82) 'Linking materials via catchwords was a convention in James's world'. See also Cheung (2003:37); Eng (2019:247).

[457] And due to the Semitic mindset of James, it is most likely an "attributive genitive" of "Hebraic" nature or origin (ref.: Mounce 1996:46; Wallace, 1996:86).

with the "word" (λόγος) in James 1:18-23. Additionally, since both cases include the idea of "sin"[458], the particular "truth" (ἀλήθεια) or "word" (λόγος) in view may well be the *nómos* (νόμος). This possibility is strengthened by the fact that Scripture defines "sin" (ἁμαρτία) as "lawlessness" (ἀνομία) (1 John 3:4) (see: "sin" in **Glossary of Terms**). James states that when "you work out sin" (ἁμαρτίαν ἐργάζεσθε), "you are being convicted by the *nómou* as transgressors" (ἐλεγχόμενοι ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου ὡς παραβάται) (Jas. 2:9). It follows that, in James's thinking there may be a close connection between "Word of Truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) (Jas. 1:18) and *nómos* (νόμος) (Jas. 1:25). Moo (2000:87) is correct when he states that the "word" (in vv.18 and 21) is 'eventually equated with the "law of liberty (v.25)'.[459]

- Secondly, concerning the word "perfect" (τέλειος): Perfection (and completion or wholeness) is a dominant theme and key purpose in James (ref. **Section 2.5**). At the outset, the *adelphoí* (ἀδελφοί) are to "let endurance have perfect work" (ὑπομονὴ ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω) so that they may be "perfect and complete" (τέλειοι καὶ ὁλόκληροι) (Jas. 1:4). To this end, God gives "wisdom" (σοφία) (from above) (Jas. 1:5; cf. 3:13-18), and logically also the "Word of Truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) (Jas. 1:18), since "every good gift" (Πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ) and "every perfect present" (πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον) is "from above" (ἄνωθεν) (Jas. 1:17). And since, the *nómos* (νόμος) is called "*nómon téleion*" (νόμον τέλειον) in James 1:25, it is also naturally associated with "every perfect present from above" (πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον ἄνωθέν) (Jas. 1:17), as well as with "wisdom" (σοφία) (from above) (Jas. 1:5; cf. 3:13-18) and the "Word of Truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) (Jas. 1:18). Thus, it is very likely, that in James's thinking, God uses the "perfect present" (δώρημα τέλειον) (Jas. 1:17) of "*nómon téleion*" (νόμον τέλειον) (Jas. 1:25) as specific "Word of Truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) (Jas. 1:18) to produce "wisdom" (σοφία) (from above) (Jas. 1:5; cf. 3:13-18), which will enable the *adelphoí* (ἀδελφοί) to "let endurance have perfect work" (ὑπομονὴ ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω) so that they may be "perfect and complete" (τέλειοι καὶ ὁλόκληροι) (Jas. 1:4). If this is so, then God could also use the "*nómon téleion*" (νόμον τέλειον) (Jas. 1:25) to instruct the believer in "the works" (τοῖς ἔργοις) by which to "perfect" (τελειόω) "faith" (πίστις) (Jas. 2:22) and even the "man" (ἀνήρ) who "does not stumble in word" (ἐν λόγῳ οὐ πταίει) (Jas. 3:2). If the *Torah* is a means for perfection/completion, then logically complete obedience to the *Torah* is required.
- Thirdly, concerning the word "blessed" (Μακάριος): James 1:25e presents the second of three beatitudes in James, the first being: "blessed (is the man) who endures

[458] "Boast" (κατακαυχάομαι) and "lie" (ψεύδομαι) in Jas. 3:13-14 and "stray" (πλανάω), "error" (πλάνη), "sinner" (ἁμαρτωλός), and "sin" (ἁμαρτία) in Jas. 5:19-20.

[459] But as mentioned before (in **Section 3.6.5 (f)** and **Section 4.2.1 (e)**) Moo (simply) equating the "Word of truth" to the Gospel seems to overlook its connection with the Torah in James 1:25.

temptation" (Μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν) (Jas. 1:12); and the third being: "behold, we consider blessed those who endured" (ἰδοὺ μακαρίζομεν τοὺς ὑπομείναντας) (Jas. 5:11). There may be a subtle connection (between Jas. 1:25 and 1:12) in that temptation is about getting believers to be "only hearers" (μὴ ἀκροαταὶ μόνον) "of the Word" (λόγου) (Jas. 1:22b) or not "doers of work" of "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (Jas. 1:25). Or conversely, the man who endures temptation (ἀνὴρ ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν) (Jas. 1:12) is the "blessed" one who "having looked into the *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (ὁ … παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) then goes on "continuing in it" (παραμείνας) (Jas. 1:25). Furthermore, due to the verbal parallels with James 1:12 and 1:25, the reader might be meant to "consider blessed" (μακαρίζομεν) "those who endured" (τοὺς ὑπομείναντας) (Jas. 5:11) because, as they wait patiently for the coming of the Lord (Jas. 5:8), they "endure temptation" (Jas. 5:11) and "continue in" "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (Jas. 1:25).

4.2.4. Meaning Structure of James 1:19-27

The meaning structure of James 1:19-27 is shown in **Figure 3** (refer to **Appendix D** for the complete analysis of James). The meaning blocks are:

- Jas. 1:19-20: Instruction concerning speech.
    - Jas. 1:21: Instruction to put aside impurity and to receive the Word.
- Jas. 1:22: Instruction to be doers of the Word.
    - Jas. 1:23-24: Illustration of not being a doer of the Word.
    - Jas. 1:25: Exposition of being a doer of the Word.
- Jas. 1:26-27: Exposition of useful and acceptable religion.

4.2.5. Meaning Indicators in James 1:19-27

The meaning indicators James's instruction/teaching in James 1:19-27 highlight several themes (via related words and phrases) and logical connections (via connecting words), as marked in **Figure 3** (refer to **Appendix D** for the complete analysis of James). The most significant meaning indicators for this Study are:

- Listening or hearing (blue underlining): The beloved *adelphoí* are exhorted to be "quick to listen" (ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι) (Jas. 1:19). A little later, they are exhorted to be "not only hearers" (μὴ ἀκροαταὶ μόνον) of the "Word" (λόγος) (Jas. 1:22). The implication is that they learn to listen well before they speak (Jas. 1:19, 26) and learn to listen or look intently into the *nómon téleion tēs eleutherías* (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 1:25) in the Word (λόγος) (Jas. 1:22) before they act.

1:19	a.	know my beloved brothers and sisters	Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger (1:26; 3:1)
	b.	**now then** let every person be quick to listen	
	c.	slow to speak	
	d.	slow to anger	
1:20	a.	**for** anger of a man does not work out God's righteousness	
1:21	a.	**therefore** having put aside all moral impurity and abundance of wickedness	Put aside sin and receive the Word (see: 1:18, 25)
	b.	in humility receive the implanted Word	
	c.	the one able to save your souls	
1:22	a.	**and** be doers of the Word	Obey the Word, don't only listen to it (see: 4:17)
	b.	and not only hearers	
	c.	deceiving yourselves	
1:23	a.	**because if** someone is a hearer of the Word	Illustration of those who hear and don't obey the Word
	b.	and not a doer	
	c.	this one is like a man	
	d.	looking intently at the face of his birth in a mirror	
1:24	a.	**for** he looked intently at himself	
	b.	and he has gone away	
	c.	and immediately he forgot what sort he was	
1:25	a.	**but** the one having looked into (the) *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*	Blessed are those who listen carefully and keep the *nómon téleion* (see: 2:12; 5:11) (see also: 1:12)
	b.	**and** continuing in it	
	c.	**not** having become a hearer of forgetfulness	
	d.	**but** a doer of work	
	e.	this one will be blessed in his doing	
1:26	a.	**if** someone supposes to be religious	Acceptable and useful religion (see: 3:1-12; 3:13-18)
	b.	not bridling his tongue	
	c.	**but** deceiving his heart	
	d.	the religion of this one is useless	
1:27	a.	pure and undefiled religion with the God and Father is this	
	b.	to visit orphans and widows in their affliction	
	c.	to keep oneself untainted from the world	

Figure 3: Semantic Discourse Analysis of James 1:19-27

- Speak or the tongue (purple text): The exhortation to be “quick to listen” is coupled with that to be “slow to speak” (βραδὺς εἰς τὸ λαλῆσαι) (Jas. 1:19) and logically also to “bridle” (χαλιναγωγέω) one’s tongue (Jas. 1:26).
- Evil or vices (orange text): Failure to be “slow to speak” and to “bridle” one’s tongue produces “anger” (ὀργή) (Jas. 1:19-20), “moral impurity” (ῥυπαρία), “abundance of wickness” (περισσείαν κακίας) (Jas. 1:21), self “deception” (ἀπατάω) and “useless” (μάταιος) “religion” (θρησκεία) (Jas. 1:26). Equally, failure to translate the “Word” into action leads to self “deception” (παραλογίζομαι) (Jas. 1:22).
- The word (green text): Refer to **Section 4.2.3 (d)** for “the chain of concepts” related to the “Word” (λόγος).
- Doing (blue text): The beloved *adelphoí* are to “work out” (ἐργάζομαι) God’s righteousness by “receiving” (δέχομαι) the “implanted Word” (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον) in “humility” (πραΰτης) (Jas. 1:20-21). Furthermore, they are to be the type of “hearers” of the Word who are also “doers of the Word” (Jas. 1:22). This they are to do by “looking” (παρακύπτω) into the *nómon téleion tēs eleutherías* (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) and “continuing in it” (παραμείνας) (Jas. 1:25). It is the “doer of work” (ποιητὴς ἔργου) of the *nómon téleion tēs eleutherías* who “will be blessed in his doing” (μακάριος ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ ἔσται) (Jas. 1:25).
- Pure religion (blue box and yellow highlight): The encircling parallelism (see **Section 4.2.3 (a)**) suggests that “God’s righteousness” (δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ) (Jas. 1:20) and “pure and undefiled religion” (θρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος) (Jas. 1:26-27) are complementary ideas, especially since both involve controlling one’s speech. The beloved *adelphoí* are called to “work out” (ἐργάζεται) the first and practice the second. Perhaps they are two ways of saying the same thing.
- The exhortation to “be doers of the word” (Γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταὶ λόγου) (Jas. 1:22-25) starts with the conjunction “and” (δέ), which connects it with the exhortation to “in humility receive” (ἐν πραΰτητι δέξασθε) “the implanted word” (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον) (Jas. 1:21). And this in turn, is connected to the exhortation to “be quick to listen” (ἔστω δὲ … ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι) (Jas. 1:19), via the conjunction “therefore” (διό).
- The exhortation to “be doers of the word” (Γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταὶ λόγου) (Jas. 1:22-25) is first stated in v.22, and then developed in vv.23-25. The development of the exhortation is divided into two contrasting parts (ref: (ii) Contrasting parallelism (vv.23-25d), under **Section 4.2.3 (b)**) by the conjunction “But” (δέ). Hearing but not doing the “Word” (λόγος) is contrasted with looking into the *nómon téleion tēs eleutherías* (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) and continuing (παραμείνας) in it.

4.2.6. Meaning of Words and Phrases in James 1:19-27

The meanings of the significant words and the phrases in the passage (Jas. 1:19-27) are explored and explained below:

(1) James 1:19: "know" (ἴστε), "my beloved brothers and sisters" (ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί):

The imperative to "know" (ἴστε), is 'to comprehend the meaning of something, with focus upon the resulting knowledge' (Louw & Nida, 1996:379). Though the tense of the verb "*oida*" (οἶδα) is "perfect", it has a 'present force' (Wallace, 1996:579). Thus, the force of the imperative can be taken to be that of a "present imperative", which is to 'command the action as an ongoing process' (Wallace, 1996:485). It follows that the initial instruction to the "beloved *adelphoi*" in James 1:19 is that they are to be always aware of and understand the three-fold command that follows in the remainder of verse 19. It also alerts them to, what will become in James 1:21, an exhortation to approach and receive the Word in the right way.

James addresses his readers here in his characteristic way, "my … brothers and sisters (ἀδελφοί μου). This signals a new topic (Moo, 2000:82), but it also speaks of his close affinity with them in the faith (refer to **Section 2.3.2**). Moreover, James adds the word, "beloved" (ἀγαπητοί); which underlines the loving intent of this new teaching portion and the pastoral nature of this Letter (refer to **Section 2.6.5**).

(2) James 1:19: "be quick to listen" (ἔστω … ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι):

To be "quick" (ταχὺς) to "listen" (ἀκοῦσαι) is to be 'swift' or 'speedy' (BDAG, 2000:993; and Louw & Nida, 1996:643), not in merely 'exercising the faculty of hearing' or 'giving attention', but to 'receive news or information' (BDAG, 2000:37-38; Louw & Nida, 1996:411).

Again, the command to "be" (ἔστω) is "present imperative" with a demand for ongoing volitional action (Wallace, 1996:485-486). The same force applies to the next two clauses: to "be" (ἔστω is implied) "slow to speak" and "slow to anger". Furthermore, according to Wallace (1996:607), the verbs "listen" (ἀκοῦσαι) and "speak" (λαλῆσαι) are both "epexegetical" infinitives, which 'clarify, explain or qualify' their accompanying nouns "quick" (ταχύς) and "slow" (βραδύς) respectively. Accordingly, "quick to listen, slow to speak" indicate a 'readiness' to listen before one speaks (Wallace, 1996:607).

But the object of the command (to "be quick to listen") is not specified in James 1:19. Consequently, two possibilities arise. The "beloved *adelphoi*" are to "be quick to listen" to whoever speaks to them, or to the "Word".

Moo (2000:82) concedes that the latter is the 'most popular option', but then argues for the former (i.e. listening generally) because it is 'difficult' to explain how the same object can apply to the two subsequent coordinating commands (i.e. "slow to speak" and "slow to anger"),

and because of James's 'obvious dependence on a widespread Jewish wisdom teaching about speech and anger' found in Scriptures such as Proverbs 10:19; 11:12, 13; 13:3; 17:27-28. While this more general application is undeniable, it is the specific application related to "the Word" that is in view in the context. Thus Allison (2013:302), might be correct in concluding that the verse 'intentionally leaves itself open to wide application'.

However, considering the context, there is a strong case for agreeing with Ropes (1916:168) who insists that the command 'relates primarily to the hearing of the Word, and not merely to social intercourse generally'.[460] The context speaks of the "Word of Truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) in the previous verse (v.18), and the succeeding verses speak of the "the implanted Word" (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον) (v.21), the "Word" (λόγου) (vv.22, 23). Moreover, verse 19 is logically connected to verse 20 (via the conjunction "*gar*" (γὰρ)), which in turn is connected to verse 21 (via the conjunction "*dió*" (διό)). Verse 25 speaks of "looking into" (παρακύπτω) the "*nomon téleion ton tēs eleutherias*" (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας). Motyer (2010:62-71) convincingly demonstrates James's progression of thought about the reader's response to God's Word in three stages: 'hearing' (vv.19-20), 'receiving' (v.21), and 'obeying' (vv.22-25).

Furthermore, Wadge (2014:71) suggests that through his instruction, James is 'invoking a commonly known adage of the day'[461] that 'combines the elements of listening, speaking, and acting along with the practice of studying *Torah*'. Along the same lines, Friedman & Friedman (2012:57) contend that James is 'encouraging his students to be ready to listen and do the instructions given in *Torah*' (see also the discussions in **Sections 3.6.6 (a) & 4.3.2(d)**). They (Friedman & Friedman, 2012:56-57) also suggest that there is a 'parallel' between the instruction in James 1:19, which states, "let every person be quick to listen" (ἔστω … πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι) and the instruction in the *Shema*, "Hear, O Israel …" (Ἄκουε, Ισραηλ …) (Deut. 6:4, LXX).

In summary, the "beloved *adelphoi*" are to listen without delay, being ready and eager to receive and comprehend what others say to them, and especially what God says to them through His Word; which includes His *Torah*.[462]

(3) James 1:19: "slow to speak" (βραδὺς εἰς τὸ λαλῆσαι):

To be "slow" (βραδὺς) to "speak" (λαλῆσαι) is to 'extend' or even 'delay' the time (Louw & Nida, 1996:645) before one starts to 'utter words' (BDAG, 2000:582). This "delay" allows for "listening" (refer to (2) above) before "speaking"; which echoes wisdom instruction in, for

[460] So also: Adamson (1979:78); Tasker (1973:49-50).

[461] See also: Gill (1809:500).

[462] See also: 2 Tim. 3:14-17.

example Proverbs 18:13 and 29:20.[463] It requires "bridling" (χαλιναγωγέω) of the tongue as taught in James 1:26 and 3:1-12. Thus, as Motyer (2010:65) explains, "slow to speak" 'does not mean "never speak", but "speak with due thought and care"'.

While both James 1:26 and 3:2-12 have application to controlled speaking generally,[464] they also have applications concerning God's Word. The first (Jas. 1:26) is structurally linked to verse 19, by means of an encircling parallelism (see **Section 4.2.3 (a)**); to listening to and doing God's Word (Jas. 1:22-25). The second (Jas. 3:2-12) is grammatically linked, by means of the conjunction "for" (γάρ), to speaking or teaching God's Word (Jas. 3:1-2). Since James 3:1-12 is structurally linked to James 1:19-20 – with James 1:19-20 introducing James 3:1-12 (See: **Sections 2.7.2** and **2.7.3**),[465] the reader should be cautioned against proclaiming the Word of God hastily or uncontrollably.[466] In line with this, Tasker (1973:50) comments Christians must not 'proclaim God's Word to others before they have really paid attention to it themselves'.[467]

It follows that to be "slow to speak" means to listen intently and with understanding to God's Word before one teaches it, and to listen well to others before one responds to them. Biblically speaking, a failure in doing the latter shows a lack in practicing the former (cf. Mat. 13:3-9). Whether one speaks to others or teaches the Word, it should not be done with rash but with controlled speech.

(4) James 1:19: "slow to anger" (βραδὺς εἰς ὀργήν):

To be "slow" (βραδὺς) to "anger" (ὀργή) is 'extend' or 'delay' the time (Louw & Nida, 1996:645) before one enters a 'state of relatively strong … emotional displeasure' (BDAG, 2000:720). "Slow to anger", as Motyer (2010:65) points out, is not the same as 'never be angry'. For there is such a thing as "righteous anger".[468] Nevertheless, "anger" needs to be carefully controlled

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[463] Prov. 18:13 (NASB) *He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him.*
Prov. 29:20 (NASB) *Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.*

[464] McKnight (2011:137) points out that, in the context of the readers' 'specific situation', it would include avoiding 'verbal disputes' (cf. 2:6), 'cursing others' (3:1-12), 'strife' (3:14), 'war' (4:1-3), or speaking against one another (4:11), but practicing 'gentleness' (3:13) and promoting 'peace' (3:18). These things are all ways of putting God's Word or instructions into practice.

[465] See also Davids (1982:92).

[466] See Tasker (1973:50).

[467] There are numerous exhortations (explicit and implied) in the *Torah*, particularly in Deuteronomy, to "listen" to God's word/commandments (which are equated with His voice) before acting and in order to act in the right way. For example: Deut. 4:1, 30; 6:3; 7:12; 11:13, 27-28; 12:28; 13:4, 18; 15:5; 26:17.

[468] See for example: (Mat. 21:12-13); Rom. 12:19; Rev. 19:15.

for it easily leads to sin or unrighteousness, as can be seen in verse 20.[469] As mentioned above (see (2)), James's teaching about speech and anger is well grounded in Jewish wisdom instruction - for example in Proverbs 15:1 and 15:18.[470] Ropes (1916:169) comments that to "be slow to anger" relates to 'restraint of anger', which relates to: 'be not easily provoked'.

As mentioned before, James 1:19 structurally introduces and thus connects with James 3:1-12.[471] In James 3:1-2, James warns: "do not many become teachers" (Μὴ πολλοὶ διδάσκαλοι γίνεσθε), knowing that "we will receive greater judgment" (εἰδότες ὅτι μεῖζον κρίμα λημψόμεθα) for "we all stumble in many ways" (πολλὰ γὰρ πταίομεν ἅπαντες). One of the ways in which teachers can sin, is by becoming angry and speaking rashly. As demonstrated in **Section 3.6.6 (b)**, Moses acted in anger when he spoke rashly for God to Israel at Meribah (Num. 20:10, 12; Psa. 106:33). Thus, while James 1:19c presents a warning about the danger of anger in speech generally, it certainly also serves as a warning to Christian teachers to take care not to express anger when they teach.

Tasker (1973:50) suggests that to "be slow to anger" also has application for 'listening to God' as 'an essential condition', lest the hearer be distracted from receiving the Word. To combat "anger", one needs "wisdom from above" (ἄνωθεν σοφία), which is (among other things) "peaceful" (εἰρηνική) and "gentle" (ἐπιεικής) (Jas. 3:17), and which God gives "generously" (ἁπλῶς) to those who "ask in faith" (αἰτείτω … ἐν πίστει) (Jas. 1:5-6). Arguably, the wise learn to listen (especially to God's Word) before they speak, and so get angry less often.

Synopsis of James 1:19:

James 1:19 instructs the "beloved *adelphoi*" to exercise constant awareness and understanding as they obey the three-fold command:

- To first be ready to listen well in order to eagerly receive and comprehend what others say to them, and especially what God says to them in His Word.
- Then only to speak with due thought, care, and control in all their discourse, and especially when they proclaim God's Word.
- And to be sure to restrain their anger when they speak, and especially when they speak or teach God's Word.

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[469] See also Eph. 4:26; Psa. 37:8.

[470] Prov. 15:1 (NASB) *A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*
Prov. 15:18 (NASB) *A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger calms a dispute.*

[471] See Adamson (1976:141).

(5) James 1:20: "for anger of a man does not work out God's righteousness" (ὀργὴ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ οὐκ ἐργάζεται):

James 1:20 starts with the conjunction "for" (γάρ), which is a 'marker of cause or reason' (BDAG, 2000:189). Accordingly, a reason (and motivation) is supplied for the instruction in James 1:19. The reason to be "quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger" is because "the anger of a man" (ὀργὴ ἀνδρὸς) does not "work out" (ἐργάζεται) the "righteousness of God" (δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ).

To "work out" (ἐργάζομαι) means to "do, accomplish, or carry out" (BDAG, 2000:389). In James 2:9, the same verb (ἐργάζομαι) is used in connection with "working out" "sin" (ἁμαρτία); which results in "being convicted by the *nómou* as transgressors" (ἐλεγχόμενοι ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου ὡς παραβάται). Here (in Jas. 1:20), as will be demonstrated below, is the exact opposite.

Since the governing verb "work out" (ἐργάζομαι) is done by "a man" (ἀνδρὸς), rather than "God", it is 'very difficult', as Moo (2000:84) rightfully comments, to think of the "righteousness of God" ("δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ") as referring to an 'act or gift' of God. The Genitive, "righteousness of God" (δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ) is thus "Objective" rather than "Subjective" (See Wallace, 1996:112-119). In this context, "righteousness" therefore refers to that practiced by a person. Accordingly, it can be defined as 'upright behavior' (BDAG, 2000:248) or, more precisely, 'the act of doing what God requires' (Louw & Nida, 2000a:743).[472] Or as Davids (1982:93) states, that which 'reflects God's standard'.

Thus James 1:20 teaches that God wants the "beloved *adelphoi*" to act according to His righteous standards. The chain action of not listening carefully, speaking rashly, and venting anger does not meet or carry out God's righteous standards. What are God's righteous standards? In James 2:12, the "beloved *adelphoi*" are commanded: "thus speak and thus do" (οὕτως λαλεῖτε καὶ οὕτως ποιεῖτε) "as those about to be judged by (the) *nómou eleutherías*" (ὡς διὰ νόμου ἐλευθερίας μέλλοντες κρίνεσθαι). In James 4:11, they are warned not to "speak against" (καταλαλῶν) one another because then they "speak against" (καταλαλῶν) the "*nómou*" (νόμου) and the one doing so is not "a doer of *nómou*" (εἶ ποιητὴς νόμου). The *Torah* (Law) certainly teaches God's righteous standards (refer: Isa. 51:7; Psa. 19:9; 119:142, 160).

The motivation to control one's speech in order to work out God's righteous standards (Jas. 1:20), is complemented by the idea of practicing useful religion (Jas. 1:26). As shown in **Section 4.2.3 (a)**, James 1:19-21 is connected to James 1:26-27 by means of an encircling parallelism. By implication, the one who is not "slow to speak, slow to anger" is parallel or equivalent to the one "not bridling his tongue" (μὴ χαλιναγωγῶν γλῶσσαν αὐτοῦ) but "deceiving his heart" (ἀπατῶν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ) and whose "religion" (θρησκεία) is "useless" (μάταιος).

[472] See also: Moo (2000:84); Ropes (1916:169); Johnson (2008:200).

(6) James 1:21: "therefore having put aside all moral impurity and abundance of wickedness" (διὸ ἀποθέμενοι πᾶσαν ῥυπαρίαν καὶ περισσείαν κακίας):

Starting with the conjunction "*dio*" (διό), James 1:21 presents an 'inference [that] is self-evident' (BDAG, 2000:250),[473] based on the preceding teaching in James 1:19-20. Since the anger of man does not work out God's righteousness, the "beloved *adelphoi*" should therefore be sure to follow the instruction to receive the Word. Motyer (2010:66) insightfully points out that the instruction touches on four aspects: (1) 'preparation for receiving', (2) the 'required attitude', (3) the 'thing to be received', and (4) 'the expected result'. The first will be discussed in this section, the second and third in the next, and the last in the section after that.

The instruction is prefaced by the participial clause: "having put aside" (ἀποθέμενοι) "all moral impurity" (πᾶσαν ῥυπαρίαν) "and abundance of wickedness" (καὶ περισσείαν κακίας).

Moo (2000:86) comments that while the action of the participle, "having put aside" (ἀποθέμενοι), could be viewed as 'more of an assumption or subordinate idea', Greek participles 'in these situations become virtually equivalent to the imperative verbs they depend on'.[474] This would almost certainly be the case if the participle functions as one of "attendant circumstances". Because then, as Wallace (1996:640) explains, the participle is 'coordinate with' and takes on 'the mood of the main verb'. Since just about all the features for attendant circumstances apply here,[475] it is reasonable to interpret the participle coordinately and imperatively with finite verb, "put aside".

To "put aside" (ἀποτίθημι) literally means to 'take off' clothes,[476] and figuratively to 'lay aside' or 'rid oneself' of something (BDAG, 2000:123), as one would clothes.[477] It is used figuratively in several NT passages[478] to instruct believers to 'stop' or 'cease' (Louw & Nida: 1996:657) the sinful views, behaviours, habits, and lifestyles that they practiced and were accustomed to before they became Christians.[479] "All moral impurity" (πᾶσαν ῥυπαρίαν)

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[473] See also: Louw & Nida (1996:782).

[474] See also: Hartin (2003:96); Allison (2013:307).

[475] Wallace (1996:642) lists the following five features 'that occur in at least 90% of the instances of attendant circumstance': (1) the tense of the participle is usually aorist; (2) the tense of main verb is usually aorist; (3) the mood of the main verb is usually imperative or indicative; (4) the participle will precede the main verb – both in word order and time of event; (5) the occur frequently in narrative literature. Of these the first 4 features apply.

[476] See Acts 7:58.

[477] As Doriani (2007:48) points, the OT Scriptures (e.g. Isa. 64:6) depict 'sinners as people who are dressed in filthy clothes'.

[478] Incl. Eph. 4:22, 25; Col 3:8; Heb. 12:1; Jas. 1:21; and 1 Pet. 2:1.

[479] See also: Davids (1982:94); Moo (2000:86); Tasker (1973:51).

includes any and every 'dirty' thing (BDAG, 2000:908) that (spiritually) defiles a person (See also Louw & Nida, 1996:768). And "abundance of wickedness" (περισσείαν κακίας) ordinarily means 'a surplus' of 'vice' (BDAG, 2000:805, 500). However, as Tasker (1973:51), rightfully points out, 'the writer cannot mean that it is only the surplus … of wickedness that must be laid aside', but rather that any 'remainder' of it must be laid aside. Contextually, "moral impurity" (ῥυπαρία) and "wickedness" (κακία) (Jas. 1:21) are the opposite of "God's righteousness" (δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ) or His righteous standards.

The instruction to "put aside" (ἀποτίθημι) prepares the readers for the main instruction to "receive" (δέξασθε) the "implanted Word" (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον). This preparatory instruction resembles something of what Israel was to do at Mt. Sinai when they were to "consecrate" (αγνισον, LXX) themselves in preparation for receiving the Ten Commandments (Exod. 19:10-14).

It follows that the first part of James 1:21 instructs the "beloved *adelphoi*" to stop doing anything that morally defiles them and to rid themselves of any residues of evil in them. All this is to be done in preparation for receiving God's Word.

(7) James 1:21: "in humility receive the implanted Word" (ἐν πραΰτητι δέξασθε τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον):

Having purified or consecrated themselves, the "beloved *adelphoi*" are commanded: "in humility receive" (ἐν πραΰτητι δέξασθε) (Jas. 1:21).

"Humility" (πραΰτης) is not to be 'overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance' (BDAG, 2000:681), and thus by implication to have an appropriate regard and reverence for the Word that they are to receive. Furthermore, as Allison (2013:310) points out, "humility" (πραΰτης) is often 'contrasted with wrath or anger' (ὀργή), 'as is implicit here' (see Jas. 1:19-20). Thus, the required attitude with which to receive God's Word is not with arrogance or anger, but with meekness, humility, and peace. Barclay (1976:58) calls it 'a truly teachable spirit'.

To "receive" (δέχομαι) is to 'indicate approval … by accepting' (BDAG, 2000:221); which includes eagerness, joy, faith, and conviction.[480] It also includes, as McKnight (2011:143) rightfully points out, to let the Word 'have its way with one's heart and life so that a person learns to live in accordance with that Word as a *Torah*-observant person'. Furthermore, the context demands that to "receive" the Word in its full sense, begins with being "quick to listen" (ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι) to the Word (Jas. 1:19) and ends with being "doers of the Word" (ποιηταὶ λόγου) (Jas. 1:22).[481] Finally, the "voice" of the verb is "middle". In this case, as Wallace

[480] See: Acts 17:11; 1 Thes. 1:5-6; 2:13.

[481] See also: Doriani (2007:47); McKnight (2011:143).

(1996:419-421) explains, the subject acts 'in his or her own interest'. It is thus for their own benefit that the "beloved *adelphoi*" are to "receive" (δέχομαι) the "implanted Word", as is made clear by the next clause (see **subsection (8)** below).

So, it is imperative for the "beloved *adelphoi*" to accept "the implanted Word" wholeheartedly and with an attitude of meekness and humility. But what exactly is "the implanted Word" (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον)?

Firstly, the article-adjective-noun construction indicates, as Wallace (1996:306) explains, that the adjective modifies the noun and 'receives greater emphasis than the substantive'. Thus, the stress is on the attribute, "implanted", of the "Word".

Secondly, the word "implanted" (ἔμφυτος) is a *hapax legomenon*.[482] According to both BDAG (2000:326) and Louw & Nida (1996:726), as something "implanted", the Word in James 1:21 is 'permanently established'. As Moo (2000:87) argues, since "the Word" has 'the power to save (v.21) and regenerate (v.18) and is eventually equated with the "law of liberty" (v.25)', "implanted" cannot refer to 'an innate quality within human beings'. Therefore, the sense is '"implanted" rather than "innate"' (Moo, 2000:87).

Thirdly, though the exact term "the implanted Word" (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον) is not used elsewhere in Scripture, the idea is in Scripture. As argued in **Sections 3.6.6 (d)** & **(f)**, the concept strongly alludes to the New Covenant promise, in which God declares that He will "put [His] Law" (*Torah*, MST; νόμος, LXX) within His people and "on their heart [He] will write it" (Jer. 31:33, NASB). Moore-Keish (2019:69) concurs by stating, 'James evokes the internalized law of Jeremiah'.[483]

Moo (2000:87) accurately comments that 'God plants it' (i.e. "the implanted Word") permanently within His people as 'a guiding and commanding presence within'. As alluded to above and argued in **Section 4.2.3 (d)**, "the implanted Word" can refer to the *Torah*.[484] Jackson-McCabe (2001:190) strongly argues that, 'first and foremost', it 'finds written expression in the Torah'. According to Wadge (2014:74), James 'paints a picture' here that 'shows the Torah' as being like a seed that has been planted into the very nature of a person'.

[482] It is used only once in the Bible.

[483] See also: Allison (2013:309-316); Bauckham (1999:146); Hegg (2002:52); Jackson-McCabe (2001:191); Moo (2000:87); Morgan (2010; 121-122).

[484] See also: Bauckham (1999:141); Hegg (2020:52).

(8) James 1:21: "the one able to save your souls" (τὸν δυνάμενον σῶσαι τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν):

Preceded by the article "the" (τὸν), the participle "to be able" (δυνάμενον) is "adjectival" in that it functions like an adjective that modifies the substantive (i.e. "the implanted Word").[485] It thus expresses an attribute of "the implanted Word", which is that it is "able". It can be translated "the one able" or "which is able".[486] According to BDAG (2000:261-262), "able" (δύναμαι) is 'to possess capability for experiencing or doing something'. Accordingly, "the implanted Word" is capable of saving the souls of the "beloved *adelphoi*", if in humility they receive it (see discussion in **subsection (7)** above).

Linked to the participle "to be able", the infinitive "to save" (σῶσαι) 'is adverbial in nature'.[487] And so, being "simple" or "naked",[488] the "adverbial infinitive" could express purpose or result.[489] Since it does not seem to answer the question "why?", result is more likely. Accordingly, the "result" of humbly receiving the implanted Word is the salvation of one's soul. The combination of "save" (σῴζω) and "soul" (ψυχή) indicates that both "preservation" and "life" that 'transcend the earthly' is in view.[490] And so, the natural result of humbly receiving the implanted Word is that it will preserve the 'seat and centre'[491] of the beloved *adelphoi's* beings from 'transcendent danger or destruction'.[492] Du Toit (2020:286) insightfully observes that James has a 'holistic' view of salvation, which 'has both a realised (5:15; 5:20) and future dimension (1:21; 2:14; 4:12)'. Thus, the readers are to 'accept and act upon [the Word] on a continual basis' (Du Toit, 2020:286).

The same two words, "save" (σῴζω) and "soul" (ψυχή), are used in James 5:20. There, James exhorts his fellow *adelphoi* to know that "the one turning a sinner" (ὁ ἐπιστρέψας ἁμαρτωλὸν) – that is someone who "strayed from the truth" (πλανηθῇ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας) (Jas. 5:19) – "out of the error of his way" (ἐκ πλάνης ὁδοῦ αὐτοῦ), "will save his soul from death" (σώσει ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐκ θανάτου) and "he will cover a multitude of sins" (καλύψει πλῆθος

[485] See Wallace (1996:617-618).

[486] So NASB, NKJV, ESV, TLV.

[487] See Wallace (1996:590-594).

[488] Not accompanied and preceded by a proposition, article, or conjunction.

[489] See Wallace (1996:590-594).

[490] See BDAG (2000:982, 1099).

[491] See BDAG (2000:1099).

[492] See BDAG (2000:982).

ἁμαρτιῶν) (Jas. 5:20).[493] So, for James "sin" (ἁμαρτία) is to "stray" (πλανάω) from the "truth" (ἀλήθεια) and to commit an "error" (πλάνη), which puts one's "soul" (ψυχή) in danger of "death" (θάνατος).[494] Again, the context indicates "transcendence", which is more than mere physical death.[495] As Allison (2013:786) comments, it is 'alienation from God in the world to come', which is analogous to the "second death" (Rev. 21:8). Furthermore, for James, to work out "sin" (ἁμαρτία) is to be a "violator" or "transgressor" (παραβάτης) of the "*nómos"* (νόμος) (Jas. 2:9) and "sin" is failing to "do good" (καλὸν ποιεῖν) (Jas. 4:17).

Concerning the above, there seem to be multiple connections with, or at least allusions to, the *Torah* in Deuteronomy. For example:

- In Deuteronomy 12:28 (NASB), *"doing what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God"* is connected with being *"careful to listen to all these words which [He] command[s] you"*.
- In Deuteronomy 30:16 (NASB), *"to walk in [God's] ways"* is equivalent to (or a least associated with) *"keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments"*. Logically therefore, to "stray" is to disregard or violate them.
- In Deuteronomy 30:15-16 (NASB), in setting His instructions before His people, the LORD their God sets before them *"life and prosperity, and death and adversity".* Thus, when they live according to *Torah*, they will have life, and if not, they will have death.

Spotting similar connections, Allison (2013:783) concludes that for James, '"the way of truth" is 'the way of the commandments, of the Mosaic law, which James calls in 1:25 "the perfect law, the law of freedom"'.

James's teaching seems to echo Proverbs 19:16 (NASB): "He who keeps (φυλασσει, LXX) the commandment (ἐντολή, LXX) keeps (τηρει, LXX) his soul (ψυχην, LXX),[496] But he who is careless (καταφρονων, LXX) of conduct (οδων, LXX) will die (απολειται, LXX)." As

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[493] There is some uncertainty as to who is saved and whose sins are covered. Allison (2013:783-784) lists four options: (i) the *adelphos* on both accounts; (ii) the *adelphos* on the first and *hamartōlos* on the second; (iii) the *hamartōlos* on the first and *adelphos* on the second; and (iv) the *hamartōlos* on both accounts. He (Allison, 2013:784) point out that 'most exegetes opt for (iii) and (iv). Because of links to various OT Scriptures, most notably Ezekiel 34, Allison (2013:783-789) rightfully argues that while option (iv) makes good and grammatical sense, other readings cannot be simply dismissed. On the other hand, since option (iv) makes so much sense, it can certainly not be dismissed. It will therefore be adopted as the main or most likely reading.

[494] This is echoed by James 1:15, which states: "and the sin having completed" (ἡ δὲ ἁμαρτία ἀποτελεσθεῖσα), "it gives birth to death" (ἀποκύει θάνατον).

[495] See BDAG (2000:443).

[496] Ross (1991:1034) comments, 'This "instruction" (miṣwāh) may refer to the teaching of the sages or to God's law. If it refers to God's commandments, then there is a stronger guarantee of safety for life'.

demonstrated in **Section 3.6.6 (e)**, Psalm 19:7-11 assigns a redemptive function to *Torah*. Adamson (1976:81) observes that 'the Jewish *Torah* was held to be redemptive' and to be 'the only way that leadeth to life'.[497]

Synopsis of James 1:20-21:

James 1:20 gives the reason (and motivation) for obeying the instruction in James 1:19. And James 1:21 gives an instruction on what is to be done as a self-evident consequence.

- The reason to listen well and control one's speech and anger (Jas. 1:19) is so that the beloved *adelphoi* can live according to or work out God's righteous standards in their lives (Jas. 1:20).
- And if they are to work out God's righteous standards (Jas. 1:20), then of necessity they are to:
  - (a) Stop doing anything that morally defiles and to rid themselves of any residue of evil in them (Jas. 1:21a). This is to be done in preparation for receiving the Word.
  - (b) Humbly receive the implanted Word – that is eagerly listen to and meekly accept it, with the intention of obeying it. This is in their own interest, since God implanted it in them as a permanent guide. By following its instructions, their souls will be preserved from transcendent danger and death.

(9) James 1:22: "and be doers of the Word" (Γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταὶ λόγου):

James 1:22 starts with the conjunction "*dé*" (δέ). While most translations[498] render it as "but", the context suggests that it functions as a "connective" or "continuative" rather than "contrastive" conjunction,[499] as indicated by Louw & Nida (1996:789). Accordingly, it 'adds an additional idea to the train of thought'[500] started in verse 19, and possibly earlier. Thus, in addition to "in humility receive the implanted Word" (ἐν πραΰτητι δέξασθε τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον), the beloved *adelphoí* are to heed the instructions that follow. As Moo (2000:88) accurately observes, 'essentially, James argues in vv.22-25, to "accept" the word means to "do it".

To "be doers" (Γίνεσθε … ποιηταὶ) is to 'do what is prescribed' (BDAG, 2000:842).[501] Prescribed by whom or what? By the "Word" (λόγος) – that is "the divine Word" (BDAG,

[497] But then he (Adamson, 1976:81) asserts that the "implanted Word" is not the "*Torah*" as such but the "*Torah* of the Messiah". See discussion in **Section 3.6.6. (f)**.

[498] Including, for example: ESV, NASB, KJV, NKJV, NRSV, TLV. Some translations leave it untranslated, for example: NIV, NLT, GNB.

[499] See Wallace (1996:671).

[500] Ibid.

[501] Ropes (1916:175) comments that the sense is "carry out what is commanded".

2000:599). Harris (ed.) (2010, Jas. 1:22)[502] equates "*lógos*" (λόγος) with the "Gospel", as do scholars such as Adamson (1976:82) and Davids (1982:96). However, based on the argument in **Section 4.2.3 (d)**, this seems somewhat forced. Being doers of God's Word, implies that the Word that James has in mind is directive or instructive.[503] For if the Word is merely informative,[504] then there is no need to be doers of it. But since James exhorts the beloved *adelphoí* to "be doers" (Γίνεσθε … ποιηταὶ) of it, he obviously means: "follow its instructions".[505] Blomberg & Kamell (2008:89) suggest that "doers of the Word" denotes, 'God's commandments that we should obey', and with the Sermon on the Mount (ref. Mat. 7:24-27) as 'key background', particularly the 'ethical core' in Jesus' Sermon.

James's teaching certainly echoes that of Jesus, but it is also rooted in the OT. As Moore-Keish (2019:71) points out, the term "doers of the Word" is Semitic and it can be seen in, for instance, Psalm 103:20.[506] For Jews, as Basser (2011:229-230) points out, the phrase is associated with 'performing *Torah*'.[507] A good example of "doers" of the Word of the LORD this is found in Exodus 24. In Exodus 24:7 (NASB), Moses took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people, and they said, "All that the LORD has spoken (ὅσα ἐλάλησεν κύριος, LXX) we will do (ποιήσομεν, LXX), and we will be obedient (ἀκουσόμεθα, LXX)!"[508]

To "be" (Γίνεσθε) doers is a present imperative, middle voice, verb. The sense is that of a command for 'action as an ongoing process',[509] possibly with the subject showing 'special interest in the action'.[510] Thus the beloved *adelphoí* are urged to always obey the instructions in God's Word.

In James 4:11, James is speaking about being a "*doer of the nómou*" (ποιητὴς νόμου).

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[502] Harris (ed.) (2010, Jas. 1:22) assigns LN 33.260 to λόγος (ref. Louw & Nida, 1996:416).

[503] The term "the Word of the LORD" occurs 241 times in the OT (NASB translation). Very often it expresses an instruction. For example, the very first use: Gen. 15:1 (NASB) *After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great."* And Num. 15:31 (NASB) *Because he has despised the word of the LORD and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt will be on him.*

[504] This is not to say that the Gospel as such does not instruct. Instructions in God's Word are more naturally associated with His *Torah*.

[505] God's instructions are His *Torah*. See **Glossary of Terms** for definitions of "*Torah*" and "Commandment".

[506] Psalm 103:20 (LXX) uses "*poiountes tòn logon*" (ποιοῦντες τὸν λόγον).

[507] See also: Friedman & Friedman (2012:57); Moore-Keish (2019:71); Martin (1988:49).

[508] Consider also Deuteronomy 30:14 (NKJV): "But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do (ποιεῖν) it."

[509] See Wallace (1996:485).

[510] See Wallace (1996:419-420).

And in James 2:12, he instructs the beloved *adelphoí*: "thus speak and thus do" (οὕτως λαλεῖτε καὶ οὕτως ποιεῖτε) "as those about to be judged by (the) *nómou eleutherías*" (ὡς διὰ νόμου ἐλευθερίας μέλλοντες κρίνεσθαι). And James's argument in verses 22-25 ends effectively with a "doer of the Word" being equated with "the one having looked into" (ὁ … παρακύψας εἰς) the "*nómon téleion tēs eleutherías*" (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) "and continuing in it" (καὶ παραμείνας), having become "a doer of work" (ποιητὴς ἔργου) (Jas. 1:25). Clearly, for James being a doer of the Word is synonymous with being a "doer of the *nómou"* or the "*nómon téleion tēs eleutherías*".[511] Allison (2013:325) concurs by commenting that, 'For James, to do the 'word' is to do *Torah*, that is, to obey the commands of God'.[512] McKnight (2011:147) insightfully comments: '*Torah* and "do" (ʿ*asah*) are brought together so often in the Hebrew Bible that instinct ought to lead us to see here a form of *Torah* observance'. Land (2019:80) concurs by insisting that, 'whatever else he or she is, the doer of Jas. 1 is a doer of *Torah'*.

(10) James 1:22: "and not hearers only" (καὶ μὴ ἀκροαταὶ μόνον):

The beloved *adelphoí* are to be doers of the Word and "not hearers only" (μὴ ἀκροαταὶ μόνον). The context suggests that, as with "listen" (ἀκούω), the related verb ("*akroáomai*" (ἀκροάομαι)) for "*akroatēs*" ("hearer") implies more than exercising the faculty of hearing. Presumably, it implies 'receiving news or information' (see **subsection (2)** above). According to Ropes (1916:175), "hearers" (ἀκροαταὶ) naturally suggests 'hearing the public reading of the Scriptures in Jewish or Christian worship'.[513]

The word "hearer" (ἀκροατής) occurs only four times in the NT - three times in James (Jas. 1:22, 23, 25) and once in Romans (Rom. 2:13). There is a striking parallel between James's use and the one in Romans.[514] Romans 2:13 states: "for not the hearer of *nómou*" (οὐ γὰρ οἱ ἀκροαταὶ νόμου) "(are) righteous with God" (δίκαιοι παρὰ τῷ θεῷ) "but the doers of the *nómou* shall be justified" (ἀλλ' οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου δικαιωθήσονται). Concerning this, Hartin (2003:419) comments, the similarity here between James and Paul 'is attributed to their common roots within the Jewish moral tradition'.

Moo (2000:88) insightfully comments that James's 'concern with doing' does not diminish the need for listening, but 'opposes … merely listening'. As argued in **subsection (2**) above, James's instruction to be "quick to listen" includes listening without delay, being ready and eager to receive and comprehend God's Word. In **subsection (7)** above, to humbly receive the implanted Word includes eagerly listening to and meekly accepting it, with the intention of

[511] See also Hartin (2003:98).

[512] See also: Hartin (2003:98); Moore-Keish (2019:74-75); Wall (1997:78).

[513] See also: Adamson (1976:82); Hartin (2003:98).

[514] See Allison (2013:324).

obeying it.

James's point is that while listening to the Word is imperative, so is doing the very Word that one has listened to. In fact, listening 'alone' or 'all by itself' (μόνος),[515] without subsequent doing, is unacceptable.

(11) James 1:22: "deceiving yourselves" (παραλογιζόμενοι ἑαυτούς):

Besides being unacceptable to God, in reality if you listen but don't do, you are "deceiving yourselves". According to Louw & Nida (1996:758), to "deceive" (παραλογίζομαι) is to 'deceive by arguments or false reasons'. Or as Liddell (1996:599) puts it, 'to be misled by fallacious reasoning'.

The participial clause "deceiving yourselves" (παραλογιζόμενοι ἑαυτούς), seems to convey the result of the action of the main verb ("be" only hearers). That it can be understood as a "dependent verbal participle" of "result" is confirmed by the fact that the participle "deceiving" is in the present tense and follows the main verb ("be" only hearers).[516]

The middle voice of the participle "deceiving" (παραλογιζόμενοι) and the reflexive pronoun "yourself" (ἑαυτούς) strongly emphasize the subject's[517] participation in his or her own self-deception.[518] Thus, the result of listening to the Word and not doing it, is being responsible for deluding or misleading oneself by faulty thinking or false reasoning.

But what exactly might they be deceived about? McKnight (2011:149) mentions that 'most understand this to be about final redemption'. This makes good sense in the context since the preceding verse (v.21) implies that unless the "implanted Word" is received humbly, one jeopardises the salvation of one's soul. In addition, deception might also be about being "blessed" (μακάριος), which is reserved for a "doer of work" (ποιητὴς ἔργου) of the "*nómon téleion tēs eleutherías*" (εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (v.25). Furthermore, verse 26 speaks of someone who "supposes to be religious" (δοκεῖ θρησκὸς εἶναι), but his "religion … is useless" (μάταιος ἡ θρησκεία), since he does not control his tongue, and so is "deceiving his heart" (ἀπατῶν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ).

Synopsis of James 1:22:

In addition to (and perhaps in order to) humbly receiving the implanted Word, the beloved *adelphoí* are not just to listen to the Word, but do what it instructs them to do. Otherwise they delude themselves and put their souls at fatal risk.

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[515] Louw & Nida (1996:590).

[516] See Wallace (1996:637-638).

[517] i.e. The person who listens to the Word but does not do it.

[518] See Wallace (1996:414-419).

(12) James 1:23: "because if" (ὅτι εἰ)

Verse 23 starts with the causal conjunction "because" (ὅτι), which 'expresses the basis or ground' (Wallace, 1996:674)[519] of the action commanded in verse 22. Since verses 23-25 are structurally tied together, as explained in **Section 4.2.4**, the unit (vv.23-25) as a whole forms the basis or ground for the instruction. Therefore, the two contrasting parts of the unit (vv.23-24 vs. v.25) (see **Section 4.2.4**), provide negative and opposite positive grounds.

This (i.e. the causal conjunction) is followed by the conditional conjunction "if" (εἰ), which present the condition with its protasis ("someone is a hearer of the Word and not a doer") and apodosis ("this one is like a man …") (v.23).[520] Since verses 23-25 form a contrasting parallelism (see **Section 4.2.3 (b)**) the following inferences can be drawn:

- Verse 25 is the positive opposite condition of verse 23 with its protasis being "the one having looked into the *nómon téleion tēs eleutherías* and continuing in it", and its apodosis being "this one will be blessed in his doing".
- "Hearer" (ἀκροατὴς) (v.23) is synonymous with "looking into" (παρακύπτω εἰς) (v.25), the "Word" (λόγου) (v.23) with the "*nómon téleion tēs eleutherías*" (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (v.25), and "doer" (ποιητής) (v.23) with "continuing in it" (παραμείνας) and "a doer of work" (ποιητὴς ἔργου) (v.25). These concrete actions indicate eagerness to carefully examine and faithfully obey.

(13) James 1:23: "this one is like a man" (οὗτος ἔοικεν ἀνδρὶ) "looking intently at" (κατανοοῦντι τὸ πρόσωπον)

The demonstrative pronoun, "this one" (οὗτος) is used as a substantive with special emphasis on the person previously mentioned; which is the "hearer of the Word and not a doer" (BDAG, 2000:740). The verb "is like" (ἔοικεν) means, 'to resemble' or 'to be similar to' (Louw & Nida, 1996:616). Additionally, the perfect tense verb "is like" (ἔοικεν), is intensive; which according to Dana & Mantey (1967:202) stresses the fact that 'a thing is', is in view.[521] It thus explicitly and intensively compares or associates (i.e. a simile) the particular person, who listens to the Word but does not obey it or put it into practice, with the "man" (ἀνήρ) described in the subsequent discourse. What is this man like?

The one who hears the Word but does not do what it instructs, is like a man "looking intently at …". To "look intently at" (κατανοέω) is to 'look at' something 'in a reflective manner' (BDAG, 2000:522) or in such a way as to 'discover something through direct observation'

[519] See also Louw & Nida (1996:780).

[520] See: Wallace (1996:675); Louw & Nida (1996:785).

[521] The same word "is like" (ἔοικεν) is used in James 1:6 to compare the one asking God while doubting with "a wave of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed about".

(Louw & Nida, 1996:281). The anarthrous participle "looking intently at" (κατανοοῦντι) 'asserts something about the predicate' (i.e. the "man"), and thus seems to function as a "predicate" participle (see Wallace, 1996:617-619).

(14) James 1:23: "the face of his birth in a mirror" (τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ)

Those who hear the Word but do not do it, are like the man who looks reflectively at "the face of his *genéseōs* in a mirror" in order to discover something about himself. According to Hartin (2003:99), the phrase "the face of his *genéseōs*" (τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ) means literally 'the face of his origin or birth'.[522] Blomberg & Kamell (2008:90) claim that 'it is simply a Semitism for "natural face", which in the context means 'the face they would have seen in any reflective surface since they were children'. McKnight (2011:150-153), however, argues that this could either refer to "birth" or "existence"; with the first alluding to the *imago Dei* (ontological interpretation)[523] and the second to the human sinfulness (moral interpretation). McKnight (2011:151) explains that for the first the hearer 'sees what God has made him or her to be, the *imago Dei*, but does not let the *imago Dei* shape his or her life'; and for the second the hearer 'sees his or her own sinfulness but does nothing about it'. But Moo (2000:91) opts for a more 'neutral' interpretation according to which "*genéseōs*" simply means "existence", and the phrase "the face of his *genéseōs* in a mirror" simply connotes the idea that the person sees 'what he is really like', warts and all, 'but does nothing about it'; which seems correct.

In the context of the simile in James 1:23, the idea of the man seeing his face "in a mirror" (ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ), gives it an obvious potential for a metaphorical reading.[524] Moo (2000:92) points out that 'by far the most common metaphorical application of looking into a mirror' was 'the process of moral self-reflection'. Along this line, Allison (2013:327) comments that 'one naturally envisages a religious setting in which *Torah* is read, after which it is up to the listener to decide how to act'. This is certainly a very reasonable possibility, considering who the first recipients were (refer to **Section 2.3.3**) and the fact that the *Torah* is alluded to, if not referred to, two verses later (in v.25) (also refer to **Section 4.2.3 (b) (ii)**).[525] Johnson (2008:207) emphatically states that 'the point of contrast is to the face presented by the perfect law'.[526] And Laws (1980:86) comments that, 'It may be suggested that the law shows man as he was created to be, which is also his reborn self'.

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[522] See also: Johnson (2008:207); Bird (2009:79).

[523] Based on James 3:9, McKnight (2011:151) believes, it is 'contextually sound' to suggest that James 'has in mind humans made in' the image of God.

[524] See Johnson (2008:208).

[525] Philo of Alexandria (1995:705), the Jewish philosopher (c. 20 B.C. – c. 50 A.D.) likened 'the whole of the law' to a mirror.

[526] See also: Ropes (1916:176); Hartin (2003:99); Martin (1988:51).

It can be concluded that James 1:23 is not simply an illustration of a man seeing his true self in a mirror, but that the illustration metaphorically points the moral self-reflection that occurs when someone listens intently to the instructions of God's Word, which are synonymous with the *nómon téleion tēs eleutherías*.[527] It follows that, for James, the instructions of God's Word function like a mirror. In support of this, Sproul (1992:267) asserts that 'the first purpose of the law is to be a mirror' - it 'reflects and mirrors the perfect righteousness of God'. This makes good sense in the context, since James 1:20 motivates the beloved *adelphoí* to work out God's righteous standards. Furthermore, since Scripture attributes the same qualities to the *Torah* as to the LORD Himself,[528] *Torah* does indeed reflect the character of God.[529] In addition to mirroring the character of God and His moral standards for His people (and humanity), it also exposes their defects and sins, as a mirror does for those who look intently into it. This function may be implied in James 2:9, which states that those who "work out sin" are "being convicted by the *nómou* as transgressors".[530]

(15) James 1:24: "for he looked intently at himself" (κατενόησεν γὰρ ἑαυτὸν)

According to Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Jas. 1:24), the conjunction "for" (γάρ) in James 1:24 is a "marker of emphasis", which often involves 'surprise and unexpectedness'; and which can here be translated, "indeed". This makes sense since, "he looked intently at himself" (κατενόησεν … ἑαυτὸν) basically repeats the previous thought, and thus stresses it, but with a surprising development. The verb "looked intently at" (κατενόησεν) has the identical lexical form (and thus basic meaning) as the participle, "looking intently" (κατανοοῦντι), in the preceding thought (in. v23).

This repetition of "himself" (ἑαυτὸν) in James 1:24 is parallel to "the face of his birth" (τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ) in James 1:23. This confirms that "the face of his birth" must be a true reflection of "himself", or as Allison (2013:328) remarks, it means something like, 'the way he has turned out to be, the way he really looks'. But as argued above (in **subsection (14)**) what he truly looks like, is against the backdrop of God's perfect righteousness, as reflected by the standards or instructions in His Word.

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[527] See also Lancaster (2015:75-76).

[528] For example: Holy (Isa. 5:16; 6:3 & Rom. 7:12); Pure (1 John 3:3 & Psa. 19:8); Righteous (Psa. 11:7; Isa. 42:21 & Psa. 19:9; Rom. 7:12); Good (Psa. 43:8 & Rom. 7:16); True (John 3:33 & Psa. 19:9); Perfect (Mat. 5:48 & Psa. 19:7); Love (1 John 4:8 & Rom. 13:10); Spiritual (John 4:24; Rom. 7:14); Eternal (Gen. 21:33 & Psa. 119:160; Luke 16:17); Unchangeable (Jas. 1:17 & Mat. 5:18).

[529] Isaiah 42:21 (NASB) "*The LORD was pleased for His righteousness' sake to make the law (Torah, MST) great and glorious."* Commenting on Isaiah 42:21, Smith (2009:186) insightfully notes that Isaiah viewed 'divine instructions' (i.e. *Torah*) as 'a great and glorious revelation of his character, something that would set the wise Israelites apart from the other nations (Deut 4:6).'

[530] See also: Jas. 2:11; and Rom. 7:7.

(16) James 1:24: "and he has gone away" (καὶ ἀπελήλυθεν) "and immediately he forgot" (καὶ εὐθέως ἐπελάθετο) "what sort he was" (ὁποῖος ἦν)

The two conjunctions "and" (καί) in James 1:24 are "connective" or "continuative". As Wallace (1996:671) explains, they simply add additional ideas 'to the train of thought'.

The perfect verb "he has gone away" (ἀπελήλυθεν) has a "gnomic" force, which, as Wallace (1996:580-581) explains, speaks of 'a generic or proverbial occurrence'. The implication is that the action is 'envisioned on many occasions or for many individuals' (Wallace, 1996:580).

And "immediately", "at once" (BDAG, 2000:405) or "right away" (Louw & Nida, 1996:635) (εὐθέως), "he forgot" (ἐπελάθετο) – that is, he did not 'remember' (BDAG, 2000:374) or 'recall' (Louw & Nida, 1996:347). Johnson (2008:208) points out that the use of the verb "he forgot" (ἐπελάθετο) in the LXX 'sometimes bears the sense of moral failure'.[531] Cheung (2003:132) points out that it is 'used frequently in the LXX in exhorting the people of Israel not to forget the Lord, His covenant, and God's law or commandments'.[532] Allison (2013:334) concurs, 'given the context of the verse'.

As Hartin (2003:99) observes, *hopoios hēn* (ὁποῖος ἦν) is literally, "what sort he was",[533] but its sense is 'what [he] was like'. In the context, it would mean that he forgot "what he was like morally" or "how he measured up against God's standards and instructions". And since he forgot, he obviously did nothing about it. In other words, he saw his shortcoming and what he had to do about them, but it all instantly slipped his mind, and he remained unchanged.

Synopsis of James 1:23-24:

The negative basis or grounds for being "doers of the Word and not only hearers" (v.22) is the fact that those who are not (doers of the Word), resemble (or are represented by) the proverbial man who looks directly into the mirror of God's Word with the intention of discovering their true moral state, as measured against the instructions in God's Word (i.e. His *Torah*). However, just as the man discovers his shortcomings and what God instructs him to do about them, he leaves with no recollection of the experience all.

(17) James 1:25: "but the one having looked into" (ὁ δὲ παρακύψας εἰς)

The conjunction "but" (δέ) marks a contrast (Louw & Nida, 1996:793) or opposing thought (Wallace, 1996:671). The contrast forms the second part of the contrasting parallelism in James 1:23-25 (refer to **Section 4.2.3 (b) (ii)**). While James 1:23-24 forms the negative basis

[531] See: Deut 4:9, 23, 31; 6:12; 8:14; Prov. 2:17.

[532] See, for example: Deut. 4:23; 6:2; 26:13; Psa. 119 [118]:16, 61, 93, 141, cf. m. Ab. 3:8

[533] See also BDAG (2000:716).

or motivation to be "doers of the Word and not only hearers" (Jas. 1:22), James 1:25 forms the positive basis or motivation (refer to **subsection (12)** above). Accordingly, James 1:23-24 represents the person who is a hearer of the Word and not a doer. James 1:25 represents someone who is both a hearer of the Word and a doer of the Word.

With the absence of a noun and the presence of an article, the participial phrase "the one having looked into" (ὁ … παρακύψας εἰς) is "substantival" (see Wallace, 1996:619). As such, it functions as a substantive with a finite verb, which can be rendered, "The one who looks into".[534] To "look into" (παρακύπτω) is to 'try and find out something intellectually' (BDAG, 2000:767). It is the 'figurative extension' of the meaning 'to stoop and look into', which according to Louw & Nida (1996:330), involves 'considerable effort in order to find out something'.[535] It thus involves an effort and desire to learn,[536] and gain insight and wisdom.

(18) James 1:25: "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*"[537] (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας)

Main interpretations of the term/phrase

The term/phrase "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) has been understood in various and contrary ways. The six main interpretations/options, each with a range or spectrum of sub interpretations with qualifications or nuances, include:

- Option A, "Complete revealed Word of God": Calvin (2010:297) equates the term with 'whole truth of God'. MacArthur (1998:85) does the same, but with 'particular emphasis on the Lord's commandments'.[538] According to Ropes (1916:178), it includes 'both the OT … and the precepts and truths of the Gospel'.[539] Similarly, according to Gench (1996:98), it comprises 'the will of God for our lives as revealed in the Old Testament and in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ'. Keddie (1989:77) defines the term as 'the whole of God's Word understood in terms of its fullness as Christ-centered good news'.[540]
- Option B, "The *Torah*": Allison (2013:335-336), Hegg (2020:58), Wadge (2014:77), and

[534] As rendered by, for example, the NASB, ESV, NRSV.

[535] See also Swanson (1997b).

[536] See Louw & Nida (1996:330).

[537] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[538] MacArthur (1998:3, 116) relates "the law of liberty" to the Gospel.

[539] See also Hughes (1991:75).

[540] This is Keddie's definition of "the law of liberty", the "Gospel. See also Burdick (1981:176); McCartney (2009:122).

Wall (1997:83) believe that the term refers to the "biblical *Torah*", as originally given by God through Moses.[541] Hartin (2003:100, 111-115) agrees with this, although he notes that, 'instead of speaking about ritualistic practices James focuses on the heart of the Torah, the moral guidance provided by the *Shema* Israel and the Ten Commandments', with 'the love of neighbor as giving fullest expression to the Torah'.[542] Johnson (2008:31-32) and Laws (1980:28, 37) seem to concur with Hartin, although with the stronger qualification that James probably only has the "moral" commands of the *Torah* in view. This is, according to Tasker (1973:53, 61), the 'law of the new covenant which Jeremiah prophesied would be written by God in men's inward parts and upon their hearts'.

- Option C, "The *Torah* as interpreted by Christ": Bauckham (1999:143, 146), Cheung (2003:12, 93, 99, 274), and McKnight (2011:155) propose that James has the *Torah* of God given through Moses in mind, but as interpreted by Jesus.[543] According to Moo (2000:94) and Bird (2009:81), Jesus also 'supplemented' the *Torah*. Adamson (1976:34) proposes that Jesus' interpretation is 'new', which Davids (1982:99-100) believes produces a 'new law'. Dibelius (1976:119) goes so far as to claim that the "new law", consisting of Jesus' words and ethics eventually displaced the *Torah*. However, Bauckham (1999:143, 146) insists that the "law" in James is not a "new law" but 'the same as [that] written in the books of Moses'.[544]
- Option D, "The law of Christ": Cremer (1872:452) asserts that, what James calls the "law of liberty" (Jas. 1:25; 2:12), Paul calls "the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). According to Carr (1921:34), the term indeed refers to "the law of Christ", which 'is called perfect because it is final and complete, as distinct from the Mosaic law which was transitory and imperfect; it is called a law of liberty because it is the expression of a Father's love for his children, not of a master's rules for slaves'.[545]
- Option E, "The Gospel": Mayor (1913:70) and Spence-Jones (1909:5) equate the term with the "Gospel".[546] According to Osborne (2019:56), the term is best understood as 'the Christian gospel fulfilling the Torah message'. Blomberg & Kamell (2008:91) argue

[541] Other scholars who seem to agree with the view that James has essentially the *Torah* or Law of God in mind include, for example: Kistemaker (1986:62); Moore-Keish (2019:73-75); Motyer (2010:70).

[542] See also Richardson (1997:30-31, 97-98, 124).

[543] See also Martin (1988:71).

[544] See also Cheung (2003:93, 99); McKnight (2011:155); Ropes (1916:178).

[545] See also Ross (1954:42).

[546] See also Lea (1999:266, 284).

that the term 'most likely refers to the gospel message, particularly in its role as fulfilling the OT prophecies about a new or renewed covenant'.[547] However, they (Blomberg & Kamell, 2008:92) believe that the "law of liberty" is 'in clear contrast to the Old Testament laws'.

- Option F, "The law of love": According to Knowling (1904:33), the term 'may be contrasted with the burden and yoke of the Law in its Pharisaic observance', and it 'completes and realises the object and meaning of the Mosaic law' (Mat. 5:17, cf. Jer. 31:33), 'because it sums up all commandments in the one command and principle of love' (i.e. love your neighbour) (cf. Rom. 13:8ff.; Gal. 6:2). Thus, James identifies "the law of liberty" with "the law of love" (Knowling, 1904:33). Gutbrod (1964:1081-1082) also sees the term as synonymous with "the law of love", which he says is 'the Law in the true sense'. But then he (Gutbrod, 1964:1081-1082) claims that it is 'in contrast to the old Law', and it 'binds the individual, not to specific commandments, but to the obedience of love.'[548]

The term will now be examined more closely, within its context, to determine which of the interpretations are more probable.

***Nómon* as "norm" / "principle" or "*Torah*" / "Law"**

According to BDAG (2000:677), "*nómon*" (νόμον) in James 1:25 refers to 'a procedure or practice that has taken hold',[549] and more specifically to 'life under the lordship of Jesus Christ as a "new law" or "system"'.[550] However, according to Harris (ed.) (2010, Jas.1:25),[551] it refers to "the *Torah*" or "the Law". The CJB, OJB, and TLV Bible translations support this understanding.[552]

In favour of understanding "*nómon*" in terms of a "norm" / "principle", is the fact that "*nómon*" does not stand alone, but is qualified/modified. In this regard, Gutbrod (1964:1081) asserts that the addition of the adjectives "*téleion"* and *"eleutherías"* to the noun *"nómon"* is 'to protect the term against the misunderstanding that the commandment of the OT Law is meant'. But

[547] See also Moffatt (1928:28).

[548] See also Du Toit (2020:289, 296).

[549] Or 'a formalized rule (or set of rules) prescribing what people must do' (Louw & Nida, 1996:425).

[550] This interpretation seems to be supported by several scholars including, for example: Dibelius (1976:116); Du Toit (2020:289); Martin (1998:51); Moffatt (1928:28).

[551] Harris (ed.) (2010, Jas. 1:25) assigns LN 33.55 to νόμος (ref. Louw & Nida, 1996:394).

[552] Scholars who support this interpretation include, amongst others: Allison (2013:283); Bauckham (1999:146); Hartin (2003:100); Hegg (2020:58); Kistemaker (1986:62); McKnight (2011:155); Motyer (2010:71); Wall (1997:83).

this is not necessarily the case. As Dana & Mantey (1967:117) explain, 'the primary and most characteristic use of the adjective is to limit or describe a noun'. James' purpose might be to describe the *"nómon"* rather than distinguish or differentiate it from the *Torah*; in which case Gutbrod (1964:1081) is dismissing the very *Torah* that James is describing.

The following reasons, from the Study so far, can be offered in favour of understanding "*nómon*" in terms of "Torah" / "Law":

- The historical and literary contexts (refer to **Chapter 2**), as wells as biblical roots of James (refer to **Chapter 3**), suggest that it would be natural for "*nómon*" (νόμον) in James 1:25 to mean "*Torah*" or "the Law" (refer to "*Torah*" in the **Glossary of Terms**). In line with this, Moo (2000:94) concedes that, 'Granted James's background and context, a reference to the law of Moses seems certain'. Hartin (2003:111) rightfully asserts that the 'term must be seen against [the] high context' of James' (first) hearers/readers from 'the world of the house of Israel'. This, together with 'James's references to the Torah throughout the letter', according to Hartin (2003:111), suggest that 'the best way to express James's understanding of the law is to refer to it as "the law of Israel", which in effect is the biblical Torah'. McKnight (2013:155) insists that 'there would seem to be only one real possibility here for James: he is referring to the Torah of Moses'.
- In the immediate exegetical context (James 1:18-25) (refer to **Chapter 4** so far, including especially **Section 4.2.3(d)**), there is a clear and logical progression from "birth … by the Word of Truth" (v.18), to "in humility receive the implanted Word" (v.21), to "be doers of the Word" (vv.22-23), to "the one having looked into", "continuing in" and being a "doer of work" of the "perfect *nómon*, that of freedom" (v.25). There is an obvious shift from God's redemptive to His instructive Word.[553] This shift is marked by the idea of "doing what is prescribed" by God (in v.22), which is naturally associated with God's Law or *Torah* (refer to **Subsection (9)** above and "*Torah*" in **Glossary of Terms**).
- James is packed with practical instructions (as noted in **Section 2.5.1**), many of which are specifically rooted in the *Torah* (refer to **Sections 3.5.6** and **3.6.7**), and all of which can be generally categorized under the "weightier matters of the *Torah*" (refer to **Section 3.5.5**).[554] As Doriani (2007:6) notes, this indicates that the Letter 'has an obvious zeal for law'. But more than that, it indicates that James sees "*nómon*" not

[553] See: McCartney (2009:122-123); Moo (2000:94).

[554] Thus the notion/view that Christians are to live by an "overarching principle" without specific written commandments/rules that give practical expression to that principle, clashes with James.

merely as a principle, but as consisting of specific practical instructions.[555] The immediate context (Jas. 1:19-27) supports this view, with James giving instructions about controlling one's speech and anger, about listening and doing, about righteousness and purity, and about caring for orphans and widows.

The above seems to swing the balance of probability towards "*nómon*" meaning "Torah" / "Law" rather than "norm" / "principle". However, the text has to be further scrutinized before a decision can be made.

Description of *nómon*

As noted above, *"nómon*" does not stand alone. It is qualified/modified by two accompanying adjectives, "*téleion*" (τέλειον) and "*eleutherías*" (ἐλευθερίας).

According to BDAG (2000:995), the word "*téleion*" (τέλειον) here pertains to that which meets 'the highest standard' and can be translated "perfect". And according to Harris (ed.) (2010, Jas. 1:25),[556] "perfect" is more in the sense of 'not lacking any moral quality'. The immediate (incl. vv.19-27, and especially vv.20-21 & 27) and preceding (incl. vv.1-18, and especially vv.12-15) contexts seem to place the emphasis on moral perfection.

It is noted that the noun-adjective construction (*nómon téleion*) is anarthrous.[557] According to Wallace (1996:309), such constructions can 'express either an attributive or predicate relation'. Wallace (1984:130) notes that while the latter is possible it is not nearly as prevalent. Robertson (2006:656) explains the difference in meaning between the predicate and attributive as follows:

> *The distinction between the attributive adjective and the predicate adjective lies in just this, that the predicate presents an additional statement, is indeed the main point, while the attributive is an incidental description of the substantive about which the statement is made.*

The context suggests that the adjective (*téleion*) describes or ascribes a quality ("perfect") to the noun ("*nómon"*), rather than asserting something about it (i.e. "*nómon" is* "*téleion*").[558] Accordingly, the phrase is better rendered "perfect *nómon*" than "*nómon* is perfect",[559] although it might be true that the "*nómon"* is perfect".

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[555] In his study of James, Evans (1983:37) concluded: 'The law, then, stands as a list of commandments to which obedience is expected …'.

[556] Harris (ed.) (2010, Jas. 1:25) assigns LN 88.36 to τέλειος (ref. Louw & Nida, 1996:745).

[557] That is, it has no article.

[558] See Dana & Mantey (1967:118).

[559] This understanding is reflected in many, if not all, English Bible translations, including: AMP, CJB, ESV, GNB, KV, NASB, NIV, NKJV, NLT, NRSV, LITV, OJB, RV, TLV, TR, YLT.

The word "perfect" (τέλειος) is used five times in James – in James 1:4 (twice); 1:17; 1:25; and 3:2.[560] As discussed in **Section 4.2.3 (e)**, the idea of "perfection" (which is associated with completeness or wholeness) is a dominant theme in James. This being the case, the "*nómon téleion*" is naturally connected with what the beloved *adelphoi* need in order to have "wisdom" (σοφία) (from above) (Jas. 1:5; cf. 3:13-18) so that they can "let endurance have perfect work" (ὑπομονὴ ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω) in order to be "perfect and complete" (τέλειοι καὶ ὁλόκληροι) (Jas. 1:4), each of them a "perfect" (τέλειος) person who "does not stumble in word" (ἐν λόγῳ οὐ πταίει) (Jas. 3:2). The *nómon téleion* is also naturally associated with "every perfect present" (πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον) "from above" (ἄνωθεν) (Jas. 1:17).[561]

The noun "*eleutheria*" (ἐλευθερία) is 'the state of being free' and can be translated "freedom" or "liberty" (BDAG, 2000:316).[562] But in what sense is the freedom? Thayer (1889:204) suggests that "*eleutheria*", in this context, is 'freedom from the dominion of corrupt desires, so that we do by free impulse of the soul what the will of God requires'.[563] But according to Ropes (1916:178), "*eleutheria*" points to the liberty that those who do observe the "*nómon"* will experience/enjoy.[564] While both senses are certainly plausible, perhaps James' thinking here is more towards the second, without denying the first; especially since Scripture teaches that freedom and power to obey God comes from God Himself,[565] while His instructions delineate the path on which freedom, wholeness, and blessing are experienced.

The object of James 1:25a (i.e. νόμον τέλειον) is clarified or qualified by the succeeding clause "*tòn tēs eleutherías*". According to Robertson (2006:780), the definite article "*tòn"* (τὸν) with the genitive "*tēs eleutherías"* (τῆς ἐλευθερίας) is used demonstratively, and can thus be rendered "perfect *nómon* – that of freedom".

The genitive phrase "of freedom" (τῆς ἐλευθερίας) is understood to be "attributive"

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[560] If the words "*teléō*" (τελέω) (2:8) and "*teleióō*" (τελειόω) (2:20) are added, the number is seven. Bauckham (2014:73) believes that 'it is surely no accident' that the (perfect/complete) word group is used seven times in James, since 'seven is the number of perfection or completeness'.

[561] See: Allison (2013:342); Hartin (2003:100, 112); Johnson (2008:209); Richardson (1997:97); Wall (1997:83).

[562] See also Louw & Nida (1996:487).

[563] See also: Cheung (2003:95); Martin (1988:51); Richardson (1997:97).

[564] See Allison (2013:338); Doriani (2007:6, 54); Kistemaker (1986:62); Moore-Keish (2019:73).

[565] Relevant Scriptures include, for example: 1 Chron. 29:18-19; 2 Chron. 30:12; (Jer. 24:7; 32:29); Ezek. 11:19-20; Rom. 8:1-4 (refer to **Section 6.2.4** for an exegesis of the passage). In the context of the New Covenant, Ezekiel 36:26-27 is especially pertinent:

(26) Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. (27) I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. (Ezek. 36:26-27, NASB).

(Robertson, 2006:496). As such it 'specifies an attribute or innate quality of the head substantive' (Wallace, 1996:86-88);[566] which is the "perfect *nómon*". This being the case, the "*nómon* of liberty" or "*nómon* of freedom" can be equated to the "liberating *nómon*", or "the *nómon* that is characterised by freedom" (Wallace, 1996:87).

It follows that James's purpose in using the "*nómon"* term is to describe or specify particular qualities or attributes of the "*nómon"*, which are "perfection" and "freedom".[567] This complements his bigger purpose (in Jas. 1:22-25) of urging his readers to be diligent in studying the "*nómon"* in order to be doers of God's instructive Word (refer to **Subsections (9)** and **(17)** above); which results in blessing (see **Subsection (22)** below); which includes "perfection" and "freedom". Thus, it seems as if James is not so much concerned about distinguishing one particular "*nómon"* from another, as he is to motivate his readers to benefit from the "*nómon"* they are well familiar with.

***Associations of Torah* with "imperfection" and "bondage"**

Associations of the *Torah* with imperfection/incompleteness and bondage has led some scholars to rule out the possibility that "*nómos"* in James 1:25 could refer to the *Torah*. For example, Ross (1954:42) asserts that 'the Law of Christ is perfect, because it is final and complete, as contrasted with the Law of Moses which was not'.[568] And Plumptre (1890:61) argues that since 'the Council at which St. James presided, the law of Moses, as such, was described as "a yoke" of bondage (Acts 15:10), even as St. Paul spoke of it (Gal. 5:1)', 'St. James must necessarily speak of a new Law'. Similarly, Mayor (1913:70-71) maintains that the "Mosaic law" is 'merely rudimentary', whereas the "law of liberty" is perfect because it 'carries out, completes, realizes' and 'replaces' the "Mosaic law", and it contrasts with the 'bondage' of it (cf. Acts 15:10; Rom. 8:2ff; Gal. 4:2ff; 21ff.). However, the following points cast doubt on these views:

- Firstly, closer examination of NT Scriptures such as Acts 15:10 and Galatians 5:1 reveals that "bondage" is not being attributed to the *Torah* itself but to incorrect interpretation and application of it. In Acts 15:10, Peter's argument centers on the "way" of salvation being "through the grace of the Lord Jesus" (v.11) rather than through one's efforts "to observe the Law of Moses" (v.5), which is "a yoke which neither our fathers [i.e. OT believers] nor we [i.e. NT believers] have been able to bear" (v.10) (NASB).[569] Similarly, in Galatians,

[566] See also Robertson (2006:496).

[567] See: Burdick (1981:176); Cheung (2003:93); Doriani (2007:53-54); Laws (1980:87); Motyer (2010:70); Ropes (1916:178).

[568] See also Carr (1921:34).

[569] See: Kistemaker (1990:546-547); Polhill (1992:327); Stott (1994:245-246); Thomas (2011:413-414).

Paul explains that "seeking to be justified by the law" (Gal. 5:4), rather than "through the Spirit, by faith" (v.5) in Christ, subjects a person to "a yoke of slavery" (NASB).[570] The (justified) believer is set free by Christ and is empowered by the Spirit to put their faith into action through acts of love,[571] which fulfills the Law (Gal. 5:6-23).[572]

- Secondly, as argued above, James's use of "*téleion*" (τέλειον) carries primarily the meaning of "moral perfection", rather than of being "complete" per se; for which James uses a different word in James 1:4 ("*holóklēros*", ὁλόκληρος). Furthermore, as concluded in **Section 3.4.4**, the *Torah* is the foundational and functional core Scripture, which later revelation builds upon, expounds, and applies. Hebrews 7:19 (NASB) does say, "for the Law made nothing perfect (ἐτελείωσεν)". But again, on closer examination of the context and overall argument, the writer to the Hebrews is talking specifically about the *Torah's* requirement(s) about the Levitical Priesthood and the associated sacrificial system that did not decisively deal with sin, but made way for Jesus, the perfect and permanent High Priest, whose sacrifice dealt with sin once for all (refer to "Excursus: *Nómos* (νόμος) in Hebrews" in **Section 6.2.5**). Nevertheless, the *Torah* itself is perfect as is proven below.

***Torah* is Perfect**

The idea 'that the *Torah* is perfect, accords with Jewish tradition', as Allison (2013:336) points out.[573] It also has its roots in the OT, as Martin (1988:51) insists.

Psalm 19:7 (LXX) says: "the *Torah* of the LORD is *ámōnos*" (ὁ νόμος τοῦ κυρίου ἄμωμος). According to BDAG (2000:56), *ámōnos* (ἄμωμος) pertains 'to being without fault and therefore [being] morally blameless'. Accordingly, the *Torah* of the LORD in the OT is morally perfect. However, *ámōnos* (ἄμωμος) is a translation of the Hebrew word "*tamim*" (תָּמִים), which is rich in meaning. HALOT (2000:1749) outlines the following five nuances for "*tamim*", with Psalm 19:7 listed under the third: (1) 'complete, unscathed, intact'; (2) 'without fault, free of blemish'; (3) 'perfect'; (4) 'impeccable'; and (5) 'honest, devout'. Wilson (2002:366) insightfully observes that *Torah*'s perfection or 'essential wholeness' is the 'basis for all [its] other characteristics' in Psalm 19, including: 'trustworthiness (19:7c), rightness (19:8a), radiance (19:8c), purity (19:9), certainty (19:9c), and righteousness (19:9d)'. Similarly, Craigie (2004:181) comments, 'in every sense and dimension, the Lord's *Torah* is good: it is "perfect", "sure", "upright", "pure", "radiant", and "true"'. There can be little doubt that the Psalmist means to say that the *Torah* of the LORD

[570] See: Boice (1976:486); Hendriksen (2002:191-192); Ryken (2005:194-195); Stott (1986:132-133).

[571] Which are prescribed by the Law (cf. Mat. 22:36-40; Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14; Jas. 2:8-11).

[572] Refer also to **Section 6.2.4** for an exposition of Romans 8:1-4.

[573] As evidence, Allison (2013:336) mentions: Psa. 19:8; Rom. 7:12; Philo, *Mos.* 2.12–16; 3 En. 11.1 ('the perfect *Torah*'); Alphabet of Akiba BHM 3.14 ('the perfect *Torah*'). He also notes: 2 Sam. 22:31 and Psa. 18:30: God's 'way' is 'perfect'.

is indeed perfect.

Thus, when James refers to the "perfect *nómon*", it is both reasonable and sound to understand him to refer to essentially the same *Torah* as in Psalm 19 (i.e. the *Torah* of the LORD), highlighting its perfection.[574] Moore-Keish (2019:74) perceptively observes that 'it is the perfection of the law itself, which is given as a life-giving word to guide [the believer's] every action'.[575] As discussed in **Section 4.2.3 (e)** and alluded to above, the word "perfect" (τέλειος) acts as a "catchword" in James. As such its use with *nómos* (νόμος) in James 1:25 connects it with the idea of allowing "endurance" (ὑπομονή) to "have perfect work" (ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω) in James 1:4 and with "every perfect present" (πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον) "from above" (ἄνωθεν) (Jas. 1:17). The implication is that the *Torah* is God's perfect gift to enable the *adelphoí* to endure in their faith so that they may be "perfect and complete" (τέλειοι καὶ ὁλόκληροι).[576] Therefore, the following strong assertion by Hartin (2003:100) is a plausible one:

> *'Without doubt the law is truly the gift from God that brings wholeness and completeness. The law James has in mind is the biblical Torah, the expression of God's will for God's people'.*[577]

Furthermore, scholars recognise that the *Torah* reflects God's character and perfections.[578] Since He is perfect and *Torah* reflects His character and behaviour (refer to **subsection (14)** above), it makes sense that James would call it, the "perfect *Torah*".

Torah is Liberating

As noted above, the "*nómon* of liberty" can be equated to the "liberating *nómon*", or "the *nómon* that is characterised by freedom" (Wallace, 1996:87). Can this be said about the *Torah*?

According to Hartin (2003:100), the concept of '*Torah* as the law of liberty' is not 'a new idea introduced by James but is attested to in Jewish tradition. Allison (2013:337-338) cites as evidence, i.a. "no one is free except he who labors in the *Torah*" (m. Abot 6.2).[579]

The *Torah* Psalm, Psalm 119, states in verse 45 (NASB): "And I will walk at liberty

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[574] As Wall (1997:89) points out, 'most scholars recognize the importance of its [i.e. *Torah's* perfection] Old Testament roots, particularly in the *Torah* Psalm 18:7 (19:7) (cf. Psalm 1, 119) where it is used as an idiom of praise for the Mosaic revelation of God's will'.

[575] This thought links the *nómos* back to the *lógos* in vv.23, 22, 21, 19.

[576] For *Torah* as God's perfect gift to His people, refer to **Section 3.6.5 (b)**. See: Land (2019:80) and Wall (1997:81).

[577] Refer also to **Section 3.6.5 (b)**.

[578] Including, i.a.: Bahnsen (1999:142); Leithart (2020:5-6); Packer (2007:37); Strickland (1999:158); Vangemeren (1999:35-36).

[579] See also: Johnson (2008:209); Moo (2000:94); Martin (1988:51); Ropes (1916:178).

(πλατυσμῷ, LXX), for I seek Your precepts (ἐντολάς, LXX).” The Hebrew word translated “liberty” (“rahab”,רָחָב) literally means ‘broad, wide, spread out’ (HALOT, 2000:1211). Wilcock (2001:200) brings out the sense well by commenting that the *Torah* is ‘not restricting but liberating’. Commenting on Psalm 119:45 and 119:96, Kidner (1975:456) observes that ‘where God is master, service is perfect freedom’, and such freedom ‘is found in God’s precepts, not in release from them’.[580] Kistemaker (1986:62) is thus accurate in saying, ‘within the boundaries of the law of God man is free … When he crosses the boundaries, he becomes a slave to sin’. Indeed, outside the *perfect Torah*, there is bondage.[581] It is in keeping or observing or living by the perfect *Torah* that a person experiences freedom.[582] The TLV’s rendering of, “the perfect Torah, the Torah that gives freedom”, thus makes sense.

Motyer (2010:71) very helpfully observes that God gave His *Torah* at Mount Sinai:

> *‘not to those He [was] bringing into bondage by imposing His law upon them, but to those who [were then] (for the first time) enjoying liberty, and to whom He gave His perfect Law in order to safeguard the freedom He [had] secured for them’.*

As noted above, the *Torah* reflects God’s character. Or as Motyer (2016:349) maintains, it ‘expresses His image in terms of commandments’. If this is so, is true freedom not about living according to His commandments in order to honour His image? Conversely, is true bondage not an inability and/or unwillingness to live a life that is consistent with the *Torah* or the character God?

According to Tasker (1973:53) the Law seems to be called “the Law of Liberty” because ‘true freedom’ is found ‘in service of God’s will’, and because ‘the believer accepts it without any compulsion’. He (Tasker, 1973:53) adds that ‘the Christian loves God’s commandments and is eager to obey them’. This perspective is certainly in line with the New Covenant promise, concerning which the LORD declares: “I will put My law (*Torah*, MST; νομους, LXX) within them and on their heart I will write it” (Jer. 31:33, NASB); and “I will put My Spirit (πνευμα, LXX) within you and cause you to walk in My statutes (δικαιωμασιν, LXX)” (Ezek. 36:26, NASB).

Finding

From the above, it seems reasonable and biblical to understand that the perfect *nómon*, to

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[580] Along similar lines Martin (1988:51) contends that, ‘Freedom is not from the works of the law …, but rather it connotes a release from self-interest and a new capacity to practice God’s will in the interests of one’s needy neighbor (v.27).’

[581] Stern (1996:727) comments that ‘*it is the Torah which, because it is perfect, gives freedom! Only rebellious antinomians seek to be free from rules and regulations; the wise understand that only within a framework of law is true freedom possible.*’

[582] See: Barclay (1976:60); Hartin (2003:100); Wadge (2014:77).

which James also attributes liberty, is none other than the *Torah* of the LORD.[583] Ropes' (1916:178) assertion therefore seems fitting:[584]

> *It is also evident that the words τέλειον and τῆς ἐλευθερίας are not introduced in order thereby to mark the law which James has in mind as distinguished from, and superior to, the Jewish law.*

With the following commentary, Calvin (2010b:297-298) insightfully explains how James's description of the Law (*Torah*) as both perfect and liberating does not contradict but complements or completes Paul's teaching on the Law:[585]

> *As long as the law is preached by the external voice of man, and not inscribed by the finger and Spirit of God on the heart, it is but a dead letter, and as it were a lifeless thing. It is, then, no wonder that the law is deemed imperfect, and that it is the law of bondage; for as Paul teaches in Gal. 4:24, separated from Christ, it generates bondage; … But the Spirit of regeneration, who inscribes it on our inward parts, brings also the grace of adoption. It is, then, the same as though James had said, "The teaching of the law, let it no longer lead you to bondage, but, on the contrary, bring you to liberty; let it no longer be only a schoolmaster, but bring you to perfection: it ought to be received by you with sincere affection, so that you may lead a godly and a holy life.*

Assessment of the main interpretations of the term/phrase

Option A: The view that the term/phrase, "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*", is best understood as, "the complete revealed Word of God", has merit. The chain of concepts in James 1:18-25 (refer to **Section 4.2.3 (d)**) connects "*lógos*" and "*nómos*" in such a way as to suggest that they are practically interchangeable or synonymous terms, as many scholars note.[586] However, as discussed above, there is a clear shift in James's thought from God's redemptive Word (in Jas. 1:18-21) to His instructive Word (in Jas. 1:22-25). This is not just to affirm that the "*nómos"* is truly God's Word, but to focus believers specifically on God's "*nómos"* in order to be doers of it, and be blessed as a result. Therefore, instead of defining "*nómos"* as God's Word generally, James seems to direct the readers to the specifics of His instructions or commandments. This is not to deny the need to interpret and apply the "*nómos"* in the context of the whole Word of God. But it is to insist on not losing focus in James 1:25 on the prescriptions of God's revealed will. Therefore, it does not seem as if "the complete revealed

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[583] Leithart (2020:5) concurs by stating: 'According to Scripture, *Torah* is the "perfect law of liberty" (Jas. 1:25; 2:12)'.

[584] See also Hegg (2020:58).

[585] See also: Hegg (2020:59-60) and Lancaster (2015:76).

[586] Scholars include i.a.: Adamson (1976:84); Allison (2013:335); Ellenburg & Morgan (2008:83); Kistemaker (1986:61); MacArthur (1998:85); Moore-Keish (2019:73); Osborne (2019:57); Richardson (1997:30).

Word of God" best captures what James has in mind with the term "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*".

Option E: The view that the term/phrase refers to the "Gospel" may be possible, depending on how the Gospel is defined. If it is defined broadly enough to include the *Torah* (or at least the *Torah* of Jer. 31:33), then it is feasible. However, but then it presents a similar problem to that of Option A in that the instructive focus of James 1:25 is blurred. Blomberg & Kamell (2008:92), who promote the view that "*nómos"* in James 1:25 refers to the Gospel, concede that the Hebrew Scriptures feature in James's conception of "*nómos"*, and would more likely form 'an integral part' of it, 'the earlier the letter is and the more Jewish James's communities are'. This Study has found that the Letter is likely very early and the original recipients, as well as the contents of the Letter, are very Jewish (refer to **Section 2.8**). Furthermore, as argued in **Sections 3.6.5 (f)** and **4.2.3 (d)** it seems unlikely that James is talking specifically about the Gospel in Pauline terms in James 1:18-24, let alone in v.25. Granted, for proper interpretation and application of the "*nómos"*, it cannot be divorced from the Gospel. But that does not necessitate for the "*nómos"* in James 1:25 to mean "Gospel".

Option F: The proposal that the "perfect *nómon*, that of freedom" is the "love commandment", seems to be the least likely option of the six main interpretations outlined at the beginning of this Section. Certainly, the "love commandment" is at the heart of the Law, and it is its great goal and summarising principle (refer to **Section 4.3.6 (3)**).[587] However, the love commandment does not replace the Law, but it finds its practical expression in obedience to the commandments of the Law (refer to **Sections 4.3.6 (3)** & **6.2.7**).

Option D: The term/phrase could conceivably refer to "the law of Christ", again depending how it is defined. If it is defined, as in **Glossary of Terms**, as "the *Torah* as interpreted and applied by Christ", then it is equivalent to Option C, which is certainly plausible. However, this terminology is not present in James. Using it seems to be 'due to harmonizing James with the rest of the Christian canon', as Allison (2013:335) comments. To avoid reading into James, and in order to interpret James on his own terms, the remaining two options are preferred.

Option B: As demonstrated above, there is a strong case for understanding "perfect *nómon*, that of freedom" to refer to the "*Torah*" or "Law of God" as originally given through Moses. This *Torah* is characterised by perfection and liberty. As such it can be translated, "perfect *Torah*, that of liberty". It is evidently the same *Torah* as that which God promised to gift and inscribe into the inner beings of His new covenant people (Jer. 31:33) (refer to **Section 6.2.5**). Whether or not it includes the ritual commandments, is unclear at this stage.

Option C: "The *Torah* as interpreted by Christ" can be a very appealing option

[587] See also: Mat. 22:36-40; Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14.

theologically. It receives support by several leading scholars, including Bauckham (1999:143), Davids (1982:99-100), Martin (1988:71), McKnight (2011:155), Moo (2000:94), and others. In favour of this option is the fact that James is a Christian document under the Lordship of Christ (Jas. 1:1) (refer to **Section 2.2.1**). James' focus on the two greatest commandments and the weightier matters of the *Torah* (refer to **Sections 3.5.3** and **3.5.5**) resemble Christ's interpretation and hermeneutic of the *Torah*. However, as argued in **Section 6.2.1**, Christ did not remove the *Torah* but gave it its right and full meaning and made its intended purpose a reality (Mat. 5:17-20). Therefore, if by this option a "new law" is meant, or something that is essentially different from the *Torah*, then it becomes questionable.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while there may be several possible ways to express and explain the term/phrase, "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*", the "perfect *Torah*, that of freedom" (i.e. Option B) seems best for the following reasons:

- It seems to best reflect the background and thought world of James and his first readers, as well as the context and character of the Letter.
- It fits well with James's flow of argument and the actual contents of the Letter. This point is corroborated in the subsequent exegesis.
- The idea of the *Torah* as a perfect gift from God, implanted by Him within His people, to instruct them towards perfection, and to guide them along the path of freedom, is strongly supported by the OT Scriptures (Jer. 31:33; Psa. 19, 119; Prov. 4:2); which functioned as the canon of James and his first readers (refer to **Section 3.3.2**).
- The rendering as proposed, arguably best preserves James's language and thought, and protects the term from being read into with ideas that may cloud or blur what James is actually teaching.

(19) James 1:25: "and continuing in it" (καὶ παραμείνας)

The conjunction "and" (καί) in James 1:25 is "connective" or "continuative". It thus adds an additional idea 'to the train of thought' (see Wallace, 1996:671).

The lexical form of the participle "*parameínas"* (παραμείνας) is "paraménō" (παραμένω), which means 'to continue in an activity or state', and can be translated "to continue", "to remain in", or "to keep on" (Louw & Nida, 1996:655).

According to Wallace (1996:270-275), the conjunction "and" (καί) plus the participle "*parameínas"* (παραμείνας) is the latter part of a "TSKS" (i.e. the-substantive-kaí-substantive) construction, with the first part being "the" (ὁ) "one having looked into" (παρακύψας). There is therefore a close connection between the two participles, "the one having looked into" (ὁ παρακύψας) and *parameínas"* (παραμείνας). And since both participles have identical forms,

and neither is impersonal, plural, or a proper name, the second refers to the same person as the first.[588] The construction thus conveys the meaning: "The one who looks into" … "and continues (in)". Adding the words in between, the full sense is: "The one who looks into the perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom, and continues (in)".

The question arises, what exactly does "the one having looked into the perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom" continue in (i.e. "what is the object")? Does the person continue "looking into the perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom", or continue in it (i.e. "the perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom)"? Rendering the participial phrase simply as "and perseveres", the ESV and NRSV seem to suggest the first. Adding the words "in it" after "continue", the LITV, (NASB),[589] NKJV, TLV, and NIV seem to suggest the second. The first option places the emphasis in the activity of "looking into". The second option, however, places the emphasis on "remaining in" or "abiding by" the "perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom"; which would carry the ideas of both "looking into" and "following" the instructions of the perfect *Torah*.[590] The explanatory clause that follows, seem to confirm the second option.[591] Therefore the rendering "and continuing in it" or "remaining in it"[592] is preferred.

Furthermore, as Allison (2013:341) insightfully observes, the idea of "continuing" corresponds with 'the theme of endurance' (ὑπομονή) (Jas. 1:3-4) or "to endure" (ὑπομένω) (Jas. 1:12; 5:11), that is 'important to [James]'. This being the case, in order to endure, the beloved *adelphoí* are to continue in the "perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom".

(20) James 1:25: "not having become a hearer of forgetfulness" (οὐκ ἀκροατὴς ἐπιλησμονῆς γενόμενος)

The conjunction "not" (οὐκ) marks a negative proposition (Louw & Nida, 1996:996), that rules out what "looking into" (παρακύψας) and "continuing in" (παραμείνας) the "perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom" cannot mean. It cannot mean "having become a hearer of forgetfulness" (ἀκροατὴς ἐπιλησμονῆς γενόμενος).

As explained in **subsection (10)** above, a "hearer" (ἀκροατὴς) is someone who 'receives information'. In the context, the information must be *Torah*, very possibly in the context of synagogue worship. The idea behind "forgetfulness" (ἐπιλησμονή) (v.25) is 'to not recall information concerning some particular matter'; which is identical to that behind the verb

[588] See Wallace (1996:171-172).

[589] Using "abides by", instead of "continues in", the NASB has a very similar rendering than the NKJV, LITV, TLV, and NIV.

[590] Allison (2013:341) concurs by stating: 'Here continued hearing and doing are likely envisaged'.

[591] See Moo (2000:94-95).

[592] Davids (1982:100) renders it: "and remains in".

"forget" (ἐπιλανθάνομαι) in James 1:24 (Louw & Nida, 1996:347). To "become" (γενόμενος) a "hearer of forgetfulness" is to 'acquire or experience [the] state' (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, Jas. 1:25) of a person who receives God's instructions, but then forgets them without heeding them. The simile in James 1:23-24 gives an apt image of such a person (see **subsections (12) – (16)** above).

As McKnight (2011:159) points out, the 'connection of "forget" with "law" is typical of the Old Testament'. For example, Deuteronomy 8:11 (NASB) states, "Beware that you do not forget (επιλαθη, LXX) the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments (εντολας, LXX) and His ordinances (κριματα, LXX) and His statutes (δικαιωματα, LXX) …".[593] Interestingly, here, forgetting the LORD's commandments is to forget the LORD Himself. Conversely, keeping them is to remember Him!

(21) James 1:25: "but a doer of work" (ἀλλὰ ποιητὴς ἔργου)

The contrastive conjunction "but" (ἀλλὰ) forms a pair with the previous conjunction "not" (οὐκ).[594] Whereas the "negative" conjunction ("not") marks what "looking into" (παρακύψας) and "continuing in" (παραμείνας) the "perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom" cannot mean, this one ("but") marks what it does mean. And obviously, "but" indicates that the two ideas are opposites.

As explained in **subsection (9)** above, a "doer" (ποιητὴς) is someone who does what is prescribed. In James 1:22, a "doer" does what God prescribes in His Word. And as argued in **subsection (9)** above, for James being a "doer of the Word" is synonymous with being a "doer of the *Torah*"; especially since James has the instructive Word of God in mind. Moreover, as demonstrated in **subsection (18)** above, for James the *Torah* is synonymous with "perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom" in James 1:25.

Here in James 1:25, however, James talks about being a "doer of work" (ποιητὴς ἔργου). As in the case of James 1:22-23, to "be doers" (Γίνεσθε … ποιηταὶ) is to 'do what is prescribed' (BDAG, 2000:842). Prescribed where? In the perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom, as the context suggests (see also **Section 4.2.3. (b) (iii)**). According to Harris (ed.) (2010, Jas. 1:25),[595] "work" (ἔργον) is 'that which one normally does'; which can be translated as "work" or "task"'.[596] Thus the full sense is: a person who does "what is prescribed in the perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom as their normal work or task". Perhaps one could say as their way of life.

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[593] McKnight (2011:159) cites: Deut. 4:23; 6:12; 26:13; Psa. 119:16. See also: Psa. 119:83, 93, 109, 141, 153, 176.

[594] See Wallace (1996:672).

[595] Harris (ed.) (2010, Jas. 1:25) assigns LN 42.42 to ἔργον (ref. Louw & Nida, 1996:514).

[596] This seems to fit the context better than BDAG's (2000:390) definition of "work" (ἔργον) as being 'that which displays itself in activity of any kind'.

Ropes (1916:180) asserts that the phrase “a doer of work” ‘gives a certain emphasis’ – the person is “a doer who does.” Similarly, Hartin (2003:100) has discerned an emphasis by suggesting that the phrase ‘is an emphatic way of describing the one who carries out the law’. It is supported by Allison (2013:343) who comments that, given the *nómon* (in v.25) it is ‘natural to suppose that’ “a doer of work” (ποιητὴς ἔργου) ‘denotes one who does the work that *Torah* demands’.

According to Allison (2013:342), the whole phrase, “not having become a hearer of forgetfulness but a doer of work”, is reminiscent of the OT idiom, ‘remember (to do) the/his commandments’, and the refrain in Psalm 119, “about not forgetting God’s law/word”. In support, he (Allison, 2013:342) refers to, i.a. to Numbers 15:39-40 (NASB),[597] which states:

> *(39) "It shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember (μνησθησεσθε, LXX) all the commandments (εντολων, LXX) of the LORD, so as to do (ποιησετε, LXX) them and not follow after your own heart and your own eyes, after which you played the harlot, (40) so that you may remember to do (ποιησητε, LXX) all My commandments (εντολας, LXX) and be holy to your God. (Num. 15:39-40).*

The word, “work” (ἔργον), also occurs in James 1:4. This may establish another connection between James 1:25 and James 1:2-4, in addition to the connection to the word “perfect” (τέλειος). This strengthens the possibility that a connection between James 1:2-4 and 1:25 is indeed intentional. If this is so, then for endurance (in faith) to have its perfect work, the *adelphoí* are to be doers of the work of *Torah*. Moreover, the word “work” (ἔργον) is a key word in James 2:14-26, being used 12 times in the passage. There the key idea is that “faith without works” (πίστις χωρὶς ἔργων) “is dead” (νεκρά ἐστιν) (Jas. 2:26, cf. 2:17). The question about which “works” (in James 2:14-26) might be answered by James 1:25.[598] The idea, then, is: “Faith without the works of *Torah*” is dead. This connection between James 1:25 and James 2:14-26 is not unlikely since James 1:19-27 is structurally linked to James 2 (see **Section 2.7.4**). Coker (2015:195) concurs by insisting that ‘what follows in James 2:14-26 can hardly refer to anything other than works of the Law.’

Finally, a connection may also exist between James 1:25 and James 3:13 in which the “wise and understanding” person is exhorted to show “out of his good behaviour” (ἐκ τῆς καλῆς ἀναστροφῆς) “his works” (τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ) “in gentleness of wisdom” (ἐν πραΰτητι σοφίας).[599]

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[597] Allison (2013:342) also refers to: Psa. 103:18; cf. Josh. 1:13; and Mal. 4:4.

[598] See Allison (2013:461).

[599] The word “work” (ἔργον) is repeated 15 times in James (Jas. 1:4, 25, 2:14, 17, 18 (x3), 20, 21, 22 (x2), 24, 25, 26; 3:13). It is clearly a key or catchword in the Epistle. Several scholars note the function of “catchwords” in James to link sayings or sections together (see for example: Blomberg & Kamell (2008:23); Cheung, 2003:37;

Again, the question about which work, is answered by James 1:25. And so "wisdom" (σοφία) is subtly associated with the works of "*Torah*" (νόμος).[600] Concerning the connection between wisdom and *Torah*, Bauckham (2014:152) insightfully proposes:

> *'But it seems that wisdom is the God-given ability of the transformed heart to discern and to practice God's will. It is the way in which Torah is internalized, so that outward obedience to Torah flows from an inner understanding and embracing of God's will expressed in Torah'.*

It certainly seems that, for James, God's will is worked out when *Torah* is applied in God-given wisdom. And God-given wisdom ponders and practices His *Torah* in order to do His will.

In conclusion, as Cheung (2003:132) aptly points out, James thus presents his readers with two steps 'studying/hearing' and 'remaining [in] / practicing' the Law (*Torah*), the second of which is the 'proper response' and 'purpose' of the first.

(22) James 1:25: "this one will be blessed in his doing" (οὗτος μακάριος ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ ἔσται)

The demonstrative pronoun "*houtos*" (οὗτος) is used substantively for the person described in the preceding part of James 1:25, directing attention to the person.[601] It can be translated, "this one" – that is the "one having looked into the perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom and continuing in it, not having become a hearer of forgetfulness but a doer of work.

James proceeds to make the following pronouncement about the particular person: "He will be blessed in his doing" (μακάριος ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ ἔσται). Again, the basic idea behind the word "doing" (ποίησις) is the same for the word "doer" (ποιητής), which is to 'do what is prescribed' in God's Word generally (as per Jas. 1:22-24), and in God's *Torah* specifically (as per Jas. 1:25). The context makes this clear. Thus, James makes the application (or practice) of *Torah* relevant to his readers.

According to BDAG (2000:611), to be "blessed" (μακάριος) is to be a 'privileged recipient of divine favor'. Louw & Nida (1996:301) place the emphasis on 'being happy'. The accompanying verb, "will be" (ἔσται) is clearly "predictive future";[602] which 'indicate something

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Dibelius (1976:6-7); Hartin (2003:64); Morgan (2010:19); and Richardson (1997:24). But as Wall (1997:22) rightfully argue, the use of "catchwords" do not just relate adjacent or successive sections, but the repetition of "catchwords" throughout the composition 'naturally expand[s] or clarif[ies] how' the 'reader should understand an important thematic interest'. Accordingly, with each successive use of a catchword, the meaning and use of the word grows in clarity.

[600] See also discussion about "*Torah*" and "wisdom" in **Section 3.6.2 (a)**.

[601] See BDAG (2000:740).

[602] Rather than "imperatival future", "deliberative future", or "gnomic future" (see Wallace, 1996:568-571).

that will take place or come to pass' (see Wallace, 1996:568). Thus, the subject (i.e. the one who looks into, continues in, and does what the perfect *Torah* instructs) will enjoy God's favour, and with it experience happiness, is certain and beyond question. But when will that happen?

Psalm 1:1-2 (NASB) declares the person "blessed" (Μακάριος, LXX) who "delights in" and "meditates on" the *Torah* of the LORD.[603] This, as Boice (2005:14) comments, is 'the way' to 'find happiness and fulfillment in life'. VanGemeren (1991:53-54) explains that this 'condition of bliss' is more than 'merely a feeling', it is to have the blessing of God rest on a person. Another beatitude concerning the *Torah* is found in Psalm 119:1 (NASB), which states: "How blessed (Μακάριοι, LXX) are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law (*Torah*, MST; νόμῳ, LXX) of the LORD." As Boice (2005b:972) comments, the 'path to a happy life … is conforming to the law of God'. These verses affirm the truth that Moses taught God's people Israel in Deuteronomy 11:26-28 (NASB):

> *(26) "See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: (27) the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, …; (28) and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, …"*

Biblically speaking, there is therefore no doubt, that putting *Torah* into practice results in present temporal benefits, with ongoing future implications. James may well include this aspect of blessing. For James 1:25 ends with the words, "in his doing" (ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ). It seems as if the preposition "*en*" (ἐν) could mark the 'state', 'circumstances', or 'cause' for the blessing (see: BDAG, 2000:327, 329). Since the cause (i.e. doing work) for the blessing has been implied already, it seems that James is adding an additional thought. Therefore, it seems as if the state or circumstances for the blessing is in view. Accordingly, McKnight (2011:161) asserts that the "blessing" is 'in the process of doing', which makes it 'concrete in the present world'.[604] This understanding seems to be conveyed by several translations, including: the NASB, NKJV, TLV, and NIV.

Having stated that, the Letter of James certainly (also) has future blessing is mind. James 1:12 states: "blessed (is the) man" (Μακάριος ἀνὴρ) "who endures temptation" (ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν) "because having been approved" (ὅτι δόκιμος γενόμενος), "he will receive the crown of life" (λήμψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς). And in referring to Job, for example, James 5:11 says: "we consider blessed those who endured" (μακαρίζομεν τοὺς ὑπομείναντας· τὴν ὑπομονὴν). Moo (2000:95) believes that it is 'more likely' that James 1:25 refers to 'future blessing'.[605] Even if this is the case, based on the discussion in the foregoing paragraph, one

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[603] Hegg (2020:62) seconds this allusion, by commenting: "This statement of James reminds us of Ps 1."

[604] See also: Allison (2013:344).

[605] See also: Davids (1982:100).

cannot easily dismiss blessing in this life.

As discussed in **Section 4.2.3 (f)** James 1:22-25 has a "command-condition-promise" composition. The latter part of James 1:25 contains the promise to the one who heeds the command (to be doers of the Word) by fulfilling the positive condition (looking into and continuing in the perfect *Torah*). The promise is that he "will be blessed in his doing". The conclusion can be drawn that God promises to bless obedience to His *Torah*, both in this life, and in the life to come.

Synopsis of James 1:25:

The positive basis or grounds for being "doers of the Word and not only hearers" (v.22), is the fact that those who are, are precisely those who apply themselves (with effort and eagerness to learn) to and abiding (or persevering) in the *Torah* of the LORD, which is both perfect and liberating. It is perfect in that it is a reflection of God's perfection, the expression of His perfect will, and a means for their perfection - even during trial and testing of their faith. It is liberating because it safeguards their freedom, and perfect freedom is found in serving God and following His instructions. Outside His *Torah* is sin and bondage. Those who apply themselves to and abide in the perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom, do not listen and forget, but listen and carry out the work prescribed in it as their way of life, the expression of their faith, and working out of their God-given wisdom. This way, God's divine favour rests on them and they experience happiness and fulfilment in life - even in the process of obeying, and will ultimately in the life to come.

(23) James 1:26: "if someone supposes to be religious" (Εἴ τις δοκεῖ θρησκὸς εἶναι)

The conditional conjunction "if" (εἰ) introduces the protasis, which presents an actual condition.[606] The actual condition is "someone" (τις, which is an indefinite pronoun used substantively) (BDAG, 2000:1007) who "supposes". The verb "supposes" (δοκεῖ) carries the idea that the person 'holds a subjective opinion' (BDAG, 2000:254) or 'regard[s] something as presumably true, but without particular certainty' (Louw & Nida, 1996:368). Accordingly, the person presumes that he/she is "religious", when this may not actually be the case.

The adjective "religious" (θρησκός) is another *hapax legomenon*.[607] However, its cognate noun, "religion" (θρησκεία), is used in Acts 26:5, Colossians 2:16, and in James 1:26 and 27. Louw & Nida (1996:530) define "religion" as 'appropriate beliefs and devout practice of obligations relating to supernatural persons or powers'.[608] Allison (2013:355) suggests that "religious" (θρησκός) is the 'visible side of religious faith' or the 'external manifestation of'

[606] See: Wallace (1996:675); Louw & Nida (1996:785).

[607] It is used only once in the Bible.

[608] See also BDAG (2000:459).

"devotion" (εὐσεβής), supposedly to God. Motyer (2010:75) concurs, and rightfully insists that for James, "religion" is 'a comprehensive word for the specific ways in which a heart relationship with God is expressed in our lives'. Thus, concerning Christianity, a "religious" person is someone who is devoted to God and faithful to true Christian beliefs and practices.[609]

In the context of James 1:19-27, a "religious" person "works out the righteousness of God" (δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ … ἐργάζεται) (Jas. 1:20), "in humility" (ἐν πραΰτητι) receives "the implanted Word" (τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον) (Jas. 1:21), is "a hearer of the Word" (ἀκροατὴς λόγου) and "a doer" (ποιητής) (Jas. 1:22-23), and one who "looks into" (κατανοέω) the "perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom" (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) and "continues in it" (παραμείνας), being "a doer of work" (ποιητὴς ἔργου) (Jas. 1:25).[610] In short, a "religious" person is someone who applies himself/herself to listing to, learning from, and applying God's *Torah*, as the expression of their devotion to God Himself.

McKnight (2011:163) points out that the term "religion" is 'often used for specific acts of worship'. This is strongly supported by the context, since the issues of controlling the tongue, caring for the needy/vulnerable, and avoiding worldliness are raised in James 1:26-27. And as Moo (2000:95) points out, these exact same issues feature elsewhere[611] in the Letter as well. Motyer (2010:73-74) makes a strong case that these three topics do not just illustrate "obedience to God's Law", but that they can be traced back to James 1:18 - to God's speech, care for the helpless, and purpose of holiness; which communicates the maxim, 'like Father, like child'. Since James does 'devote the whole central substance of his letter (2:1-5:6)'[612] to develop these three topics, Motyer (2010:74) seems right in suggesting that the new birth/life which God gives 'should bear the same in fruits in [the believers] as in Him'.

(24) James 1:26: "not bridling his tongue" (μὴ χαλιναγωγῶν γλῶσσαν αὐτοῦ)

The marker of negation, "not" (μὴ), adds 'a contrary to fact condition' to the protasis in James 1:26.[613] The condition is described by the present participial clause, "not bridling his tongue" (μὴ χαλιναγωγῶν γλῶσσαν αὐτοῦ), which indicates contemporaneous action with the main

[609] See also Louw & Nida (1996:531).

[610] Moo (2000:95) comments that '"accept the word" (v.21) becomes "do the word" (v.22), which becomes "do the law"'.

[611] In James 1:19-20; 3:1-12; 4:11-12 (the tongue); 2:1-13; 15-16; cf. 5:1-6 (the vulnerable/needy); 4:4-10 (worldliness).

[612] According to Motyer (2010:74), the 'three truths about the Father' (i.e. His care, Word, and purpose) in Jas. 1:18 correspond to 'three marks of the child of God' (i.e. controlled tongue, caring ministry, holy life) in Jas. 1:26-27. And these three topics (of marks) are developed in Jas. 3:1-12; 2:1-26; and 3:13-5:6 respectively.

[613] See BDAG (2000:644).

verb “supposes” (δοκεῖ).[614] The person “supposes” (or “presumes”) to be “religious” while, at the same time, he (or she) is not “bridling” his (or her) tongue. To “bridle” (χαλιναγωγέω) is the ‘figurative extension’ of the same verb that means ‘to control with bit or bridle’ (Louw & Nida, 1996:751) a horse (cf. Jas. 3:2-3).[615] Thus, the sense is to ‘hold in check’ (BDAG, 2000:1076) one’s tongue, or to ‘exercise self-control’ (Louw & Nida, 1996:751) in one’s speech.

Now, the beloved *adelphoí* have already been instructed to be “slow to speak” (βραδὺς εἰς τὸ λαλῆσαι) in James 1:19. And as discussed in **Section 4.2.3 (a)**, James 1:19-21 and 1:26-27 form an encircling parallelism around James 1:22-25, which is all about being “doers of the Word” (ποιηταὶ λόγου) or a “doer of work” (ποιητὴς ἔργου) of the perfect *Torah,* the *Torah* of freedom (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας). The implication is that failing to “bridle” one’s tongue, is failing to be a “doer” of *Torah* and to reflect God’s character. Thus, while James 1:25 sets out positive obedience of the *Torah*, James 1:26 sets out negative or disobedience of the *Torah*.

As mentioned before, the matter of controlling the tongue is developed in James 3:1-12. The verb to “bridle” (χαλιναγωγέω) acts as a “catchword”, which connects James 1:26 with James 3:2. But as discussed in **Section 4.2.3 (e)**, James 3:2 is also connected with James 1:25 by means of the “catchword” “perfect” (τέλειος). Furthermore, James 3:2 has yet another “catchword”, “stumble” (πταίω), which connects it with James 2:10. The logic can be set out as follows:

- Not “bridling” (χαλιναγωγῶν) one’s “tongue” (γλῶσσαν) (Jas. 1:26) is to “stumble in word” (ἐν λόγῳ … πταίει) (Jas. 3:2).
- To “stumble in word” (ἐν λόγῳ … πταίει) (Jas. 3:2) can be associated with someone who “stumbles in one” (πταίσῃ … ἐν ἑνί) of the parts of the *“ólon tòn nómon”* (ὅλον τὸν νόμον) (Jas. 2:10).
- Conversely, “if someone does not stumble in word” (εἴ τις ἐν λόγῳ οὐ πταίει) “this one (is a) perfect man” (οὗτος τέλειος ἀνήρ) (Jas. 3:2).
- A “perfect man” (τέλειος ἀνήρ) (Jas. 3:2) can be associated with “the one having looked into” (ὁ … παρακύψας εἰς) the “perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom” (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) and “continuing in it” (παραμείνας) (Jas. 1:25).

It follows that the “religious” person is someone who seeks to control their speech by putting the *“ólon tòn nómon”* (ὅλον τὸν νόμον) (Jas. 2:10) or the “perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom”

[614] See Wallace (1996:614).

[615] Allison (2013:356-357) raises the possibility that the ‘image’ of a person with an animal’s bit in his mouth ‘owes something to Jewish tradition’. As evidence, he (Allison, 2013:356-357) refers to Psa. 32:9; 39:2; Isa. 30:28; 37:29; 2 Kgs. 19:28.

(νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 1:25) into practice, in order to be a "perfect" person (Jas. 3:2). And all this is done out of genuine or whole-hearted devotion to God (Jas. 1:26).

(25) James 1:26: "but deceiving his heart" (ἀλλὰ ἀπατῶν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ)

The word "but" (ἀλλά) adds an 'emphatic contrast' (Louw & Nida, 1996:793) to complete the protasis. In contrast to being "religious" (θρησκός), the person who does not "bridle" (χαλιναγωγέω) his tongue is "deceiving his heart". The participial phrase "deceiving his heart" (ἀπατῶν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ) is again a "present" one; which indicates contemporaneous action with the main verb "supposes" (δοκεῖ). Thus, while the person "supposes" (or "presumes") to be "religious", he is actually "deceiving his heart".[616]

To "deceive" (ἀπατάω) oneself is to 'have misleading or erroneous views concerning the truth' (Louw & Nida, 1996:366). Stated differently, the person believes a lie about himself. Johnson (2008:210-211), however, argues that "*apataō*" (ἀπατῶν) should be translated "indulging" rather than "deceiving". This is a possible translation.[617] Johnson (2008:211) points out that the cognate noun "*apatē*" (ἀπάτη) often 'has the sense of a kind of pleasure that leads to vice'.[618] If this reading is correct, Johnson (2008:211) is right in that 'it would anticipate the condemnation of those seeking the fulfillment' of their [*hedonism*][619] and [lusting][620] in 4:1–3'. This reading also fits well with James's teachings on the heart (see below). However, this reading requires that the conjunction "*allá*" (ἀλλά) be translated as "and" (rather than "but"), indicating coordination with the previous clause ("not bridling his tongue") and a contrast with the first clause ("if someone supposes to be religious").[621] Against this reading is the fact that major English translations, including: NASB, KJV, NKJV, ESV, NRSV, TLV, NIV, GNB, NTL, render "*apataō*" as "deceive(s)".

According to BDAG (2000:508), the "heart" (καρδία) is the 'center and source of the whole inner life, with its thinking, feeling, and volition'. Mentioning it no less than 5 times (in 1:26; 3:14; 4:8; 5:5, 8), the heart (i.e. inner being and state of a person) is clearly very important to James. For James:

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[616] It seems as if the "customary" present is applicable here. Accordingly, the actions in view occur regularly or as an ongoing state (refer to Wallace, 1996:521-522). If this is so, then a habit or lifestyle of not bridling one's tongue and deceiving oneself is in view.

[617] BDAG (2000:98) does include 'enjoy oneself, live pleasurably' in the semantice range for "apataō" (ἀπατῶν), but lists no particular NT verses under this use. See also Allison (2013:358).

[618] BDAG (2000:98) confirms this meaning/usage, listing Mark 4:9 and 2 Pet. 2:13 as examples.

[619] "*hēdonai*" (ἡδοναῖ).

[620] "*epithymiai*" (ἐπιθυμίαι).

[621] See Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Jas. 1:26) for the semantic range of "allá" (ἀλλά).

- The “heart” is where vices such as “bitter jealousy” (ζῆλον πικρὸν) and “selfish ambition” (ἐριθείαν) lodge (Jas. 3:14).
- The “heart” is what the “doubleminded” (δίψυχοι) are instructed to “purify” (ἁγνίσατε) (Jas. 4:8).
- The “heart” is what “the rich” (οἱ πλούσιοι) “fed” (ἐθρέψατε) for a “day of slaughter” (ἡμέρᾳ σφαγῆς) (Jas. 5:5).
- The “heart” is what the *adelphoí* are instructed to “strengthen” (στηρίξατε) because the “coming of the Lord” (παρουσία τοῦ κυρίου) “has drawn near” (ἤγγικεν) (Jas. 5:8).

It follows that it is a very serious matter for someone to deceive their own heart. Either way, this can be associated with getting contaminated with vice at core of one’s being, not getting purified of doublemindedness, but heaping up guilt for the day of judgment, and failing to be strengthened or prepared for the Lord’s return.

(26) James 1:26: “the religion of this one is useless” (τούτου μάταιος ἡ θρησκεία)

The final clause of James 1:26, which contains the apodosis, is: “the religion of this one is useless” (τούτου μάταιος ἡ θρησκεία). The demonstrative pronoun “*toútou*” (τούτου) is used substantively (hence translated, “this one”) to refer to the person who “supposes to be religious” while “not bridling his tongue”. The “religion” (θρησκεία)[622] of this person is “useless”. The adjective “useless” (μάταιος) means ‘of no use’ (BDAG, 2000:621) or ‘being futile or lacking in content’ (Louw & Nida, 1996:624).

James 1:19-20 already made it clear that not controlling the tongue could easily lead to anger, which does not “work out” God’s “righteousness” (i.e. His righteous standards). This equates to “useless religion” (refer to **subsection (5)** above). Furthermore, as Allison (2013:359) rightfully points out, “useless” (μάταιος) “religion” in James 1:26 stands in strong contrast to the “pure” (καθαρὰ) and “undefiled” (ἀμίαντος) “religion” in James 1:27.

Useless religion is thus to practice unrighteousness and to violate the *Torah*. Moreover, as Hartin (2003:101) comments, “it is, in effect, idolatrous”,[623] as is suggested by the end of the next verse.[624] In James 4:4-6, James issues a strong warning and gives clear instructions against idolatry.

[622] Refer to **subsection (23)** above for an explanation of the meaning of the word “religion” (θρησκεία).

[623] See also Allison (2013:359).

[624] “Pure and undefiled religion” is to “keep oneself untained from the world” (Jas. 1:27). By implication “useless religion” is to be “tained by the world”; which is doubtless idolatry.

(27) James 1:27: "pure and undefiled religion" (θρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος) "with the God and Father" (παρὰ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ) "is this" (αὕτη ἐστίν)

Being used in both James 1:26 and 27, the word "religion" ties the two verses together. Not only that, it is the main subject for James 1:26-27. Furthermore, while linked together, the two verses also form an obvious contrast: "useless" religion vs. "pure and undefiled" religion. Thus, as Allison (2013:360) points out, James 1:27 'supplies the antithesis' to James 1:26.

BDAG (2000:489) defines "pure" (καθαρός) as 'being free from moral guilt', while Louw & Nida (1996:535) define it as 'being ritually clean'. And BDAG (2000:54) defines "undefiled" (ἀμίαντος) as being so figuratively or being 'pure in a religious and moral sense', while Louw & Nida (1996:536) defines it as 'not being ritually defiled, with implications of accompanying moral defilement'. As Hartin (2003:101) rightly points out, the terms are 'naturally associated' with "religion" in the ancient world, which 'demanded that both the worshipper and offering must be ritually pure and without stain'.[625] More specifically though, as McKnight (2011:160) convincingly argues, "pure" (καθαρός) and "undefiled" (ἀμίαντος) are 'purity terms', derived from *Torah*', to describe the 'condition' and 'aptness' of a person to 'live in the Land and enter the Temple for worship in utter fidelity to God and *Torah*'.[626] Further support for this argument is the fact that the words "pure" (καθαρός) and "defile" (μιαίνω), as well as the cognate verb for the opposite of the adjective "undefiled" (ἀμίαντος), occur in multiple chapters in the LXX translation of the *Torah*.[627] Since James, as McKnight (2011:168) rightfully asserts, 'is rooted more in *Torah* that anything else', it is reasonable to understand "pure" and "undefiled" in James to involve '*Torah*-keeping purity' that 'transcends the outwardly observant to include deeds of mercy'. This becomes clear in the rest of James 1:27, which clarifies the "pure" and "undefiled" religion that James is talking about, by way of specific practical expressions.

The phrase "with the God and Father" (παρὰ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ) qualifies that "pure and undefiled religion" is that which 'has to do with God', as McKnight (2011:168) points out. According to Louw & Nida (1996:799), the construction of "*para*" (παρὰ) with the dative, marks 'a participant whose viewpoint is relevant to an event', and it can be translated 'in the sight of, in the opinion of, in the judgment of'.[628] Accordingly, James is about to clarify what exactly "pure and undefiled religion" in the sight or judgment of God is.

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[625] See also Ropes (1916:183).

[626] As evidence, McKnight (2011:168) presents for "pure": Gen. 8:20 ("clean animal"), Lev. 4:2 ("clean place"), Lev. 7:19 ("clean" flesh); and for "undefiled" he presents: Lev. 18:24 ("defile yourselves"), and Deut. 21:23 ("defile the land").

[627] For example: Lev. 11 (re: foods); Lev. 13 (re: leprosy); Lev. 15. (re: bodily discharges); Lev. 20 (re: God's name and animals); Lev. 22 (re: animals); Num. 5 (re: ritual purity and infidelity); Num. 19 (re: ritual purity).

[628] See also: Hartin (2003:101); Johnson (2008:212).

However, before James's qualification, it is noticed that he does not simply say, "in the sight or judgment of God", but "… of the God and Father". Johnson (2008:212) suggests, 'especially in the context of James 1:17',[629] that the sense is 'God who is also father'. While several translations render it "God and Father" (incl. NASB, KJV, NKJV, TLV), others do "God, the Father" (incl. ESV, NRSV), or "God the Father" (GNB, NLT, CEV), or "God our Father" (NIV), or "Father God" (TPT). Whatever the rendering, since the two nouns "the God" and "Father" are in the TSKS[630] construction, they refer to the same person[631] – i.e. "God the Father". Perhaps the reason why James adds "God" to "Father" (as in Jas. 1:17) is to highlight the fact that our Creator is also our compassionate and caring Father.[632]

The demonstrative pronoun "*houtē*" (αὕτη) with the verb "is" (ἐστίν) – translated "is this:" – is followed by two parallel appositional statements that reveal the contents of the pronoun ("this").[633] Thus, the contents of "pure and undefiled religion" is disclosed in what follows.

(28) James 1:27: "to visit orphans and widows" (ἐπισκέπτεσθαι ὀρφανοὺς καὶ χήρας) "in their affliction" (ἐν τῇ θλίψει αὐτῶν)

Wallace (1996:606) explains that since the infinitive "to visit" (ἐπισκέπτεσθαι), 'stands in apposition' to the noun (pure and undefiled "religion") to which it is related, the infinitive 'defines' rather than 'explains' the noun.[634] Therefore, it could be rendered: "Pure and undefiled religion … is this, namely, to visit …".[635]

According to BDAG (2000:378), "to visit" is 'to go see a person with helpful intent'. According to Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Jas. 1:27), it is to 'care for or look after, with the implication of continuous responsibility'. While "orphans" (ὀρφανοὺς) are ordinarily understood to be those who are 'deprived of parents' (BDAG, 2000:725), McKnight (2011:170) points out that recent study of papyri has shown that an "orphan" could 'mean "fatherless" (or "motherless") rather than "parentless". He (McKnight, 2011:170) insightfully observes that, this being the case, brings 'into sharper focus why for the "fatherless" James may be pointing to God as "Father" in the text'. "Widows" (χήρας) are women whose husbands had died.[636]

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[629] Jas. 1:17 states that "every good and perfect present … comes down from the Father (τοῦ πατρὸς)".

[630] Article-substantive-kaí-substantive (see Wallace, 1996:270).

[631] See Wallace (1996:274).

[632] See also discussion under **Section 3.6.5 (d)**. And see also: Allison (2013:361); Moo (2000:97).

[633] See Wallace (1996:40).

[634] See also: Dana & Mantey (1967:218, 295).

[635] See Wallace (1996:606).

[636] See: BDAG (2000:1084); Louw & Nida (1996:119).

In the ancient world, orphans and widows were of the most vulnerable people in society and in most need of help.[637] Care for them, as McKnight (2011:168) states, 'came from *Torah* legislation', for example: Exodus 22:22 and Deuteronomy 10:18.[638] Johnson (2008:212) believes that James makes this a 'covenant obligation' as he 'continues the emphasis' of the *Torah*, Prophets, and Writings.[639] Whether James does so or not, he certainly affirms the fundamentally important *Torah* principle of taking care of the needy. This is a typical example of James's focus on the "weightier matters of the *Torah*", as discussed in **Section 3.5.5**.

Torah prescribes what God Himself does. Psalms 68:5 (NASB) declares: "A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows, is God in His holy habitation'. Accordingly, Hartin (2003:102) comments that for James the *adelphoì* 'are to emulate God's actions by visiting the orphans and widows and caring for their needs'.

Their needs are acute, since James adds: "in their affliction". Affliction (θλῖψις) is 'trouble involving direct suffering' (Louw & Nida, 1996:242). Some commentators understand the suffering to be 'in terms of afflictions of the last days' (i.e. eschatological).[640] But since things such as bereavement and poverty were commonplace for widows and orphans, there is no need to look beyond that, as McKnight (2011:171) and Johnson (2008:212) rightfully observe.

(29) James 1:27: "to keep oneself untainted from the world" (ἄσπιλον ἑαυτὸν τηρεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου)

The infinitive, "to keep" (τηρεῖν), adds a parallel appositional statement to further define "pure and undefiled religion" in the sight or judgment of God. "To keep" (τηρέω) is to 'cause a state, condition, or activity to continue' (BDAG, 2000:1002),[641] or to 'maintain a condition or stance' (Johnson, 2008:212).

The condition to be maintained is that of being "untainted from the world". The adjective "untainted" (ἄσπιλος), according to Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Jas. 1:27), is 'a figurative extension' of "*áspilos"* (ἄσπιλος) (i.e. 'spotless, without stain'), and means a 'morally spotless' character. The "world" (κόσμος), in this context, refers to 'the system of human existence' that is 'hostile to God' and is 'lost in sin', 'ruined and depraved' (BDAG, 2000:562). The same sense

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[637] See: Allison (2013:363); Moo (2000:97).

[638] See also: Moo (2000:97).

[639] As proof texts for the emphasis on this 'convenant obligation', Johnson (2008:212) lists for the *Torah*: Exod. 22:20-21; 23:9; Lev. 19:9-10; 19:33; 23:22; Deut. 10:17-19; 14:28-29; 16:9-15; 24:17-18; 26:12-15; AND for the Prophets: Amos 2:6-8; 3:2; Hos. 12:8-9; Mic. 3:1-4; Zeph. 1:9; Zech. 7:8-10; Mal. 3:5; Isa. 3:5, 14-15; 5:7-10; Jer. 23:3; AND for the Writings: Prov. 19:17; 21:3; 31:9).

[640] So Hartn (2003:102).

[641] See also: Louw & Nida (1996:152).

is used in James 4:4, where James categorically states: “friendship with the world” (ἡ φιλία τοῦ κόσμου) “is enmity with God” (ἔχθρα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν). In James 1:27, the “world” can morally stain a person. Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Jas. 1:27) explains that the preposition “from” (ἀπὸ) in the phrase “from the world”, is a ‘marker of dissociation’, ‘implying a rupture from a former association’; which can be translated ‘separated from’.

Thus to ‘keep oneself untainted from the world’ is to maintain a distance from it (it, which is at enmity with God) so as not to be morally stained by its standards and practices. By implication, it means to be set apart for God and to devote oneself to His standards and practices, according to His instructions.[642] The reflexive pronoun “oneself” (ἑαυτὸν) ‘highlight[s] the participation of the subject in the verbal action’ (Wallace, 1996:350). Accordingly, there is intentionality, perhaps even intensity, in the action – the one whose religion is right before God is the one who applies himself/herself to God’s *Torah*, in devotion to God and to remain wholly reserved for God.

Allison (2013:365) makes the insightful observation that the “world” is the ‘practical antithesis of “God and Father” and the functional equivalent of “sin” or “evil”’, and that James’s choice of the word “world” rather than “sin” or “evil” is to emphasize that ‘the things (i.e. “sin and evil”) to be avoided are practically ubiquitous’.

Now, for James, “to keep oneself untainted from the world” does not mean to withdraw from the rest of humanity or to live in isolation from society. The parallel clause “to visit orphans and widows” makes that clear. Perhaps it is better to think of it in terms of “you shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy” (Lev. 19:2b, NASB), which practically works itself out in devotion to God and works of love, justice, and righteousness towards one’s neighbour. And as discussed in **Section 3.5.4**, James demonstrates what this looks like in practice by applying several instructions from Leviticus 19 (the so-called “Holiness Code”) in his Letter.[643]

Synopsis of James 1:26-27

To presume to be religious, while not controlling one’s speech, is to be deluded at the core of one’s being, since such religion is empty and of no use. In contrast, useful (and by implication, acceptable) religion is ritually and morally pure in the judgment of God the Father, divine Creator and caring Father. Such religion is defined or known by works of compassion/care for the vulnerable and needy, out of utter devotion and fidelity to God and His *Torah*.

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[642] James’s teaching here aligns with that of Jesus about being separate from the world, in for example: John 15:19; 17:14-17.

[643] Lev. 19:12 in Jas. 5:12, Lev. 19:13 in Jas. 5:4, Lev. 19:15 in Jas. 2:1 & 9, Lev. 19:16 in Jas. 4:11; and possibly also Lev. 19:17b in Jas. 5:20, and Lev. 19:18a in Jas. 5:9.

4.2.7. Absolutes in James 1:19-27

The table below outlines the absolutes identified from the analysis above, together with supporting Scriptures from both the OT and NT:

1:	**Eagerly listen (before you speak) in order to receive and comprehend what others say; and especially to what God says in His Word (Jas. 1:19).**
OT:	**Deut. 6:4** (NASB) Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! **Prov. 4:20** (NASB) My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings.
NT:	**Mat 11:15** (NASB) He who has ears to hear, let him hear.
2:	**Speak with due thought, care, and control; especially when you teach God's Word (Jas. 1:19).**
OT:	**Prov. 18:13** (NASB) He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him. **Prov. 29:20** (NASB) Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.
NT:	**Mat. 12:36-37** (NASB) But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. **37** For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned. **Eph. 4:29** (NASB) Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.
3:	**Restrain your anger when you speak, and especially when you proclaim God's Word (Jas. 1:19).**
OT:	**Psa. 106:33(b)** (NASB) He {Moses} spoke rashly with his lips (see Num. 20:12). **Prov. 15:18** (NASB) A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, But the slow to anger calms a dispute.
NT:	**Col. 3:8** (NASB) But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.

4: Believers should live out God's righteous standards (Jas. 1:20).

OT: **Gen. 18:19** (NASB) For I have chosen him {i.e. Abraham}, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.

Deut. 6:25 (NASB) It will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before the LORD our God, just as He commanded us.

NT: **Mat. 5:20** (NASB) For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Rom. 8:4 (NASB) so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

5: Stop doing anything that morally defiles and rid yourself of any residues of evil (particularly as you prepare to receive the Word) (Jas. 1:21).

OT: **Exod. 19:10-11** (NASB) The LORD also said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments; **11** and let them be ready for the third day, for on the third day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

NT: **1 Pet. 2:1-2** (NASB) Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, **2** like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,

6: Eagerly listen to and meekly accept the Word of God, with the intention of obeying it, since it is your permanent guide in you to preserve you from transcendent danger (Jas. 1:21).

OT: **Deut. 30:14-16** (NASB) But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it. **15** See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; **16** in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it.

Jer. 31:33 (NASB) But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

NT: **1 Thes. 2:13** (NASB) For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

1 Pet. 1:22-23 (NASB) Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, **23** for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.

7: Listen to and do (obey) God's Word (Jas. 1:22).

OT: **Exod. 24:7** (NASB) Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!"

2 Kgs. 18:12 (NASB) because they did not obey the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed His covenant, even all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded; they would neither listen nor do it.

NT: **Rom. 2:13** for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified.

8: Those who do not do (obey) God's Word, deceive themselves (Jas. 1:22-24).

OT: **Num. 15:31** (NASB) Because he has despised the word of the LORD and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt will be on him.'

NT: **Matthew 7:21-23** (NASB) Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. **22** Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' **23** And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

9: The *Torah* reflects (or mirrors) God's character and standards (Jas. 1:23-25)

OT: **Isaiah 42:21** (NASB) The LORD was pleased for His righteousness' sake to make the law great and glorious.[644]

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[644] Commenting on Isaiah 42:41, Smith (2009:186) insightfully observes that God 'graciously revealed' His written instructions (Torah) as 'righteous guidelines for behavior' and a 'great and glorious revelation of His character'.

The Scriptures assign the same attributes to the Torah as to God Himself. For example:

OT & NT: Holy (Isa. 5:16; 6:3 & Rom. 7:12); Pure (1 John 3:3 & Psa. 19:8); Righteous (Psa. 11:7, Isa. 42:21 & Psa. 19:9; Rom. 7:12); Good (Psa. 43:8 & Rom. 7:16); True (John 3:33 & Psa. 19:9); Perfect (Mat. 5:48 & Psa. 19:7); Love (1 John 4:8 & Rom. 13:10); Spiritual (John 4:24; Rom. 7:14); Eternal (Gen. 21:33 & Psa. 119:160; Luke 16:17); Unchangeable (Jas. 1:17 & Mat. 5:18).

10: The *Torah* of the LORD is perfect and liberating (Jas. 1:25).

OT: **Psa. 19:7** (NASB) The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

Psa. 119:45 (NASB) And I will walk at liberty, For I seek Your precepts. (See also Psa. 119:32).

NT: **John 8:31-32** (NASB) So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; **32** and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." (For Law embodying the truth see Rom. 2:20)

Rom. 7:12 (NASB) So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

Rom. 12:2 (NASB) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (For Law revealing God's will see Rom. 2:18).

11: Believers should carefully listen to, and not forget, but do the works of God's *Torah* (Jas. 1:25).

OT: **Num. 15:39-40** (NASB) It shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the LORD, so as to do them and not follow after your own heart and your own eyes, after which you played the harlot, **40** so that you may remember to do all My commandments and be holy to your God.

Psa. 119:16 (NASB) I shall delight in Your statutes; I shall not forget Your word.

Prov. 3:1 (NASB) My son, do not forget my teaching, But let your heart keep my commandments;

NT: **Rev. 14:12** (NASB) Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

12: Blessed are those who do God's *Torah* (i.e. His will) (Jas. 1:25).

OT: **Deut. 11:26-28** (NASB) See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: **27** the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, which I am commanding you today; **28** and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, …

NT: **Luke 11:28** (NASB) But He said, "On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it."[645]

Rev. 22:14 (NKJV) Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.[646]

13: The religion of those who do not control their tongues is of no use (Jas. 1:26).

OT: **Psa. 34:12-16** (NASB) Who is the man who desires life And loves length of days that he may see good? **13** Keep your tongue from evil And your lips from speaking deceit. **14** Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it. **15** The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous And His ears are open to their cry. **16** The face of the LORD is against evildoers, To cut off the memory of them from the earth.

Prov. 10:19 (NASB) When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, But he who restrains his lips is wise.

NT: **1 Peter 3:10-12** (NASB) For, THE ONE WHO DESIRES LIFE, TO LOVE AND SEE GOOD DAYS, MUST KEEP HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING DECEIT. **11** HE MUST TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD; HE MUST SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT. **12** FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE TOWARD THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER, BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL.

[645] The term, "the word of God" (τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ) occurs four times in Luke (5:1; 8:11, 21; 11:28). According to Louw & Wolvaardt (2015), in each of these cases, the "word" is best understood as 'that which has been stated or said, with primary focus upon the content of the communication' (LN 33.98), rather than 'the content of what is preached about Christ or about the good news' (LN 33.260). Thus, the term can be understood as "the content of what God revealed'. While Jesus is certainly presented as the One who (supremely) proclaims/teaches "the word of God" (Luke 5:1), "the word of God" cannot be limited to what Jesus spoke, or what is recorded in the NT. That the OT Scriptures are included in the NT's conception of "the content of what God revealed" is confirmed in various locations and ways in the NT, including notably, Matthew 4:4 (NASB) where Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8:3, that "man shall … live … on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God". Surely, this includes the *Torah*.

[646] This is reading is supported by both the Textus Receptus (TR) and the Majority Text (MT).

14: Useful and pure religion before God is known by works of compassion/care for the vulnerable and needy (like orphans and widows) (Jas. 1:27).

OT: **Deut. 27:19** (NASB) Cursed is he who distorts the justice due an alien, orphan, and widow. And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

Micah 6:8 (NASB) He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?

NT: **Matthew 6:1-4** (NASB) Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. **2** "So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. **3** But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, **4** so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

Mat. 23:23 (NASB) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.

15: Useful and pure religion before God comes from devotion and fidelity to God, according to His *Torah* (Jas. 1:27).

OT: **Isa. 29:13** (NASB) Then the Lord said, "Because this people draw near with their words and honor Me with their lip service, But they remove their hearts far from Me, And their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned by rote,

NT: **Mat. 15:4, 7-9** (NASB) **4** And He answered and said to them, "Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? … **7** You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you: **8** 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. **9** BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'

Mat. 23:28 (NASB) So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.[647]

[647] Lawlessness (ἀνομία) is 'to behave with complete disregard for the laws or regulations of a society' (Louw & Nida (1996:757). Jesus' introduction to the judgment/ruling in Mat. 23:28 is as follows: "(2) … The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; (3) therefore all that they tell you, do and observe,

1 Tim. 1:5 (NASB) But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

4.3. Analysis of James 2:8-13

4.3.1. Exegetical Context and Flow of Thought of James 2:1-7

Again, in order to fully and correctly interpret James 2:8-13, the immediate context will first be considered. The argument from James 1:2 to 2:7 is traced below.

Following the prologue (Jas. 1:2-27), James addresses the issue of faith (Jas. 2:1-26). James 2:1-26 can be divided into three parts: "faith without partiality" (Jas. 2:1-7), "be doers of the *nómou*" (Jas. 2:8-13), and "faith with works" (Jas. 2:14-27) (refer to **Figure 1**, **Section 2.7.3**). As discussed in **Section 2.7.2**, the middle part (Jas. 2:8-13) links the first (Jas. 2:1-7) and last (Jas. 2:14-27) parts, to make the three parts a unit. Furthermore, since the middle part (Jas. 2:8-13) is structurally connected with James 1:21-25 by virtue of their common focus on *nómos* (refer to **Figure 1**, **Section 2.7.4**), James 2:1-27 can be seen as a development of the idea of being "doers of the Word" (Jas. 1:21-25) (refer to discussion in **Section 2.7.2**).

James 2:1-7 ("faith without partiality") starts with the basic instruction in James 2:1 (do not show partiality). James 2:2-3 explains the instruction by way of an example of partiality (discriminating against the poor and showing favour to the rich); which together with James 2:4 (the evil of partiality), forms the cause or reason for the instruction in James 2:1 (do not show partiality). James 2:5-7 provides further weight to the instruction in James 2:1 (do not show partiality) by contrasting how God treats the poor bother/sister (Jas. 2:5) with how those who show partiality (or favouritism) do (Jas. 2:6-7).

(a) Do not show partiality (2:1)

The basic instruction (imperative) to the *adelphoí* in James 2:1-7 is: "let not have in partiality" (μὴ ἐν προσωπολημψίαις ἔχετε) "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory" (τὴν πίστιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης) (Jas. 2:1).

"Partiality" (προσωπολημψία),[648] according to Louw & Nida (1996:767), is an idiom which literally means 'to accept a face'. Thus, to be "partial" is to accept or reject people at face value. Or as Moo (2000:102) puts it, to 'make judgments about people based on external appearance'. Favour is shown to those who look or present well, and favour is withheld from those who don't; as becomes clear in James 2:2-3.

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but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them" (Mat. 23:2-3, NASB). In this context, "lawlessness" can/should be understood as "behaving with disregard to God's Law".

[648] See BDAG (2000:877).

According to Johnson (2008:228), James's language 'invokes the world of Torah' and the term *prosōpolēmpsia* (προσωπολημψία) is 'unintelligible apart from the frame of reference provided by Scripture'. Scholars[649] recognize in James a deliberate echo of, or an allusion to, Leviticus 19:15, which states:

> *You shall do no injustice in judgment (κρισει, LXX); you shall not be partial (οὐ λήμψῃ πρόσωπον, LXX) to the poor nor defer to the great, but you are to judge (κρινεις, LXX) your neighbor fairly.* (Lev. 19:15, NASB).

The connection with Leviticus 19:15 is further strengthened in James 2:4, which equates the act of showing partiality with being "judges" (κριταὶ). Johnson (2008:228) explains that James 2:1-4 finds its 'explicit significance in the ancient norms for exercising righteous judgment among the people'; which is grounded in the *Torah*, in for example, Deuteronomy 1:17a (NASB): "You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike." Additionally, Johnson (2008:228) insightfully points out that James's allusion to the Torah (Jas. 2:1-4 alluding to Lev. 19:15) 'is particularly important for understanding the transition that follows in 2:8', concerning the *nómon … basilikòn* (νόμον … βασιλικὸν).

The phrase "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory" in James 2:1, attaches a chain of genitives (τοῦ κυρίου - ἡμῶν - Ἰησοῦ - Χριστοῦ - τῆς δόξης) to the object, "the faith" (τὴν πίστιν). This raises two questions, in particular, about the correct interpretation of the phrase:

Firstly, should "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ" be understood as a "subjective" or "objective" genitive? In the first case, the genitive substantive functions as the subject of the verbal idea, and in the second it functions as the direct object of the verbal idea.[650] According to the subjective genitive reading, the faith or faithfulness of Jesus Himself is in view. In practice, Hartin (2003) suggests that the issue is that the believer does not correctly follow the example of Jesus' faithfulness to His Father's will. Similarly, Johnson (2008:220) suggests that it is about the believer not correctly holding the faith reflected or declared by Jesus. According to the objective genitive reading, the readers' (the *adelphoi*) faith in Jesus Christ is in view. In this case, as Moo (2000:100) comments, the issue is that partiality is 'inconsistent with true faith in Christ'.[651] In favour of the first option is the fact that James does direct faith towards God the Father (in Jas. 2:19, 23), rather than Jesus Himself.[652] But equally and biblically

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[649] Scholars include, inter alia, Allison (2013:381); Johnson (2008:228); Hartin (2003:117); Kaiser (2001:221); McKnight (2011:176); Moo (2000:102).

[650] See Wallace (1996:113, 116).

[651] See also McKnight (2011:117).

[652] See: Hartin (2003:117); Johnson (2008:220).

speaking, Jesus can also be the object of faith,[653] as per an "objective" genitive reading of James 2:1. In favour of an "objective" genitive reading, as McKnight (2011:177) points out, is that calling Jesus "Lord" and "of glory" entails 'faith in Jesus Christ … at some level', and it is easier to perceive someone holding 'his or her own faith and own partiality' together, rather than for someone to hold 'Jesus' own faith with partiality'. While recognising its disputable nature, Wallace (1996:116) comments that James 2:1, is 'almost certainly' an instance of the objective Genitive with "faith" as the direct object. Furthermore, since to "have" plus "faith" (ἔχω + πίστις) very clearly applies to the reader later on in James 2 (vv.14-26), it is reasonable to assume that the same construction (ἔχω + πίστις) here in James 2:1 applies to the reader as well. Therefore, an objective genitive reading seems to be more likely.

The second question is this: which part of the phrase does, "of glory", modify and how should it be rendered? Three of the most significant possibilities are:

(a) the glorious One, [our] Lord Jesus Christ;[654]
(b) our glorious Lord Jesus Christ (NASB; NRSV; NIV; NLT);[655]
(c) our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory (LITV, KJV, NKJV, ESV; GNB).[656]

Moo (2000:101) seems right in that while none of these options is theologically objectionable, the third option is probably best. According to Allison (2013:381), "Lord of glory" is 'a title in both Jewish and Christian texts'.[657] And as Moo (2000:101) argues, describing Jesus as "the Lord of glory", resonate well with "the coming of the Lord" (τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου) (Jas. 5:7, 8) as "the Judge" (ὁ κριτὴς) (Jas. 5:9).

In summary, James 2:1 instructs the *adelphoí* who have faith in Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, not to show partiality. That is, not to judge or treat people based on their outward appearance, as they practise their faith in their glorious Lord Jesus Christ, who is coming as the Judge.

(b) Example of partiality (2:2-3)

Having instructed the *adelphoí* not to "have in partiality the faith" (Jas. 2:1), James gives an example of partiality in James 2:2-3. The example forms the "if" clause (or protasis) of a conditional statement. While, by itself, the example could merely have been hypothetical,

[653] See, for example: Rom. 3:22, 26.

[654] See McKnight (2011:178-180).

[655] See Hartin (2003:117).

[656] See Moo (2000:100-101).

[657] For example: 'God of glory' (Psa. 19:3; Acts 7:2), 'king of glory' (Psa. 24:7-10; Dan. 2:37); 'Father of glory' (Eph 1:17); 1 Enoch. In 1 Cor. 2:8, Jesus is called "the Lord of glory".

James 2:6-7 indicates that it was real, as Moo (2000:102) points out. Thus, it actually happened that the *adelphoí*[658] were guilty of practicing their faith with favouritism and prejudice. In what way?

When a man with a gold ring and in fine clothes entered their synagogue[659] and a poor one in dirty clothing, they said to the rich, "you sit here well" (Σὺ κάθου ὧδε καλῶς), and to the poor, "you stand there or sit at my footstool" (Σὺ στῆθι ἢ κάθου ἐκεῖ ὑπὸ τὸ ὑποπόδιόν μου) (Jas. 2:2-3). Their appearances contrasted as sharply as in the ways they were treated.[660] Based on his impressive appearance, the rich man was invited to sit close in honor and comfort. And based on his unpleasant appearance, the poor man was kept at a distance in humiliation and discomfort.

(c) Partiality is evil (2:4)

James 2:4 contains the "then" clause (or apodosis) of the conditional statement that spans James 2:2-4. As a whole, the statement provides a reason or cause for the instruction in James 2:1. The reason comes in the form of the two coordinate (rhetorical) questions that follow. If you (the *adelphoí*) showed partiality by favoring the rich and discriminating against the poor visitors to or new converts in their synagogue:

(1) Have you (the *adelphoí*) not made a distinction (διεκρίθητε) among yourselves?
(2) And become judges (κριταὶ) of evil reasoning (διαλογισμῶν πονηρῶν)?

The answer to both of these questions is an obvious and resounding, "yes". Thus, showing partiality is to 'judge that there is a difference' (Louw & Nida, 1996:363) between people simply based on their external appearance. Doing so is to act as those who 'have the right to render decisions in legal matters' (BDAG, 2000:570), only their judgments are flawed with faulty or 'morally worthless' (BDAG, 2000:851) reasoning. In short, partiality is not just unjust, it is evil.

(d) God grants poor people real riches (2:5)

Further reason or motivation for the instruction against partiality (Jas. 2:1) is the instruction in James 2:5. The instruction is to "listen" (ἀκούσατε), which is 'to believe and respond' to what follows 'on the basis of having heard' it (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, Jas. 2:5). McKnight (2011:192) insightfully comments that, *akouō* (to listen), is the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew *Shema*, which moves the hearer 'from attentiveness to concrete actions'. What follows and requires action is the question:

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[658] Presumably some of the *adelphoí* and not necessarily all of them.

[659] Refer to **Section 2.3.2** for a discussion of this "established Messianic community of believers" who met in their own Synagogue.

[660] Rich in fine clothes vs. poor in dirty clothes, sit here well vs. stand there or sit at my footstool.

did God not choose (οὐχ ὁ θεὸς ἐξελέξατο) the poor in the world (τοὺς πτωχοὺς τῷ κόσμῳ)

to be rich in faith (πλουσίους ἐν πίστει)

and heirs of the Kingdom (καὶ κληρονόμους τῆς βασιλείας)

that He promised to those loving Him (ἧς ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν)? (Jas. 2:5).

Again, the answer to the rhetorical question is a resounding, "yes". To be sure, God selected the poor *adelphoí*[661] who love Him to be the blessed recipients of plentiful or abounding[662] faith, and to be possessors (or beneficiaries)[663] of the Kingdom.

As discussed in **Section 3.5.3**, to love God (Jas. 2:5) alludes to the *Shema*. Thus, the rich faith of these poor *adelphoí* expressed itself in love towards God, as would be expected of a truly Torah observant people.[664]

Hartin (2003:120) perceptively observes that, "the Kingdom" (τῆς βασιλείας) (Jas. 2:5) parallels "the crown on life" (τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς) (Jas. 1:12), since both ideas are connected to the common phrase: "that He promised to those loving Him" (ἧς ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν) (Jas. 1:12; 2:5).[665] Since "the Kingdom" is associated with "the crown of life", it is reasonable to assume that possessing the former entails (eternal) life.[666] Scholars[667] recognise behind this promise the words of Jesus in Luke 6:20, "blessed are the poor" (Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί), "for yours is the Kingdom of God" (ὅτι ὑμετέρα ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ).

Finally, showing partiality against the poor is not only evil (Jas. 2:4), it is contrary to God's dealings with the poor who love Him (Jas. 2:5). He gives them rich faith and will make them heirs of the Kingdom. Thus, they are beneficiaries of spiritual and eternal riches.[668] In James 2:2-5 we see dramatic and ironic reversal: the poor who have hardly a place in the assembly, God has given rich faith and a certain (and perhaps prominent) place in His Kingdom.[669] This harkens to James 1:9-11 in which "the humble *adelphòs*" (ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινὸς) is instructed

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[661] Implied by the fact that they are said to be "those loving Him" (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν) (Jas. 2:5d).

[662] See BDAG (2000:831).

[663] See BDAG (2000:548).

[664] See McKnight, 2011:195-196.

[665] See also Johnson (2008:225); McKnight (2011:111-112).

[666] See: Hartin (2003:119); McKnight (2011:112).

[667] See: Allison (2013:397); Moo (2000:105); et.al.

[668] See Motyer (2010:93).

[669] See Hartin (2003:119-120).

to “boast” (καυχάσθω) in his “high position” (ὕψει) (Jas. 1:9), and “the rich” (ὁ … πλούσιος) in his “humiliation” (ταπεινώσει) (Jas. 1:10).

(e) Partiality is dishonouring the poor and blaspheming the Lord (2:6-7)

The way in which the partial *adelphoí* were treating the poor in their midst (who actually loved God) clashed with how God was treating them (Jas. 2:3-5); with His ‘divine choice and promise’, as Allison (2013:398) notes. This clash is the focus of James 2:6-7, as marked by the contrastive conjunction “*dé*” (δέ) at the beginning of verse 6. While God chose the poor to be rich in faith and to be recipients of the Kingdom, the partial *adelphoí* “dishonoured” (ἠτιμάσατε) them. They ‘deprived them of honour and respect’; which was ‘an especially grievous offence in strongly honour-shame Semitic … societies’ (BDAG, 2000:148). To put the offence in perspective, James urges his (original) readers (who were arguably mostly not rich)[670] to reflect on how the rich have been treating them. This is again done by way of rhetorical questions; doubtlessly to have the desired impact on his readers.

The first question: *“Do not the rich oppress you (οὐχ οἱ πλούσιοι καταδυναστεύουσιν ὑμῶν) and they themselves drag you into courts (καὶ αὐτοὶ ἕλκουσιν ὑμᾶς εἰς κριτήρια)?”* From this question, the *adelphoí* were evidently themselves the victims of financial exploitation and legal injustice by wealthy and powerful landowners and merchants.[671] Just the thought of them then perpetuating such shameful behavior in their fellowship must have horrified them; especially since their forefathers were oppressed and exploited in Egypt (Exod. 1:13), the prophets often warned God’s people against oppressing the poor (Jer. 7:6; 22:3; Ezek. 18:12; 22:7, 29; et.al.), and verses such as Proverbs 14:21[672] are ringing in the background.[673] James will again pick up the issue of oppression of the poor in James 5:1-6, at which time he will target the rich among the readers.

The second question: *“Do not they themselves blaspheme (οὐκ αὐτοὶ βλασφημοῦσιν) the good name (τὸ καλὸν ὄνομα), the One called upon you (τὸ ἐπικληθὲν ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς)?”* The rich did not only oppress the Messianic community, they defamed[674] Messiah Himself[675] who took

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[670] See Moo (2000:108); refer also to Section 2.4.2.

[671] See: Johnson (2008:226); McKnight (2011:197); Moo (2000:108); refer also to Section 2.4.2.

[672] Proverbs 14:21 (NASB) He who despises his neighbor sins, but happy is he who is gracious to the poor.

[673] See: Johnson (2008:225-226).

[674] Blaspheme (βλασφημέω) is ‘to speak against someone in such a way as to harm or injure his or her reputation’, which can be rendered: ‘to revile, to defame, to blaspheme, reviling.’ (Louw & Nida, 1996:433).

[675] “the good name, the One” (Jas. 2:7) could refer to God the Father (as in Jas. 2:5) or the Lord Jesus Christ (as in Jas. 2:1). Moo (2000:109) seems right in saying that it is ‘more likely’ the latter (see also: McKnight 2011:201; Johnson, 2008:226).

ownership of the community.[676] This reflects (or is an assault) on the *adelphoí* themselves, since they are called by His name.[677] Being called by His name, as Motyer (2010:92) points out, 'speaks of an intimate, personal, and permanent relationship'.

(f) Summary of James 2:1-7

The *adelphoí* are instructed not to practice their faith in Christ with partiality (2:1). Some of them were guilty of showing favor to the rich and dishonour to the poor in their gatherings (2:2-3). It is not only unjust, but also evil to judge people based on outward appearance (2:4). Moreover, it clashed with God's choice of and promise to the poor, who actually loved Him (2:5). The *adelphoí* who practiced partiality, reflected the shameful behaviour of the rich who mistreated them and blasphemed the good name of their Lord (2:6-7).

4.3.2. Translation[678] of James 2:8-13

2:8 a εἰ μέντοι νόμον τελεῖτε βασιλικὸν κατὰ τὴν γραφήν,
if however you carry out (the) *nómon basilikòn*[679] according to the Scripture
b ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν,
you shall love your neighbour as yourself
c καλῶς ποιεῖτε·
you do well

2:9 a εἰ δὲ προσωπολημπτεῖτε,
but if you show partiality
b ἁμαρτίαν ἐργάζεσθε
you work out sin
c ἐλεγχόμενοι ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου ὡς παραβάται.
being convicted by the *nómou*[680] as transgressors

2:10 a ὅστις γὰρ ὅλον τὸν νόμον τηρήσῃ
for whoever keeps *[h]ólon tòn nómon*[681]

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[676] See: Hartin (2003:121); McKnight (2011:202-203); Moo (2000:109).

[677] According to Scripture, God's people are called by His name. See, for example: 2 Chron. 7:14; Isa. 43:7; 45:4; Dan. 9:19; Amos 9:12; Acts 15:17.

[678] The Greek New Testament text for this study was taken from the 4th Revised Edition, UBS, 2012. Revisions were made to Scripture Directs' (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015) English translation to reflect a more literal rending. Refer to **Appendix C**. The changes are indicated in highlighted (additions/replacements) and in strikethrough (deletions/replaced) text.

[679] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[680] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[681] Ibid.

b πταίσῃ δὲ ἐν ἑνί,
but stumbles in one
c γέγονεν πάντων ἔνοχος.
has become guilty of all

2:11 a ὁ γὰρ εἰπών,
for He who said
b μὴ μοιχεύσῃς,
do not commit adultery
c εἶπεν καί,
also said
d μὴ φονεύσῃς·
do not murder
e εἰ δὲ οὐ μοιχεύεις
now if you do not commit adultery
f φονεύεις δέ,
but you murder
g γέγονας παραβάτης νόμου.
you have become a transgressor of (the) *nómou*[682]

2:12 a οὕτως λαλεῖτε
thus speak
b καὶ οὕτως ποιεῖτε
and thus do
c ὡς διὰ νόμου ἐλευθερίας μέλλοντες κρίνεσθαι.
as those about to be judged by (the) *nómou eleutherías*[683]

2:13 a ἡ γὰρ κρίσις ἀνέλεος τῷ μὴ ποιήσαντι ἔλεος·
for the judgment (is) merciless to the one not doing mercy
b κατακαυχᾶται ἔλεος κρίσεως.
mercy triumphs over judgment

4.3.3. Thought Structure Analysis of James 2:8-13

James 2:8-13 is remarkably coherent, with the word "*nómos*" (νόμος) holding it together.[684] It is also connected with James 2:1-7, via the idea to "show partiality" (προσωπολημπτέω) (Jas. 2:9); which is the main concern of the preceding pericope. The preceding pericope is also

[682] Ibid.

[683] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[684] See Cheung (2003:73).

linked to James 2:8-13 by means of the ideas of the "kingdom" (βασιλικός) in verses 5 and 8. Thus James 2:8-13, apart from teaching about "*nómos*", is meant to bring added weight and conviction regarding the instruction against showing "partiality".

As illustrated in **Figure 4** (refer to **Appendix D** for the complete analysis of James), James's thoughts oscillate between three types of ideas:

(a) The "*nómos*" (νόμος) as the standard for living; which is either upheld (a+), violated (a-), or said to be the standard for judgment (a).

(b) Conduct, whether according to "*nómos*" (b+), in violation of "*nómos*" (b-), or commanded by "*nómos*" (b).

(c) Cause or reason.

The ideas are expounded and reinforced through the repetition of related thoughts. Some repetitions occur in the same order (i.e. parallelisms), and others occur in reverse order (i.e. chiasm). These chiasms and parallelisms bind James 2:8-13 into a tightly knit unit, as shown in **Figure 4**. The patterns and other significant elements in James's lines of thought are discussed below.

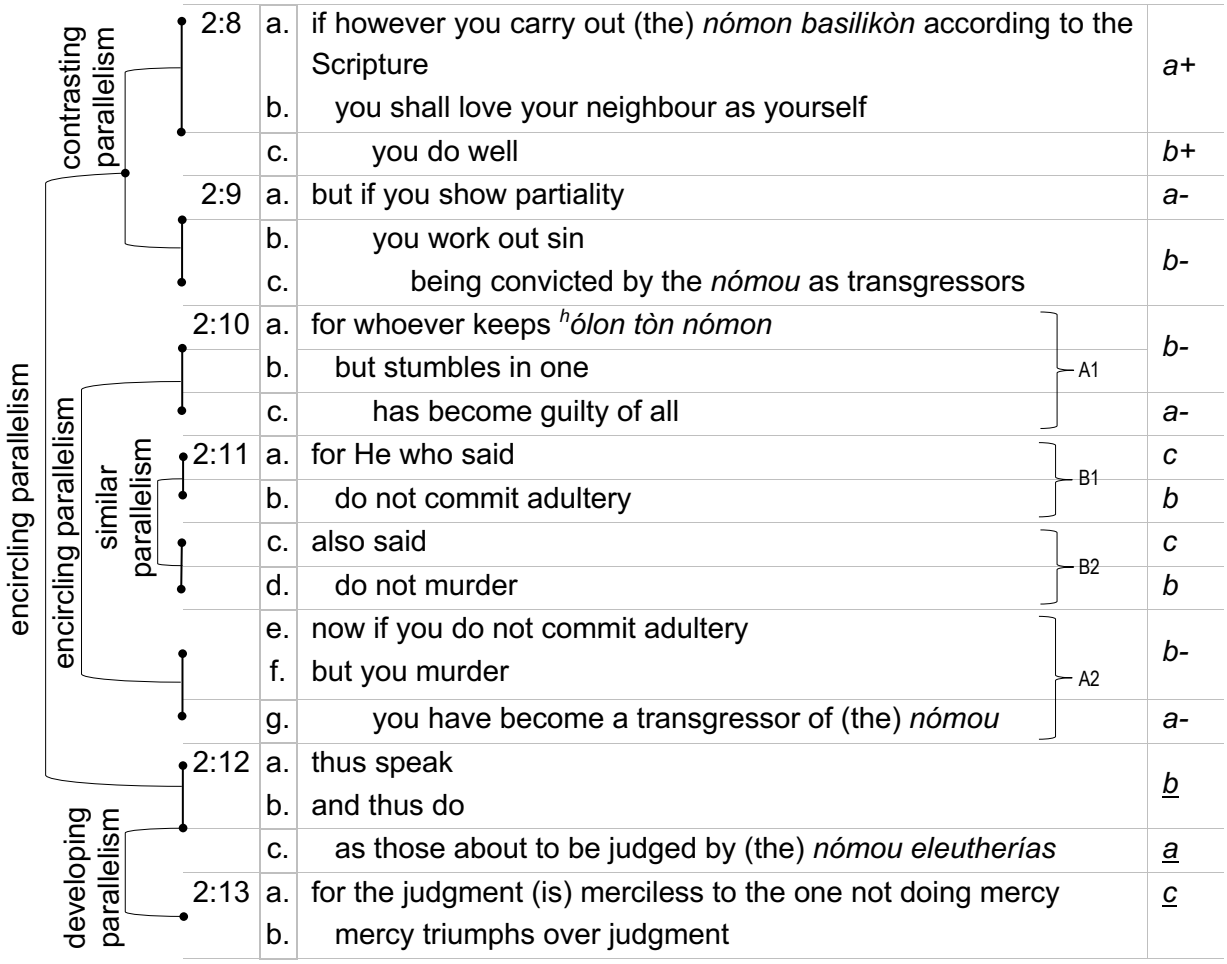


Figure 4: Thought Structure Analysis of James 2:8-13

(a) Contrasting Parallelism in James 2:8-9

In James 2:8-9, if "you carry out the *nómon basilikòn*" (νόμον τελεῖτε βασιλικὸν), "you shall love your neighbor" (ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου) "as yourself" (ὡς σεαυτόν) (a+), "you do well" (καλῶς ποιεῖτε) (b+). Contrastingly, if "you show partiality" (προσωπολημπτεῖτε) (a-), "you work out sin" (ἁμαρτίαν ἐργάζεσθε), "being convicted" (ἐλεγχόμενοι) "by the *nómou* as transgressors" (ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου ὡς παραβάται) (b-).

The effect of this parallelism is as follows:

- carrying out *the nómon basilikòn* is not just to do well, but not to be convicted by the *nómou* as transgressors;
- showing partiality is not just to work out sin, it is also to fail in loving one's neighbour and carrying out the *nómon basilikòn.*

(b) Similar Chiasm and Parallelisms in James 2:10-11

The repetitions in James 2:10-11 can be grouped into an encircling parallelism (v.10 & v.11e-g) and a similar parallelism (v.11a-d). Viewed as a whole, the verses appear to be structured as a similar chiasm with the following pattern: A1 (v.10) - B1 (v.11a-b) - B2 (v.11c-d) - A2 (v.11e-f).

(i) Encircling Parallelism (v.10 & v.11e-f)

"Whoever keeps the *ʰólon tòn nómon*" (ὅστις … ὅλον τὸν νόμον τηρήσῃ) but "stumbles in one" (πταίσῃ … ἐν ἑνί) part or commandment of the *nómou* (implied) (b-), "has become guilty of all" (γέγονεν πάντων ἔνοχος) (a-) (v.10). Similarly, if "you do not commit adultery" (οὐ μοιχεύεις) but "you murder" (φονεύεις) (b-), "you have become a transgressor of (the) *nómou*" (γέγονας παραβάτης νόμου) (a-) (v.11e-g).

The point is thus made twice: to violate or break any one commandment of the *nómou*, is to be a transgressor of the *nómou* or to be guilty against the whole *nómon.*

(ii) Similar Parallelism (v.11a-d)

The stated and reinforced point of the encircling parallelism (v.10 & v.11e-f) is substantiated in v.11a-d by means of a similar parallelism. "He who said" (ὁ … εἰπών) (c) "do not commit adultery" (μὴ μοιχεύσῃς) (b), also "said" (εἶπεν) (c) "do not murder" (μὴ φονεύσῃς) (b).

Common to the commandments, is the same God who spoke. And since it is God who spoke the commandment of the *nómou*, they have considerable weight. The similar parallelism reinforces this point.

(c) Encircling and developing chiasm/parallelism around James 2:10-11

James 2:12-13 rounds off, concludes, and climaxes James's instruction about the *nomos* in James 2:8-13. James 2:12-13 has three thought elements:

(b) The instruction to "speak" (λαλεῖτε) and "do" (ποιεῖτε).

(a) The standard to be followed in heeding the instruction: "As those about to be judged by (the) *nómou eleutherías*" (ὡς διὰ νόμου ἐλευθερίας μέλλοντες κρίνεσθαι). Thus (the) *nómou eleutherías* is the standard against which both speech and conduct will be judged.

(c) The reason or motivation for heeding the instruction is that "the judgment is merciless" (ἡ γὰρ κρίσις ἀνέλεος) "to the one not doing mercy" (τῷ μὴ ποιήσαντι ἔλεος), and "mercy triumphs over judgment" (κατακαυχᾶται ἔλεος κρίσεως).

The elements (b) and (a) might form an encircling (similar) chiasm with verse 8, or an encircling (contrasting) parallelism with verse 9. With the addition of the reason/motivation (thought element (c)), the encircling chiasm/parallelism is of a developing nature.

(d) The subject of *nómos*[685]

Being referred to in every verse, except the last one, *nómos* is doubtlessly the key concept or main subject of James 2:8-13. However, not used as a standalone word every time. The consecutive uses of *nómos* are listed below:

- Jas. 2:8 "*nómon basilikòn*" (νόμον … βασιλικὸν).
- Jas. 2:9 "*tou nómou*" (τοῦ νόμου).
- Jas. 2:10 "*hólon tòn nómon*" (ὅλον τὸν νόμον).
- Jas. 2:11 "*nómou*" (νόμου).
- Jas. 2:12 "*nómou eleutherías*" (νόμου ἐλευθερίας).

The three uses in the middle (vv.9-11) have basically the same form, but the forms of the first and last uses are clearly different. Are their meanings different? While the meanings will be more fully explored later, the following observations can be made from the train of thought and thought structure:

- In the contrasting parallelism in James 2:8-9, "*nómon basilikòn*" (νόμον … βασιλικὸν) (v.8a) is paralleled with "*tou nómou*" (τοῦ νόμου) (v.9c). Evidently, there is close correspondence between the two concepts, if they are not synonymous. The following observations support this notion:

[685] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

- The command: “you shall love your neighbor” (ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου) “as yourself” (ὡς σεαυτόν) (v.8b) is either synonymous with “*nómon basilikòn*” (v.8a), or its governing principle or objective, or one of its commandments. But equally, since the command is from Leviticus 19:18 (cf. 19:34), it is part of the “*tou nómou*” (τοῦ νόμου) (v.9c). Indeed, the Lord Jesus Himself, marked it as the second greatest commandment “in the *nómō*” (ἐν τῷ νόμῳ) (Mat. 22:36, 39); after the first and greatest, which is: “you shall love the LORD your God” (ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου) “with all your heart” (ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ καρδίᾳ σου) “and with all your soul” (καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ψυχῇ σου) “and with all your mind” (καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ διανοίᾳ σου) (Mat. 22:37).
- Secondly, the parallelism not only establishes a connection between “*nómon basilikòn*” (v.88) and “*tou nómou*” (v.9c) (which are similar, as argued above), but also between the idea “to carry out” (τελέω) (v.8a) and “to work out” (ἐργάζομαι) sin (v.9b); which is its opposite. The natural inference is that not “to carry out” the “*nómon basilikòn*” is “sin”, which is to be a “transgressor” (παραβάτης) of the “*tou nómou*” (v.10c). And this is indeed the flow of the argument: to show partiality (vv.1-7) is a failure to carry out the “*nómon basilikòn*” (or a failure to love one’s neighbour as oneself) (v.8). And to show partiality is to “work out sin”, being convicted by the “*tou nómou*” as a transgressor (v.9).

- James’s teaching from the first verse in chapter two concludes and climaxes in verses 12-13. The initial instruction to “not have in partiality the faith” (Jas. 2:1), is followed by the imperative to “listen” – that is to be attentive and act appropriately based on the fact that God chose the poor in this world to be rich in faith and “heirs of the Kingdom” (κληρονόμους τῆς βασιλείας) (Jas. 2:5). In James 2:8, the idea of carrying out the “*nómon basilikòn*” is commended; with “*basilikòn*” (βασιλικὸν) (Jas. 2:8) being the adjective for “Kingdom” (βασιλείας) in James 2:5. This connection may suggest that the “*nómos”* is “*nómon basilikòn*” because it is the standard for the heirs of the Kingdom.[686] The final and climactic instruction is to “speak” (λαλεῖτε) and “do” (ποιεῖτε) “as those about to be judged by (the) *nómou eleutherías*” (ὡς διὰ νόμου ἐλευθερίας μέλλοντες κρίνεσθαι).
    - Because verse 12 is connected to verse 8 and/or 9 (via an encircling chiasm or parallelism), the “*nómou eleutherías”* is paralleled with “*nómon basilikòn*” (v.8) and/or “*tou nómou*” (v.9). Again, there is therefore a close correspondence between the concepts.

[686] This idea will be further explored in **Section 4.3.4**.

- "*Nómou eleutherías*" (Jas. 2:12) appears to be a short form of "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (Jas. 1:25).[687] According to the analysis of James 1:19-27, "*téleios*" and "*eleuthería*" in "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 1:25) were found to be attributes of "*nómos*", rather than indicators that a different "*nómos*" is in view (refer to **Section 4.2.4, subsection (18)**). If the same is the case with "*eleuthería*" in "*nómou eleutherías*" (Jas. 2:12), then "*nómou eleutherías"* (Jas. 2:12), "*tou nómou*" (Jas. 2:9), and "*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 1:25) are all synonymous terms for *Torah*, as potentially is "*nómon basilikòn*" (Jas. 2:8).[688]
- Finally, in James 2:12, the *adelphoí* are instructed to "speak" and "do" as those about "to be judged" (κρίνεσθαι) by (the) "*nómou eleutherías*". In James 4:11, they are warned against acting as a "judge" (κριτής) of and not being a "doer of (the) *nómou*" (ποιητὴς νόμου). The strong parallel between these two verses further strengthens the correspondence between, and possibly the equivalence of, the "*nómou eleutherías*" and the "*nómou"*.[689]

4.3.4. Meaning Structure of James 2:8-13

The meaning structure of James 2:8-13 is shown in **Figure 5** (refer to **Appendix D** for the complete analysis of James). The meaning blocks are:

- Jas. 2:8-9: Partiality is violating *nómos* as opposed to carrying out the *nómon basilikòn*.
- Jas. 2:10-11: Violating any part of *nómos* is to be guilty against the whole.
- Jas. 2:12-13: Instruction to act as those to be judged by (the) *nómou eleutherías*.

4.3.5. Meaning Indicators of James 2:8-13

The most significant related words and phrases, stylistic features, and connecting words in James 2:8-13 are marked and shown in **Figure 5** (refer to **Appendix D** for the complete analysis of James). These meaning indicators highlight the concepts, repetitions, and connections that determine the meaning of the passage and its constituent parts. The stylistic features (such as chiasms and parallelisms) were discussed in **Section 4.3.3** above. The related words and phrases and connecting words are discussed below:

[687] This assertion will be tested in **Section 4.3.4**.

[688] Again, these ideas will be further explored in **Section 4.3.4**.

[689] Ibid.

2:8	a.	**if however** you carry out (the) *nómon basilikòn* according to the Scripture	Partiality is violating *nómos* as opposed to carrying out the *nómon basilikòn* (see: 3:17; 4:11, 17)
	b.	you shall love your neighbour as yourself	
	c.	you do well	
2:9	a.	**but if** you show partiality	
	b.	you work out sin	
	c.	being convicted by the *nómou* as transgressors	
2:10	a.	**for** whoever keeps *[h]ólon tòn nómon*	
	b.	**but** stumbles in one	
	c.	has become guilty of all	
2:11	a.	**for** He who said	Violating any part of *nómos* is to be guilty against the whole (see: 4:12; 4:17)
	b.	do not commit adultery	
	c.	**also** said	
	d.	do not murder	
	e.	**now if** you do not commit adultery	
	f.	**but** you murder	
	g.	you have become a transgressor of (the) *nómou*	
2:12	a.	**thus speak**	Act as those to be judged by the *nómou eleutherías* (see: 4:11-12; 1:25)
	b.	**and thus do**	
	c.	as those about to be judged by (the) *nómou eleutherías*	
2:13	a.	**for** the judgment (is) merciless to the one not doing mercy	Reason – doing so is doing mercy
	b.	mercy triumphs over judgment	

Figure 5: Semantic Discourse Analysis of James 2:8-13

- Doing (blue text): The first set of related words and phrases is about "doing". The *adelphoí* who "carry out" (τελεῖτε) the *nómon basilikòn* "do" (ποιεῖτε) well (Jas. 2:8). Conversely, the *adelphoí* who show partiality "work out" (ἐργάζεσθε) sin (Jas. 2:9). Whoever "keeps" (τηρήσῃ) *[h]olon tòn nómon* but stumbles in one (part) has become guilty of all (Jas. 2:10). The *adelphoí* are commanded: to speak and "do" (ποιεῖτε) as those about to be judged by the *nómou eleutherías* (Jas. 2:12). Finally, judgment is merciless to the one not "doing" (ποιήσαντι) mercy (Jas. 2:13).
- Sin and related concepts (orange text): If you "show partiality" (προσωπολημπτεῖτε) you work out "sin" (ἁμαρτίαν), "being convicted" (ἐλεγχόμενοι) by the *nómou* as "transgressors" (παραβάται) (Jas. 2:9). Whoever "stumbles" (πταίσῃ) in one part of *nómos*, has become guilty (ἔνοχος) of all (Jas. 2:10). God who said, "do not commit adultery" (μὴ μοιχεύσῃς) also said "do not murder" (μὴ φονεύσῃς) (Jas. 2:11a-d). But if "you do not commit adultery" (οὐ μοιχεύεις) but "you murder" (φονεύεις), you have become a "transgressor" (παραβάτης) of the *nómou*.

- Judged and judgment (dark orange text): The *adelphoí* are to speak and do as those about to be "judged" (κρίνεσθαι) by the *nómou eleutherías*. (Jas. 2:12). For the "judgment" (κρίσις) is merciless to the one not doing mercy, mercy triumphs over "judgment" (κρίσεως) (Jas. 2:13).
- *Nómos* and Scripture (green text): The central theme of "*nómos*" of the passage, with the related theme of "Scripture" is marked in green text. If you carry out the "*nómon basilikòn*" (νόμον … βασιλικὸν) according to the "Scripture" (γραφήν), you do well (Jas. 2:8). But if you show partiality you work out sin, being convicted by "the *nómou*" (τοῦ νόμου) as transgressors (Jas. 2:9). Whoever keeps "[h]*ólon tòn nómon*" (ὅλον τὸν νόμον) yet stumbles in one has become guilty of all (Jas. 2:10). If you do not commit adultery but you murder, you have become a transgressor of the *nómou* (νόμου) (Jas. 2:11). Thus, the *adelphoí* are commanded to speak and do as those about to be judged by the "*nómou eleutherías*" (νόμου ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 2:12).
- Other concepts in the passage that are themes in James include:
    - Love (red box): To "love" (ἀγαπάω) one's neighbor as oneself is to carry out (the) *nómon basilikòn* (Jas. 2:8). The *adelphoí* are called "beloved" (ἀγαπητοί) (Jas. 1:16, 19; 2:5). Those who endure temptation and are poor yet rich in faith are said to "love" (ἀγαπάω) God (Jas. 1:12; 2:5).
    - Speak (purple text): The *adelphoí* are commanded to "speak" (λαλεῖτε) and do as those about to be judged by the "*nómou eleutherías*" (νόμου ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 2:12). Speech is a major theme in James, with related words used no less than 20 times in the Letter (refer to **Appendix D**, **p.364**).
    - Mercy (green highlight): Judgment is "merciless" (ἀνέλεος) to the one not doing "mercy" (ἔλεος), "mercy" (ἔλεος) triumphs over judgment (Jas. 2:13). Mercy is one of several virtues promoted in James (refer to **Appendix D**, **p.365**).
- Several significant connecting words are used in James 2:8-13, indicating important logical connections between successive propositions. The most significant are discussed below:
    - James 2:8 is connected with verse 9 by way of the contrastive conjunction "but" (δέ) to form a contrasting parallelism (refer to **Section 4.3.3 (a)**). The verses assert that partiality is violating *nómos* as opposed to carrying out the *nómon basilikòn*.
    - James 2:10-11 is bound together via a similar parallelism (Jas. 2:11a-d) with an encircling parallelism (Jas. 2:10 & 11e-f) around it, to form an A1-B1-B2-A2 chiastic structure. As a whole, James 2:10-11 labours the point that violating any part of *nómos* makes one guilty of violating the whole (of *nómos*); which in turn functions as

a reason for the assertions in James 2:8-9, as marked by the causal conjunction "for" (γάρ) at the beginning of v.10.

- The comparative conjunction "thus" (οὕτως) in James 2:12, indicates 'how something is to be done'.[690] It is about how the *adelphoí* are to speak and act. They are to speak and do "as those about to be judged by the *nómou eleutherías*" (Jas. 2:12).
- James 2:13 also starts with the causal conjunction "for" (γάρ), which indicates the cause or reason why the *adelphoí* are to speak and act according to the *nómou eleutherías*" (Jas. 2:12). The reason is that "the judgment is merciless to the one not doing mercy, mercy triumphs over judgment" (Jas. 2:13).

4.3.6. Meaning of Words and Phrases in James 2:8-13

The meanings of the significant words and phrases in the passage (James 2:8-13) are explored and explained below:

(1) James 2:8: "If however you carry out (the) *nómon basilikòn*"[691] (εἰ μέντοι νόμον τελεῖτε βασιλικὸν):

James 2:8 starts with the words, "if however". The conjunction "if" (εἰ) marks the condition (or protasis) for the action or conclusion (apodosis) that follows (Wallace, 19996:675). The protasis is "if … you carry out …" (Jas. 2:8a-b), and the apodosis is "you do well" (Jas. 2:8c).

According to BDAG (2000:630), the particle "*méntoi*" (μέντοι) is 'mostly adversative' and could be translated as 'though', or alternatively as 'really'. Taking the adversative sense, Louw & Nida (1996:794) render it, 'If indeed on the one hand', and the beginning of James 2:9, 'but if on the other hand'. Bible translations are divided between the intensive (e.g. LITV, NKJV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, NLT) and adversative (e.g. NASB, RV, TLV) force of "*méntoi*" in James 2:8. Most scholars prefer the former.[692] Johnson (2008:22) seems right, though, in saying that "*méntoi*" (Jas. 2:8) should be taken together with "*dé*" (δὲ) in James 2:9 'and placed in strong opposition'.[693] Therefore "if you really … if however" or simply "if however … but if" seems to bring out the sense of James 2:8-9.

The protasis states that "if … you carry out" (τελεῖτε) the "*nómon basilikòn*" (νόμον … βασιλικὸν) (Jas. 2:8a). According to BDAG (2000:997), the verb "*teléō*" (τελέω) means 'to carry out an obligation or demand', and it could be translated, 'carry out, accomplish, perform, fulfil,

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[690] See Wallace (1996:675).

[691] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[692] Including, et.al.: Allison (2013:401); Hartin (2003:113); McKnight (2011:205), Moo (2000:110-111); Tasker (1973:60).

[693] This seems right especially since James 2:8-9 forms a contrasting chiasm (see **Section 4.3.3(a)**).

keep'. Hartin (2003:121) insightfully observes that the verb "*teleῖte*" (τελεῖτε) returns to the theme of "perfection" in the Letter and implies that the Law (*Torah*) is to be carried out 'fully, wholly, or totally'.[694] This point is strongly supported by James 2:10-11, which drives home the point that to keep "*hólon tòn nómon*" (ὅλον τὸν νόμον) and yet stumble "in one" (ἐν ἑνί) part of it, is to be guilty "of all" (πάντων).

The object that is to be carried out fully or completely is the "*nómon basilikòn*" (νόμον … βασιλικὸν) (Jas. 2:8a). The context of the Letter (**Chapter 2**), the biblical roots of its content (**Chapter 3**), and its flow of thought (**Chapter 4** so far) naturally suggest that "*nómon*" (in Jas. 2:8) refers to *Torah*.[695] Thus Hartin's (2003:113) assertion that it 'continues to refer to the *Torah*, as before' is reasonable.[696] McKnight (2011:206) supports this up by commenting, 'we might be tempted to forget that James is referring here to the Torah, the law or laws of Moses'. Bauckham (1999:142) states it more emphatically: 'In James 2:8-12 James can hardly be speaking of anything other than the whole law of Moses, i.e. every commandment in the Torah'.

According to Louw & Nida (1996:479), the adjective "*basilikòs*" (βασιλικός) means 'pertaining to a king'. According to BDAG (2000:170), it conveys the sense of 'given by the king (of the kingdom of God)'. Along these lines, Bird (2009:101) asserts that the "*nómos*" is 'described as "royal", meaning that it is the law of a king". Scholars note that "*basilikòs*" could mark the "*nómon basilikòn"* as being pre-eminent or supreme among all laws.[697] But perhaps even more so, as Hartin (2003:121), Johnson (2008:230), Moo (2000:111-112), and Motyer (2010:97) rightfully observe, that the proximity of "*basilikòs*" to the noun "*basileía*" (βασιλεία) in James 2:5 suggest that the sense is, "the Law pertaining to the Kingdom of God", or simply "Law of the Kingdom", or alternatively "Kingdom *Torah*", as per the Complete Jewish Bible. Tasker (1973:60) puts it well by saying, 'it is the law of the kingdom of God, given by the Supreme King Himself'. Allison (2013:404) is therefore right in contending that "*basilikòs"* stresses 'the importance of the *νόμος* and so implies obligation to observe it'. Or as MacArthur (1998:111) asserts, it indicates 'the absolute and binding authority of the law'. Perhaps one could sum up by saying that the "*nómon basilikòn"* is the Kingdom *Torah* that is wholly to be observed by all who are loyal to the King and are heirs of His Kingdom. Echoes of this language

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[694] Johnson (2008:320) makes a similar observation. See also Wall (1997:122). Allison (2013:402) comments that perhaps James used the verb 'because of his interest elsewhere in τέλειος.

[695] So: Louw & Nida (1996:394) and the Complete Jewish Bible.

[696] Ropes (1916:198) states: 'νόμος means the Law of God'. Hegg (2020:85) clarifies further that 'it is the *Torah* given to Israel by the hands of Moses.' And Cheung (2003:99) concurs by stating: 'This law, however, is still the law given to Israel through Moses, now understood as the law of God's kingdom over his messianically renewed people.'

[697] This possibility is noted by et.al: McKnight (2011:206); Moo (2000:111).

are found in Exodus 19:5-7,[698] immediately prior to the giving of the Ten Commandments, which will come to the fore in James 2:11:

> *(5) 'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; (6) and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel." (7) So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the LORD had commanded him. (Exod. 19:5-7, NASB).*

Motyer (2011:199-200) helpfully explains that "if" (in Exod. 19:5) relates not to 'covenant status' but to 'covenant enjoyment', as 'status comes by the acts of God' and 'enjoyment by the responsive acts of obedience'. Therefore, the blessings of being God's personal possession, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation are enjoyed through obedience.

It follows from the above, that the adjective "*basilikòn*" describes the noun "*nómon*", as was the case in James 1:25. And just as it is reasonable to understand "*nómon*" to refer to the *Torah* there, so it is the case here.[699] Osborne (2019:72) thus seems right in asserting that, 'Most likely, "royal law" refers to all the teaching of *Torah* rather than one specific command, but still the love command is highlighted'.

(2) James 2:8: "according to the Scripture" (κατὰ τὴν γραφήν):

Johnson (2008:230) rightfully observes that, because of its placement, the function of the prepositional phrase "according to the Scripture" (κατὰ τὴν γραφήν) is ambiguous. Does it function as a citation formula to introduce Leviticus 19:18 (so Allison (2013:406)),[700] or does it serve to say that what the *adelphoí* are to do is "according to Scripture" – that is "as the Scripture intends" (so McKnight (2011:207)) them to live? The latter seems more likely. Motyer (2010:97) insightfully observes that the Kingdom *Torah* thus carries considerable weight not only because it has 'scriptural authority' but is also the 'special concern' of the King.

The inference from the above is that the King's will for His subjects is expressed in the sacred Scriptures in the form of His *Torah*, which instructs them on how to conduct themselves in His Kingdom.[701] The *Torah* of the Kingdom (Kingdom *Torah*) is God's instructions written in the Holy Scriptures. Or as MacArthur (1998:111) suggests, the 'royal law and [God's] biblical commands are synonymous'. The chiasm in James 2:8-9, with the *nómon basilikòn* (v.8a)

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[698] Hartin (2003:114) also detects Exodus 19:5-6 in the background.

[699] See: Bauckham (1999:142); Hartin (2003:113); McKnight (2011:206).

[700] See also: Hartin (2003:121).

[701] Or as Motyer (2010:96) puts it: 'the life-style of the redeemed' is to be 'framed according to the law of the Redeemer'.

paralleling the *nómou* (v.9c) strengthens this understanding (refer to **Section 4.3.3(a)** and **(d)**). Evidently therefore, Hegg (2020:86), invoking several Scriptures as validation,[702] seems right in asserting that 'James … like Yeshua Himself, would never have considered that the *Torah* given to Moses and Israel, would someday be replaced by a "new, messianic *Torah*".

(3) James 2:8: "you shall love your neighbour as yourself" (ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν):

The citation, "you shall love your neighbour as yourself" (ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν) is verbatim from the Greek translation (LXX) of Leviticus 19:18. Not only is Leviticus part of the *Torah*, it is also part of the "Holiness Code"; which James draws from extensively (refer to **Section 3.5.4**). Though the verb "*agapēseis*" (ἀγαπήσεις) is in the future indicative, as Wallace (1996:569-570) explains, its force is that of a command that is 'universal', 'timeless', 'solemn' and 'emphatic' - as is often characteristic of the commandments in the *Torah*. Accordingly, it is imperative that the *adelphoí* show as much 'sincere appreciation and high regard' (Louw & Nida, 1996:292) to their 'fellow human beings' (BDAG, 2000:830) as they do towards themselves.

The relationship between the "Kingdom *Torah*" (or "royal law") and the imperative "you shall love your neighbour as yourself" (the "love command") has been variously understood. According to Laws (1980:109), 'Lev. 19:18 … is the royal law'.[703] But, as Allison (2013:407) rightfully comments, one would expect '*νόμος* to refer not to a single commandment but to a corpus of imperatives'.[704] This is in line with Jesus referring to the "love commandment" as the second greatest "commandment" (ἐντολὴ) "in the *Torah*" (ἐν τῷ νόμῳ) (Mat. 22:36-40). Therefore, Hartin (2003:121) seems correct in asserting that the Kingdom *Torah* is 'not restricted to Lev. 19:18 … but embraces the entire Law of which the command to love is but a part'.[705] Nonetheless, it is a crucial part. According to Moo (2000:113), 'the royal law [is] epitomized in the love command'. The "love commandment" does not just summarize and exemplify the Kingdom *Torah*, it is 'at the heart of the *Torah*' (Hartin, 2003:115) and 'the great general principle in the *Torah*' (Allison, 2013:407). So important is loving one's neighbour as oneself, that Jesus ranks it second to the *Shema* only (Mark 12:28-31).

This understanding of the relationship between the "love commandment" and the Kingdom *Torah* (or *Torah*) is strongly supported by the fact that Leviticus 19:18 ("love commandment") comes from 'right in the middle of the most "legal" book of the Torah', as Silva (2014c:417)

[702] Mat. 5:17-18; Psa. 119:99, 160; Isa. 40:8.

[703] So Barclay (1976:69).

[704] See also: Ropes (1916:198); Vlachos (2013:78).

[705] So also Bauckham (1999:142).

insightfully points out. He (Silva, 2014c:417) then makes the following indisputable statement:

> *It makes little sense to suggest that Lev 19:18 contradicts or undermines or is inconsistent with the detailed requirements of the Mosaic law. Quite the contrary: that verse in its context provides the proper motivation for obedience; indeed, the very next verse begins, "You shall keep my statutes" (Lev 19:19 NRSV).*

Clearly, therefore, the "love commandment" finds its practical expression in obedience to God's binding and permanent instructions (i.e. His *Torah*).

(4) James 2:8: "you do well" (καλῶς ποιεῖτε):

The protasis: if you (i.e. the *adelphoí*) completely keep the Kingdom *Torah* as the Scripture intends by showing loving concern for your fellow human beings; is followed by the apodosis: then "you do well" (καλῶς ποιεῖτε). According to BDAG (2000:840), the verb "*poiéō*" (ποιέω) means 'to carry out an obligation of a moral or social nature'. And according to BDAG (2000:505), "*kalōs*" (καλῶς) 'pertains to being in accord with a standard' – that is to do 'rightly' or 'correctly'. Put together, the apodosis has the sense of, "then you carry out your moral and social obligation rightly or well, in accordance with God's absolute standard for living".

McKnight (2011:209) insightfully detects the idea of "blessing" behind the words "do well". This recalls James 1:25, which teaches that those who look into, continue in, and do the works of *Torah* are blessed.

The "*kalōs*" (καλῶς) + "*poiéō*" (ποιέω) form is repeated in James 2:19, which alludes to the *Shema*.[706] As Allison (2013:408) points out, this may indicate that James treats the *Shema* (Deut. 6:5) and the "love commandment" (Lev. 19:18) as summaries of the first and second tables of the *Decalogue* respectively, and indeed of the entire *Torah*. This, of course, is in line with Jesus' teaching (Mat. 22:36-40). As demonstrated in **Section 3.5.3**, the *Shema* and the two greatest commandments are of great importance to James.

There are echoes in James's language from passages like Deuteronomy 6:17-18:

> *(17) "You should diligently keep (φυλάσσων, LXX) the commandments (ἐντολὰς, LXX) of the LORD your God, and His testimonies (μαρτύρια, LXX) and His statutes (δικαιώματα, LXX) which He has commanded (ἐνετείλατό, LXX) you. (18) "You shall do (ποιήσεις, LXX) what is right (ἀρεστὸν, LXX) and good (καλὸν, LXX) in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well (εὖ, LXX) with you and that you may go in and possess the good land which the LORD swore to give your fathers, (Deut. 6:17-18, NASB).*[707]

[706] Refer to **Section 3.5.3**. See also **Glossary of Terms** for "*Shema*".

[707] See also Deut. 12:25, 28.

(5) James 2:9: "but if you show partiality" (εἰ δὲ προσωπολημπτεῖτε):

James 2:9 starts with the contrastive conjunction, "but" (δέ). According to Du Toit (2020:295), this may indicate a 'contrast between the love principle and the Mosaic law'. Based on this "possibility", he then posits that James sets the "love commandment" (v.8) against "the *Torah*" (v.9). This is not correct. As explained in **Section 4.3.3 (a)** (see also **Section 4.3.5**), "but" (δέ) joins verses 8 and 9 together to form a contrasting parallelism, according to which:

- The opposite of "carry out the Kingdom *Torah*" (which is epitomized by the command: "you shall love your neighbour as yourself") (v.8a-b) is to "show partiality" (v.9a).
- And the opposite of "you do well" (v.8c) is "you work out sin, being convicted by the *nómou* as transgressors" (v.9b-c).

Furthermore, as discussed in **Section 4.3.3 (d)**, the implication of the parallelism in James 2:8-9 is that the "Kingdom *Torah*" (together with the "love commandment/principle") and the "*nómou"* are effectively synonymous ideas, and not opposites.

As in verse 8, the conjunction "if" (εἰ) marks the condition (or protasis) for the action or conclusion (apodosis) that follows (Wallace, 1996:675). The protasis is, "if you show partiality" (Jas. 2:9a), and the apodosis is, "you work out sin, being convicted by the *nómou* as transgressors" (Jas. 2:9b-c).

To "show partiality" (προσωπολημπτέω) is the verb form of "partiality" (προσωπολημψία), which is the main subject of James 2:1-7; which is rooted in the *Torah* (and specifically Lev. 19:15). As explained in **Section 4.3.1(a)**, to be partial (or to show partiality) is to accept or reject people, or to show or withhold favour from them, based on the physical or external. Doing so is evil (Jas. 2:4), contrary to God's way (Jas. 2:5), and it dishonours the poor (Jas. 2:6-7). James 2:9 adds another, and perhaps the primary, reason why showing partiality is so offensive. If you show partiality, then "you work out sin" (ἁμαρτίαν ἐργάζεσθε).

(6) James 2:9: "you work out sin" (ἁμαρτίαν ἐργάζεσθε):

To "work out" (ἐργάζομαι) is 'to do, accomplish, or carry out something through work' (BDAG, 2000:389). The same verb is used in James 1:20 to say that the anger of a person does not "work out" (ἐργάζεται) "God's righteousness" (δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ) – that is not to act according to God's righteous standard. Showing partiality is not just failing to work out God's righteous standard, it is failing to act like God and to execute justice and show love to the vulnerable (i.e. weightier matters of the *Torah*, refer to **Section 3.5.5**), as Deuteronomy 10:17-18 makes clear:

> *(17) For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe. (18) He executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing. (Deut. 10:17-18, NASB)*

In James 2:9, showing partiality is to work out "sin". According to Louw & Nida (1996:772), "sin" (ἁμαρτίαν) is 'to act contrary to the will and law of God'. This definition fits the context perfectly, as will be confirmed in the next clause. Clearly for James, working out sin and not working out God's righteousness are synonymous. And both "sin" and "righteousness" (i.e. doing what is right) are related to *nómos* – with the first being violation of it (negative relation to *nómos*) and the second living according to it (positive relation to *nómos*).

In James, "sin" (ἁμαρτία) having completed, gives birth to "death" (θάνατον) (Jas. 1:15). Knowing to "do" (ποιεῖν) "good" (καλὸν) and not "doing" (ποιοῦντι) it, is "sin" (ἁμαρτία) (Jas. 4:17). "Sin" (ἁμαρτία) can cause people to be "ill" (κάμνω) (Jas. 5:15). The *adelphoí* are to "confess" (ἐξομολογέω) their "sins" (ἁμαρτίας) in order to be "forgiven" (ἀφίημι) and "healed" (ἰάομαι) (Jas. 5:15-16). A soul will be "saved" (σώσει) out of "death" (θανάτου) and a multitude of "sins" (ἁμαρτιῶν) will be "covered" (καλύψει) when a "sinner" (ἁμαρτωλός) "turns" (ἐπιστρέφω) out of the "error" (πλάνης) of his way (Jas. 5:20). Thus, to sin is to err; fail to do good, and fail to work out God's righteous standards. Sin leads to more sin, sickness, and ultimately death and the loss or destruction of a soul. Sin has to be confessed, turned from, and forgiven. Sin is exceedingly serious. Its seriousness is underlined by the next clause.

(7) James 2:9: "being convicted by the *nómou*[708] as transgressors" (ἐλεγχόμενοι ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου ὡς παραβάται):

When the *adelphoí* show partiality, they work out sin, "being convicted by the *nómou* as transgressors" (Jas. 2:9c). Since the present tense participle, "being convicted" (ἐλεγχόμενοι), follows the main verb, "you work out" (ἐργάζεσθε), and it makes sense as a result participle, it can be viewed as such (Wallace, 1996:638-639). Thus, the result of working out sin (by showing partiality) is "being convicted by the *nómou* as transgressors" (Jas. 2:9c).

According to BDAG (2000:315), to "convict" (ἐλέγχω) is 'to bring a person to the point of recognizing wrongdoing'. In this case those doing wrong are convicted "as transgressors". According to Louw & Nida (1996:468), the word, "transgressor" (παραβάτης), is a derivative of "*parabaínōa*" (παραβαίνωa), which means to 'to disobey' or 'to break the law'. Thus a "transgressor" is a person who breaks, disobeys, or violates the *Torah*.

James states that it is "the *nómou*" (τοῦ νόμου) that convicts the *adelphoí* as transgressors when they work out sin (by showing partiality). But which "*nómos*" is in view? Some scholars say that it is the "royal law" (or Kingdom *Torah*).[709] Others say that it is the *Torah* or Law of

[708] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[709] Including, amongst others: Burdick (1981:121), Davids (1982:115), Laws (1980:110), Keddie (1989:102), and Richardson (1997:121).

God.[710] And yet others think it could be either.[711] Most English translations translate "the *nómou*" (τοῦ νόμου) as "the law",[712] and thus leave it to the reader to work out. Some indicate that the *Torah* is in view by translating "the *nómou*" as "the *Torah*" or "the Law".[713] The Passion Translation translates "the *nómou*" as "this royal law of love". Thus, scholars and Bible translations are divided on the issue.[714] However, Lyle (2018)[715] seems right in saying that 'the potential ambiguity is resolved' if one continues to read on in James.

As discussed in **Section 4.3.5**, James 2:8-9 is connected to James 2:10-11 by means of the causal conjunction "for" (γάρ) at the beginning of verse 10. Thus, the reason behind James's assertions in verses 8-9 is the fact that violating any part of *nómos* is to be guilty against the whole (of *nómos*) (vv.10-11). Furthermore, as demonstrated in **Section 4.3.3 (b)**, James 2:10-11 is interconnected via a chiastic structure. As a result, the "*nómou*" (v.11g) is parallel to the "*hólon tòn nómon*" (ὅλον τὸν νόμον) (v.10a). Furthermore, the idea of being a "transgressor" (παραβάτης) of the "*nómou*" at the end of James 2:9 is basically repeated at the end of James 2:10-11, which tightens the relationship between the "*nómou*" and "*hólon tòn nómon*". Therefore, Lyle (2018)[716] is right in concluding that James's thought process 'leads us to believe' that "the *nómou*" (in v.9) does not refer to the *nómon basilikòn* (in v.8) per se, but to "*hólon tòn nómon*" (the whole law) (in v.10). However, as demonstrated in **Section 4.3.3 (a)**, the parallelism between James 2:8-9 contrasts to "carry out (the) *nómon basilikòn*" with "being convicted by the *nómou* as transgressors". And as argued in **Section 4.3.6 (1) & (2)**, the "*nómon basilikòn"* is the *Torah* of God's Kingdom, which is essentially the *Torah*. Further support for "the *nómou*" referring to the *Torah* as a whole is the fact that the specific offence of showing partiality is spoken against in several places in the *Torah* itself.[717]

Synopsis of James 2:8-9:

If the *adelphoí* wholly observe or fulfil the Kingdom *Torah* (or *Torah* of the Kingdom) in the way

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[710] Including, amongst other: Adamson (1976:116), Blomberg & Kamell (2008:117-118), Hartin (2003:121-122); MacArthur (1998:113), McKnight (2011:211), Stern (1996:730).

[711] For example, Martin (1988:68) comments that 'the law in view could be the Mosiac law' or 'it may be that James is also speaking of the new law of 2:8'.

[712] Translations include, for example: NASB, LITV, KJV, NKJV, ESV, RV, NRSV, NIV, NLT.

[713] Translations include, for example: CJB, OJB, and TLV use "the Torah", and AMP and GNB use "the Law".

[714] Although one could say that more Scholars seem to lean toward "*nómos*" referring to "the *Torah*" (or "the Law") rather than the "royal law" as such.

[715] Logos Bible Software electronic document with no page numbers.

[716] Ibid.

[717] Including, for example: Lev. 19:15; Deut. 1:17; 16:19.

Scripture requires, they will show as much loving concern for their fellow human beings as they do for themselves. As a result, they will indeed rightly carry out God's absolute moral and social standards for living. On the other hand, if the *adelphoí* show partiality they act contrary to God's will and the *Torah* (or His righteous standard). As a result, the *Torah* as a whole finds them at fault as those who break, disobey, or violate the *Torah*. Moreover, they act contrary to God Himself in that they fail to administer justice and love to the vulnerable, thus neglecting the weightier matters of the *Torah*.

(8) James 2:10: "for whoever keeps *ʰólon tòn nómon*"[718] (ὅστις γὰρ ὅλον τὸν νόμον τηρήσῃ):

James 2:10 starts with the conjunction "for" (γὰρ), which marks the cause or reason for what is stated in James 2:8-9.[719] Since James 2:10-11 forms a tightly knit unit (refer to **Section 4.3.3 (b)**), the unit as a whole constitutes the reason.

The relative pronoun "*ʰóstis*" (ὅστις) refers to any person or whoever (BDAG, 2000:729) acts as follows. Thus, the sense is that of a general principle or proverbial truth that is being conveyed.[720] The generic sense is further conveyed by the subjunctive from of the verb "*tēréō*" (τηρέω).[721]

According to BDAG (2000:1002), "*tēréō*" (τηρέω) means 'to persist in obedience … especially of law and teaching'. And this is exactly what the object for persistent obedience is: "*ʰólon tòn nómon*". The adjective "*ʰolos*" (ὅλος) pertains to 'being whole, complete, or entire' (Louw & Nida, 1996:612).

Both BDAG (2000:677-678) and Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Jas. 2:10) identify "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James 2:10 as the law that Moses received from God (i.e. the *Torah*). This understanding is reflected in a number of English Bible translations, including: CJB & TLV ("the whole Torah"), LITV ("all the Law"), AMP ("the Law [as a] whole"), NLT ("all of God's laws"), TPT ("all of the law of Moses"). Many scholars agree that "*ʰólon tòn nómon*" refers to God's Law as a whole (or the entire *Torah*).[722] However, some do maintain that "*ʰólon tòn nómon*" refers to the "Kingdom *Torah*" in James 2:8.[723] This may be the case, if the "Kingdom *Torah*"

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[718] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[719] Ref.: Louw & Nida (1996:779); BDAG (2000:189); Wallace (1996:674).

[720] See Vlachos (2013:80).

[721] See Wallace (1996:478-479).

[722] Scholars include, for example: Allison (2013:410-411); Bauckham (1999:142-143); Blomberg & Kamell (2008:118); Hartin (2003:122); Lyle (2018: no page numbers); MacArthur (1998:114); McKnight (2011:215-216); Moore-Keish (2019:96-97); Motyer (2010:99); Stern (1996:730); Wall (1997:126).

[723] For example, Johnson (2008:232).

is understood to be essentially the same as the *Torah*. But the chiastic structure and encircling parallelism in James 2:10-11 (refer to **Section 4.3.3 (b)**), indicates that "*hólon tòn nómon*" and "the *nómou*" are parallel concepts. Also, the fact that the centre piece (v.11a-d) focusses on commandments of the Decalogue (which is at the heart of the *Torah*),[724] strongly suggests that both concepts ("*hólon tòn nómon*" and "the *nómou*") are synonymous with the *Torah*.

(9) James 2:10: "but stumbles in one" (πταίσῃ δὲ ἐν ἑνί):

Being obviously contrastive, the conjunction "*dè*" (δὲ) should be rendered "but".[725]

According to Louw & Nida (1996:773), the verb "*ptaíō*" (πταίω), which literally means "to stumble", is used figuratively to mean, 'to fail to keep the law (of God)'. It can be translated, 'to stumble, to err, to sin'.[726] The same verb is used in the same sense in the context of speech in James 3:2, where James says to his *adelphoí*, "we all stumble in many ways" (πολλὰ γὰρ πταίομεν ἅπαντες).

As Allison (2013:441) rightly suggests, the propositional phrase, "in one" (ἐν ἑνί), is understood to mean, in 'one point or commandment' of the *Torah*.[727]

(10) James 2:10: "has become guilty of all" (γέγονεν πάντων ἔνοχος):

The *adelphós* who consistently obeys the whole *Torah*, and yet break one of its commandments, James says, "has become guilty of all".

According to Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Jas. 2:10) the noun, "*énochos*" (ἔνοχος), pertains to 'being guilty for having done wrong' and can be translated 'guilty' or 'liable'. Wallace (1996:581) explains that the sense of the perfect tense verb, "has become" (γέγονεν), is "proleptic" (futuristic); which means that the state (of guilt) will also be the result for future sins. Wallace (1996:581) adds that the perfect tense verb can also be viewed as "gnomic", since 'the sinner in view is generic'.

In the context of James 2:10, the adjective "of all" (πάντων) acts substantively and stands for, "of all *toū nómou* (τοῦ νόμου)" or the *Torah* as a whole.[728] Thus, the sin with its resultant guilt is against the whole *Torah*.

Motyer (2010:99) explains the implications of James's teaching well: 'the whole law of God is represented in every individual precept'. He (Motyer, 2010:99) adds that one cannot,

[724] See Blomberg & Kamell (2008:118).

[725] Refer to Louw & Nida (1996:793).

[726] Refer to Louw & Nida (1996:773).

[727] See also Hartin (2003:122).

[728] See: Allison (2013:413); Hartin (2003:112).

therefore, 'pick and choose between the commandments, because to break one is to break "the law"', just like breaking one part of a glass is breaking the glass as a whole.[729] Wall (1997:126) adds that 'every commandment is a critical disclosure of God's will … true devotion demanded obedience to the whole will (or law) of God'.

The unity of the *Torah* as well as the requirement to observe it entirely is well expressed in the *Torah* itself: *"Cursed is he who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen'"* (Deut. 27:26, NASB).[730] The same truth was affirmed and elevated by Jesus in Matthew 5:18-19:

> *(18) For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. (19) Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.* (Mat. 5:18-19, NASB).

(11) James 2:11: "for He who said do not commit adultery" (ὁ γὰρ εἰπών· μὴ μοιχεύσῃς):

The causal conjunction, "for" (γὰρ), marks the cause or reason what is said in James 2:10.[731] Accordingly, verse 11 gives the reason (or at least an illustration),[732] for why the *Torah* is a unity and to transgress one commandment is to transgress *Torah* as a whole.

Since the participle, "*eipōv*" (εἰπών), is accompanied by an article ("the" (ὁ)) and not by a noun, it functions as a substantive.[733] Wallace (1996:620) explains that it is therefore 'speaking of the person who … does'. Thus, the focus is on "He" who said.[734] And since what follows is from the Ten Commandments, "He" who said is obviously none other than the LORD God Himself who made His awesome presence and authority felt at Mount Sinai, from where He spoke the Ten Commandments (Exod. 19-20)[735] and gave His *Torah* (Lev. 27:34).[736] Davids (1982:117) makes the reasonable suggestion that James not mentioning God is 'a

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[729] See also Tasker (1973:61).

[730] See also: Lev. 19:37 (NASB) *You shall thus observe all My statutes and all My ordinances and do them; I am the LORD*. Adamson (1976:116) notes that even, 'a Jewish proselyte had to accept the Law without exception'.

[731] See: BDAG (2000:189); Wallace (1996:674). See also Hartin (2003:122).

[732] So Moo (2000:115).

[733] See Dana & Mantey (1967:255).

[734] See Blomberg & Kamell (2008:118).

[735] Allison (2013:415) comments, 'God literally uttered the decalogue'. Refer **to Section 3.4.2** on the Primacy and Permanence of the Ten Commandments.

[736] See also: Allison (2013:414-415); Blomberg & Kamell (2008:118).

circumlocution in Jewish style to avoid naming God'.[737] Yet, as Johnson (2008:232) rightfully observes: 'critical to the argument is that the commandment is not just a text but "someone speaking", namely the lawgiver, God (4:11-12)'.[738] And this is exactly where James's thoughts go to in James 4:12, where God is emphatically stated to be the One "Lawgiver (*Torah*-giver) and Judge" (νομοθέτης καὶ κριτής), with the clear implication that the Law (*Torah*) He gave (or spoke) is divine and unquestionable as a standard for conduct and judgment (see further discussion in **Section 4.4.6** below). Thus 'the Law is not just an impersonal document; it is God's word and God's will;[739] as McKnight (2011:216) helpfully states. Furthermore, as demonstrated in **Sections 4.2.5 (14)** & **(19)**, the Law (*Torah*) reflects the character of God.[740] In this regard, Motyer (2010:100) insightfully comments:

> *'The thing which gives the law its indivisible nature is the character of the God who spoke it.[741] That means that there is nothing arbitrary about the commandments of the law: each one reflects some facet of the divine nature. Neither is there anything unnecessary: if the law is to express the whole nature of the Lawgiver, then every single precept has its place.'*[742]

Wallace (2000:469) explains that since the negative particle, "not" (μὴ), with the aorist subjunctive verb, "commit adultery" (μοιχεύσῃς), has a force that is 'equivalent to an imperative after μὴ', it should be translated 'Do not rather than You should not'. Being the Seventh Commandment in the Decalogue (Exod. 20:14; Deut. 5:18), it would be entirely appropriate to translate it, "You shall not commit adultery", as rendered in the LITV, NRSV, and NIV.

Technically speaking, according to Louw & Nida (1996:771), "to commit adultery" (μοιχεύω), is 'sexual intercourse of a man with a married woman other than his own spouse'. Yet, according to Silva (2014c:329), it could also be 'sexual relations between a married person and someone other than his or her spouse'. Silva (2014c:330) explains that, it 'threatened the basis of the people's existence (Deut. 22:22b)' since it 'offended not only against the foundations and personal rights of marriage and family but also against the law of God (Exod. 20:14)'. HALOT (2000:658) highlights that it is metaphorical for practicing idolatry. Biblically speaking, adultery was a serious matter, punishable by death (Lev. 20:10).

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[737] So also: Hartin (2003:122); Martin (1988:69).

[738] See also Moo (2000:114).

[739] See also Johnson (2008:233).

[740] A key absolute from James 1:19-29 is: "The *Torah* reflects (or mirrors) God's character and standards (Jas. 1:23-25).

[741] Davids (1982:117) comments: "The Law is a unity because the lawgiver is one'.

[742] Wall (1997:126) comments that 'every commandment is a critical disclosure of God's will'.

(12) James 2:11: "also said do not murder" (εἶπεν καί μὴ φονεύσῃς):

As discussed in **Section 4.3.3 (b) (ii)**, James 2:11a-d forms a similar parallelism. Therefore, "also said" (εἶπεν καί) is short for "He also said". Thus, the same God who said, "do not commit adultery" also said "do not murder" (μὴ φονεύσῃς).[743] Again, the authority of God (the Lawgiver), who spoke and declared His infallible moral will at Mount Sinai, comes to the fore. Once again, the negative particle, "not" (μὴ), with an aorist subjunctive verb, "murder" (φονεύσῃς), has a prohibitive imperative force.[744] And being the Sixth Commandment in the Decalogue (Exod. 20:13; Deut. 5:17) it can be translated, "You shall not murder", as rendered in the LITV, NRSV, and NIV.

According to Louw & Nida (1996:237), "to murder" (φονεύω), is 'to deprive a person of life by illegal, intentional killing'. Murder is a particularly grave offence, since it is an assault on the image of God, as the *Torah* instructs: "*Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man"* (Gen. 9:6, NASB). In every book of the *Torah*, murder is condemned as a capital offence.[745]

It is noted that James specifically chose two commandments from the Decalogue to enforce the point of the unity of the *Torah* and the need to keep it entirely.[746] Davids (1982:117) is right that James's selection of these commands is 'far from accidental':

- Firstly, as MacArthur (1998:114) comments, James could have chosen any commandment to make his point[747], but he chose 'two of the most serious social sins' in order to 'illustrate the extreme sinfulness of partiality'. Similarly, Wall (1997:126) comments that James's subsequent repetition of "adultery" and "murder", does not only underline their great evil ('which even pagans abhor'), but suggests that they 'are embodied in acts of discrimination against the poor and powerless'.
- Secondly, Blomberg & Kamell (2008:119) rightfully point out that Jesus expounded these very commandments in the Sermon on the Mount (Mat. 5:21-32),[748] and the same

[743] So Burdick (1981:180). Refer to **Section 3.4.2** on the Primacy and Permanence of the Ten Commandments.

[744] Refer to Wallace (2000:469).

[745] Refer to: Gen. 9:6; Exod. 21:12-14; Lev. 24:17; Num. 35:16; Deut. 19:11-13.

[746] In this regard Moo (2000:115) comments, "Pressed to its logical conclusion, James's argument would require obedience to every single commandment of the law …"

[747] That breaking any commandment makes a person a transgressor of the Law.

[748] Jesus' exposition of the Sixth and Seventh commandments explain/illustrate what He meant by Him coming to fullfil the *Torah*, rather than abolish it (Mat. 5:17-32). Louw & Nida (1996:404) helpfully defines "fulfill" (πληρόω) here as, 'to give the true or complete meaning to something'.

two ideas ("adultery" and "murder") return in James 4:1-4[749] where the issue of infidelity towards God (or idolatry) is addressed. James thus draws application of the Decalogue more widely, and in both a figurative and a spiritual sense.

- Thirdly, James is intentionally quoting and repeating (albeit through allusion) two of the Ten Commandments, because they[750] are at the core of the *Torah*'s ethics and other commandments are practical expressions of the fundamental principles that they embody (refer to "*Torah*" in the **Glossary of Terms** and to **Section 3.4.2**). Moreover, as DeYoung (2018:19-20) demonstrates from passages such as Mark 10:17-19, Romans 13:8-10, and 1 Timothy 1:9-10, it is also 'central to the ethics' of the NT.

Finally, Pilch (2012:154) insightfully observes that the Ten Commandments (Exod. 20; Deut. 5) are 'never repeated verbatim in *toto* in the Hebrew Bible or in the New Testament'. He (Pilch 2012:155) explains that scholars have recognized that this is according to the Jewish culture of safeguarding and honouring the sacredness of the list of commandments, like they do the name of God (YHWH).[751] By implication, the whole Decalogue may spring to the Jewish mind even if only one of its commandments is referred to or alluded to. This implication is strongly supported by James's argument about the unity of the *Torah*,[752] as discussed above (refer to **subsections (8)** to **(10)**). Commenting on James 2:10-11, Elliott (1884:124) writes: 'It is impossible to suppose that the apostle has not in mind the whole Decalogue … In a statement of such gravity he must have specified the exception if any existed.'

(13) James 2:11: "now if you do not commit adultery but you murder" (εἰ δὲ οὐ μοιχεύεις φονεύεις δέ):

The conjunction "*dè*" (δὲ) seems to function according to its explanatory use,[753] and so can be translated "now".[754] Accordingly, what follows explains what precedes. What precedes can be expressed as follows: to violate one of *Torah's* instructions, is to violate *Torah* (as a whole) (Jas. 2:10).[755] This is made clear in James 2:11e-g, which forms an encircling parallelism with James 2:10 (refer to **Section 4.3.3. (b)(i)**). Thus, the point is both emphasized and clarified.

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[749] See also Jas. 5:4-6.

[750] The Ten Commandments.

[751] In support, Pilch (2012:155) quotes Josephus who stated, 'It is not lawful for us to set [these precepts] down directly, but their import we will declare'.

[752] Refer again to **Section 3.4.2** on the Primacy and Permanence of the Ten Commandments.

[753] See Dana & Mantey (1957:244).

[754] As translated in: NASB, KJV, NKJV, RV, NRSV, TLV, and TPT.

[755] James 2:11a-d provides the basis or reason for this, which is the fact that it is God, the One Lawgiver and Judge (Jas. 4:12), spoke each instruction (Jas. 2:11a-d).

Again, the conjunction, "if" (εἰ), marks the condition (or protasis) for the conclusion (apodosis) that follows (Wallace, 19996:675). The protasis is, "if you do not commit adultery but you murder" (Jas. 2:11e-f). And the apodosis is, "you have become a transgressor …" (Jas. 2:11g). The protasis is about the real or hypothetical situation in which an *adelphós* does not "commit adultery" (μοιχεύεις) but does "murder" (φονεύεις).[756] Thus, the person keeps one commandment (of the Ten Commandments) but breaks another. How does the person measure up to the *Torah*?

(14) James 2:11: "you have become a transgressor of (the) *nómou*"[757] (γέγονας παραβάτης νόμου):

This brings up the apodosis: "you have become a transgressor of (the) *nómou*". In this particular case, as Wallace (1996:682-684) explains, the relationship between the protasis and apodosis is that of equivalence – i.e. '"If A, then B" means the same thing as "A = B"'. Accordingly, the *adelphós* who murders equals "a transgressor of the *nómou*", regardless of the fact that he did not commit adultery. The term, "a transgressor of the *nómou*" (παραβάτης *νόμου*) (Jas. 2:11g) is parallel to "become guilty of all" of "*hólon tòn nómon*" (Jas. 2:10c), and is identical to "being convicted by the *nómou* as transgressors" (Jas. 2:9c). As argued above (refer to **Sections 4.3.6 (7)** – **(8)**) both terms naturally (and reasonably) refer to the *Torah*. Thus, a failure to keep any one commandment is to break, disobey, or violate the *Torah* as a whole.[758]

The analysis of James so far suggests that the "*nómou*" (Jas. 2:9, 11) and "*hólon tòn nómon*" (Jas. 2:10) refer to the whole *Torah.* Yet, Moo (2000:116) insists that, 'it is not the OT law per se that [James] urges perfect compliance with, but "the royal law" (v.8), "the law of liberty" (v.12, cf. 1:25)'. He (Moo, 2000:115) claims that 'nothing in [James's] letter would suggest that he holds so strict a view'. Allison (2013:417) is right in countering the argument by saying, 'nothing in his letter suggests that he did not hold so strict a view' and that James held to 'the same view as Mt. 5:17-20'. Is James's point not that the "entire *Torah*" is to be kept, because failure in any one commandment results in guilt against the whole (Jas. 2:10)? Granted, the specific examples of commandments are from the Ten Commandments and the "Holiness Code", which are indisputably moral in nature and which have very much to do with the practical expression of loving one's neighbour. But, as Cheung (2003:123-124) rightfully

[756] Refer to **Sections 4.3.6 (11)** and **(12)** for definitions of these two offenses/sins.

[757] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[758] Considering the relational and covenantal context of the *Torah*, and especially the of Ten Commandments, breaking them is not simply a matter of breaking the divine code of conduct. Ortberg (2014:144) insightfully observes that since the Ten Commandments spell out who we as believers are, 'we break ourselves when we violate them'.

argues, silence with regard to the ritual commandments of the *Torah*, is not necessarily proof that those commandments are no longer relevant.[759] Bauckham (1999:147) puts it well:

> '*James's failure to refer to the literal observance of ritual and cultic commandments does not mean that he did not expect his readers to observe them, but it does mean that they are not of central concern to him*'.[760]

Evidently, therefore, James has nothing less in view than the moral commandments of the *Torah*, as encapsulated in the Ten Commandments, and as governed by the *Shema* (love for God first and foremost) and the "love commandment" (love neighbour as oneself).[761] Nevertheless, since James is silent on the "ceremonial" commandments, it seems advisable to look to the rest of the New Testament for answers about their applicability.

Synopsis of James 2:10-11:

The reason why partiality is a violation of the *Torah* as a whole (Jas. 2:9), is that consistent obedience to the entire *Torah*, except in one of its commandments still result in guilt against the whole *Torah* (Jas. 2:10). The basis for the unity of the *Torah* and the need for complete obedience to it, is the fact that God, the One *Torah*-giver and Judge (Jas. 4:12), spoke its every commandment (Jas. 2:11), and every commandment reflects something of His character and will. Therefore, to disobey *Torah* at any point, is to become guilty before the whole *Torah* (Jas. 2:11). At the core of *Torah*'s ethics are the Ten Commandments. And at the heart of the Ten Commandments, is the *Shema* (love for God, first and foremost) and the "love commandments (love neighbour as oneself).

(15) James 2:12: "thus speak and thus do" (οὕτως λαλεῖτε καὶ οὕτως ποιεῖτε):

The adverb, "*houtōs*" (οὕτως), could refer to what precedes and/or what follows in the discourse (BDAG, 2000:741). In the case of the former, it makes a logical connection with the teaching of the preceding verses (vv.10-11), and could be rendered, "thus".[762] Since James 2:12-13 forms and encircling parallelism with James 2:8-9 (refer to **Section 4.3.3 (c)**), the logical connection is with James 2:8-11. In the case of the latter, the stress is on the manner described/prescribed in the succeeding proposition; in which case the sense is, "in this way" or "as follows" (BDAG, 2000:741). The weight seems to be on the former, although the latter cannot be discounted.[763] Additionally, as Hartin (2003:123) rightfully observes, the repetition

[759] So also: Allison (2013:91).

[760] Refer also back to **Section 3.5.5**.

[761] See Hartin (2003:112).

[762] Refer to Louw & Nida (1996:610).

[763] Refer to Allison (2013:417).

of "*ʰoutōs …ʰoutōs*" is 'an emphatic way of stressing the importance' of the exhortation that follows.[764]

Based on the logic about the unity of *Torah* and the fact that breaking one of its commandments results in being a transgressor of the *Torah* as a whole (Jas. 2:10-11), the *adelphoí* are now commanded in the exact manner in which they are to respond. This response parallels them carrying out the Kingdom *Torah* (*nómon basilikòn*) (Jas. 2:8-9).

The *adelphoí* are thus to "speak" (λαλεῖτε) and thus to "do" (ποιεῖτε). The force of the present active imperatives is that of commanding actions as 'ongoing process[es]' (Wallace, 1996:485). All their speech and actions are always to be based upon or be according to the proposition that follows. McKnight (2011:219) insightfully comments that 'speaking and doing are shorthand for everything a human does'.[765] This exhortation, therefore, has profound implications for how the *adelphoí* live their entire lives.

The two actions of "speaking" (λαλέω) and "doing" (ποιέω), recall James 1:19-27, which also has them in view. The two passages (Jas. 2:8-13 and 1:19-27) are also connected with their common focus on *nómos* (*Torah*). Being further developed in Jas. 3:1-12 and 2:14-26 respectively, speech and actions are clearly major themes in James.

It follows, that it is both imperative and important that the *adelphoí's* lives are to be characterised by conformity to a certain standard of living, which includes all of their speech and conduct. That the standard of living is God's *Torah*, is confirmed below.

(16) James 2:12: "as those about to be judged by (the) *nómou eleutherías*"[766] (ὡς διὰ νόμου ἐλευθερίας μέλλοντες κρίνεσθαι):

The *adelphoí* are to thus speak and thus do "as those about" (ὡς … μέλλοντες) "to be judged" (κρίνεσθαι). "About" conveys the ideas of both imminence (as in Jas. 5:9)[767] and inevitability;[768] both of which demand readiness or preparedness.[769]

Being simple (or "naked", i.e. without an article or preposition), the present infinite verb, *"krínesthai"* (κρίνεσθαι), seem to be one of purpose (Wallace, 1996:590-592). Accordingly, it answers the question why the *adelphoí* are to speak and act in a particular way, or according to a particular standard. The answer is that they are about "to be judged" (κρίνεσθαι) in a 'legal'

[764] So also McKnight (2011:219).

[765] See also Allison (2013:417).

[766] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[767] So McKnight (2011:2019); see also BDAG (2000:627-628).

[768] So Hartin (2003:123); see also BDAG (2000:627-628).

[769] See McKnight (2011:219).

or ‘forensic sense’ (BDAG, 2000:568). As Kistemaker (1986:84) observes, ‘judgment is going to come and is inescapable’. The verb “to be judged” (κρίνεσθαι) is in the passive voice. With God being ‘the obvious agent’, as Wallace (2000:437-438) rightfully points out, it is a “divine passive” (or “theological passive”). That God is the Judge is confirmed in James 4:12, with the statement: “One is the *Nomothetēs* and Judge” (εἷς ἐστιν νομοθέτης καὶ κριτής).

The preposition, “*dià*” (διὰ), marks the instrument ‘by which something is accomplished’ (Harris (ed.), 2010, Jas. 2:12),[770] and can be translated, ‘by, via, or through’ (BDAG, 2000:224). Accordingly, the instrument by which God will judge is the “*nómou eleutherias*” (νόμου ἐλευθερίας). Thus, by implication, the “*nómou eleutherias*” is the standard by which the *adelphoí* are to live. It instructs them in the precise way they are to speak and act. Yet, what is the “*nómou eleutherias*”?

Blomberg & Kamell (2008:119) argue below that the “*nómou eleutherias*” is not the *Torah* but a ‘different’ law:

> *‘Here appears the clearest evidence in vv.8-13 that there are two different laws under discussion in this passage. James returns to the “law of liberty,” first introduced in 1:25, as a positive contrast to the law of vv.10-11, which served only to condemn. Thus, this passage suddenly sounds remarkably Pauline: If one attempts to live according to Torah, one is doomed to failure because one can never keep all of it. Rather, one ought to live according to the new law or covenant that Christ creates by fulfilling and supplementing Torah and according to the freedom it brings.’*

The truth of this claim is highly questionable for the following reasons:

- Firstly, James is not contrasting two different laws. Rather, showing partiality is contrasted with loving one’s neighbour (Jas. 2:8-9). The first is sin, which is transgressing *nòmos* (*Torah*) (Jas. 2:9). And the second is carrying out or keeping the *nómon basilikòn* (Kingdom *Torah*) (Jas. 2:8). If anything, the different *nòmos*-terms are complementary, if not synonymous. They are certainly not contrasting.
- Secondly, James is not teaching that the law (*Torah*) only serves to “condemn” and perform a negative function.[771] James 4:11 strongly implies that the *adelphoí* are to be “doers” of the law (*Torah*), with the statement: “now if you judge (the) *nómon*” (εἰ δὲ νόμον κρίνεις) “you are not a doer of (the) *nómou*” (οὐκ εἶ ποιητὴς νόμου). This is

[770] Harris (ed.) (2010, Jas. 2:12) assigns LN 90.8 to διὰ (ref. Louw & Nida, 1996:796).

[771] It should be noted that James does not use the word “condemn” but “convict”, which according to BDAG (2000:315) means ‘to bring a person to the point of recognizing wrongdoing’. Surely for a believer, this is not negative because conviction leads to godly sorrow and repentance, which Paul says is not to be regretted (2 Cor. 7:10).

a positive function. And since the *adelphoí* are to be doers of the *Torah*, it seems most unreasonable that James would subscribe to the notion that the *adelphoí* (who have "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory", Jas. 2:1) are "doomed to failure" if they attempt to live according to the *Torah*. Besides, James 2:12-13 teaches that the "law of liberty" will be God's instrument for judgment, which will produce a "merciless" (and thus negative) outcome for some. And so, to set the *Torah* against the "law of liberty" clashes with James, and arguably with the Scriptures as a whole. Is it not more accurate to say that God has essentially only one *Torah*, which convicts (and condemns) the unbeliever who violates its instructions, and which liberates the believer who lives according to its instructions?

- Thirdly, suppose the *Torah* of liberty is not essentially the same as the *Torah*, then its standards must be equal to or greater than the *Torah* (which supposedly only condemns), otherwise the *adelphoí* will live according to an inferior standard which will cause them to continue in a condemned state. If the *Torah* of liberty does indeed require a greater standard of conduct than the *Torah*, then how would the *adelphoí* be able to conform to it, if they could not conform to the lesser standard of the *Torah*? Again, it makes sense for the *Torah* of liberty to be essentially the same as the *Torah*, if not identical to the *Torah*.
- Fourthly, there is no hint in the Letter that the *Torah* has been abolished or superseded by a "new law", which is in opposition to the *Torah*. Nowhere does James show anything less than complete reverence for the validity and authority of the *Torah*.
- Finally, if Blomberg & Kamell (2008:119) are correct, then presumably the so-called "new law" does not condemn sin as the *Torah* does. Does it overlook sin? Believers are supposedly able to keep the "new law" (perfectly), as if it is reasonable and bearable, while the *Torah* is not. Rather than *Torah* being the issue (for it is "perfect", Jas. 1:25), is the issue not the response and disposition of a person toward the same *Torah* before and after they have been regenerated by the Spirit?

It seems as if Blomberg & Kamell's (2008:119) argument is based on a particular understanding of Paul concerning the Law (*Torah*); which they then read into James in order to harmonise James with their reading of Paul. Calvin's (2010a:297-298) interpretation of Paul correspond well with James: 'the Spirit of regeneration, who inscribes [the Law] on our inward parts' let it 'no longer lead you to bondage, but in the contrary, bring you to liberty …'

Several scholars note the resemblance between "*nómou eleutherias*" (in Jas. 2:12) and *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (in Jas. 1:25).[772] The latter has been found to ascribe the

[772] Scholars include amongst others: Allison (2013:418); Hartin (2003:138); Hegg (2020:94); Kistemaker (1986:84); Tasker (1973:62).

qualities of perfection and liberty to *Torah*, rather than referring to a different *Torah* (refer to **Sections 4.2.6 (17) – (23)**). Logically, therefore, "*nómou eleutherias*" (in Jas. 2:12) highlights the liberating function of *Torah*. Otherwise, the even "*nómou eleutherias*" (in Jas. 2:12) and *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*" (in Jas. 1:25) have to be taken to refer to different "laws"; which surely confuses what James means by *nómos*. Furthermore, "*nómou eleutherias*" (Jas. 2:12) is structurally paralleled with "*nómon basilikòn*" (Jas. 2:8), which is found to describe the *Torah* as the *Torah* of the Kingdom. Again, for consistency of interpretation, *nómou eleutherias*" (in Jas. 2:12) has to mean "*Torah* of liberty", or *Torah* that gives freedom.

Motyer (2010:102) puts it well: 'God's law describes the life of true freedom' and 'obedience liberates'. As the Psalmist confidently declares: 'And I will walk at liberty, For I seek Your precepts[773] (Psa. 119:45, NASB). '… within the boundaries of God's protective laws we have perfect freedom', says Kistemaker (1986:83). As Wadge (2014:90) comments about the commandments: they are 'God's principles of life … each one is vital … when we choose not to live by them, we are in essence, choosing to live in bondage.' Tasker (1973:62) adds a complementary truth: 'by [Christians'] union with Christ, a new liberating power is now at work within them making it possible for them to render obedience'.

Allison (2013:418) draws the reasonable conclusion that "*nómou eleutherias*" refers to 'the *Torah* in its entirety'.[774] This understanding does correspond well with the context and the whole argument of James 2:8-13 (refer also to **Section 4.4.3.(e)**). However, since James seems to focus exclusively on moral/ethical matters, one probably has to look elsewhere in the New Testament for clarity about the applicability of the ceremonial/ritual matters of the *Torah* (refer to **Section 5.3.2** for further discussion).

(17) James 2:13: "for the judgment (is) merciless to the one not doing mercy" (ἡ γὰρ κρίσις ἀνέλεος τῷ μὴ ποιήσαντι ἔλεος):

As discussed in **Section 4.3.3 (c)**, James 2:12-13 comprises three related thought elements: an instruction ("thus speak and thus do"), its standard ("as those about to be judged by the *Torah* of liberty") (v.12), and its motivation or reason (v.13). The reason is marked by the conjunction "for" (γὰρ). The reason is, "the judgment (is) merciless to the one not doing mercy" (ἡ γὰρ κρίσις ἀνέλεος τῷ μὴ ποιήσαντι ἔλεος).

Judgment (κρίσις) refers to God's impending and inescapable judgement, which will be according to His *Torah* of liberty (v.12). Judgment is a significant theme in James, especially in James 4:11-5:12, where the warning of the upcoming eschatological judgment acts as a

[773] Precepts are the particular instructions in *Torah* (see "precepts" in **Glossary of Terms**).

[774] See also Bauckham (1999:142).

thread that connects each of its pericopes[775] together (refer to **Appendix D** for the Analysis).

"*Anéleos"* (ἀνέλεος) comprises of the negative particle "*an*" (ἀν) and "*éleos*" (έλεος), meaning 'without mercy' or 'merciless' (Strong, 1995). BDAG (2000:316) defines "*éleos*" (έλεος) as 'kindness or concern expressed for someone in need', and translates it as 'mercy, compassion, pity, clemency'. Johnson (2008:234) rightfully points out that, 'in the LXX, *éleos* translates the Hebrew *ḥesed'*.[776] Most notably, God is the One who supremely shows mercy, as declared in the Ten Commandments:

> *but showing lovingkindness (ḥesed, MST; ἔλεος, LXX) to thousands, to those who love (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσίν, LXX) Me and keep My commandments* (Exod. 20:6; Deut. 5:10, NASB) (See also Deut. 7:9).[777]

As Allison (2013:420) insightfully points out, 'showing mercy is, then, to act like God, and not showing mercy is to abandon the *imitatio Dei*'.[778] The implication of James's argument is that the *Torah* teaches and requires the *adelphoí* to be merciful (even to be full of mercy),[779] just as their heavenly Father is. This is exactly what their Lord Jesus teaches:[780] "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36, NASB). Moreover, when they are merciful, they are blessed, as Jesus said: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy" (Mat. 5:7, NASB). Wadge (2014:93) puts it this way: 'if we practice mercy, not only will we receive mercy in return, we become more like Him (i.e. God)!'

It turns out that the encircling parallelism, which comprises James 2:8-9 and 2:12-13 (refer to **Section 4.3.3 (c)**), is not just held together by the idea that carrying out the kingdom *Torah* (v.8) is paralleled with the command to do and act according to the *Torah* of liberty (v.12). Its

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[775] In Jas. 4:11-12, the *adelphoí* are warned against acting as judges for One is a *Torah*-giver and Judge. In Jas. 4:13-17, they are warned against (the sin of) boasting about their future plans. Jas. 5:1-6 warns the rich of miseries coming upon them for their acts of injustice. In Jas. 5:7-11, the *adelphoí* are warned against complaining against each other, and they are reminded that the Judge has taken stand at the door. Lastly, in Jas. 5:12, they are commanded not to swear but to let their "yes be yes" and "no be no" lest they fall under judgment.

[776] So also Hartin (2003:124).

[777] Deut. 7:9 (NASB) "Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness (*ḥesed*, MST; ἔλεος, LXX) to a thousandth generation with those who love (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν, LXX) Him and keep His commandments;"

[778] See also Hartin (2003:124).

[779] McKnight (2011:221) supports this by asserting, 'the essential behavior of mercy toward the marginalized is written into the fabric of the Hebrew Bible and the Jewish tradition'. And as discussed in **Section 3.5.5**, this is effectively what the second table of the Decalogue instructs God's people to do.

[780] The One who gives *Torah* its full and correct meaning (cf. Mat. 5:17-20).

connection is enforced by the idea that loving one's neighbour (v.8) is paralleled by the need to be merciful towards one's neighbour (v.13). Thus, showing mercy (like loving one's neighbour) is the antithesis of showing partiality (vv.1, 9).[781]

The above confirms that the *Torah* rightly understood and practiced, trains the *adelphoí* to be loving and merciful people.[782] Moreover, it gives them great incentive to be so, because judgment is merciless to those who do not show mercy. Of all people, the *adelphoí* should be merciful because of God's abundant mercy to them (in Christ).

Wadge (2014:92-93) insightfully observes that behind the idea that "judgment (is) merciless to the one not doing mercy" is the principle that 'God will give to man what he deserves', as taught in, for example, Psalm 62:12 (NASB): "*And lovingkindness is Yours, O Lord, For You recompense a man according to his work.*" The principle of the LORD's fair judgment is echoed in 2 Samuel 22:26-27:

> *(26) With the merciful you show yourself merciful; with the blameless man you show yourself blameless; (27) with the purified you deal purely, and with the crooked you make yourself seem tortuous.* (2 Sam. 22:26-27, ESV)

(18) James 2:13: "mercy triumphs over judgment" (κατακαυχᾶται ἔλεος κρίσεως):

According to BDAG (2000:517), the verb "*katakaucháomai*" (κατακαυχᾶται) means 'to have a cause for boasting because of advantage in power'. According to Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Jas. 2:13) it can be translated, 'to be more powerful than, to triumph over'. Accordingly, mercy "triumphs over" judgment because it has superior power. As the prophet Micah declares, God Himself is the One, more than anyone else, who practices this principle perfectly:

> *Who is a God like You pardoning iniquity, overlooking transgression, for the remnant of His heritage? He will not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. (Mic. 7:18, TLV).*

Again, the implication is that if God so delights in mercy and exercises the power to show mercy and offer forgiveness when judgment could legitimately be effected, how much more should the *adelphoí* not delight to show mercy, since they are the beneficiaries of God's supreme mercy (in Christ)? This is exactly what the prophet Micah calls God's people to:

> *He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God? (Mic. 6:8, NKJV).*

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[781] See Allison (2013:419).

[782] Therefore, contrary to Du Toit's (2020:296) claim, this Study finds that James does not set judging 'on the basis of the Mosaic law' against judging 'on the basis of the law or principle of freedom'. For James, there is no dichotomy between the two concepts. Either way, God's people should practice mercy when they judge.

Practicing mercy is not contrary to the *Torah*, but at the heart of how *Torah* instructs people to live. Anything else is hypocritical. As the Lord Jesus Christ said:

> *Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. (Mat. 23:23, NASB).*

Synopsis of James 2:12-13:

Based on the facts of the unity of the *Torah* and that breaking of any of its commandments results in being transgressors of the *Torah* as a whole, the *adelphoí* are to be careful and intentional about living according to God's particular standards for them. This encompasses all their speech and actions, which will most certainly be judged by God Himself who is the Judge. The instrument that God will use for His judgment is the *Torah* of liberty, which by implication is the standard by which the *adelphoí* are to live. Living by the *Torah*, protects their freedom. It also teaches and trains them to be loving and merciful people, modelled after God's love and mercy toward them. Alternatively, if they are merciless (by showing partiality, for example), they will be judged without mercy, according to the just standards of *Torah*.

4.3.7. Absolutes in James 2:8-13

The table below outlines the absolutes identified from the analysis above, together with supporting Scriptures from both the OT and NT:

1:	**The Kingdom *Torah* (*Torah* of the Kingdom) constitutes the absolute and binding instructions of the King to all the heirs (or subjects) of His Kingdom (Jas. 2:8).**
OT:	**Exod. 19:5-7** (NASB) 'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; **6** and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel." **7** So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the LORD had commanded him.
NT:	**Mat. 5:19** (NASB) Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Mat. 28:18-20 (NASB) And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **19** "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

2: To fulfil the *Torah* of the Kingdom (or Kingdom *Torah*) as Scriptures demands, one has to show as much loving concern for all others as for oneself (Jas. 2:8).

OT: **Lev. 19:18** (NASB) You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD.

Lev. 19:34 (NASB) The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the LORD your God.

NT: **Mat. 22:36-40** (NASB) "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" **37** And He said to him, " 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' **38** "This is the great and foremost commandment. **39** "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' **40** "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

Rom. 13:8-10 (NASB) Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. **9** For this, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, YOU SHALL NOT MURDER, YOU SHALL NOT STEAL, YOU SHALL NOT COVET," and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." **10** Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilment of the law.

3: When one shows as much loving concern for all others as for oneself, one does indeed carry out God's absolute and moral standards for life correctly and well (Jas. 2:8).

OT: **Deut. 6:17-18** (NASB) "You should diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and His testimonies and His statutes which He has commanded you. **18** "You shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you and that you may go in and possess the good land which the LORD swore to give your fathers.

NT: **Mat. 5:43-48** (NASB) "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.' **44** "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, **45** so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. **46** "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? **47** "If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? **48** "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

4: To show partiality is to disobey God and violate His *Torah* (Jas. 2:9).

OT: **Lev. 19:15** (NASB) You shall do no injustice in judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor nor defer to the great, but you are to judge your neighbor fairly.

Deut. 1:17 (NASB) 'You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not fear man, for the judgment is God's. The case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.'

NT: **1 Tim. 5:21** (NASB) I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality.

5: To disobey *Torah* at any point, is to become guilty against the whole *Torah* (Jas. 2:10, 11).

OT: **Deut. 27:26** (NASB) “Cursed is he who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.' And all the people shall say, ‘Amen’”.

NT: **Gal. 3:10** (NASB) For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM."

6: The *Torah* is a unity, because every commandment of the *Torah* is spoken by God (the One *Torah*-giver and Judge) (Jas. 2:11).

OT: **Num. 15:16** (NASB) There is to be one law and one ordinance for you and for the alien who sojourns with you.

Deut. 4:2 (NASB) You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

NT: **Luke 16:17** (NASB) But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail.

7: The core of the *Torah* is the Ten Commandments, and its aim is love for God (*Shema*) and one's neighbour (Jas. 2:8, 11).

OT: **Lev. 19:34** (NASB) The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the LORD your God.

Deut. 4:13 (NASB) So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone

Deut. 6:4-5 (NASB) Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! **5** You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

NT: **Mat. 19:16-19** (NASB) And someone came to Him and said, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?" **17** And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." **18** Then he *said to Him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER; YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY; YOU SHALL NOT STEAL; YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS; **19** HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER; and YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

Mark 12:28-31 (NASB) One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?" **29** Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD; **30** AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.' **31** "The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

8: Speak and act (live) according to the *Torah* (Jas. 2:12).

OT: **Deut. 26:16** (NASB) This day the LORD your God commands you to do these statutes and ordinances. You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul.

NT: **Mat. 5:19** (NASB) Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

9: God will judge according to works (of *Torah*) (Jas. 2:12).

OT: **Psa. 62:12** (NASB) And lovingkindness is Yours, O Lord, For You recompense a man according to his work.

NT: **Rom. 2:6** (NASB) who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS:

Rom. 2:12 (NASB) For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law;

10: The *Torah* is liberating (Jas. 2:12).

Refer to **Absolute 10** for James 1:19-27.

11: The Lord (and *Torah*) requires (His) people to be merciful (Jas. 2:13).

OT: **Mic. 6:8** (NKJV) He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

NT: **Mat. 23:23** (NASB) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.

Luke 6:36 (NASB) Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful".

12: The merciful will receive mercy, and the merciless will be judged without mercy (Jas. 2:13).

OT: **2 Sam. 22:26-27** (ESV) **26** With the merciful you show yourself merciful; with the blameless man you show yourself blameless; **27** with the purified you deal purely, and with the crooked you make yourself seem tortuous.

NT: **Mat. 5:7** (NASB) Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

Mat. 18:32-35 (NASB) Then summoning him, his lord *said to him, 'You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. …

33 'Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?' **34** "And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him. **35** "My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart."

13: Mercy triumphs over judgment (Jas. 2:13).

OT: **Mic. 7:18** (TLV) Who is a God like You pardoning iniquity, overlooking transgression, for the remnant of His heritage? He will not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy.

NT: **Mat. 5:43-45** (NASB) You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.' **44** But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, **45** so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

4.4. Analysis of James 4:11-12

4.4.1. Exegetical Context and Flow of Thought for James 4:11-12

Before examining James 4:11-12 in detail, the immediate setting of the passage will be considered in order to fully and correctly interpret it. The line of thought from James 2:1 onward is briefly outlined below.

This Study follows Cheung's (2003:83-85) proposal that James 2:8-13 holds James 2:1-26 together, James 3:13-18 holds James 3:1-4:10 together, and James 4:11-12 holds James 4:11-5:11/12 together. The respective themes of the three parts of the main body are: "faith in action" (Jas. 2:1-26), "manifesting wisdom from above" (Jas. 3:1-4:10), and "beware of eschatological judgment" (Jas. 4:11-5:12) (refer to **Appendix D**). The overarching concern of the connecting passages (Jas. 2:8-13; 3:13-18; 4:11-12), and arguably the Letter as a whole, is the need to be "doers of the *Torah*" with "wisdom from above" (refer to **Section 2.7**).

Under the theme of "manifesting wisdom from above", James 4:1-10 brings the Letter to an emotional climax and confronts the reader with a stark choice: "friendship with the world or being a friend of God" (refer to **Section 2.5.2**). The first amounts to idolatry (Jas. 4:4), while the second requires the *adelphoí* to be humbled before the Lord (Jas. 4:10).

While James 4:11-12 seem to start and hold together the third part of the main body of James (Jas. 4:11-5:12), it is not disconnected from the preceding part (Jas. 3:1-4:10). Johnson (2008:292) and Motyer (2010:156) seem right in their view that James 4:11-12, 4:13-17, and 5:1-6 address three typical areas in which the *adelphoí* are to guard against arrogance and

need wisdom from above. As Motyer (2010:156) so eloquently puts it, they are:

> *'in relation to other people and what we say about them (4:11-12), in relation to the ordering of our lives and the laying of plans (4:13-17), and in relation to the husbanding and use of this world's resources and goods (5:1-6)'.*

It follows that the teaching in James 4:11-12 can be understood in the context of warnings both against arrogance and imminent ultimate judgment, as well as the need to both be doers of the *Torah* and manifesters of wisdom from above.

4.4.2. Translation[783] of James 4:11-12

4:11 a Μὴ καταλαλεῖτε ἀλλήλων, ἀδελφοί.
do not speak against one another brothers and sisters
b ὁ καταλαλῶν ἀδελφοῦ
the one speaking against a brother or sister
c ἢ κρίνων τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ
or judges his brother or sister
d καταλαλεῖ νόμου
speaks against (the) *nómou*[784]
e καὶ κρίνει νόμον·
and judges (the) *nómon*[785]
f εἰ δὲ νόμον κρίνεις,
now if you judge (the) *nómon*[786]
g οὐκ εἶ ποιητὴς νόμου
you are not a doer of (the) *nómou*[787]
h ἀλλὰ κριτής.
but a judge

[783] The Greek New Testament text for this study was taken from the 4th Revised Edition, UBS, 2012. Revisions were made to Scripture Directs' (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015) English translation to reflect a more literal rending. Refer to **Appendix C**. The changes are indicated in highlighted (additions/replacements) and in strikethrough (deletions/replaced) text.

[784] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[785] Ibid.

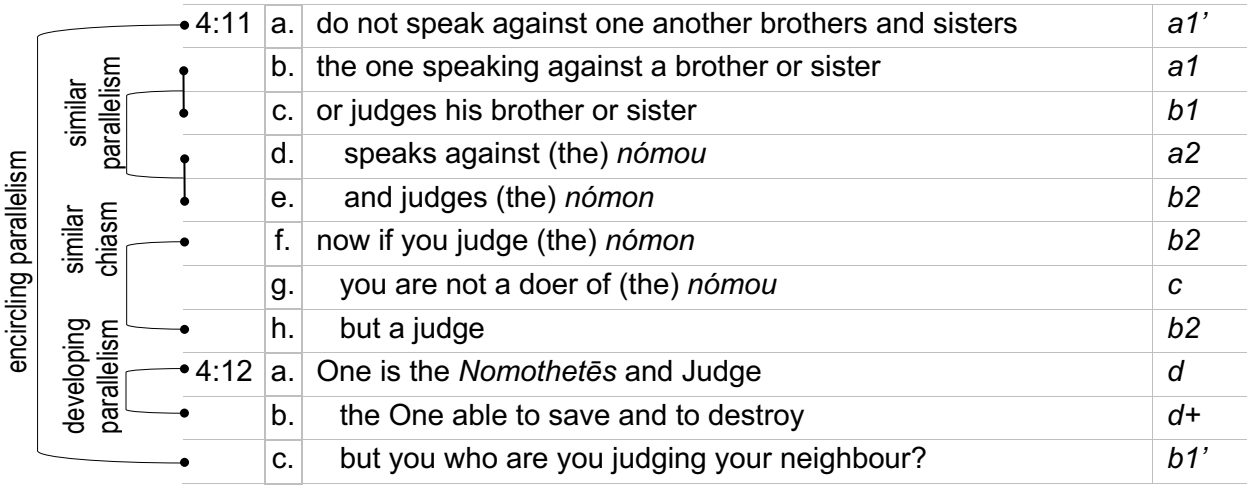
[786] Ibid.

[787] Ibid.

4:12 a εἷς ἐστιν [ὁ] νομοθέτης καὶ κριτής[788]
One is the *Nomothetēs*[789] and Judge
b ὁ δυνάμενος σῶσαι καὶ ἀπολέσαι·
the One able to save and to destroy
c σὺ δὲ[790] τίς εἶ ὁ κρίνων τὸν πλησίον[791];
but you who are you judging the neighbour?

4.4.3. Thought Structure Analysis of James 4:11-12

As illustrated in **Figure 6**, James 4:11-12 also shows remarkable unity of thought, with parallel lines working together and binding the short passage into a tightly knit unit (refer to **Appendix D** for the complete analysis of James). The passage contains two key or catch words, "*krínō"* (κρίνω) and "*nomos"* (νόμος), that not only connect it to James 2:8-13 (which has the same words), but also contribute to two related key themes in James.[792] The parallel lines and key words are discussed below:



4:11	a.	do not speak against one another brothers and sisters	*a1'*
	b.	the one speaking against a brother or sister	*a1*
	c.	or judges his brother or sister	*b1*
	d.	speaks against (the) *nómou*	*a2*
	e.	and judges (the) *nómon*	*b2*
	f.	now if you judge (the) *nómon*	*b2*
	g.	you are not a doer of (the) *nómou*	*c*
	h.	but a judge	*b2*
4:12	a.	One is the *Nomothetēs* and Judge	*d*
	b.	the One able to save and to destroy	*d+*
	c.	but you who are you judging your neighbour?	*b1'*

Figure 6: Thought Structure Analysis of James 4:11-12

(a) Encircling Parallelism around James 4:11b-12b

The passage starts with the instruction, "do not speak against" (μή καταλαλεῖτε) "one another brothers and sisters" (ἀλλήλων ἀδελφοί) (Jas. 4:11a) (a1'). The passage ends with the question, "but you who are you" (σὺ δὲ τίς εἶ) "judging your neighbour?" (ὁ κρίνων τὸν πλησίον)

[788] M & TR omit "καὶ κριτής" (and Judge).

[789] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[790] M & TR omit "δὲ" (but).

[791] M & TR read "ἕτερον" (another).

[792] Refer to **Section 2.5.1** for the Dominant Themes in James.

(b1'), which is an implied instruction not to judge one's neighbour. Since the ideas to "speak against" (καταλαλέω) and to "judge" (κρίνω) are held together in James 4:11b-h, the instruction in the beginning (a1') (Jas. 4:11a) and the question at the end (b1') (Jas. 4:12c) could be viewed as a parallelism, which encircles all of James 4:11b-12b. This being the case, the instruction not to speak against or judge one's neighbour bookends the passage, and thus the instruction (or warning) is emphasized. Furthermore, "speaking against" one's neighbour is a form of "judging" them.

(b) Similar Parallelism in James 4:11b-e

"The one speaking against" (ὁ καταλαλῶν) "a brother or sister" (ἀδελφοῦ) (a1) (Jas. 4:11b) "or judges" (ἢ κρίνων) "his brother or sister" (τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ) (b1) (Jas. 4:11c) forms a similar parallelism with, "speaks against" (καταλαλεῖ) "(the) *nómou*" (νόμου) (a2) (Jas. 4:11d) "and judges (the) *nómon*" (καὶ κρίνει νόμον) (b2) (Jas. 4:11e). Thus, to speak against or judge a brother or sister is not inconsequential, it is to do so against the *nómon*; which is a violation of God's instructions (cf. Jas. 2:9). Furthermore, by implication, *nómos* (*Torah*) is not a set of arbitrary or meaningless rules, they teach the *adelphoí* how to relate and how not to relate toward their neighbours. Stated differently, they teach the *adelphoí* how to love their neighbours (cf. Jas. 2:8).

(c) Similar Chiasm in James 4:11f-h

James 4:11f-h forms a similar chiasm, with a b2-c-b2 structure (refer to Jas. 4:11 in **Appendix D**). The thought unit, "now if you judge (the) *nómon*" (εἰ δὲ νόμον κρίνεις) (b2) (Jas. 4:11f), is paralleled and basically repeated by the thought unit, "but a judge" (ἀλλὰ κριτής) (b2) (Jas. 4:11h). Even though the thought unit, "you are not a doer of (the) *nómou*" (οὐκ εἶ ποιητὴς νόμου) (c) (Jas. 4:11g) is not repeated, it is emphasized by virtue of it being in the centre of the chiasm. This being the case, the need to be doers of *nómos* (*Torah*) is stressed.

(d) Developing Parallelism in James 4:12a-b

The idea of God being the "One" (εἷς) who "is the *Nomothetēs* and Judge" (ἐστιν νομοθέτης καὶ κριτής) (d) (Jas. 4:12a) is further developed by the idea that He is the "One who is able" (ὁ δυνάμενος) "to save and to destroy" (σῶσαι καὶ ἀπολέσαι) (d+) (Jas. 4:12b). This development could be regarded as a developing parallelism (refer to Jas. 4:12 in **Appendix D**). The implications of this development of thought (Jas. 4:12), in its context (Jas. 4:11-12), are as follows:

a) God's judgment will be based on, or will at least be consistent with, the *nómos* (*Torah*) which He has given.
b) God's judgment (based on *Torah*) will have one of two contrasting outcomes: salvation or destruction.

c) Salvation is for doers of (the) *nómou* (*Torah*) and destruction for those who speak against or judge their *adelphoí*.

(e) Key words in James 4:11-12

The words *krínō* (κρίνω) and *nómos* (νόμος) with their cognates are key words in the passage (Jas. 4:11-12) and in the Epistle. The former occurs six times[793] and the latter five times[794] in the short passage (Jas. 4:11-12). Both of the words also occur in James 2:8-13.

James 4:11f-g says, "now if you judge (the) *nómon*" (εἰ δὲ νόμον κρίνεις) "you are not a doer of (the) *nómou*" (οὐκ εἶ ποιητὴς νόμου) "but a judge" (ἀλλὰ κριτής). James 4:12a says, "One is the *Nomothetēs* and Judge" (εἷς ἐστιν νομοθέτης καὶ κριτής). Taken together, James 4:11f-12a implies: Be doers of the *Torah* given by God, since He will judge by it. This strongly parallels James 2:12, which says: "thus speak and thus do" (οὕτως λαλεῖτε καὶ οὕτως ποιεῖτε) "as those about to be judged by (the) *Torah of liberty*" (ὡς διὰ νόμου ἐλευθερίας μέλλοντες κρίνεσθαι). This parallel supports the finding that the "*Torah of liberty*" (Jas. 2:12 and Jas. 1:25) is synonymous with the *Torah* itself (refer to **Section 4.3.6 (16)**).

James 4:11-12 warns the *adelphoí*: "do not speak against one another" (μὴ καταλαλεῖτε ἀλλήλων). This is similar to the warning in James 5:9: "do not complain" (μὴ στενάζετε) against one another "so that you may not be judged" (ἵνα μὴ κριθῆτε). James 5:9 then adds: "behold" (ἰδοὺ) "the Judge has taken stand before the doors" (ὁ κριτὴς πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν ἕστηκεν). This not only emphasizes the fact that God will judge, but also calls attention to the nearness or imminence of His coming judgment, as Davids (1982:185) rightly points out.[795] James's strong eschatological perspective (discussed in **Section 2.5.1**) thus emerges to encourage the *adelphoí* to live in the light of what is to come.

In its context, James 1:25 teaches the *adelphoí* that in order to be "doers of the Word", they need to apply themselves to and persevere in the *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*, which is the *Torah* of the LORD that is both perfect and liberating (refer to **Section 4.2.6**, **Synopsis of James 1:25**). James 2:8-9 teaches the *adelphoí* to fulfill the *Torah* of the Kingdom (*nómon basilikòn*) (or rightly carry out God's standards), by loving their neighbours as themselves, lest they violate *Torah* (*nómou*) (refer to **Section 4.3.6**, **Synopsis of James 2:8-9**). James 2:10-11 adds that to disobey *Torah* (*nómou*) at any point (or command) is to be guilty before the whole *Torah* (*ʰólon tòn nómon*), since *Torah*'s unity stems from God who spoke or gave it (refer to **Section 4.3.6**, **Synopsis of James 2:10-11**). James 2:12-13 therefore urges the *adelphoí* to be careful and intentional by living according to *Torah* (*nómou eleutherías*) which protects

[793] Four times in the verb form "*krínō*" (κρίνω) and twice in the noun form "*kritēs*" (κριτής).

[794] Four times as the simple noun "*nomos*" (νόμος) and once as the compound noun "*Nomothetēs*" (νομοθέτης).

[795] So also McKnight (2011:414). Refer also to **Section 4.3.6 (16)**.

their freedom and trains them to be loving and merciful, lest they be judged according to its just standards (refer to **Section 4.3.6**, **Synopsis of James 2:12-13**). James 4:11-12 warns the *adelphoí* not to act in such a way as to be judges of the *Torah* (*nómon*), but instead be doers of it, since God is the One who will act as Judge, according to the *Torah* which He has given (refer to **Section 4.4.6**, **Synopsis of James 4:11-12**).

4.4.4. Meaning Structure of James 4:11-12

The meaning structure of James 4:11-12 is shown in **Figure 7** (refer to **Appendix D** for the complete analysis of James). The meaning blocks are:

- Jas. 4:11a: Do not speak against your brother or sister.
- Jas. 4:11b-e: To speak against or judge them is to do so against the *nómon*.
- Jas. 4:11f-h: To judge the *nómon* is not to be a doer of it.
- Jas. 4:12a-b: There is (only) one *Nomothetēs* and Judge
- Jas. 4:12c: Who are you (then) to judge your neighbour?

McKnight (2011:359-360) helpfully outlines the above as follows: 'prohibition' (4:11a), 'explanation' (4:11b-12a-b), and 'concluding question' (4:12c); with the 'explanation' consisting of a 'statement' (4:11b-e), 'clarification' (4:11f-h), and 'foundation' (4:12a-b).

4:11	a.	do not speak against one another brothers and sisters	Do not speak against others
	b.	the one speaking against a brother or sister	To speak against or judge them is to do so against the *nómon* (see: 2:4; 5:9)
	c.	or judges his brother or sister	
	d.	speaks against (the) *nómou*	
	e.	**and** judges (the) *nómon*	
	f.	**now if** you judge (the) *nómon*	To judge the *nómon* is not to be a doer of it (see: 1:22-25; 2:12)
	g.	you are not a doer of (the) *nómou*	
	h.	**but** a judge	
4:12	a.	One is the *Nomothetēs* and Judge	There is (only) one *Nomothetēs* and Judge
	b.	the One able to save and to destroy	
	c.	**but** you who are you judging your neighbour?	Who are you to judge them?

Figure 7: Semantic Discourse Analysis of James 4:11-12

4.4.5. Meaning Indicators of James 4:11-12

The significant related words and phrases, stylistic features, and connecting words in James 4:11-12 are marked and shown in **Appendix D**. These meaning indicators highlight the concepts, repetitions, and connections that determine the meaning of the passage and its

constituent parts. The stylistic features (such as chiasms and parallelisms) were discussed in **Section 4.4.3** above. The most significant related words and phrases and connecting words are discussed below:

- Speak against (framed orange text): In James 4:11, the *adelphoí* are exhorted not to "speak against" (καταλαλεῖτε) one another, since "the one speaking against" (ὁ καταλαλῶν) a brother or sister "speaks against" (καταλαλεῖ) the *nómou* (*Torah*).
- Judge (dark orange text): As indicated above (ref. **Section 4.4.3 (e)**) the word "judge" is a key word in the passage (Jas. 4:11-12), used four times in verb form "*krínō*" (κρίνω) and two times in the noun form "*kritēs*" (κριτής). The "one who judges" (κρίνων) his brother or sister "judges" (κρίνει) the *nómon* (*Torah*) (Jas. 4:11c, e). If "you judge" (κρίνεις) the *nómon* (*Torah*), you are not a doer of the *nómou* (*Torah*) (Jas. 4:11f-g). James 4:12 ends with the question, "you who are you 'judging' (κρίνων) your neighbour?". The one who judges the *nómon* (*Torah*) is not a doer of it but a "judge" (κριτής) (Jas. 4:11f-g), while One is the *Nomothetēs* (Torah-giver) and "Judge" (κριτής) (Jas. 4:12a).
- *Torah* (green text): *Torah* is a key focus or subject in the passage, with no less than five mentions of, references to, it (ref. **Section 4.4.3 (e)**). To speak against or judge a brother or sister is to speak against "*nómou*" (*Torah*) or to judge the "*nómon*" (*Torah*) (Jas. 4:11b-e). If you judge the "*nómon*" (*Torah*), you are not a doer of the "*nómou*" (*Torah*) (Jas. 4:11f-g). One (i.e. God) is the "*Nomothetēs*" (*Torah*-giver) and Judge (Jas. 4:12a).
- God (red underlined text): God the Father is said to be the "One" (εἷς) who is the "*Nomothetēs*" (νομοθέτης)(*Torah*-giver) and "Judge" (κριτής) (Jas. 4:12a). He is also said to be "the One who is able" (ὁ δυνάμενος) to save and to destroy (Jas. 4:12b).
- "Save" (underlined cyan text) and "destroy" (underlined dark orange text) are the two contrasting outcomes of God's judgment (Jas. 4:12a-b).

4.4.6. Meaning of Words and Phrases in James 4:11-12

(1) James 4:11: "do not speak against one another" (μὴ καταλαλεῖτε ἀλλήλων) "brothers and sisters" (ἀδελφοί)

The word "*katalaléō*" (καταλαλέω) is composed of the preposition "*kata*" (κατά), meaning "against", and the verb "*laléō*" (λαλέω), meaning "speak" (BDAG, 2000:511, 582). According to Louw & Nida (1996:432), it means 'to speak against, often involving speaking evil of' and can be translated, 'to speak evil of' or 'to slander'.[796]

[796] See also: Barclay (1976:111); Hartin (2003:217); Moo (2000:197-198).

The prohibitive command, “do not speak against” (μὴ καταλαλεῖτε) “one another” (ἀλλήλων) is in the present imperative. The force is therefore to forbid the readers to slander one another as an ongoing command (cf. Wallace, 1996:485). Stated differently, they are never allowed to slander one another.

The prohibition against slander is well established in the Hebrew Scriptures, as several scholars note.[797] For example, Psalm 50:20 (NASB) states: “You sit and speak against (κατελάλεις, LXX) your brother; you slander your own mother's son.”[798] Sad examples of the sin of slander are found in Numbers 12 when Aaron and Miriam spoke against Moses (v.8), and in Numbers 21 when the Israelites spoke against God and against Moses (vv.5, 7). With James’s sustained use of Leviticus 19 (refer to **Section 3.5.4**), he may well have drawn his instruction in James 4:11 from Leviticus 19:16, which states:[799]

> *You shall not go about as a slanderer among your people, and you are not to act against the life of your neighbor; I am the LORD. (Lev. 19:16, NASB).*

Furthermore, as Hartin (2003:221) rightfully points out, this is the third time James addresses the issue of speech.[800] Thus the issue is stressed, and, with it being the final mention of the theme, it is brought to a climax and conclusion. Though the issue is serious and confronting, James’s tone is very pastoral, as evidenced by the readers being addressed as “*adelphoi*” (ἀδελφοί). McKnight (2011:360) puts it well in saying that James’s intent is not to ‘accuse or destroy’ but to ‘lead to repentance and restoration’.

As explained in **Section 2.3.2**, the “*adelphoi*” (ἀδελφοί) are brothers and sisters by virtue of ‘their close affinity’ in the faith of their Lord Jesus Christ of glory (cf. Jas. 2:1). And they are “*adelphoi*” because God is their Father (cf. Jas. 1:17, 27, 3:9).

Thus, James 4:11 presents a pointed, permanent, and pastoral warning to the Christian brothers and sisters not to speak against or slander one another.

(2) James 4:11: “the one speaking against a brother or sister” (ὁ καταλαλῶν ἀδελφοῦ) “or judges his brother or sister” (ἢ κρίνων τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ)

The explanatory phrase (refer to **Section 4.4.4**), “the one speaking against a brother or sister” (ὁ καταλαλῶν ἀδελφοῦ) (Jas. 4:11b), basically restates the imperative in James 4:11a in indicative form. It is expanded by the phrase “or judges his brother or sister” (ἢ κρίνων τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ) (Jas. 4:11c), which is similar (to Jas. 4:11b) in form.

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[797] See: Hartin (2003:217); Johnson (2008:292); and McKnight (2011:361).

[798] See also: Psa. 78:19; 101:5; Prov. 20:13; Hos. 7:13; Mal. 3:13.

[799] So also Silva (2014c:418).

[800] After James 1:19 & 26 and 3:1-12.

According the BDAG (2000:567-569), the semantic range of the verb "judge" (κρίνω) includes: 'to make a selection', 'to pass judgment upon', 'to make a judgment based on taking various factors into account', 'to come to a conclusion after a cognitive process', 'to engage in a judicial process', and 'to ensure justice for someone'. The context rules out all of these,[801] except option 2 and possibly 5. Louw & Nida (1996:555) confirm this by identifying the correct contextual meaning as: 'to judge a person to be guilty and liable to punishment', which can be translated, 'to judge as guilty' or 'to condemn'.[802]

Wallace (1996:672) explains that the "disjunctive conjunction" "or" (ἤ) 'gives an alternative possibility', which 'can suggest opposite or related alternatives'. The context clearly points to the latter. As observed in **Section 4.4.3 (a)**, "speaking against" one's fellow believer or neighbour is a form of "judging" them. Moreover, Johnson (2008:293) seems right in asserting that 'the way in which James places these terms', makes them 'virtually synonymous'.[803] Therefore to "speak against" or "slander" someone is to "judge" or "condemn" them.

As demonstrated in **Section 4.4.3 (b)**, the two phrases, "the one speaking against a brother or sister" (a1) and "or judges his brother or sister" (b1) (Jas. 4:11b-c), form the first half of a similar parallelism. And they form the first half of an explanatory statement (refer to **Section 4.4.4**). The second half of the similar parallelism and explanatory statement is examined below.

(3) James 4:11: "speaks against (the) *nómou*"[804] (καταλαλεῖ νόμου) "and judges (the) *nómon*"[805] (καὶ κρίνει νόμον)

"The one speaking against a brother or sister" (a1) and "or judges his brother or sister" (b1) (Jas. 4:11b-c) is paralleled, synonymized or mirrored, and completed by "speaks against (the) *nómou*" (καταλαλεῖ νόμου) (a2) and "and judges (the) *nómon*" (καὶ κρίνει νόμον) (b2) (Jas. 4:11d-e). Thus, the person who slanders or condemns another, does so against "*nómos*". But which "*nómos*" does James refer to?

Blomberg & Kamell (2008:197-197) suggest that because "*nómos*" here is anarthrous (without the article), it might be indefinite and therefore refer to "God's will" in 'a qualitative sense' rather than refer to *Torah* itself.[806] However, as Wallace (1996:243) explains, 'it is not

[801] As they are clearly things that Christians are expected to do (cf. Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 11:13; 1 Cor. 7:37; Isa. 1:17).

[802] So also: Hartin (2003:218); MacArthur (1998:222); McKnight (2013:362).

[803] So also Hartin (2003:221).

[804] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[805] Ibid.

[806] See also Du Toit (2020:300).

necessary for a noun to have the article in order for it to be definite'. There are numerous examples in the NT where "*nómos*" is anarthrous, and yet refers to the *Torah* (e.g. Rom. 2:12, 13, 14, 17, 23, 25, 27, et.al.). Moreover, the argument that the anarthrous use of "*nómos*" in James 4:11 might point away from the *Torah*, becomes unconvincing when one considers that it is also used without the article in James 2:10 (i.e. simply "νόμου"), and yet there it indisputably refers to the *Torah* (refer to **Section 4.3.6 (14)**).

According to Martin (1988:163), "*nómos*" 'may be the Mosaic law', but James 2:8 'suggests that what James means is the epitome of the teaching of Jesus, which is summed up by the exhortation "to love one another as yourself" (cf. Gal 6:2)'. Similarly, Moo (2000:198) believes one is 'justified in thinking' that James speaks here of 'the OT law insofar as it has been taken up into the "law of the kingdom" that Jesus laid upon his followers'. Stated differently, Moo (2000:198) sees it as 'the love command and its related exhortations' within the new covenant context.

However, it may be exegetically more accurate to see, as scholars such as Allison (2013:635-637), Hartin (2003:222), McKnight (2011:362), Hegg (2020:169-170), Wadge (2006:154), and Wall (1997:213), the reference here to be to the *Torah*, for the following reasons:

- Firstly, the fact that the term "*nómos*" is here used by itself, with everything[807] in the immediate context supporting and nothing opposing the notion that it most naturally refers to the *Torah*. That the *Torah* is in view here is confirmed by both BDAG (2000:678) and Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Jas. 4:11). Additionally, the CJB, OJB, and TLV translate "*nómos*" as "*Torah*" in James 4:11.
- Secondly, as mentioned above, "*nómos*" in James 2:10 has an identical form to that here in James 4:11. Since it refers to the *Torah* in James 2:10, it is reasonable to conceive that it does so in James 4:11 as well.
- Thirdly, several scholars[808] see in James 4:11 a resemblance to Leviticus 19:16 (NASB), which states: "*You shall not go about as a slanderer among your people, and you are not to act against the life of your neighbor; I am the LORD.*" As demonstrated in **Section 3.5.4**, this is just one of several references to and applications of Leviticus 19 in James. With Leviticus 19 (which is part of the *Torah*) in the background, is it not most reasonable to conclude that James has the *Torah* in mind when he mentions "*nómos*"?

[807] Most notably: the phrases "a doer of (the) *nómou*" (ποιητὴς νόμου) (Jas. 4:11g) and "One is the *Nomothetēs* and Judge" (εἷς ἐστιν νομοθέτης καὶ κριτής) (Jas. 4:12a).

[808] Including, amongst others: Hartin (2003:222); Johnson (2008:293); McKnight (2011:635); Moore-Keish (2019:153-154).

- Fourthly, as Johnson (2008:293) rightfully argues, James's logic that slandering one's neighbour equates to judging the Law 'remains obscure' unless the Law forbids it, which it does in Leviticus 19:16.[809] Naturally therefore, when James talks about the Law ("*nómos"*), he is talking about the *Torah*.

- Fifthly, there is no hint in James that when he mentions "*nómos*", that he is thinking of "the love commandment" (cf. Jas. 2:8) alone, which has supposedly replaced or superseded the *Torah* in the New Covenant.[810] Rather, as argued in **Section 4.3.6 (3)**, it seems more accurate to say that, for James and according to Jesus, loving one's neighbour as oneself is a summarizing principle and great purpose of the commandments of the *Torah*, rather than the replacement of it.

- Finally, the Study so far has found that James is consistently referring to the *Torah*. Numerous hints in the text and context have been reasonably argued and demonstrated to point to the *Torah*. Nothing in James has been found to point to "*nómos*" being anything other than *Torah*.[811] Bauckham (1999:143) is right in concluding:

  > *'The law as James reads it … is the law interpreted by Jesus in His preaching of the kingdom, the law as expressing God's will for His people in the dawning of His eschatological rule. This is the same law as is written in the books of Moses."*[812]

(4) James 4:11: "now if you judge (the) *nómon*"[813] (εἰ δὲ νόμον κρίνεις) "you are not a doer of (the) *nómou*"[814] (οὐκ εἶ ποιητὴς νόμου) "but a judge" (ἀλλὰ κριτής)

The postpositive conjunction, "*dè*" (δὲ), functions here as a continuative particle,[815] which indicates a closely related point in James's argument.[816] As indicated in **Section 4.4.4**, James now clarifies the point that to speak against or judge a brother or sister is to do so against the *nómos* (*Torah*). However, James does not just seek to clarify, he also seeks to persuade; as

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[809] The offence of slander is powerfully demonstrated elsewhere in the *Torah*, in Numbers 12 and 21.

[810] See Allison (2013:637).

[811] Ibid.

[812] Similarly, Moore-Keish (2019:154) contends that the law is 'the life-giving guidance in the ways of justice and mercy that God offered the people of Israel at Sinai, and in Jesus Christ'.

[813] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[814] Ibid.

[815] See Dana & Mantey (1957:244).

[816] See Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Jas. 4:11).

is evident from his use of the "first class conditional sentence" that follows (ref. Wallace, 1996:690-694). It is marked by the conditional conjunction, "if" (εἰ).

The protasis, "you judge (the) *nómon* (*Torah*)" (εἰ δὲ νόμον κρίνεις) has already been stated to be true when someone speaks against or judges another. That being the case, it is also true to say about the particular person as stated in the apodosis: "you are not a doer of (the) *nómou* (*Torah*)" (οὐκ εἶ ποιητὴς νόμου) "but a judge" (ἀλλὰ κριτής). With the conditional sentence, James is thus using rhetorical power to invite his readers to draw the logical conclusion and be persuaded (even convicted) that when you slander or defame a fellow believer, you are not a doer of *Torah* but a judge of it.[817] Moreover, on a pragmatic level James, in effect, issues the polite command: "Be a doer of *Torah* and not a judge".[818]

As explained in **Section 4.2.6 (9)**, being a "doer" (ποιητὴς) is doing what is prescribed. Accordingly, a "doer of (the) *nómou* (*Torah*)" (ποιητὴς νόμου) is doing what *Torah* prescribes.[819] McKnight (2011:363) helpfully observes that 'the fundamental imperative for Israel with respect to God's *Torah* was to "do" … what God said', which was exactly 'what Jesus expected of His followers' (Mat. 7:21-28). The importance of being a doer of *Torah* is emphasized in that the idea is in the centre of a chiasm (refer to **Section 4.4.3 (c)**).[820] The imperative to do (or obey) *Torah* is found in James 2:12 (refer to **Sections 4.3.6 (15) & (16)** and **4.3.7 (8)**). Johnson (2008:293) is thus right in observing that James 4:11 is 'the application of the principle stated in 2:8-11 concerning the obligation to obey all the law'. Mayor (1913:143) insightfully observes that, 'it is the essence of a law to require obedience' and to refuse obedience is virtually to say, 'it ought not to be law'.[821]

James says that if you judge the *nómon* (*Torah*) you are not a doer "but" (ἀλλὰ) a judge. Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Jas. 4:11) explain that the conjunction, "*allà*" (ἀλλὰ), marks an 'emphatic contrast'. Thus, judging the *Torah* (Law) is clearly and forcibly in contrast to keeping it. Moreover, judging the Law is to adopt a rebellious attitude towards it (so Hartin, 2003:218), to deny its authority (so Moo, 2000:199), to exempt oneself of the duty to obey it (so Calvin,

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[817] See Wallace (1996:692).

[818] See Wallace (1996:693) who illustrates the rhetorical device well by means of the following example. 'Suppose a mother says to her child, "If you put your hand in the fire, you'll get burned." The pragmatic meaning is the statement is, "Don't put your hand in the fire!". It is, in effect, a polite command, couched in indirect language.'

[819] As argued in **Sections 4.2.6 (9) & (22)** it is clear that for James, "a doer of the Word" (Jas. 1:22), "a doer of work" (Jas. 1:25), and "a doer of Torah" (Jas. 4:12) are synonymous and interchageble concepts. See also: Cheung (2003:96); Moore-Keish (2019:154).

[820] Friedman & Friedman (2012:67) concurs that James 'stresses that it is a person's duty to perform the instructions given to us in the *Torah*."

[821] See also: Motyer (2010:159) and Tasker (1973:100).

2010a:338), and to place oneself above it (so: Barclay, 1976:111; Hartin, 2003:222; Kistemaker, 1986:145; Moore-Keish, 2019:154). Ultimately, it is to usurp the authority of God Himself (so: Allison, 2013:636; McKnight, 2011:363; Moore-Keish, 2019:154; Motyer, 2010:159). This becomes clear in James 4:12.

Finally, Motyer (2010:159) very insightfully comments that when we disobey the *Torah* (Law) we are not just disputing God's authority, which is 'error and offence enough', we are also contradicting Him and valuing our opinions above His. He (Motyer, 2010:159) explains:

> *'God's law is not an arbitrary collection of precepts which happen to contain this selection of all possible commands. His law is the expression of who and what he is; he gave us his commands in order that, by obeying them, we might fashion our lives in his image. Elements which exist as principles of the divine nature have been expressed as precepts for believers, so that the life of God may be seen in our mortal bodies.'*

(5) James 4:12: "One is the *Nomothetēs*[822] and Judge" (εἷς ἐστιν νομοθέτης καὶ κριτής)

James completes the explanation of why the *adelphoí* are not to speak against one another by stating the foundational or fundamental truth (refer to **Section 4.4.4**): "One is the *Nomothetēs* and Judge".

Being the subject of the sentence, the adjective "*ʰeis*" (εἷς) functions substantively. Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Jas. 4:12) explain that it means, "one, in contrast to more than one".[823] The sense is "only one" (so the NASB, ESV, TLV, NIV). Or "God alone" (so the NLT), or "God is the only" (so the GNB), since the context (Jas. 4:7ff) clearly indicates that "one" stands for God.

As several scholars recognise,[824] the word "One" (εἷς) recalls the most fundamental confession (in the OT), the *Shema* (refer to **Section 3.5.3**):

> *(4) Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! (5) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (6) These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. (7) You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.* (Deut. 6:4-7, NASB).

Craigie (1976:169-170) helpfully comments that the implication of the oneness and uniqueness of God (i.e. He is 'the one and only' God), as stipulated in the *Shema*, is loving

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[822] "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms are transliterated until their meaning has been established.

[823] See also BDAG (2000:292).

[824] Scholars include, amongst others: Allison (2013:637), Cheung (2003:188), Hartin (2003:218); Johnson (2008:294), McKnight (2011:364).

Him with 'all-encompassing love' - love that is 'to find its expression in a willing and joyful obedience of the commandments of God.' This shows, as Thompson (1974:138-139) rightfully observes, that 'obedience to the commandments is an outgrowth of love' for God, rather than 'barren legalism based on necessity and duty'. One should hasten to add, that obedience to God's commandments is not to be in order to be God's people or to be saved. Rather, as the preamble of the Decalogue (Exod. 20:2; Deut. 5:6)[825] makes clear, obedience (to the *Torah*) is to be in the context of relationship with God established by Him and redemption accomplished by Him.[826] Motyer (2011:213) is thus right in stating that 'the grace that saves preceded the law that demands.'[827]

According to Louw & Nida (1996:426), "*Nomothetēs*" (νομοθέτης)[828] means 'one who gives or enacts laws', which can be translated 'lawgiver'.[829] The word is a *hapax legomenon*[830] in the NT. Nevertheless, as Johnson (2008:294) points out, God is referred to as the "Lawgiver" in the LXX (Psa. 9:21;[831] Psa. 83:7) and the verb form, "*nomothetéō*" (νομοθετέω) of its related noun (νομοθέτης) 'is frequently applied to God'.[832] A prime example is found in Exodus 24:12, which reads:[833]

> *Now the LORD said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and remain there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the law (Torah, MST; νόμον, LXX) and the commandment which I have written for their instruction (yarah,[834] MST; νομοθετῆσαι, LXX)"* (Exod. 24:12, NASB).

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[825] "*I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.*" (Exod. 20:2; Deut. 5:6, NASB).

[826] Refer to **Section 3.4.2**.

[827] See also Block (2012:182).

[828] According to Louw & Nida (1996:426), "*Nomothetēs*" (νομοθέτης) is a derivate of derivative of the verb "*nomothetéō*" (νομοθετέω) (i.e. 'to give a law').

[829] So also BDAG (2000:676).

[830] i.e. used only once in the NT.

[831] Interestingly, in the English Bible, which is based on the MST, the Psalm 9:20 (NASB) says: "*Put them in fear, O LORD; Let the nations know that they are but men. Selah.*" Whereas the corresponding verse (Psa. 9:21) in the LXX says: "*κατάστησον, κύριε, νομοθέτην ἐπ' αὐτούς, γνώτωσαν ἔθνη ὅτι ἄνθρωποί εἰσιν. διάψαλμα.*" In English, this could be rendered: "*Appoint, O LORD, a lawgiver over them; Let the nations know that they are human*". If follows that all people (not just Jews) need to know that being human means that they are under the Lawgiver, who is God. Hence, they are all subject to the Law (*Torah*) that He has given.

[832] See also: Hartin (2003:222); McKnight (2011:364).

[833] Other examples in the LXX include: Deut. 17:10; Psa. 24:8, 12; 26:11; 118:33, 102, 104.

[834] See Hebrew root of the word "*Torah*". See the **Glossary of Terms** for the meaning of "*Torah*".

According to BDAG (2000:570), God being the "Judge" (κριτής) means that He is the 'one who has the right to render a decision in legal matters'.[835] In this context, He would thus have the right 'to pass judgment upon … the lives and actions of … people', which would mean that He could rightfully condemn (ref. BDAG, 2000:568). As the "Judge", as Motyer (2010:155) correctly observes, 'none can appeal or resist' His judgment. The concept of God as the "judge" is fundamental in the OT Scriptures.[836] For example, the Psalms portray Him as "a righteous judge" (Psa. 7:11, NASB) and "the Judge" who "puts down one and exalts another" (Psa. 75:7, NASB). And Isaiah declares "the LORD is a God of justice" (Isa. 30:18, NASB) and "the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver" (Isa. 33:22, NASB).

God is not just the "*Torah*-giver" (Lawgiver) or the "Judge", He is both the "*Torah*-giver and Judge". With James holding the two terms together, the obvious inference is that God will judge according to the *Torah* (Law) that He has given.[837] MacArthur (1998:225) is thus right in commenting that God 'gave the law and will judge men by His law'. Likewise, Kistemaker (1986:144) who comments that "God makes the law, applies it, and enforces it by carrying out the sentence".[838] James 4:12a further emphasises, as Tasker (1973:100) rightfully observes, that the laws of the Lawgiver are 'of permanent significance' and the judgments of the Judge are 'of eternal validity'. Finally, as Motyer (2010:155) rightfully observes: as the "Lawgiver" God decides what the standard is for a good or right life, and as the "Judge" God determines to what extent each person has lived up to that standard.

(6) James 4:12: "the One able to save and to destroy" (ὁ δυνάμενος σῶσαι καὶ ἀπολέσαι)

The participial clause, "the One able to save and to destroy" (ὁ δυνάμενος σῶσαι καὶ ἀπολέσαι) modifies (or develops)[839] the substantive (i.e. God, the One "*Torah*-giver and Judge"). As such it functions attributively (cf. Wallace, 1996:617-618), ascribing a quality to the substantive (Dana & Mantey, 1967:118). God, the One "*Torah*-giver and Judge" (i.e. the substantive) is "the One able to save and to destroy" (i.e. quality of the substantive).

Wallace (1996:222-223) explains that the article "*ho*" (ὁ) indicates that the substantive is 'in a class by itself', it is 'the only one deserving of the name'. Thus, the emphasis on God as

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[835] See also Louw & Nida (1996:555).

[836] See: Hartin (2003:218); Johnson (2008:294).

[837] This is idea is strongly supported by James 2:12. Refer to **Section 4.3.6 (15) – (16)**. The idea is also strongly supported by the throught structure, as discussed in **Section 4.4.3 (d)**.

[838] Along the same lines, Hegg (2020:172) comments that "the ultimate application of God's law is in the hands of the Law giver Himself."

[839] Refer to **Section 4.4.3 (d)**.

the unique and ultimate *Torah*-giver and Judge, is maintained and perhaps heightened by the fact that He (as the *Torah*-giver and the Judge), is *par excellence* the One able to save and to destroy. In fact, as Barclay (1976:112) asserts: 'It is God alone who is able to save and to destroy' – it is His 'great prerogative'.

Being "able" (δύναμαι), God the One *Torah*-giver and Judge, 'possess[es] capability' (BDAG, 2000261) to "save" and to "destroy" (ἀπόλλυμι). In context, to "save" (σώζω) means 'to save or preserve from transcendent danger or destruction' (BDAG, 2000:982). And to "destroy" (ἀπόλλυμι) means to 'cause or experience eternal destruction' (BDAG, 2000:115), which is the exact opposite of being saved. Hegg (2000:173) is thus right in asserting that James is here referring to the 'ultimate judgment of God', which 'determines the eternal destiny' of people.[840] This fits well with the theme in James that the "soul" (ψυχή)[841] is in danger of eternal death (cf. Jas. 1:15; 5:20) and in need of salvation (cf. Jas. 1:21; 5:20).

Several scholars[842] note that James is here reiterating the great truth that God revealed about Himself in Deuteronomy 30:39:

> *See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal, And there is no one who can deliver from My hand. (Deut. 32:39, NASB).*

This truth is echoed throughout Scripture, in for example: 1 Samuel 2:6, 2 Kings 5:7, Psalm 68:20, and Matthew 10:28.[843]

(7) James 4:12: "but you who are you" (σὺ δὲ τίς εἶ) "judging the neighbour?" (ὁ κρίνων τὸν πλησίον;)

The teaching of James 4:11-12 is concluded with a question, a rhetorical question. The question starts with the postpositive conjunction "*dè*" (δὲ). Being contrastive, "*dè*" (δὲ) (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, Jas. 4:12), marks an opposing thought (cf. Wallace, 1996:671) to God being the sole *Torah*-giver and Judge over humanity, especially since He has the power and right to determine who will be saved and who will be destroyed. Contrary to God being the *Torah*-giver and Judge, some *adelphoí* are judging others, hence the confronting question.

Emphasis is added to the confronting question by the double use of the second person demonstrative pronoun, "you", which directs the question straight at the offender in emphatic

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[840] So also Moo (2000:199).

[841] i.e. the 'seat and center of the inner human life' (BDAG, 2000:1099).

[842] Including i.a. Hartin (2003:218); Johnson (2008:294); Kistemaker (19:86:145); McKnight (2011:365); Tasker (1973:100-101).

[843] See Barclay (1976:112).

fashion: “you” (σὺ), “who are you” (τίς εἶ). In effect, as Hartin (2003:222) observes, James is saying,

> *‘Who do you think you are,*[844] *God alone is the one to make the law, to judge according to the law, to exercise the role of salvation and destruction based on the law’.*

James’s question is, “but you who are you judging the neighbour?” Interestingly, instead of saying, “brother or sister” (ἀδελφός) as in James 4:11, he says “neighbour”. As BDAG (2000:830) explains, “neighbour” (πλησίον) refers to ‘a fellow human being’, one ‘who is near or close by’. Moreover, as several scholars observe,[845] James’s use of the word “neighbour” seems to intentionally allude to the “love command” (Jas. 2:8; Lev. 19:18) in order to remind his readers that judging or speaking against one another is to fail to love their neighbours as themselves.

Finally, as observed in **Section 4.4.3. (a)**, James 4:12c forms an encircling parallelism with James 4:11a: “do not speak against” (μή καταλαλεῖτε) “one another, brothers and sisters” (ἀλλήλων ἀδελφοί). Thus, the instruction not to slander or judge others is enforced and stressed.

Synopsis of James 4:11-12:

James presents a pointed, permanent, and pastoral warning to the Christian brothers and sisters not to speak against or slander one another. Speaking against or slandering people is a form of judging or condemning them. Doing so is to slander or judge the *Torah*. This, in turn, is in contrast to doing or obeying *Torah* as one is supposed to. Moreover, it is to place oneself above *Torah* and even usurping God’s authority and contradicting His personality, which *Torah* expresses. God alone is the *Torah*-giver and Judge who deserves wholehearted love, who defines the instructions about how to love, and who determines the ultimate destiny of each person. Therefore, who in the world is the person who dares to slander or condemn their neighbour whom God commands them to love?

4.4.7. Absolutes in James 4:11-12

The table below outlines the absolutes identified from the analysis above, together with supporting Scriptures from both the OT and NT:

1:	**Do not speak against (slander) or judge (condemn) one another (Jas. 4:11).**
OT:	**Lev. 19:16** (NASB) You shall not go about as a slanderer among your people, and you are not to act against the life of your neighbor; I am the LORD.

[844] Or more intensely, ‘Who in the world do you think you are?’ as McKnight (2011:366) suggests.

[845] In cluding i.a. Allison (2013:639); Hartin (2003:219); Kistemaker (1986:145).

Psa. 101:5 (NASB) Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy; No one who has a haughty look and an arrogant heart will I endure.

NT: **Mat. 7:1** (NASB) Do not judge so that you will not be judged.

Mat. 12:36 (NASB) "But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment.

Rom. 2:1 (NASB) Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.

1 Peter 2:1 (NASB) Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander,

2: Do (obey) the *Torah* instead of slandering or judging it (Jas. 4:11).

OT: **Deut. 27:26** (NASB) Cursed is he who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them. And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

Psa. 119:5-6 (NASB) Oh that my ways may be established To keep Your statutes! **6** Then I shall not be ashamed When I look upon all Your commandments.

NT: **Mat. 5:19** (NASB) Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Rom. 2:13 (NASB) for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified.

Rom. 13:8 (NASB) Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.

3: God is the (supreme) *Torah*-giver (Lawgiver) and Judge, the One who can save and destroy (Jas. 4:12).

OT: **Exod. 24:12** (NASB) Now the LORD said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and remain there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the commandment which I have written for their instruction."

Psa. 75:7 (NASB) But God is the Judge; He puts down one and exalts another.

Isa. 33:22 (NASB) For the LORD is our judge, The LORD is our lawgiver, The LORD is our king; He will save us -

NT: **Mat. 10:28** (NASB) Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Heb. 8:10 (NASB) FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.

Heb. 12:23 (NASB) to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

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4: Love the One True God and your neighbour by keeping God's *Torah* (Jas. 4:11-12).

OT: **Deut. 6:4-6** (NASB) Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! **5** You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6 "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.

Lev. 19:18 (NASB) You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD.

NT: **Mat. 22:37-40** (NASB) And He said to him, " 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' **38** "This is the great and foremost commandment. **39** "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' **40** "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

Rom. 13:10 (NASB) Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilment of the law.

4.5. Study Objective 3 - Examine the use of and determine the meaning(s) of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James

James uses "*nómos*" (νόμος) in five different ways:

- Firstly, James 1:25 speaks of the "*nómon téleion*" (νόμον τέλειον) "*tòn tēs eleutherías*" (τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) which can be translated, "perfect *Torah*, that of freedom" or "perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom". Rather than referring to a different *Torah* (Law) from that given by God through Moses, it is found that James refers essentially to the same *Torah* and ascribes to it perfection and liberty, as does the OT. It is perfect in that it is a perfect gift from the Father, it reflects His perfect character, and it is a means for the *adelphoí's* perfection. It is liberating because it safeguards their freedom and perfect freedom is found

in following God's instructions (*Torah*).

- Secondly, James 2:8 uses the term, "*nómon basilikòn*" (νόμον … βασιλικὸν), which can be translated, "Kingdom *Torah*". This is the "*Torah*" pertaining to the Kingdom of God. Again, rather than referring to a different *Torah* to that given by God in the OT, the same *Torah* instructs the *adelphoí* in the righteous standards for life in God's Kingdom.
- Thirdly, James 2:9, 11 and 4:11 refer to the "*nómou*" (νόμου) simply, which also stands for *Torah* - violation of which is sin, and obedience of which is right living. In this context, James specifically mentions two of the Ten Commandments, which shows that the Decalogue is foundational or core in his conception of the *Torah*. As argued in **Section 4.3.6 (12)**, it can be read, according to Jewish cultural norms, that the whole Decalogue is implied even when all of its commandments are not spelled out.
- Fourthly, James speaks once of the "*hólon tòn nómon*" (ὅλον τὸν νόμον) in James 2:10. Once again, he essentially has the *Torah* that Moses received from God in mind. The emphasis here is on the whole or entire body of instruction in the *Torah*.
- Finally, the term "*nómou eleutherías*" (νόμου ἐλευθερίας) is found in James 2:12, which can be translated the "*Torah* of freedom". It highlights the liberating function of the *Torah* for those who speak and act according to its instructions. It can be viewed as shorthand for the "perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* of freedom" (Jas. 1:25). Once again, the same *Torah* is in view, albeit with a focus on a particular attribute (i.e. liberty) of the *Torah*.

It is therefore concluded that, although James uses five different "*nómos*" terms, he has essentially only one "*nómos*" in mind – God's *Torah* given through Moses. The context or text of the Letter does not seem to support the view that he has different "*torahs*" in mind. This makes perfect sense, since there is only One *Torah*-giver and Judge (Jas. 4:12). For James, God is not only the One unique and ultimate *Torah*-giver and Judge (Jas. 4:12), He is also the invariably good heavenly Father from whom every good gift and every perfect present comes (Jas. 1:17).[846] Accordingly His *Torah* is not just a good and perfect gift, but a fatherly one.

Hence, the definition of *Torah* (*nómos*) as expounded in the **Glossary of Terms** seems very fitting for James: *"God's fatherly standards (or aims) and instructions (or teachings) for His people for life"*, the core of which is the "Ten Commandments", the summary of which is the "Two Greatest Commandments" (Mat. 22:37-40), and the exposition and application of which are found in the remaining commandments in the Pentateuch and Scripture as a whole. At the very least, it is presumed that every biblical commandment that instructs the *adelphoí* in love towards God (first and foremost) and love towards one's neighbour (as to oneself) is part of the *Torah* that James is referring to. While James is silent on the ritual commandments

[846] Refer to **Section 3.6.5**.

of the *Torah*, he is certainly very vocal on its moral commandments, with particular focus on the "weightier matters" of the *Torah* (refer to **Section 3.5.5**). Alternatively, therefore, the *Torah* (*nómos*) can simply be defined as the corpus of biblical commandments that reveals God's will for His people (see **Glossary of Terms**). This corpus is essentially the same as, or is at least in complete agreement with, the moral commands of the *Torah* given through Moses – the core principles of which are encapsulated in the Ten Commandments.

4.6. Study Objective 4 - Analyse statements related to "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James in order to outline their teaching

The definition of "*nómos*" (*Torah*) as set out above is perfectly compatible with James's teaching concerning "*nómos*" (νόμος). His teaching comprises the following points:

- The beloved *adelphoí* are instructed to know that not listening carefully, speaking rashly, and venting anger, do not carry out God's righteous standards or fails to do what God requires (Jas. 1:19-20). In the context of James, and particularly in the light of James 1:25, 2:12 and 4:11, it is reasonable to assume that God's standards and requirements are defined by His *Torah*.
- In order to work out God's righteous standards and avoid transcendent danger, James 1:21 exhorts the beloved *adelphoí* to consecrate themselves in order to humbly and wholeheartedly receive "the implanted Word",[847] which may refer to the *Torah* which God puts within and writes on the hearts of His people, according to the New Covenant Promise (Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:10; 10:16).
- The beloved *adelphoí* are not just to humbly receive the Word (by eagerly listening to and meekly accepting it), but they are also to be wholehearted doers of it by obeying its instructions, lest they deceive themselves (Jas. 1:22). The reason for this is that the *Torah* mirrors their true moral state as well as God's character and aims for them as they intently into examine it, and yet they do not act upon it (Jas. 1:23-24).
- But those who do apply themselves to and abide in the *Torah* (which is both perfect and liberating), do not listen and forget, but listen and carry out the work prescribed by it as their way of life, expression of their faith, and working out of their God-given wisdom (Jas. 1:25). They are indeed blessed because it is a means to their own perfection, protection, and freedom.
- If someone presumes to be religious (i.e. devoted to God and faithful to true Christian beliefs and practices) and does not control their speech, they deceive themselves because their religion is of no use (Jas. 1:26). On the other hand, pure and undefiled religion (and by

[847] This is reminiscent of Israel who were to consecrate themselves in preparation for receiving the Ten Commandments in Exodus 19.

implication acceptable and useful religion) before the caring and compassionate Creator and Father, is to visit and care for the most vulnerable people (i.e. widows and orphans), and not to be morally stained by the standards and practices of the world (Jas. 1:27). In the context, this is done by listening to and practicing God's *Torah*, in complete devotion to Him (Jas. 1:19-27). Thus, *Torah* rightly practiced is the exercise of justice, mercy, and faith (i.e. not neglecting but attending to the weightier matters of the *Torah*).

- If you wholly and wholeheartedly keep the *Torah* - which is the *Torah* of the King Himself and of His Kingdom, which is according to Scripture and stipulated in the Scriptures, and at the heart of which is the command that you shall love your neighbour as yourself – then you carry out your moral and social obligation well (in accordance with God's absolute standard for living) and it will go well with you (Jas. 2:8).
- In contrast, if you treat people based on outward appearance (i.e. show partiality), you work out sin (rather than God's righteous standard) and become guilty of disobeying, breaking, or violating the *Torah* (Jas. 2:9).
- In fact, as James explains, when someone persists obediently in all that the *Torah* commands, and yet errs or fails to keep one particular command (of the *Torah*), the result is still guilt against the whole or entire *Torah* (2:10).
- The unity of the *Torah* stems from the fact that it is God Himself (the One *Torah*-giver/Lawgiver and Judge) who gave and uttered its every commandment. By specifically quoting two of the Ten Commandments, James indicates that the Decalogue is core and fundamental in Christian ethics, and that breaking any other commandment of God's *Torah* is just as idolatrous and sinful as violating the Decalogue (Jas. 2:11).
- As a result or consequence of what James is teaching, Christians are to live according to the instructions and standards of God's *Torah* in all their speech and conduct, since they will most certainly be judged by the *Torah*, and true freedom is only to be found for those who live according to it (Jas. 2:12).
- A key motivation for living according to the *Torah* is the fact that the *Torah,* rightly understood and practiced, trains believers to show "*ḥesed*" (lovingkindness, mercy) to others, even as their Heavenly Father does (Jas. 2:13). Otherwise, as merciless people, they will receive no mercy in the imminent and inevitable judgment.
- James issues a stern warning that to speak against (slander or defame) a fellow believer is a form of judging (i.e. condemning) them. And to do so, is to speak against or judge the *Torah*, when they are supposed to be doers and not judges of the *Torah* (Jas. 4:11).
- God is the unique and ultimate *Torah*-giver and Judge - the One who alone possesses the ability and authority to determine everyone's eternal destiny, and the One who alone

deserves the highest loyalty and deepest love. This fact should sober believers up to how essential it is for them to follow His instructions in order to practically love their neighbours, as expression of their love for Him. Far be it, therefore, for Christians to attempt to place themselves above God's *Torah* or to usurp His role as Judge (Jas. 4:12).

In summary:

- The *Torah* is given/spoken by God as the *Torah*-giver. It is the *Torah* of the King for His kingdom. It reflects God's perfect character, it mirrors our true moral state, and it defines God's righteous standards or aims for life. The fundamental principles of the *Torah* are the Ten Commandments. And the heart of the *Torah* is to love one's neighbor as oneself. The *Torah* rightly understood and practiced, trains believers to show lovingkindness (or mercy), care and compassion (or justice) towards others, especially to the vulnerable – and all this as expression of love and devotion to God.
- God implants His instructive Word (i.e. *Torah*) in His people. They need to consecrate themselves, eagerly listen to, humbly accept, and wholeheartedly be doers of the *Torah*, as their way of life, expression of their faith, and practice of their God-given wisdom so that they will be blessed, and so that their religion will be pure, undefiled, acceptable, and useful before their Creator and Father.
- The *Torah* is both perfect and liberating. It is perfect because it is a perfect gift from the Father, it reflects His perfect character, and it is a means for the believers' perfection. It is liberating because it safeguards their freedom, and true freedom is only to be found for those who live according to its instructions.
- The *Torah* is a unity because God, the *Torah*-giver, spoke/gave it. To break any of its commandments is to violate the *Torah* as a whole. Since the Judge will judge believers according to the *Torah* He has given, they are to be doers of the *Torah* in all their speech and conduct, rather than attempt to place themselves above the *Torah* or usurp God's role as Judge.

CHAPTER 5: THE MEANING AND TEACHING OF νόμος IN JAMES

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5.1. Introduction

In order to establish what James means and teaches concerning "*nómos*" (νόμος), this Study has:

(1) Considered the context within which the "*nómos"* passages are to be interpreted (in **Chapter 2**).

(2) Determined the extent to which the OT Scriptures, and especially the *Torah*, feature in James; and how the original recipient's conception of the OT and *Torah* would most likely have shaped their understanding of "*nómos*" (νόμος) (in **Chapter 3**).

(3) Analysed all the "*nómos"* passages in James in order to define "*nómos*" and discern James's doctrine about "*nómos*" (in **Chapter 4**).

The overarching research question, though, is: what does James teach about the nature, content, and function of the *Torah*? The purpose of this chapter is therefore to restate James's teaching about the *Torah* in terms of those three categories in order to answer the main research question directly. This will be done after recapitulating what "*nómos*" means in James.

5.2. The Meaning of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James

In **Section 4.5**, it has been concluded that, despite the fact that James uses five different "*nómos*" (νόμος) terms,[848] he has essentially only one "*nómos*" in mind – God's *Torah* (Law) given through Moses. The context or text of the Letter does not seem to support the view that he has different "*torahs*" in mind. A similar case is found in the NT's use of the term "Gospel" (εὐαγγέλιον). As indicated in the **Glossary of Terms** (refer "Gospel", **footnote 20**), the biblical Gospel is referred to as "the Gospel of the Kingdom", "the Gospel of God", "the Gospel of the grace of God", etc. Each term highlights a particular aspect or characteristic of the same Gospel.

A working definition for "*Torah*" (*nómos*) in James is: *"God's fatherly standards (or aims) and instructions (or teachings) for His people for life"*; the core of which is the "Ten Commandments", the summary of which is the "Two Greatest Commandments" (Mat. 22:37-40), and the exposition and application of which are found in the remaining commandments in the Pentateuch and Scripture as a whole.

5.3. The Teaching of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James

James's teaching about "*nómos*" (νόμος) is outlined in **Section 4.6** and supplemented with the

[848] (1) "perfect *Torah*, that of freedom" (νόμον τέλειοντὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 1:25); (2) "Kingdom *Torah*" (νόμον … βασιλικὸν) (Jas. 2:8); (3) "Torah" (νόμου) (Jas. 2:9, 11; 4:11); (4) "The whole *Torah*" (ὅλον τὸν νόμον) (Jas. 2:10); and (5) "*Torah* of freedom" (νόμου ἐλευθερίας) (Jas. 2:12).

findings in **Sections 3.4.4, 3.5.6 & 3.7**. It is recast in terms of its nature, content, and function below.

5.3.1. Nature of the Law of God

For James, the *Torah* (Law of God) is given by God, the unique and ultimate Torah-giver and Judge, who alone possesses the ability and authority to determine everyone's eternal destiny, and the One who alone deserves the highest loyalty and deepest love (Jas. 4:12).

The *Torah* is a perfect gift from the Father that reflects His perfect character (cf. Jas. 1:17; 1:25), and that defines His righteous standards for life in His Kingdom (cf. Jas. 1:20; 2:8). Indeed, it is the *Torah* of the King Himself and of His Kingdom (Jas. 2:8). It is itself perfect, liberating, and a means for blessing (Jas. 1:25). *Torah* rightly practiced, is the exercise of justice, mercy, and faith (i.e. the weightier matters of the *Torah*) (Jas. 1:19-27; cf. 2:1-21).

Violation of the *Torah* is sin, and obedience to it is right living (Jas. 2:9, 11; cf. 4:17). Since God spoke or gave its every commandment, it is a unity; which means that violation of one of its commandments results in violation against the *Torah* as a whole (Jas. 2:10-11). Furthermore, violation against any one commandment is just as sinful as violating its core (i.e. the Decalogue) (Jas. 2:11).

5.3.2. Content of the Law of God

The Jewishness of James and his first readers (refer to **Chapter 2**), the likelihood that the Septuagint (Greek translation of the OT) was their "Bible" with "*nómos*" (νόμος) being the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew "*Torah*" (refer to **Section 3.3**), the *Torah* being the primary revelation in the OT with the Prophets and Writings expanding and applying rather than altering or nullifying it (refer to **Section 3.4**), James's extensive use of the OT (60 references in 108 verses) (refer to **Section 3.5**), and his thoroughly rooting his teaching in the OT (refer to **Section 3.6**), all indicate that James not only means "*Torah*" when he speaks of "*nómos*" (νόμος), but that he may include everything in the "*Torah*" that the OT does. The fact that James clearly refers or alludes to several instructions in the "Holiness Code" (Jas. 2:1, 9; 4:11; 5:4, 9, 12, 20) throughout his Letter (refer to **Section 3.5.4**), supports the understanding that the "*Torah"* James is referring to is indeed the complete *Torah* that God gave through Moses.

While James refers to the whole or entire body of instruction in the *Torah,* none of its commandments of which the *adelphoí* may not violate (Jas. 2:10), he makes no mention of any so-called "ceremonial" commandments of the *Torah*.[849] This, in and of itself, does not necessarily prove that he considers them to be abolished. Nevertheless, his silence on the "ceremonial" commandments and his particular focus on the "moral" commandments, indicates

[849] Refer to "Tripartite Division of the Law" in the **Glossary of Terms**.

that he considers the weightier matters of the *Torah (*cf. Jas. 1:26-2:7) to be of primary importance. Indeed, all the contents of the Letter may fall under *Torah*'s weightier matters of "justice", "mercy", and "faith" (refer to **Section 3.5.5**).

By quoting two of the Ten Commandments within the key passage on the *Torah* (Jas. 2:8-13), James indicates that the Decalogue (i.e. "moral law") is foundational or core in his conception of the *Torah* (2:11). This notion is strengthened by the fact that James alludes to the "*Shema"* several times (Jas. 1:12, 19; 2:5, 19; 4:12) and to the Second Commandment (Jas. 4:4-6), and he quotes the commandment to love one's neighbour (Jas. 2:8) (refer to **Section 3.5.3**). Together, these summarise the first and second tables of the Decalogue and centres the heart and intent of the *Torah* in James on the "Two Greatest Commandments", as Jesus expounded in Matthew 22:36-40.

James's silence on the "ceremonial law" and his preoccupation with the "moral law" can certainly be explained by the pre-eminence of the latter and that the former comprises illustrations or situational applications of the latter. While some scholars reject the division of the *Torah* into the different categories of "moral", "civil", and "ceremonial" (refer to "Tripartite Division of the Law" in the **Glossary of Terms**) on account of the "indivisible unity" of the *Torah* and the lack of scriptural evidence for the threefold division of the *Torah*,[850] there is a good case for it, and it may further explain why James does not exhort his readers concerning any of the "ceremonial" requirements.

Concerning the case for the tripartite division of the *Torah*: Firstly, there is strong biblical evidence that the *Torah* is not simply a monolithic unity that does not distinguish between types of commandments and that results in an "all or nothing" approach to its being in force (i.e. if one commandment has served its purpose, then all of it is abolished).[851] Secondly, as Ross

[850] See for example Moo (1999:167).

[851] Firstly, as argued in **Section 3.4.2**, the Ten Commandments (which is the archetypal substance of the "moral law" and which provides the basic paradigms of *Torah*) has an unquestionable pre-eminent status and foundational function within the *Torah*. Secondly, the structures of both Exodus and Deuteronomy reflect the primacy of the Decalogue (by placing it first) and present the rest of the commandments as case-specific applications of Decalogue or "moral law". Kaiser (1990:297) sees Exodus 21-23 as 'illustrative of the Ten Commandments' and argues that Deuteronomy 12-25 'follow the exact order and illustrative principles laid down in the Decalogue'. McComiskey (1987) divides Exodus 20-31 as follows: Decalogue (Exod. 20), 'civil and societal laws' (Exod. 21-23:11), and 'ceremonial laws' (Exod. 23:12-31:18). Thirdly, Rothenberg (2018:809) accurately states that 'some laws seem to neatly fit into the three categories' of "moral" (e.g. Exod. 12:13, 1516), "civil" (e.g. Exod. 22:12-14), and "ceremonial" (e.g Lev. 5:2). Fourthly, as Bayes (2017:10-13) demonstrates, there is a plethora of Scriptures that seem to distinguish between "moral" and "ceremonial" injunctions, giving priority to the first (e.g. Deut. 10:12; 1 Sam. 15:22; Psa. 40:6; 51:16-19; Prov. 15:8; 21:3; Isa. 1:11-17; 43:22-24; Jer. 6:19-20; Hos. 6:6; Mic. 6:6-8; Rom. 2:25-27; 1 Cor. 7:19). Fifthly, Jesus categorically restored the "weighter matters of the *Torah*" to their rightful place, which is above the

(2010:1) has found, the threefold division of the *Torah* has 'united Christians in every century and across denominations', and it has been 'expounded, maintained, and defended' by 'the church's most prominent theologians' throughout its history.[852] Clearly therefore, the long-held tradition of distinguishing between different categories in the *Torah* is not without theological or historical basis. And all of James's instructions fall naturally within the primary category of the "moral law".

Concerning the lack of any "ceremonial" instructions in James: In the light of the New Testament's teaching on the "ceremonial law" (notably in passages such as: Eph. 2:14-16; Col. 2:9-12, 16-17; Heb. 8:1-5; 10:1-4), one has to concede that it is possible that James did not mention them because he considered them to have been brought to a designed end through the coming and work of Jesus Messiah.

It is concluded that the corpus of the *Torah* that James has in mind is essentially the same as that given by God through Moses. Or at least, it is in complete agreement with the moral commandments of the *Torah* of Moses. It seems reasonable to conclude that, for James, the core of the *Torah* is the "Ten Commandments", its summary is the "Two Greatest Commandments" (Mat. 22:37-40), and its exposition and application are found in the remaining commandments in the Pentateuch and Scripture as a whole. At the very least, it is presumed that every biblical commandment that instructs believers in love towards God (first and foremost) and love towards their neighbours (as to themselves) is part of the *Torah* that James has in mind.

5.3.3. Function of the Law of God

The *Torah* instructs the *adelphoí* in the righteous standards and requirements for life in God's Kingdom (cf. Jas. 1:20; 1:25; 2:2, 12; 4:11). It mirrors their true moral state as well as God's character and aims for them (Jas. 1:23). *Torah* defines pure, undefiled, acceptable, and useful religion (Jas. 1:26-27). It teaches the moral and social obligations of God's people (Jas. 2:8).

In James 1:21, James may be referring to the New Covenant Promise, according to which God puts His *Torah* within and writes it on the hearts of the beloved *adelphoí* so that they can work out His righteous standards and avoid transcendent danger (Jas. 1:20-21).

Torah is a means to ensure the *adelphoí's* perfection (Jas. 1:25). Perfect freedom is only to be found in following God's instructions (*Torah*) in all one's speech and conduct (Jas. 1:25;

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requirements concerning tithing, for example. This is a distinction which James seems to uphold (refer to **Section 3.5.5**). Sixthly, both Paul (in Col. 2:17) and the writer to the Hebrews (Heb. 8:5; 10:1) present ceremonial aspects of the *Torah* as "shadows" (or types) greater realities. Concerning Hebrews, refer to **Section 6.2.5**, and particularly to the **Excursus** on the use of "*nómos*" in Hebrews.

[852] See also: Bayes (2017:3-8); Calvin (1845c:537-538; IV:XX:14); Rothenberg (2018:806, 822).

2:12). Those who apply themselves to and abide in the *Torah* as their way of life, expression of their faith, and working out of their God-given wisdom are blessed (Jas. 1:25).

Torah, rightly understood and practiced, trains believers to show "*ḥesed"* (lovingkindness, mercy) to others, even as their Heavenly Father does (Jas. 2:13). Otherwise, as merciless people, they will receive no mercy in the imminent and inevitable judgment (Jas. 2:13).

To disobey, break, or violate the *Torah* is to sin and incur guilt (Jas. 2:9, 11). God, the *Torah*-giver and Judge, will judge according to His *Torah* (Jas. 2:12; 4:12). Far be it, therefore, for Christians to attempt to place themselves above God's *Torah* or to usurp His role as Judge (Jas. 4:12). It is therefore essential for believers to follow His instructions in order to practically love their neighbours, as expression of their love for Him (Jas. 4:11-12).

5.4. Study Objective 5: The Meaning and Teaching of νόμος in James

This Study has found that James has essentially only one "*nómos*" (νόμος) in mind, namely:

- God's *Torah* given through Moses (ref. **Sections 3.7** & **4.5**),
- the core of which is the Ten Commandments (cf. Jas. 2:10-11; ref. **Section 3.4.2**),
- the summary and purpose of which are captured by the Two Greatest Commandments (cf. Jas. 1:12; 2:5, 8; 4:12; ref. **Section 3.5.3**),
- the exposition and application of which are found in the rest of the Pentateuch and Scriptures as a whole (cf. Jas. 2:1, 9; 4:11; 5:4, 9, 12, 20; Lev. 19:12-18; ref. **Sections 3.4.1**; **3.4.2**; **3:5.4**),
- and the priority of which is to express and practice "justice", "mercy", and "faith" (cf. Jas. 1:2, 27; 2:1; ,4, 9, 13, 15-16; 3:17; 5:4-6; ref. **Section 3.5.5**).

Concerning the nature of the *Torah*, James teaches:

- That its origin/source is divine (Jas. 4:12).
- It is perfect, righteous, and liberating in its essence (Jas. 1:25, 2:12; cf. 1:21).
- Violating any of its parts is violation against the whole (Jas. 2:10).

Concerning the content of the *Torah*, James teaches:

- Believers may not violate any part of the entire body of instruction in the *Torah* (Jas. 2:10-11).
- However, since James makes no mention of any so-called "ceremonial" commandments, it may be that he only has the "moral" commandments in mind when he refers to the *Torah*.

- Even if James does not exclude the “ceremonial” commandments, he certainly views the Decalogue as the core (cf. Jas. 2:10-11; ref. **Section 3.4.2**), the two greatest commandments as the purpose (cf. Jas. 1:12; 2:5, 8; 4:12; ref. **Section 3.5.3**), and the weightier matters as the priority of the *Torah* (cf. Jas. 1:2, 27; 2:1; ,4, 9, 13, 15-16; 3:17; 5:4-6; ref. **Section 3.5.5**).

Concerning the function of the *Torah*, James teaches:

- The *Torah* reflects God’s character and the righteous standards of His kingdom (cf. Jas. 1:21, 23, 25; 2:8, 11).
- It mirrors the true moral state of the believer (Jas. 1:23).
- It defines pure and useful religion (cf. Jas. 1:27).
- It instructs believers in their moral and social obligations (Jas. 2:8, 12; 4:11).
- Being implanted within, the *Torah* protects believers against transcendent danger (cf. Jas. 1:21),
- and it is a means to enable their own perfection and to safeguard their freedom (Jas. 1:25).
- *Torah* trains believers to show “*ḥesed”* and to be God’s merciful people (Jas. 2:13).
- To violate *Torah* is sin, therefore *Torah* defines sin (Jas. 2:9-11).
- God will judge according to the *Torah* He has given (Jas. 2:12; 4:12).
- Christians are to keep *Torah* and not judge it (Jas. 1:25; 2:12; 4:11-12).

CHAPTER 6: HARMONY BETWEEN JAMES & THE REST OF THE NT

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6.1. Introduction

Chapter 5 answers the overarching research question about what "*nómos*" (νόμος) means in James and what James teaches about "*nómos*". This chapter will compare James's teaching concerning "*nómos*" to that of the rest of the New Testament. The objective is to demonstrate the harmony between James and the rest of NT Scripture, and to highlight the contribution of James to the NT's teaching on the Law of God.

6.2. Teaching of Key NT Passages on the *Torah*

As demonstrated in **Sections 4.2.7**, **4.3.7**, and **4.4.7**, the teaching in James's three "*nómos*" (i.e. *Torah*) passages (Jas. 1:19-27, 2:8-13, and 4:11-12) is firmly grounded in the Old Testament and thoroughly supported by the NT. Detailed exposition of each of the listed NT passages is beyond the scope of this Study. Examination of several key NT passages, however, is at least necessary at this stage to prove more convincingly that James's teaching about the *Torah* is indeed in harmony with that of the test of the NT.

6.2.1. Matthew 5:17-20 – Jesus' Purpose is to Fulfil not Abolish the Torah

The primary passage concerning the teaching of Jesus and the New Testament about the *Torah* is arguably **Matthew 5:17-20**. The analysed NASB text with key Greek words is shown in **Figure 8** below:

17	**Do not** think {μή νομίσητε} that I came to abolish {καταλῦσαι} the Law {νόμον} or the Prophets {προφήτας};	A	**Jesus' purpose:** He didn't come to abolish but fulfil the *Torah*
	I did not come to abolish {καταλῦσαι}	Contrasting Parallelism a1	
	but to fulfil {καταλῦσαι}.	Contrasting Parallelism b1	
18	For truly {ἀμήν} I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away {παρέλθῃ}, not the smallest letter {ἰῶτα} or stroke {κεραία} shall pass from the Law {νόμου} until all is accomplished {γένηται}.	C1	**Cause/reason:** The *Torah* is permanent.
19	Whoever then annuls {λύσῃ} one of the least {ἐλαχίστων} of these commandments {ἐντολῶν}, **and** teaches {διδάξῃ} others *to do* the same {οὕτως}, shall be called least {ἐλάχιστος} in the kingdom of heaven;	Contrasting Parallelism a2	**Inference:** Teach and Keep the Commandments (of the *Torah*).
	but whoever keeps {ποιήσῃ} and teaches {διδάξῃ} *them,* he shall be called great {μέγας} in the kingdom of heaven.	b2	

Note: the figure is continued on next page

Figure 8: Analysis of Matthew 5:17-20

20	"For I say to you that unless your righteousness {δικαιοσύνη} surpasses {περισσεύσῃ} *that* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter {εἰσέλθητε} the kingdom of heaven.	C2	**Cause/reason:** Right living (as per *Torah*) is essential.

Figure 8: Analysis of Matthew 5:17-20 (continued)

Commentary on the thought structure of the passage and each of the verses is given below:

(1) Thought Structure

Matthew 5:17-20 appears to be well structured and thought integrated, as illustrated in **Figure 8**. In verse 17a-b, Jesus makes an emphatic opening statement (i.e. that He did not come to abolish the Law and Prophets) that is developed and substantiated by the rest of the passage by way of a series of parallelisms, which tie the successive thoughts together, expand and clarify the meaning, and add emphasis by way of repetitions. Verse 17c-d forms a contrasting parallelism (a1-b1), as does verse 19 (a2-b2); both of which stress the enduring place/role of the Law (i.e. *Torah*). And since they are related in thought, they (v.17a-b & v.19) form a similar parallelism (a1-b1-a2-b2), which adds further emphasis to the continuing relevance of the *Torah*. With verse 18 in between, a chiasm is formed ((a1-b1)-C1-(a2-b2)), with the permanence of the *Torah* in focus as the main point. As a whole, verses 17c-20, could also form a similar parallelism ((a1-b1)-C1-(a2-b2)-C2) with the flow of thought as follows: Jesus did not come to abolish the *Torah* and Prophets (a1) but to fulfil them (b1), because *Torah* is permanent (C1), therefore whoever annuls one … of *Torah*'s commandments … shall be call least in the kingdom of heaven (a2) but whoever keeps and teaches them shall be great in the kingdom of heaven (b2), because unless one's righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees one will not enter the kingdom of heaven (C2).

(2) Preamble

Viljoen (2016a:6) insightfully points out that 'Matthew depicts Jesus as a Moses-like figure to meet Messianic expectations of the one who would bring Torah once again'. As the One with superior authority to interpret the *Torah* as to its meaning and practice (Viljoen 2016a:6), Jesus proceeds with His discourse in Matthew 5:17-20ff.

(3) Matthew 5:17

Jesus forbids His followers to even "think" (νομίζω)[853] that He came "to abolish" (καταλῦσαι)[854]

[853] "Do not think" (μή νομίσητε) is a prohibitive subjunctive (Wallace, 1996:469).

[854] The infinitive "to abolish" (καταλῦσαι) answers the question about "why" Jesus came. It thus indicates "purpose" (see Wallace, 1996:590-591).

the *Torah* (Law) or the Prophets. His purpose in coming[855] was not to 'do away with', put out of 'force' (Louw & Nida, 1996:681), or bring an 'end to [their] effect or validity' (BDAG, 2000:522).

The "*Torah*" and the "Prophets" here may simply refer to them as Scripture,[856] and so Jesus did not come to do away with the OT Scriptures. However, in verse 18 the focus is not merely on the nature or status of the *Torah* as Scripture, but on its actual instruction.[857] Thus in verse 17, the undertone is the teaching and commandments of the *Torah*, and the commentary thereof in the Prophets, which together formed the rule of faith and practice of God's people in the OT.[858] It follows that Jesus not only affirmed the OT as God's written Word, He also most certainly did not terminate or invalidate its instruction. The fact that Jesus did not come to abolish the *Torah* or the Prophets is made emphatic by repetition in verse 17.

Instead of abolishing, Jesus came "to fulfil" (πληρῶσαι)[859] *Torah* and the Prophets. According to BDAG (2000:828-829) "fulfil" here means either 'to do or carry out' (i.e. 'bring to a designed end'), or 'to bring to full expression' or 'show forth its true meaning'. Leaning towards the second meaning, Louw & Nida (1996:404) define "fulfil" as: 'to give the true or complete meaning to something'.[860] This (second) meaning becomes obvious when Jesus goes on, in verses 21-48, to expound the *Torah's* commandments.[861] However, the last clause of verse 18 ("until all is accomplished") points to the first meaning, and so it cannot be excluded.

It follows that Jesus came to accomplish *Torah*'s purpose (not to terminate or cancel it) and to correctly interpret and fill up its meaning (not to contradict or diminish it).[862] Davies & Allison (2004a:487) are therefore right in commenting that "fulfil" 'can only confirm *Torah*'s truth' and 'imperatival force'. And so is Stott (1985:72), who observes that Jesus' 'attitude' towards the OT 'was not one of destruction and of discontinuity, but rather of a constructive, organic continuity'.

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[855] According to Bivin (2007:93), the Hebrew verb "to come" 'often is used idiomatically to denote intent or purpose'.

[856] Mat. 5:17: νόμος – *Torah* as Scripture (BDAG, 2000: 678); προφήτης – 'the writings of prophets' (BDAG, 2000: 891).

[857] Mat. 5:18: νόμος – *Torah* as Instruction (BDAG, 2000: 678; Louw & Nida 1996:394). Viljoen (2011:394) adds the important clarification that "*Torah*" 'most likely refers to the written law, and not to the oral traditions which Pharisees also regarded as part of the Torah'.

[858] Refer to **Sections 3.3** & **3.4**. See also Henry (1999:1631).

[859] Again, the infinite is one of "purpose" (see **Footnote 854**).

[860] See also Bivin (2007:94).

[861] As Viljoen (2011:391) explains, since Mat. 5:17-20 is 'structurally and thematically linked' to Mat. 5:21-48, the former 'can therefore not be correctly understood in isolation' from the latter.

[862] Refer to the **Preamble** above.

To sum up, Jesus' intent or purpose was not to terminate or invalidate the *Torah* or the Prophets. It was quite the opposite. He came to realise their purpose and correct and complete their meaning. Thus, Jesus came to bring the *Torah* to its 'full intent and expression' and 'to new actuality in people's lives', as Viljoen (2011:395) astutely asserts.

(4) Matthew 5:18

The conjunction "*gár*" (γάρ) at the beginning of verse 18 marks a "cause" or "reason" (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, Mat. 5:18) for Jesus' solemn declaration in verse 17. With the words (literally), "For amen, I say to you" (ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν), Messiah Himself strongly affirms (BDAG, 2000:53) the stated reason: "until heaven and earth pass away (παρέλθῃ), not the smallest letter (ἰῶτα) or stroke (κεραία) shall pass from the Law (νόμου) until all is accomplished (γένηται)."

Bivin (2007:94-95) explains that Jesus is declaring here, that 'heaven and earth might sooner disappear' than the 'smallest letter' or 'optional decorative stroke' (in Hebrew) from the '*Torah* given by God [through] Moses'. In other words, it 'would never cease to exist' (Bivin, 2007:95). Along the same lines, Calvin (2010d: 278) comments that, 'the truth of the Law, and of every part of it, is secure, and that nothing so durable is to be found in the whole frame of the world'. Spurgeon (1882:6) puts it most eloquently by saying:

> *'The Law of God must be perpetual from its very nature, for does it not strike you, the moment you think of it, that right must always be right, truth must always be true, and purity must always be pure?'*

The perpetuity of the *Torah* is clearly taught in the OT (see e.g. Psa. 119:142, 144, 152, 160)[863] and confirmed in Luke 16:17 (NASB), which states: "*But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail.*" "Pass away" (παρελθεῖν) means 'to come to an end and so no longer be there' (BDAG, 2000:776). And "fail" (πίπτω) means 'become invalid, come to an end' (BDAG, 2000:815). Therefore, it is easier for the universe to disappear than for the most insignificant part of the *Torah* to become invalid. The context in Luke 16:17 highlights two important facts: (1) the arrival of the Gospel did not bring an end to the *Torah* (v.16), and (2) the Gospel upholds the morality of the *Torah* (v.18).

The reason why Jesus did not come to abolish the *Torah* is because it is more permanent and certain than heaven and earth (Mat. 5:18). The gravity and emphatic nature of the point is not just underlined by Jesus' use of the "*amen*-formula", but also by the point being at the centre of a chiasm (refer to **Subsection (1)** above).

Matthew 5:18 ends with the added phrase, "until all is accomplished" (ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται). The word for "accomplished" (γίνομαι) literally means, 'to happen or take place'

[863] Refer also to **Section 3.5.5**.

(BDAG, 2000:197; cf. Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, Mat. 5:18). Does "until" (ἕως) then suggest that the *Torah* will eventually lose its significance? If so, then according to the context, and to Luke 16:17, that cannot happen before heaven and earth have passed away. However, rather than setting a time limit for the *Torah*'s validity and authority, Jesus' argument seems to be more about affirming the continuity of the *Torah* for His followers and assuring them that He teaches true/correct adherence to it.[864] This idea complements that of the last phrase in Matthew 5:17.

(5) Matthew 5:19

In verse 19, Jesus sets out the inference or result of His purpose concerning the *Torah*, as indicated by the conjunction "then" (οὖν) (cf. BDAG, 2000:736). The inference is in the form of a contrasting parallelism, which sets out the two alternative approaches to the *Torah* and their corresponding consequences.

On the one hand, whoever "annuls" (λύσῃ) – i.e. 'do away with', 'bring to an end', or 'abolish' (BDAG, 2000:607) – one of the "least" (ἐλάχιστος) of the *Torah*'s "commandments" (ἐντολῶν) and "teaches" (διδάσκω) others to do the same, shall be called least (ἐλάχιστος) in "the kingdom of heaven" (τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν). On the other hand, whoever "keeps" (ποιέω) and "teaches" (διδάσκω) even the least of *Torah*'s commandments, shall be called great (μέγας) in the kingdom of heaven. The use of hyperbolic language here not only emphasises the seriousness of what Jesus is stating, but is also designed to have a heightened effect on the reader/listener.

Taken as a whole, the parallelism clearly lays a "moral obligation" on everyone to do the will [of God] obediently' (BDAG, 2000:840), even to the extent of the least of the commandments of *Torah*, and to 'tell or instruct' (BDAG, 2000:241) others to do the same. People's status or position in God's kingdom will depend on this.[865] An implication of the contrasting parallelism is that failure to keep and teach the *Torah* is tantamount to annulling the *Torah*. This is further emphasised by the parallelism between verses 17b-c and 19 (refer to **Subsection (1)** above). Davies & Allison (2004a:496) thus rightfully comment that the validity of the *Torah* in its entirety, and the necessity of it being practiced and taught, excludes 'all antinomian tendencies'. Moreover, God's children 'ought to take as their rule of life' the 'commandments of life',[866] as Calvin (2010a:279) insists.

(6) Matthew 5:20

The conjunction, "*gár*" (γάρ), in verse 20 marks the reason (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, Mat.

[864] See Viljoen (2011:397-398).

[865] See Stott (1985:74).

[866] Calvin (2010a:279) equated the "Commandment of Life" with the Ten Commandments.

5:20) why Christ's followers are to obey and teach the entire *Torah*. Jesus prefixed the reason with the words, "For I say to you" (λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν) (similar to v.20), to add gravity to the reason. So why must Christians keep and teach the whole *Torah*?

Christians are to obey and share the *Torah* because their "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη) is to "surpass" (περισσεύω) that of the Scribes and Pharisees. This is a radical requirement, since the Scribes were the most noted teachers and the Pharisees were the most celebrated practitioners of the *Torah*, as Henry (1999:1631) points out. However, as Viljoen (2011:401) clarifies, Jesus is not requiring 'bigger and better pharisaism', but purer and better 'quality' of attitude and conduct as expounded in Matthew 5:21-48 and 6:1-6.

In context, "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη) refers to 'upright behavior' (BDAG, 2000:248) or 'the act of doing what God requires' (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, Mat. 5:20), rather than 'to [be] put right' or be in a 'right relationship' with God (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, Mat. 5:20). This is confirmed by: (a) the fact that Jesus acknowledged that the Scribes and Pharisees were, to some degree (albeit insufficient), righteous; (b) the succeeding passages (Mat. 5:21-48; 6:1-7:29) are all about right living; and (c) verse 19 discusses doing (i.e. obeying) God's *Torah*.[867]

Verses 19 and 20 establish a direct connection between right living and obedience to the *Torah*. Furthermore, the obedience that Jesus is calling His disciples to is not superficial observance but heartfelt conformity to the deeper attitudes (Mat. 5:1-12) and implications of the *Torah* (Mat. 5:21-48; 6:1-7:29). And so, the better righteousness (than that of the Scribes and Pharisees), as Davies & Allison (2004a:499-500) observe, is that of 'Christian character and conduct in accordance with Jesus' demands', which are a fuller and deeper exposition of the *Torah*.

But why are Jesus' followers to surpass the Scribes and Pharisees in righteousness (right living)? Unless they do, they will not enter the kingdom of heaven. According to Wallace (1996:468-469), this way of negation is the strongest way in the Greek – 'it rules out even the idea of being a possibility'.[868] Thus, it is impossible for someone to be saved unless they are more righteous than the Scribes and Pharisees. No wonder, Jesus said in Matthew 7:21-23:

> *(21) Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. (22) Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' (23) And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS (τὴν ἀνομίαν).' (Mat. 7:21-23, NASB).*

[867] See also: Davies & Allison (2004a:499-500); Viljoen (2011:402); Viljoen (2016b:5).

[868] οὐ μή εἰσέλθητε (aorist subjunctive) – Emphatic Negation (Wallace, 1996: 468-469).

(6) Synopsis of Matthew 5:17-20

Jesus did not come to abolish the *Torah* but to fulfil it because the *Torah* is permanent (Mat. 5:17-20). This truth is made emphatic by means of strong language (e.g. “Do not think”, “Amen I say to you”) and several stylistic features (incl. contrasts, parallelisms, (chiasm), hyperboles). In fulfilling the *Torah*, Jesus did not remove the *Torah* but gave it its correct and full meaning and made its intended purpose a reality (Mat. 5:17-20). Jesus, the fulfiller of the *Torah*, calls His followers to teach and obey the *Torah* (in its fulfilled form) because unless they live right and better (in character and conduct) than the Scribes and Pharisees they cannot be saved (Mat. 5:17-20).

6.2.2. Matthew 23:23-24 – Do the Weightier Matters of the Torah, and Do not Neglect the Minor Matters

Having established that Jesus did not come to abolish but to fulfil the *Torah*, the attention will now be turned to Jesus’ teaching in **Matthew 23:23-24** about the “weightier matters” of the *Torah*. Again, the analysed NASB text with key Greek words is shown in **Figure 9** below:

23	Woe {οὐαί} to you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites** {ὑποκριταί}!		Statement of misery on hypocrites
	For you tithe {ἀποδεκατοῦτε} mint and dill and cummin,	a	**Cause:** They do the lighter and neglect the weightier matters of *Torah*
	and have neglected {ἀφήκατε} the **weightier provisions** {βαρύτερα} of the **law** {νόμου}: **justice** {κρίσιν} and **mercy** {ἔλεος} and **faithfulness** {πίστιν};	b	
	but these are the things you should {ἔδει} have done {ποιῆσαι} without neglecting {ἀφιέναι} the others.	b a	
24	**Blind guides** {ὁδηγοὶ τυφλοί}, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!		**Analogy:** they care for the small and ignore the bigger

Contrasting Chiasm

Figure 9: Analysis of Matthew 23:23-24

As Carson (1984:476-477) demonstrates, the “woe” in Matthew 23:23-24 is the fourth of seven “woes” in Matthew 23:13-32 that ‘fit a neat chiastic pattern’.[869] Being in the centre of the chiasm, the failure of the Scribes and Pharisees concerning the “weightier matters of the *Torah*” stand out among their other failures. Commentary on each of the verses is given below:

[869] See also Viljoen (2018:5-8).

(1) Matthew 23:23

Hagner (1995:668) explains that the interjection, "woe" (οὐαί), is a 'painful statement of displeasure involving an implied judgment'; which hence serves as 'the opposite of the beatitude'. In pronouncing God's displeasure on the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus calls them out for being "hypocrites". A "hypocrite" (ὑποκριτής) is one who 'pretends to be other than he really is' (Louw & Nida, 1996:765).

As indicated by the conjunction "for" (ὅτι), Jesus explains the cause or reason for His pronouncing this "woe" on the scribes and Pharisees. They "tithe" particular herbs while "neglecting" the "weightier provisions" of the "*Torah*".

The *Torah* prescribes "tithing" (ἀποδεκατόω) (i.e. 'to give one tenth' (BDAG, 2000:109)) of "the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree" (Lev. 27:30, NASB). While it does list tithing crops of "grain", "new wine", and "oil" (Deut. 14:23, NASB), it does not specifically mention that tithing of herbs like "mint and dill and cumin" is required, as Hendrickson (1973:831) points out. For this reason, as Davies & Allison (2004c:294) observe, some scholars believe that tithing of herbs was part of the oral rather than biblical tradition.

While perhaps going 'beyond the requirement of the law' with their scrupulous tithing (Hagner, 1995:670), the scribes and Pharisees were guilty of "neglecting" (ἀφίημι), departing from, or abandoning (BDAG:2000:156) the "weightier provisions" (βαρύτερα) (i.e. 'more important, not more difficult' matters (Davies & Allison (2004c:294))[870] of the "*Torah*" (νόμου). Jesus stipulates that the weightier or more important matters of the *Torah* are "justice" (κρίσιν), "mercy" (ἔλεος), and "faith"/"faithfulness" (πίστιν). As discussed in **Section 3.5.5**, the requirement for this triad of virtues originates from the OT (notably Mic. 6:6-8),[871] and embraces the "moral law" of love and loyalty to God and justice and mercy to one's neighbour, as codified in the Decalogue.

In the last part of verse 23, Jesus explicitly states that it is a matter of 'necessity' and 'compulsion' (δεῖ) (BDAG, 2000:214) for these "weightier" matters of the *Torah* to be done, without "neglecting" (ἀφίημι) tithing. Hagner (1995:670) explains Jesus' reasoning:

> *'If the Pharisees [and scribes] wish to tithe even the smallest herbs, well and good - let them, as long as they give attention at the same time to the most important items of the law, items that bear directly on the welfare of others around them.'*

It follows that Jesus restores the "weightier matters" of the *Torah* to their proper place and priority, without abolishing matters such as tithing. Clearly not all commandments of the *Torah* are 'of equal importance', as Kasdan (2011:273) rightly notes. Or as Davies & Allison

[870] See also: Carson (1984:480); BDAG (2000:167); Louw & Nida (1996:626, Mat. 23:23).

[871] See also: Hagner (1995:670); Hendriksen (1973:831-832).

(2004c:295) put it: some are 'more important' and 'fundamental', others as 'less important' and 'peripheral'. This truth is underlined by the contrasting chiasm, as illustrated above.

(2) Matthew 23:24

In Matthew 23:23, Jesus called the scribes and Pharisees, "hypocrites", for scrupulously attending to the lesser matters of the *Torah* and carelessly neglecting its weightier matters. In verse 24, He calls them "blind guides" (ὁδηγοὶ τυφλοί). In this regard, Hendriksen (1973:833) aptly comments that, 'to be blind is sad enough' but 'to serve as a [blind] guide … is disastrous'. Not only were they guilty of 'wrong conduct', they were also 'misleading others with their *halakha*' (Viljoen, 2018:8). In Matthew 15:12-14 (NASB), Jesus expressly warned His disciples to avoid "blind guides" (i.e. false teachers) for "*if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit*".

In verse 24 Jesus concludes the "woe" with an analogy that is both 'humorous and shocking' (Kasdan, 2011:273). According to the analogy, while the scribes and Pharisees are at pains to "filter" or "strain out" (διϋλίζω) a gnat from their drink, they end up "swallowing" (καταπίνω) a camel for their meal. Camels are "unclean" and hence forbidden as food (Lev. 11:4), and gnats are obviously not kosher.[872] Yet, what good is it to avoid a minute thing that defiles, only to consume a massive one? The analogy drives home the point that the hypocritical practitioners and blind teachers of the *Torah* were very concerned about its small and relatively unimportant matters, and yet they neglected its big and important ones.[873]

(3) Synopsis of Matthew 23:23-24

In Matthew 23:23-24, Jesus very clearly distinguishes between lesser and greater matters of importance in the *Torah*. He declares in no uncertain terms that God is not pleased with those who are preoccupied with minutiae (such as tithing) while neglecting very important matters such as being faithful to the Lord and showing justice and lovingkindness to one's neighbour. While Jesus did not abolish the "lighter" matters, He restores the "weightier" matters to their rightful place as of first importance.

6.2.3. Romans 3:28 & 31 – Believers do not Nullify but Establish the Torah

Jesus came to realise *Torah*'s intention and to correct and complete its meaning. Concerning the second, Jesus restored "justice", "mercy", and "faith" to their rightful place as of primary importance in the *Torah*, without necessarily abolishing matters of lesser importance. The attention will now be turned to key teachings of Paul concerning *Torah*. Firstly, **Romans 3:28 & 31**. The analysed NASB text and key Greek words are shown in **Figure 10** below:

[872] See Kasdan (2011:273).

[873] See Hagner (1995:670-671).

28	For {γάρ} we maintain {λογιζόμεθα} that a man is justified {δικαιοῦσθαι} by faith {πίστει} apart from {χωρίς} works {ἔργων} of the Law {νόμου}.	Justification is by faith (alone)
31	Do we then {οὖν} nullify {καταργοῦμεν} the Law {νόμον} Through {διὰ} faith {πίστεως}? May it never be! {μὴ γένοιτο} **On the contrary** {ἀλλὰ}, we establish {ἱστάνομεν} the Law {νόμον}.	Believers establish the *Torah*

Figure 10: Analysis of Romans 3:28 & 31

(1) Context

Romans constitute Gospel exposition (Rom. 1-11) and exhortation (Rom. 12-16).[874] The first major exposition is about the revelation of God's "wrath" (ὀργή) (Rom. 1:18-3:20) and then His "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη) (Rom. 3:21-4:25), in order to establish the doctrine of "justification by faith" (δικαίωσιν ἐκ πίστεως). The second major exposition is about the results and implications of this doctrine concerning the individual believer (Rom. 5-8), and the third is that concerning Israel (Rom. 9-11).

(2) Romans 3:28

The conjunction, "*gár*" (γάρ), marks the 'self-evident' conclusion (see DBAG, 2000:190)[875] of Paul's exposition on "justification" in Romans 3:21-29. Accordingly, Paul and presumably his fellow apostles "maintain" (λογιζόμεθα) (i.e. 'hold the view' (BDAG, 2000:598) that a person "is justified" (δικαιοῦσθαι) – that is 'acquitted' and 'pronounced and treated as righteous' (BDAG, 2000:249)[876] – by God "by faith". Wallace (1996:162-163) explains that the dative noun, "by faith" (πίστει), 'indicates the means or instrument by which the verbal action is accomplished'. Thus, a person's "faith" is the means by which God clears the person of transgression and declares the person to be righteous. In context, "faith" (πίστις) is the 'state of believing on the basis of the reliability of the one trusted' (BDAG, 2000:818-819).[877] While the verse omits the object of faith, the context clearly indicates that the faith is "in Christ Jesus" (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) (Rom. 3:22; cf. 26); and particularly "through the redemption" (διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως) which is in Him (Rom. 3:24-25).

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[874] Though there are exhortations in the first section and expositions in the second, this distinction/division is considered to be a helpful observation, generally speaking.

[875] This understanding is reflected in several English translations, including: LITV, KJV, NKJV, CJB, GNB.

[876] According to Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Rom. 3:28), 'it seems more probable that Paul uses these expressions in the context of the covenant relationship with God rather than in the context of legal procedures', in which case it could be rendered, to "put right with" or to be "in a right relationship" with God.

[877] Or as Louw & Nida (1996:375) put it: 'to believe to the extent of complete trust and reliance'.

The prepositional phrase, “apart from works of the Law” qualifies the “justification by faith in Christ” that is in view. The preposition, “apart from” (χωρὶς), means here ‘without’ or ‘independent of’ (Louw & Nida, 1996:792).[878] “Works of the Law” (ἔργων νόμου) means ‘deeds that the law (i.e. ‘Law of Moses’ or “*Torah*”, (BDAG, 2000:677-678))[879] commands you to do’ (BDAG, 2000:391). As Moo (1996:206-209) points out, while there has been ‘considerable debate’ about the meaning of “deeds of the law”,[880] this (i.e. ‘things done in obedience to the law’) is the ‘traditional’ understanding, and ‘most interpreters’ have agreed that this is the correct understanding.[881] Paul’s point, therefore, is that no one ‘will earn justification by … obedience to God’s requirements’, as Cranfield (2004:198) rightly puts it.[882] Moreover, as Moo (1996:250-251) explains, not ‘anything that a person does’ - ‘no works, whatever’ – ‘can play any part in making a sinner right with God’.[883] Paul’s qualification here harkens back to his statement in Romans 3:20 (NASB): “by the works of the law” (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου) “not one of all flesh shall be justified” (οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ) “in His sight” (ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ).

Paul’s teaching here (in Rom. 3:20-30) substantiates the Christian conviction that ‘justification of guilty sinners’ is ‘by God’s grace alone in Christ alone through faith alone’[884] (Stott, 2001:35). Luther[885] famously added the word “*allein*” (alone) to “faith” in his 1522 German Translation of the NT to emphasize the fact that justification is by faith apart from works of the Law.[886]

(3) Romans 3:31

The conjunction “*oun*” (οὖν) ‘denot[es] that what it introduces is the result of or an inference from what precedes’ (BDAG, 2000:736). What precedes is Paul’s explanation of “justification by faith apart from the Law (*Torah*)”. As a result or consequence of it, do we (i.e. believers) “*katargoumen*” (καταργοῦμεν) the *Torah*? The verb, “*katargeō*” (καταργέω) means to, ‘invalidate’ (BDAG, 2000:525) or ‘to abolish, to cancel, or to cause not to function, to cause to have no worth (or power), to make ineffective’ (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, Rom. 3:31).

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[878] See also BDAG (2000:1095).

[879] See also Louw & Nida (1996:394).

[880] Particularly in connection with the “New Perspective on Paul” (refer to **Section 1.1.1**).

[881] Calvin (2010e:132) agrees with this by commenting, ‘But we contend, not without reason, that Paul speaks here of the whole law’.

[882] See also Stott (2011:119).

[883] See also Moo (1996:141).

[884] Or as the Reformers put it: “sola gratia solus Christus sola fide”.

[885] Other before him also held to “*sola fide*”, amongst others: Origen, Augustine, and Aquinas.

[886] See: Bruce (1985:114-115); Hendriksen (1981:135-136); Moo (1996:250-251); Stott (2001:36).

Paul's emphatic answer to the question is: "*mē génoito*" (μὴ γένοιτο). Wallace (1996:481) explains that this 'very strong negative' has 'the force of abhorrence'.[887] Thus, to infer from Paul's teaching that *Torah* is invalidated or terminated for the Christian is not only a serious mistake, it is also completely unacceptable! In fact, the very opposite of abolition is the case, as indicated by the strong negative and contrastive conjunction, "*alla*" (ἀλλά).[888] Instead of putting *Torah* to an end through faith, we (i.e. believers) "*histánomen*" (ἱστάνομεν) the *Torah*. In context, "*hisēmi*" (ἵστημι) means, 'to validate something that is in force or in practice' (BDAG, 2000:482) or 'to uphold, … maintain' or 'accept the validity of' (Louw & Nida, 1996:681).

Paul thus clearly 'affirms the continuing role of the law', as Moo (1996:253) rightly observes. But what role exactly? Both Moo (1996:253-255) and Schreiner (2006:207-208) argue very convincingly that it is not so much the "testifying" or "convicting" role of the Law of Moses (i.e. *Torah*), as its "commanding" role that is in view here. But then Moo (1996:254-255) goes on to suggest that it is about 'our faith in Christ' that 'provides for the full satisfaction of the demands of the law' (cf. Rom. 8:4), rather than about Christians being 'obliged to continue to obey the ("moral") demands of the law', or even about the anticipation of 'the command to love' that 'is set forth as the "fulfilment" of the law" (in Rom. 13:8-10).

While Moo very helpfully acknowledges the "continuing commanding" aspect of the Law (*Torah*), he seems to underplay its instructive or didactic function in the sanctification of the believer (see "Uses of the Law" in **Glossary of Terms**), which Calvin (2010e:152) rightfully highlights. The believer's role concerning the Law (*Torah*) is more active and direct. This can be seen from the fact that:

- The verb, "we uphold" (ἱστάνομεν) is present active, which indicates that believers are 'in the process' (Wallace, 1996:514) of 'doing the action' (Wallace, 1996:408) of "maintaining" or "establishing"[889] the Law (*Torah*), instead of "invalidating" or "putting to an end" to the Law (*Torah*).
- And the noun "Law (*Torah*)" (νόμον) is the direct object of the action to "maintain" or "establish".

Furthermore, as Schreiner (2006:208) insightfully points out, Paul's statement in Romans 3:31 'recalls (Rom. 2:26-27) and anticipates his positive comments on keeping the law (8:2-4; 13:8)', and 'a comment on the establishment of the law' is called for at this point, especially after Paul has so strongly emphasised justification by faith apart from the Law.

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[887] Quoting Burton (Moods and Tenses, 79 [§177]), Wallace (1996:481) clarifies "abhorrence" as 'abhorrence of an inference which he fears may be (falsely) drawn from his argument'.

[888] See BDAG (2000:44).

[889] See: LITV, NASB, KJV, NKJV.

It is concluded that, far from abrogating the Law (*Torah*), "justification by faith alone", both confirms and supports the continuing validity of the Law's 'revelatory character and moral instruction', as Sproul (1994:80) maintains.[890] Moreover, it excludes any form of "antinomianism" as Stott (2001:121) insists. Therefore, de Koning's (2020:143, 146) claims that Romans 3:31 does not touch on the *Torah*'s role in sanctification and that it would not have believers look to the *Torah* to 'learn their duties', overlook the exegetical evidence, impose a restriction on the text, and contradict Paul's clear teaching in 2 Timothy 3:16-17.[891]

(4) Synopsis of Romans 3:28 & 31

God acquits sinners and puts them right with Himself through the instrument of (personal) faith or trust in Jesus Christ and His redeeming work. This God does independent of their obedience to the Law (*Torah*). However, this by no means means that believers (can) invalidate or terminate the *Torah* through their faith. On the contrary, they maintain and support (i.e. carry out and confirm) *Torah*'s (moral) instructions through their confession and conduct.

6.2.4. Romans 8:1-4 – Those who are in Christ keep the Torah as they yield to the Spirit

In Romans 3:31, Paul teaches that God justifies people through faith in Christ. Yet those who have such faith do not do away with the *Torah*, but they uphold it. **Romans 8:1-4** explains how they are enabled to do so. The analysed NASB text and key Greek words are shown below:

1	Therefore {ἄρα} there is now no condemnation {κατάκριμα} for those who are in Christ Jesus {ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ}.	**Inference:** those united to Christ are in the right and clear.
2	For {γάρ} the law of the *Spirit* of life {ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς} in Christ Jesus {ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ} has set you free {ἠλευθέρωσέν} from the law of sin and of death {τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου}.	**Cause/reason:** The Spirit liberates them.

Note: figure continues on the next page.

Figure 11: Analysis of Romans 8:1-4

[890] See also: Harrison & Hagner (2008:76); Murray (1997:126); Schreiner (2006:208); Stott (2001:121).

[891] Note: Since "all Scripture" in 2 Tim. 3:16-17 most certainly includes the *Torah*, the *Torah* is "profitable" for "training" believers "in righteousness". Indeed, one could argue that this is essential in order that they may "be adequate, equipped for every good work".

3	For {γάρ} what the Law {τοῦ νόμου} could not do {ἀδύνατον}, weak as it was {ἠσθένει} through {διά} the flesh {σαρκός}, God *did:* sending {πέμψας} His own Son in the likeness {ὁμοιώματι} of sinful flesh {σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας} and *as an offering* for sin {περὶ ἁμαρτίας}, He condemned {κατέκρινε} sin {ἁμαρτίαν} in the flesh {ἐν τῇ σαρκί},	**Cause/reason:** God sent Jesus as an offering condemned in their stead.
4	so that {ἵνα} the requirement {δικαίωμα} of the Law {τοῦ νόμου} might be fulfilled {πληρωθῇ} in us {ἐν ἡμῖν}, who do not walk {περιπατοῦσιν} according to the flesh {κατὰ σάρκα} **but** {ἀλλὰ} according to the *Spirit* {κατὰ πνεῦμα}.	**Purpose/result:** That they keep *Torah* as they live under the Spirit's control

Figure 11: Analysis of Romans 8:1-4 (continued)

(1) Romans 8:1

As marked by the inferential conjunction, "*ara*" (ἄρα), Romans 8:1 gives the 'deduction, conclusion, or summary to the preceding discussion' (Wallace, 1996:673) in Romans 7, and possibly from the whole exposition so far.[892] The inference and assurance is that from the moment that someone is "in Christ Jesus", there is no "condemnation" for them.

"Condemnation" (κατάκριμα) is 'a verdict of guilt' and 'thus subject to punishment' (Louw & Nida, 1996:555). In Romans 5:16-21 "condemnation" (κατάκριμα) (5:18) and "constituted sinners" (ἁμαρτωλοὶ κατεστάθησαν) (5:19) are placed against: "justification" (δικαίωμα) (5:16), "the gift of righteousness" (τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς δικαιοσύνης) (5:17), "justification of life" (δικαίωσιν ζωῆς) (5:18), and "will be constituted righteous" (δίκαιοι κατασταθήσονται) (5:19). It follows that not to be condemned means more than just to be acquitted of a "guilty" verdict and of the penalty for violating God's Law (*Torah*). It also implies that a person has received the gift of right standing with God and new life.[893]

The term, "in Christ" (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) is first used in Romans 6:11, at the end of the exposition of the believers' union with Christ in His death and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-11). The term marks 'close personal association' and could be translated 'one with, in union with, [or] joined closely to' (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015. Rom. 8:1)[894] Christ. Consistent with Paul's theology: this union with Christ is 'by faith', 'is invisibly effected by the Holy Spirit', and 'is visibly

[892] See: Cranfield (2004:373); Moo (1996:472); Stott (2001:217).

[893] And Romans 5:1-11 lists several other implications and blessings of justification by faith.

[894] See also: BDAG (2000:328).

signified and sealed by baptism', as Stott (2001:174) helpfully explains.[895] Romans 7:1-6 likens this union between the believer and Christ to a marriage, in which the believer comes under His rule/authority (Rom. 7:1-4). Only in this bond can the believer bear fruit to God (Rom. 7:4); which is not mere outward or superficial observance of the letter of the *Torah* (Law), but inward and heartfelt observance of *Torah*'s true intentions, as directed and empowered by the Spirit (Rom. 7:6).[896]

(2) Romans 8:2

The causal conjunction "*gár*" (γάρ) marks the 'cause or reason' (BDAG, 2000:189) why those who are joined to Christ are not under condemnation but are in the right and in the clear. The reason is that because of their union with Christ, "the law of the Spirit of life" (ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς) has set them free from "the law of sin and death" (τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου). The context of and contrast between the two phrases (between double inverted commas) clearly indicates that, in neither case, does "*nómos*" (*νόμος*) refer to the *Torah*. As Louw & Nida (1996:426) helpfully explain, in both cases the sense of "*nómos*" is 'a governing power'.[897] Further clarity can be added if the genitive construction, "the Spirit of life", is recast as a "Genitive of Product" (ref. Wallace 1996:106), adding the words "which produces". Verse 2 can thus be rephrased as follows: "*Because the governing power of the Spirit which produces (or gives) life in (union with) Christ has set you free from the governing power of sin and death*".[898]

The verb "*eleutheróō*" (ἐλευθερόω) means to 'be released' (Louw & Nida, 1996:488) or to 'cause someone to be freed from dominion' (BDAG, 2000:317). And being aorist, the 'stress is on the fact of the occurrence' (Wallace, 1996:557) that happened in the past.

(3) Romans 8:3

Verse 3 also starts with the causal conjunction "*gár*" (γάρ), which, in turn, adds the cause or reason for the cause set out in verse 2. Thus, the cause for the Spirit's life-giving and liberating work in those who are united to Christ is now expounded. In short, "what the Law" (τοῦ νόμου) (i.e. *Torah*, BDAG (2000:687)) "(was) incapable of" (ἀδύνατον) (BDAG (2000:22)) doing, "God (did)" (ὁ θεὸς). The exposition sets out: (a) the cause for *Torah*'s inability, and (b) what God did that *Torah* couldn't.

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[895] See also Moo (1996:359-360).

[896] See: Cranfield (2004:339–340); MacArthur (2005:1527); and Sproul (1994:120).

[897] BDAG (2000:677) defines it as: 'a procedure or practice that has taken hold'. See also Cranfield (2004:376); Murray (1997:276).

[898] The GNB, distinguishing between the "Law" (i.e. *Torah*) (as in vv.3-4) and the "law" (in v.2), gives a very similar translation of v.2, as follows: *"For the law of the Spirit, which brings us life in union with Christ Jesus, has set me free from the law of sin and death."*

(a) The cause for Torah's inability:

The cause for *Torah*'s inability is: "in that" (ἐν ᾧ) "it was weak" (ἠσθένει) "through the flesh" (διὰ τῆς σαρκός). The verb "*asthenéō*" (ἀσθενέω) refers to 'a state of incapacity or weakness' (Louw & Nida, 1996:678).[899] And the preposition, "through" (διὰ), marks the 'instrument by which something is accomplished' (Louw & Nida, 1996:796). The "flesh" (σάρξ) refers to the 'physical body' of a person, which 'is dominated by sin' (BDAG, 2000:915). It can be translated "sinful (human) nature",[900] as per the GNB and NLT. Clearly, therefore, it was not the Law that was at 'fault' but 'sinful human nature … was to blame', as Hendriksen (1981:246) notes.[901] Thus, the sinful nature of humans is the instrument through which the *Torah* is rendered incapable - incapable to do what God Himself then did.

(b) God did what Torah could not do:

God did what *Torah* could not do. God did it by:

(i) "Sending" (πέμψας) "His own Son" "in the likeness" (ἐν ὁμοιώματι) "of sinful flesh" (σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας). To "send" (πέμπω) is 'to cause someone to depart for a particular purpose' (Louw & Nida, 1996:190). It was God's love that made Him send His own Son.[902] While the exact meaning of, "in the likeness" (ἐν ὁμοιώματι) "of sinful flesh" (σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας), is debated (BDAG, 200:707), Hendriksen (1981:247) seems most reasonable in suggesting that the phrase conveys that the 'divine Son' truly became human, while remaining divine and sinless.[903]

(ii) And "concerning sin" (περὶ ἁμαρτίας), "He condemned sin" (κατέκρινε τὴν ἁμαρτίαν) "in the flesh" (ἐν τῇ σαρκί). The phrase, "concerning sin", could simply mean that God sent His Son on a mission to deal with sin, but more likely Moo (1996:480)[904] is right that, since the phrase 'so frequently means "sin offering" in the LXX', an allusion to God's Son as the sacrifice for sin is also intended here.[905] As several scholars propose, God "condemning" (κατακρίνω) sin "in the flesh", is not simply about Him "pronouncing the sentence" for our sins upon His Son, but also "executing" that sentence or punishment upon His Son.[906]

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[899] See also BDAG (2000:142).

[900] See also Louw & Nida (1996:321-322).

[901] See also: Cranfield (2004:379); Augustine of Hippo (1887:97).

[902] Cf. John 3:16-17; Rom. 5:8; 8:31-39. 1 John 4:9-10, 14. See: Stott (2001:2019); Hendriksen (1981:247).

[903] See also: BDAG (200:707); Moo (1996:479-480) and Stott (2001:219).

[904] See also Stott (2001:219-220).

[905] This sense brought out in several English translations, including for example: NASB, TLV, NIV, NLT.

[906] See: Cranfield (2004:382); Hendriksen (1981:247-248); Moo (1996:481); Stott (2001:220).

The combined action of God in sending His own Son concerning sin and executing the just punishment for our sin upon His Son thus clearly speaks of both the incarnation and atonement, as Stott (2001:219-220) insightfully notes.

(4) Romans 8:4

The conjunction, "*hína*" (ἵνα), marks the 'purpose', 'goal', or 'aim' (cf. Wallace, 1996:676)[907] of God's action in Romans 8:3. Indeed, as Stott (2001:221) insists, it indicates the 'ultimate purpose of the incarnation and atonement'. However, since what God purposes, 'is what happens', "*hína*" here, might well 'express both the divine purpose and the result', as Wallace (1996:473) explains. Thus, the subjunctive clause indicates 'both [God's] intention and its sure accomplishment' (Wallace, 1996:473).

It follows that God sent His own Son (on the mission) to become human and to be the propitiation for our sin in order that (i.e. purpose) and so that (i.e. result) "the requirement of the Law" (τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου) "might be fulfilled" (πληρωθῇ) "in us" (ἐν ἡμῖν). According to both BDAG (2000:249) and Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, Rom. 8:4), "*dikaíōma*" (δικαίωμα) refers to, 'regulation concerning just or right action'; the source of which is the "*nómos*" (νόμος), which doubtlessly refers to the Law of God given through Moses (or *Torah*) (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, Rom. 8:4).[908] The verb, "fulfil" (πληρόω), here means 'to bring to a designed end' (BDAG, 2000:828) or 'cause to happen' (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, Rom. 8:4). The prepositional phrase, "in us" (ἐν ἡμῖν), specify 'within' whom (cf. Dana & Mantey, 1967:105)[909] or 'with regard to' (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, Rom. 8:4) whom the just or right action of *Torah* becomes a reality.

But how exactly is *Torah*'s righteous standards or actions met in, or with regard to, those who are united to Christ by faith? According to Moo (1996:482-484), 'the just demand of the law is fulfilled in Christians not through their own acts of obedience but through their incorporation into Christ", or stated differently, 'the law is satisfied' and 'we are counted just' when 'the obedience of Christ is accepted for us'. Moo's (1996:383) argument is based on:

(a) The observation that the verb, "might be fulfilled" (πληρωθῇ), is passive. Thus, it 'points not to something that we are to do but to something that is done in and for us'.

(b) The 'always imperfect obedience of the law' by Christians 'does not satisfy what is demanded'.

However, as Schreiner (2006:405) warns, it would be 'a serious mistake' to 'exclude actual

[907] See also Louw & Nida (1996:784).

[908] See also: BDAG (2000:677); Venter (2014:2).

[909] According to Dana & Mantey (1967:105), the root meaning of "*en*" (ἐν) is 'within', which 'mostly occurs with words of place' and 'time'. In this case it occurs with persons.

obedience of believers' from God's work of fulfilment. Using parallel passages (incl. 2 Cor. 10:6; cf. Eph. 5:18; Phil. 1:11; Col. 1:9), Schreiner (2006:405) proves that the passive use of "fulfil" (πληρωθῇ) does not 'rule out human activity, even when the work of God is envisaged'. This point is strongly supported by evidence of the active role of the person in whom the fulfilment of the *Torah* takes place (v.4), and the transformative effect of the fulfilment itself in the life of the Christian (vv.5-17). Romans 8:4 describes Christians as those "who walk" (περιπατοῦσιν, active participle), not according to the flesh but the Spirit. It is their 'custom' or 'habit' to 'live' or 'behave' continually (Louw & Nida, 1996:504; BDAG, 2000:803) according to the 'norm' or 'standard' (BDAG, 2000:512), as stated by the Holy Spirit. Surely these include God's will and instructions in the *Torah*. Romans 8:7-8 describes the person whose mind is set on the flesh as: "hostile" (ἔχθρα) to God, not "being subjected" (ὑποτάσσεται) to His "*Torah"* (νόμῳ), and not "able" (δύναται) "to please" (ἀρέσαι) Him. By implication, the opposite is true about those who live according to the Spirit. Clearly, therefore, Romans 8:4 is not so much about what Christ has done for us by way of substitution, as it is about what the Spirit is empowering and energizing in us by way of sanctification. Besides, if the dominant sense was about substitution, would Paul not have used the preposition, "*huper*" (ὑπέρ), meaning "on behalf of" or "for the sake of" us, instead of "*en*" (ἐν), which seems to point to where (i.e. within "us who … walk according to the Spirit") the fulfilment takes place?

Thus, there is a better explanation of how the fulfilment of the *Torah* takes place in the lives of Christians. As Stott (2001:221) explains it: 'while the flesh renders the law impotent, the Spirit empowers [them] to obey it', 'while the law cannot secure obedience, the Spirit can'. Thus, Cranfield (2004:384) is right in clarifying the meaning of the fulfilment of the righteous requirement of God's *Torah* as follows: 'that His law might be established in the sense of at last being truly and sincerely obeyed'.[910] This is according to God's New Covenant promise:[911]

> *(26) Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. (27) I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. (Ezek. 36:26-27, NASB).*

And as for all the failures of the believer to keep *Torah* perfectly, they are atoned for by Christ, as Romans 8:3 alludes to. Besides, as Harrison & Hagner (2008:131) reasonably suggest, 'the actual fulfilment of the law in Christian living' does not equate to 'Christian

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[910] See also: comment of Louw & Nida (1996:597) on Romans 8:4; Schreiner (2006:404). Venter (2014:3) reaches the same conclusion. However, his (Venter's, 2014:3) claim that those who are "in Christ" has been 'freed from their obligation to the Torah" is debatable. If freedom from the curse and penalty imposed by the *Torah* is meant, then "yes". But if freedom from *Torah's* morality and spirituality is also meant, then "no".

[911] See: Augustine of Hippo (1887:97); Cranfield (2004:384); Stott (2001:221).

perfectionism' but to 'a basic orientation of one's life and basic patterns of righteousness'.

It is concluded, that 'law-abiding Christian behaviour' is 'the ultimate purpose of God's action through Christ' (Stott, 2001:221). Augustine of Hippo (1887:97) puts it well: 'The law was therefore given, in order that grace might be sought; grace was given, in order that the law might be fulfilled'. And so, Murray (1997:283) rightly insists that Romans 8:4 gives 'conclusive proof that the law of God has the fullest normative relevance' for those who are 'in that state which is the product of grace'. Schreiner (2006:406) makes a pertinent and poignant observation:

> *'The failure to see a reference to the keeping of the law by believers is explicable in some cases by an unduly negative view of God's law.'*

(5) Synopsis of Romans 8:1-4

There is no condemnation for those who are united to Christ (by faith) because the governing power of the Spirit who gives life has liberated them from the dominion and governing power of sin and death. The *Torah*'s impotence to set people in the clear and right with God is because of people's sinful or fallen human natures. However, the loving and compassionate God rectified this problem through the incarnation and atonement of His own Son. This God did with the ultimate purpose of producing a people who would walk in His *Torah*, as they are directed and empowered by His Spirit.

In summary, Stott's words (2001:219, 222) capture Romans 8:1-4 well: '[God] made provision for both our justification and sanctification' – '[He] justifies us through his Son and sanctifies us through his Spirit.[912] And 'although law-obedience is not the ground of our justification …, it is the fruit of it and the very meaning of sanctification'.

6.2.5. Hebrews 8:10-12 – the LORD makes His Torah Part of His Covenant People

Jesus clearly taught that the *Torah* is permanently instructive for the Christian, with the weightier matters of justice, mercy, and faith being of primary importance, without neglecting the matters of lesser importance. Paul teaches that while God justifies people (solely) through faith in Christ, saving faith does not do away with the *Torah*, but uphold it. For this is the very purpose of the incarnation and atonement: that the Holy Spirit would enable believers to live according to the righteous standards in God's *Torah*. **Hebrews 8:10-12** explains the place and influence of the Torah in the lives of God's New Covenant people. The analysed NASB text and key Greek words are shown in **Figure 12** below:

[912] This is not to deny the role of Christ in sanctification. As Harrison & Hagner (2008:131) rightly insist, the connection of Romans 8:4 with verse 3, 'demands that we include the saving work of Christ' (cf. Rom. 6:4). See also Schreiner (2006:405).

10	**For** {ὅτι} this is the covenant {διαθήκη} that I **will make** {διαθήσομαι} with the house of Israel After those days, **says** the Lord:	**New Covenant Promises:**
	I **will put** {διδοὺς} My laws {νόμους μου} Into {εἰς} their minds {διάνοιαν}, And I **will write** {ἐπιγράψω} them on {ἐπὶ} their hearts {καρδίας}.	**1.** God's ***Torah*** will be in His people (obedience & holiness)
	And I **will be** {ἔσομαι} their God {θεόν}, And they **shall be** {ἔσονταί} My people {λαόν}.	**2.** He will be **their God** and they **His people** (identity & belonging)
11	And they **shall** not **teach** {διδάξωσιν} everyone his fellow citizen, And everyone his brother, **saying**, '**Know** {Γνῶθι} the Lord,' **For** all **will know** {εἰδήσουσίν} Me, From the least to the greatest of them.	**3.** They will all **know** God (relationship & intimacy)
12	**For** {ὅτι} I **will be** {ἔσομαι} **merciful** {ἵλεως} to their iniquities {ἀδικίαις}, And I **will remember** {μνησθῶ} their sins {ἁμαρτιῶν} no more {ἔτι}.	**4.** God will be **merciful** to them (sins forgiven & forgotten)

Figure 12: Analysis of Hebrews 8:10-12

(1) Context of Hebrews 8:10-12

The Old (Mosaic) Covenant was inferior to and eventually replaced by the New Covenant for several reasons: (1) Jesus became the eternal High Priest at the right hand of throne of the Majesty in heaven (Heb. 8:1); (2) the earthly sanctuary was a mere copy and shadow of the heavenly one (Heb. 8:5); (3) Jesus is the superior mediator of the New Covenant, which has better promises (Heb. 8:6); (4) people of the Old Covenant, by and large, did not remain faithful to the LORD (Heb. 8:7-9). What then are the better promises of the New Covenant?

(2) Overview of Hebrews 8:10-12

Quoting Jeremiah 31:31-34, Hebrews 8:10-12 sets out the New Covenant promises. They cover at least four blessings, all of which God Himself will bring to pass. The blessings entail:

(a) The place of God's *Torah* (v.10): God Himself will put His laws on the minds and write it on the hearts of His people.

(b) The identity of God's people (v.10): God will be their God, and they will be His people. They will belong to Him and be identified with Him. Thus, who they are will be closely connected with who God is, and their destiny will be secure in Him.

(c) The knowledge of God's people (v.11): Each one of them, without exception or discrimination, will have personal knowledge of who God really is, and they will enjoy an intimate relationship with Him.

(d) And the status of God's people (v.12): their sins will be forgiven and forgotten by God. They will be in complete right standing with Him and His kindness and favor will rest on them.

The promise concerning God's *Torah* is of special interest for this Study and is expounded below:

(3) Hebrews 8:10a

The function of the conjunction, "for" (ὅτι), simply seems to introduce what follows.[913] The demonstrative pronoun, "that" (αὕτη), 'directs the attention' to the 'thing near at hand in the discourse' (BDAG, 2000:740), which is "the New Covenant" promised in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and quoted here in Hebrews 8:10-12.

The Greek word for "covenant" is "*diathēkē* (διαθήκη), which translates the Hebrew term "*b^{e}riyṯ*".[914] In the connection with the "New Covenant", it refers to: "*a solemn commitment between two parties* (in this case God and His covenant people), *who have willingly entered into a lasting bond and most intimate relationship, with its benefits and responsibilities*" (refer to "Covenant", in **Glossary of Terms**).

The context (including the original context of Jer. 31:31-34) makes it clear that the verbal subject is the "LORD" (*YHWH*); which is 'the proper name' of 'the God of Israel' (BDB, 1977:217), the 'one true God', 'the Existing One' (Strong, 1995). The LORD promised, saying "I will make" (διαθήσομαι). The verb, "*diatíthēmi*" (διατίθημι), means 'to make formal arrangements for something to be done or brought about' (BDAG, 2000:238). The "something" to be done or brought about is the "New Covenant", as laid out in Hebrews 8:10b-12. The predictive future tense portrays that 'it <u>will</u> happen' (Wallace, 1996:568).

The prepositional phrase, "after those days" (μετὰ τὰς ἡμέρας ἐκείνας) (Heb. 8:10), as well as the related phrase, "(the) days are coming" (ἡμέραι ἔρχονται) (Heb. 8:8), point to a non-specific time in the future, from a 6th (plus) Century B.C perspective.[915] However, the writer to

[913] See Dana & Mantey (1967:252).

[914] Ref.: Allen (2010:447); Payne (1987:238); Williamson (2000:420).

[915] Which was the time when Jeremiah uttered this prophecy.

the Hebrews addresses his readers who are, “in these last days” (ἐπ’ ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων) (Heb. 1:2). Therefore, from a 1st Century A.D. perspective, it seems that the days referred to in Jeremiah’s prophecy have indeed arrived.[916] This is supported by Jesus’ declaration[917] about the New Covenant when He instituted the Lord’s Supper, which points to the inauguration of the New Covenant at His death.[918] Hebrews 8:13 suggests that the New Covenant is in effect since God “has declared as obsolete” (πεπαλαίωκεν) the Old Covenant. Furthermore, the apostle Paul speaks of him and his fellow workers as, “servants of a New Covenant” (διακόνους καινῆς διαθήκης) (2 Cor. 3:6). Waltke (2007:442) therefore seems to be right in asserting: ‘Unquestionably, the church presently lives under its [i.e. the New Covenant’s] administration’. However, while the New Covenant certainly can be said to have been inaugurated, Kaiser (1972:20) argues[919] convincingly that its ‘full realization’ awaits fulfilment ‘in the *eschaton*’.[920]

As to the participants in, or beneficiaries of, the New Covenant, Hebrews 8:10 says, “with the house of Israel” (τῷ οἴκῳ Ἰσραὴλ). Israel must include Judah, because Hebrews 8:8 says that the covenant will be, “with the house of Israel” (ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰσραὴλ) “and the house of Judah” (καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰούδα). Therefore, “restored Israel” is in view. However, based on Scriptures such as Jeremiah 4:2 and 16:9,[921] this “restored Israel” conceivably includes converted Gentiles, as Borg (2014:21) attests.[922] Paul’s teaching about the “wild olive” (ἀγριέλαιος) branches (i.e. Gentile believers) being “grafted into” (ἐνεκεντρίσθης ἐν) the “olive tree” (ἐλαίας) (i.e. Jewish believers) in Romans 11, supports this idea.[923] It is therefore difficult to refute Kaiser (1972:22-23) who asserts that ‘Christians presently participate in the new covenant’. Besides, if they don’t, then under which covenant are they?

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[916] See also: Guthrie (1983:178); Kaiser (1972:23).

[917] He declared: “this cup is the new covenant in My blood” (Τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι) (1 Cor. 11:25; cf. Luke 22:20).

[918] See also Borg (2014:21). Or at least it has been brought into effect with Christ’s entrance into the heavenly sanctuary (cf. Heb. 8:1-2; 9:11-12) at the great High Priest (see Lane (1991:210)).

[919] Based on Scriptures such as Revelation 21:3, which reads (NASB): “*And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,*”

[920] See also: Allen (2010:448); Borg (2014:28-29); Waltke (2007:442-444).

[921] Jer. 4:2 (NASB) “And you will swear, 'As the LORD lives,' In truth, in justice and in righteousness; Then the nations will bless themselves in Him, And in Him they will glory.” Jer. 16:19 (NASB) “*O LORD, my strength and my stronghold, And my refuge in the day of distress, To You the nations will come From the ends of the earth and say, "Our fathers have inherited nothing but falsehood, Futility and things of no profit.*"

[922] See also Kistemaker (1984:226).

[923] See Kaiser (1972:16, 23).

Finally, the oracle formula, “says the LORD” (λέγει κύριος), stresses the divine source and authority of the prophecy through Jeremiah (31:31-34).[924] Thus God Himself spoke the prophecy. And with great determination and certainty, He Himself will bring it to pass or make it happen; as is stressed by the phrase, “I will …”, which resounds through the passage (Heb. 8:10-12) no less than six times.

(4) Hebrews 8:10b

The first blessing of the New Covenant that the self-existent and covenant-keeping God of Israel promised, is:

“I will put My *nómous*” (διδοὺς νόμους μου)	a1
“into their minds” (εἰς τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν),	b1
“and upon their hearts” (καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν)	b2
“I will write them” (ἐπιγράψω αὐτούς)	a2

Silva (2014a:717) explains that, ‘aside from the neutral sense of transferring something to another person, the verb “*dídōmi*” (δίδωμι), ‘often means more specifically, “to bestow, give freely [as a present]”’. This meaning fits the context well.[925] The “mind” (διάνοια) is ‘the faculty of thinking, comprehending, and reasoning’ (BDAG, 2000:324).[926] And the “heart” (καρδία) is the ‘center and source of the whole inner life, with its thinking, feeling, and volition’ (BDAG, 2000:508).[927] Taken together, the “mind” and “heart” represent a person’s whole inner being.[928] And since the two terms are at the centre of the similar chiasm (see “b1” & “b2” above), the transformative and inward character of the New Covenant is emphasized, as Guthrie (1983:179) observes. As Silva (2014a:600) points out, the NT’s use of the verb, “*epigráphō*” (ἐπιγράφω), meaning ‘to write on’, relates to ‘inscriptions’ (see: Mark 15:26; Acts 17:23; Heb. 8:10; 10:16; Rev. 21:12). Therefore, it can be translated, “inscribe”, which conveys more of a sense of permanence. So, God deposits His “*nómous*” as a lasting gift into His New Covenant people’s inner beings, and in their inner beings He inscribes it.

According to BDAG (2000:678) and Harris (ed.) (2010, Heb. 8:10),[929] “*nómos*” in Hebrews 8:10 refers to the “Law of Moses” or the “*Torah”*. Both the TLV and CJB reflect this understanding with their use of the word, “*Torah*”. That “*nómos*” means “*Torah*” in Hebrews

[924] See: Craigie (1991:23); LaSor (et.al.) (1996:222).

[925] See also BDAG (2000:243).

[926] See also (BDAG, 2000:234).

[927] See also Louw & Nida (1996:320).

[928] See Kistemaker (1984:195).

[929] Harris (ed.) (2010, Heb. 8:10) assigns LN 33.55 to νόμος (ref. Louw & Nida, 1996:394).

8:10 can hardly be disputed because the original word used in Jeremiah 31:33 (MST) is the singular form of the noun, "*Torah*" (tô·rā).[930] However, the Greek NT followed the Septuagint (LXX) in using the equivalent Greek term (*nómos*), but in the plural form, "*nómous*". Allen (2010:447) reasonably suggests that the plural 'most likely … emphasizes the specific laws of the Mosaic covenant'.[931]

It is concluded, therefore, that the New Covenant does not contain a "new *torah*",[932] but the same *Torah* as that in the Old Covenant, as many scholars observe.[933] Even under the Old Covenant, the *Torah* was meant to be in the heart (cf. Deut. 6:6; 11:18; 32:46; Psa. 40:8).[934] This is new in the New Covenant: the LORD Himself places the *Torah* in the mind and inscribes it on the heart. As a result, it becomes a permanent part of the 'nature of God's people' and it functions as 'a principle of life' (Feinberg, 1986:576).[935] Keil & Delitzsch (1996, vol.8:282) are correct in their statement that the Law of the LORD forms 'the kernel and essence of the relationship' instituted between the LORD and His people.[936]

There is a striking parallel between the Decalogue,[937] which the LORD wrote on stone, and the *Torah*, which He writes on hearts.[938] This parallel naturally suggests, as Borg (2014:29-31) contends, that the "*Torah*" in Jeremiah 31:33 is, 'nothing short of the Decalogue'.[939] Hyatt (1941:395) concludes that, 'it is possible … that Jeremiah thought of Torah as being embodied exclusively, or especially, in the ethical decalogue'. If the Decalogue contains the most sacred, basic, and fundamental principles of the *Torah*, which it most certainly does (refer to **Section**

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[930] According to HALOT (2000:1712), Jer. 31:33 refers to 'the commandments' that 'stand between Yahweh and the people as a covenant duty'. This is clearly a reference to the *Torah*, as is the case with Scriptures such as Deut. 31:9, 24. See also Dearman (2002:287).

[931] In support, Allen (2010:447) refers to F. Malone's PhD dissertation (1989:186), "A Critical Evaluation of the Use of Jeremiah 31:31–34 in the Letter to the Hebrews", Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

[932] Or even a 'second law', or 'better law' (Allen, 2010:447).

[933] Including: Allen (2010:447-448); Borg (2014:29); Bright (1966:194); Bruce (1990:190); Calvin (2010f:132); Hyatt (1941:396); Kaiser (1972:19); Keil & Delitzsch (1996, vol.8: 282); Lane (1991:209); Thiessen (2019:184).

[934] See also: Psa. 37:31; 40:8; cf. Prov. 2:1; 3:1. And see Kaiser (1972:19).

[935] See also: Dearman (2002:287); Kistemaker (1984:226).

[936] See also Kaiser (1972:19).

[937] The Decalogue constitutes the core principles of the *Torah*, refer to: "*Torah*" in **Glossary of Terms**; and **Section 3.4.2**).

[938] See: Dearman (2002:287); Guthrie (1983:179); Hyatt (1941:396).

[939] Allen (2010:447) quotes Malone (refer to **Footnote 931**). According to Malone (1989:79), 'νόμους refers specifically here to the Decalogue since in Jer. 31:33, the Hebrew verb is only used with God as its subject in connection with the Ten Commandments in the OT'.

3.4.2), then surely the *Torah* that God writes on His people's hearts has it at its very heart!

The result of God putting His *Torah* in the minds and writing it on the hearts of His New Covenant people is not simply that it would be internal as opposed to merely external, or that it would be understood and treasured. As Bright (1966:195) argues, it is that they would also have 'both the desire and the power to obey it'.[940] This enabling is through the liberating and life-giving power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, as Ezekiel 36:27 and Romans 8:4 makes clear. Matthew Henry (1999:2392) outlined the fuller implications as follows:

> *"He once wrote His laws to them, now He will write His laws in them; that is, He will give them understanding to know and to believe His law; He will give them memories to retain them; He will give them hearts to love them and consciences to recognize them; He will give them courage to profess them and power to put them in practice; the whole habit and frame of their souls shall be a table and transcript of the law of God. This is the foundation of the covenant; and, when this is laid, duty will be done wisely, sincerely, readily, easily, resolutely, constantly, and comfortably."*

(5) Synopsis of Hebrews 8:10-12

Hebrews 8:10-12 focusses the attention on the blessings of the New Covenant, which the LORD has made effective for the church through the sacrifice and high priestly ministry of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the powerful operations of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The first blessing concerns the *Torah*. While the LORD engraved the Decalogue with His finger in stone, He Himself gifts and inscribes it (i.e. the *Torah*, or at least the Decalogue) into the inner beings of His New Covenant people. This He does that they might know, understand, love, and live out His instructions.

Excursus: *Nómos* (νόμος) in Hebrews

The word "*nómos*" (νόμος) is used fourteen times in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. 7:5, 12, 16, 19, 28 (x2), 8:4, 10; 9:19, 22; 10:1, 8, 16, 28). BDAG (2000:677-678), Harris (ed.) (2010),[941] the TLV, and CJB are unanimous that in all of these cases, except Hebrews 7:12 and 16, the *Torah* or Law of Moses is in view. The context indicates that Hebrews 7:12 arguably also refers to the *Torah*, with support from BDAG (2000:677-678), Harris (ed.) (2010, Heb. 7:12), and the CJB. Contextually, however, Hebrews 7:16 seems to refer to 'a formalized rule' or 'prescribed principle', rather than *Torah* as such, as indicated by BDAG (2000:677), and Louw & Nida (1996:425).

[940] See also: Bruce (1990:190); Feinberg (1986:576).

[941] Harris (ed.) (2010) assigns LN 33.55 to νόμος (ref. Louw & Nida, 1996:394) to all of the listed references.

Significantly, all of the uses of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in Hebrews, except the very last (i.e. Heb.10:28), occur in the section of the Epistle that is primarily about the supremacy of Jesus the Son of God as the great High Priest (Heb. 4:14-10:18).[942] Most of the uses of "*nómos*" (νόμος) are thus located in a cultic setting (Thiessen, 2019:183, 186), especially those in Hebrews 7:1-8:6 and 9:1-10:14; the discourses of which are about the priesthood and sacrifices. The rest of the uses form part of statements about the New Covenant (Heb. 8:10 in 8:7-13; 10:16) and a warning against deliberate sin (Heb. 10:28 in 10:26-30).

The issues raised in Hebrews 7:1-8:6 and 9:1-10:14 concerning the *Torah* or Law of Moses are specific:

(1) Hebrews 7:1-8:6: According to the *Torah*, Levitical priests are to be appointed (under the Old Covenant) to collect tithes (Heb. 7:5) and bring offerings (Heb. 8:4). However, since these priests are appointed "on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent" (Heb. 7:16, ESV), the *Torah* appoints (under the Old Covenant) men as high priests who are weak (Heb. 7:28). Since perfection could not be attained through the Levitical priesthood, there was a need for another Priest, according to the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 7:11), and "by the power of an indestructible life" (Heb. 7:16, ESV). Therefore, according to an oath (in Psa. 110:4) made after giving the *Torah*, God appointed His Son as High Priest (under the New Covenant), who has been made perfect forever (Heb. 7:28). The preceding line of argument forms the critical context within which the statements concerning the *Torah* in Hebrews 7:12 and 19a are to be interpreted.

- Hebrews 7:12: "*For the priesthood being changed, of necessity a change of the Torah also occurs*". The participle "being changed" (μετατιθεμένης) and its cognate noun "change" (μετάθεσις) indicate a 'change in state' or a 'transformation' (BDAG, 2000:639, 642; Louw & Nida, 1996:154, 155). Thus, the change/transformation of the priesthood (with the associated sacrificial system) necessitated and resulted in a corresponding change/transformation of the *Torah*. However, to infer a wholesale change of the *Torah*, seems to push the text too far.[943]

- Hebrews 7:19a: "*For the Torah made nothing perfect*". According to Louw & Nida (1996:746), the verb "*teleioō*" (τελειόω) here means, 'to make perfect in the moral sense'. The point is that the legal requirement(s) in the *Torah* about the

[942] Several scholars see a similar primary section, for example: Allen (2010:94): 'Obligations of Jesus' Priestly Office and Saving Work (4:14–10:18)'; Guthrie (1998:27): 'Position of the Son, Our High Priest, in Relation to the Earthly Sacrificial System (4:14-10:25)'; Lane (1991:125) 'The high priestly office of the Son (5:11-10:39)'.

[943] See: Brown (2009:149); Regev (2017:596-597); Schmitt (2009:198).

Levitical Priesthood and the associated sacrificial system did not decisively deal with sin, as becomes clear in the subsequent discourse. However, Jesus, the perfect and permanent High Priest sacrificed for sin once for all, bringing better hope for believers to draw near to God (Heb. 7:19-27).

(2) Hebrews 9:1-10:4: The *Torah* (under the Old Covenant) required that "all things are cleansed with blood" (Heb. 9:19-22). However, the sacrifices offered in accordance with the *Torah* (Heb. 10:8) continually, year by year, did not perfect those who drew near for worship (Heb. 10:1; 9:9). For the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins (Heb. 10:4). Therefore, Christ came to do the will of His Father (Heb. 10:5), by which believers "have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10:10, NASB). This clarifies what is meant by Hebrews 10:1a: "*For the Torah, having a shadow of the coming good things*" (Σκιὰν γὰρ ἔχων ὁ νόμος τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν). The sacrificial system was merely a foreshadow of the reality of Christ's atoning and redemptive work. Therefore, the associated ceremonial regulations of the *Torah* were only in force until the time of the new order (i.e. presumably the New Covenant) (Heb. 9:9-10).

It is concluded, from the above, that the majority of the uses of "*nómos*" (11 of 14) in Hebrews deal primarily with the regulations in the *Torah* concerning the priesthood and the sacrificial system, which have been brought to their designed end by the redemptive and mediatory work of Jesus Christ, the Supreme High Priest. This has transformed the *Torah*, but it has by no means abrogated it.[944] To claim that Hebrews teaches that the *Torah* has been replaced by essentially something else, or that sin and morality are no longer defined with reference to the *Torah*, seems to be a grave mistake for the following reasons:

(1) Nowhere in the Epistle to the Hebrews is it stated that the *Torah* is abolished.

(2) There is no hint in the Epistle that there is anything wrong or deficient with the moral precepts of the *Torah*, or that they have been done away with. On the contrary, God puts His *Torah* into the minds and writes it upon the hearts of His new covenant people (Heb. 8:10; 10:16). Surely this includes, at the very least, the fundamental and eternal moral principles of the Decalogue (see **Section 6.2.5 (4)**).

(3) Contrary to the claim that Hebrews would have us think no longer of sin in relation to the *Torah*, the Letter places "sin" beside "lawlessness" (ἀνομία) (i.e. disregarding or violating the *Torah*, see **Glossary of Terms**) (Heb. 10:16), and it places

[944] See: Allen (2010:421-422); Bahnsen (1999:104, 142); Brown (2009:149); Joslin (2008:168-169); Stern (1996:681).

"lawlessness" opposite "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη) (Heb. 1:9). If the Supreme Son of God is said to "have hated lawlessness" (Heb. 1:9), should it not also be true of His followers? Redefining sin does not seem like something the writer to the Hebrews is urging Christians to do. Besides, if the clear moral instructions of the *Torah* no longer communicate God's will and demarcate sin, what does?

(4) Thirdly, Hebrews 10:28 (NASB) issues a stern warning: "*Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses*". What will happen on Judgment Day if someone is found to have declared the *Torah* to be invalid? (See also the warning in Heb. 2:1-4).

(5) Fourthly, the notion that the *Torah* has been abolished is an obvious contradiction of Jesus' clear and authoritative teaching in Matthew 5:17-20 (refer to **Section 6.2.1**).

6.2.6. 1 John 3:4 – Sin is Lawlessness

Key samples from the Gospels, Pauline Epistles, and the Letter to the Hebrews have shown that, far from being abolished, God has made the *Torah* part of His people. He has sent His Son to deal with their sins and He has given His Spirit to enable their obedience. Two key passages from John's epistles will now be considered. Firstly, **1 John 3:4**. The analysed NASB text and key Greek words are shown **Figure 13** below:

Everyone {πᾶς} who practices {ποιῶν} sin {ἁμαρτίαν} also practices {ποιεῖ} lawlessness {ἀνομίαν}; **and** sin {ἁμαρτία} is lawlessness {ἀνομία}.	Sin is Lawlessness

Figure 13: Analysis of 1 John 3:4

(1) 1 John 3:4

1 John 3:4 'states a universal truth', as Stott (1988:1125) notes, and as indicated by the adjective "*pās*" (πᾶς), which pertains to 'any one in a totality' (Louw & Nida, 1996:596). It refers to 'each, any, and every' (BDAG, 2000:782) person. There 'are no exceptions', as Akin (2001:139) rightly insists.

BDAG (2000:840) explains that the verb "*poiéō*" (ποιέω) here means, to 'do, commit, be guilty of sins and vices'; which is a failure to 'carry out an obligation of a moral or social nature', as the context clearly indicates.

Louw & Nida (1999:772) define "sin" (ἁμαρτία) as 'act[ing] contrary to the will and law of God'. Indeed, for John, "to sin" is to break or violate God's Law, as several scholars observe.[945]

[945] Scholars include, for example: Akin (2001:140); Calvin (2010a:207-208); Henry (1994:2448); Kistemaker (1986:297); Silva (2014c:417); Smalley (1984:154).

This fits the context well because John says that everyone who practises/does "sin" also practises/does "lawlessness".

"Lawlessness" (ἀνομία) is 'lawless deed[s]' (BDAG, 2000:85),[946] 'not [to be] restrained or controlled by law, especially God's law' (Brand et.al., 2003:1020), or to 'act as if there were no *Torah*' (Stern, 1996:34).[947] Jobes (2014:143) is right in observing that to be "lawless" 'does not mean simply to break the law; it means to disdain the very idea of a law to which one must submit'; as Leviticus 26:43b elucidates:

> *They, meanwhile, will be making amends for their "iniquity" (ανομιας, LXX), because they rejected My ordinances and their soul abhorred My statutes (Lev 26:43b, NASB).*

By stating that "sin is lawlessness", John is not simply equating the former with the latter, he is defining the former in terms of the latter.[948] As Calvin (2010a:208) puts it, John 'defines sin to be a transgression of the divine law'. "Lawlessness" is 'the essence' of sin (Stott, 1988:125).

A few verses later (in vv.7-8), John uses two phrases with identical (to that in 1 John 3:4a) forms in juxtaposition, which enriches the meaning of 1 John 3:4:

- v.7b (NASB) states: "The one who practices righteousness" (ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην) is righteous, just as He is righteous.
- v.8a (NASB) states: "The one who practices sin" (ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν) is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning.

Practising sin is the opposite of practicing righteousness.[949] And the first is linked to and modelled after the devil, while the second is linked to and modelled after God. In relation to verse 4, therefore, "lawlessness" stands in contrast to "righteousness",[950] and is satanic in nature. Smalley (1984:155) proposes that "lawlessness" describes, 'Satan-inspired rejection of God and his law that will be manifest in the present age and will come to a climax before Christ's second coming'.[951] In the light of this, therefore, Smalley (1984:155) is right to conclude

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[946] See also Louw & Wolvaardt (2015, 1 John 3:4). Refer also to **Glossary of Terms** for "lawlessness".

[947] NT use of "lawlessness" (ἀνομία) includes: Mat. 7:23 (for context see also v.21); 13:41; 23:28; 24:12; Rom. 4:7; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:14; 2 Thes. 2:3, 7; Tit. 2:14; Heb. 1:9; 10:17; 1 John 3:4. Its cognate, "lawless" (ἄνομος), is used in: Luke 22:37; Acts 2:23; 1 Cor. 9:21; 2 Thes. 2:8; 1 Tim. 1:9; 2 Pet. 2:8.

[948] See: Kistemaker (1986:298); Smalley (1984:155); Stott (1988:125).

[949] See also Akin (2001:139-140).

[950] See also Hiebert (1989:208). In Matthew 7:21-23, Jesus juxtaposes the practice of "lawlessness" (ἀνομία) with doing the will of His Father who is in heaven.

[951] Smalley (1984:155) quotes: Haas, C., de Jonge, M., and Swellengrebel, J. L. (1972). *A Translator's Handbook*

that in John, "lawlessness" (ἀνομία), means that behind breaking God's Law, there is an arrogant rebellion against, and rejection of, God Himself. On the day of judgment, Jesus will say to those who practised "lawlessness" (ἀνομία), "I never knew you … depart from Me" (Mat. 7:23).

(2) Synopsis of 1 John 3:4

The apostle John teaches the absolute truth: sin is essentially "lawlessness", which is a disposition of disregarding or violating the *Torah* (i.e. God's Law), which is Satan-inspired rebellion against God Himself. "Lawlessness" stands in opposition to righteousness.

6.2.7. 1 John 5:1-5 – Those who Love God Keep His Commandments

The Apostle John teaches that the essence of sin is opposition to the *Torah*, because of satanic rebellion against the *Torah*-giver. Secondly, and positively, those who love God keep His commandments, as taught in **1 John 5:1-5**. The analysed text and key Greek words are shown in **Figure 13** below:

1	Whoever **believes** {πιστεύων} that Jesus is the Christ {χριστὸς} is born {γεγέννηται} of God and whoever **loves** {ἀγαπῶν} the Father {τὸν γεννήσαντα} **loves** {ἀγαπᾷ} the child born {γεγεννημένον} of Him.	A1	Faith and love (with being born of God)
2	By this we know {γινώσκομεν} that we **love** {ἀγαπῶμεν} the children {τέκνα} of God, when we **love** {ἀγαπῶμεν} God and **observe** {ποιῶμεν} His commandments {ἐντολὰς}.	B1	Loving God's children
3	**For** this is the love {ἀγάπη} of God, that we **keep** {τηρῶμεν} His commandments {ἐντολὰς}; and His commandments {ἐντολαὶ} are not burdensome {βαρεῖαι}.	B2	Loving God
4 **5**	**For** whatever is born {γεγεννημένον} of God **overcomes** {νικᾷ} the world {κόσμον}; and this is the victory {νίκη} that has **overcome** {νικήσασα} the world {κόσμον} - our **faith** {πίστις}. Who is the one who **overcomes** {νικῶν} the world {κόσμον}, but he who **believes** {πιστεύων} that Jesus is the Son of God?	A2	Victory over the world through faith (with being born of God)

Figure 14: Analysis of 1 John 5:1-5

on the Letters of John. UBS Helps for Translators. p.81. London: United Bible Societies. The reference to Jesus' second coming can be seen especially in 2 Thes. 2:3 that talks about the revelation of the "man of lawlessness" (ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας).

(1) Overview of 1 John 5:1-5

The passage is bookended by two almost identical ideas: "Everyone who believes" (Πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων) "that Jesus is the Christ" (ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστιν ὁ χριστὸς) (v.1), and "he who believes" (ὁ πιστεύων) "that Jesus is the Son of God" (ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ) (v.5). That is to 'consider [Him] true and worthy of one's trust' (BDAG, 2000:816).[952] Whoever is convinced that Jesus is truly the Messiah, the divine Son of God, and trusts Him as a result:

(a) Is "born of God" (ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται) (v.1). That is 'a radical change' of a person when God makes them His children (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, 1 John 5:1).[953] As a result, they "practise" (ποιέω) "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη) (1 John 2:29), as opposed to "keep on sinning" (ἁμαρτάνω) (1 John 5:18; cf. 3:9). For "the One who was born of God" (ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ) - that is God's Son -[954] "keeps" (τηρεῖ) them safe, and "the evil one" (ὁ πονηρὸς) "cannot touch" (οὐχ ἅπτεται) them (1 John 5:18). Furthermore, they "love" (ἀγαπάω), and they "know" (γινώσκω) God (1 John 4:7).

(b) Is the one "who overcomes" (ὁ νικῶν) "the world" (τὸν κόσμον) (v.5). Overcoming the world is to be a 'victor' or 'conqueror' (Louw & Nida, 1996:500) over "the evil one" (τὸν πονηρόν) (1 John 2:13-14) and "the (spirit) of the antichrist" (τὸ (πνεῦμα) τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου), because "greater is the One" (μείζων ἐστὶν ὁ)[955] in God's children than "the one in the world" (ὁ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ) (1 John 4:3-4). And all that is "in the world" (ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ) is "the lust of the flesh" (ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρκὸς), "the lust of the eyes" (ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν), and the "boastful pride of life" (ἡ ἀλαζονεία τοῦ βίου) (1 John 2:16, NASB). The "victory" (νίκη) of "everyone born of God" (πᾶν τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ) is their "faith" (πίστις) – that is through their 'trust', 'confidence', and 'firm commitment' (BDAG, 2000:818-819) in Christ (v.4).

Inside the bookends about faith (and being born of God), the attention is turned to love and obedience. According to Law (1909:6), these three – 'believing that Jesus is the Christ', 'doing righteousness' (or obedience), and 'loving one another' – are 'fundamental tests of the Christian life' (to know that one has eternal life)[956] that are repeated, in turn, three times over

[952] See also Louw & Nida (1996:369).

[953] See also Silva (2014a:562-563).

[954] As Akin (2001:212) and Smalley (1984:303) note, most scholars understand this to be a reference to Jesus Christ. The CJB, GNB, and NLT reflect this understanding. And the NASB, TLV, NIV hint to it.

[955] This is understood to be a reference to the Holy Spirit. As Stott (1988:157) insists, 'This must be the 'Spirit of truth' (6), 'the anointing' which 'remains in you' (2:20, 27). See also: Akin (2001:174); Kistemaker (1986:328).

[956] Stott (1988:57) helpfully refers to them as the 'theological' (faith), 'moral' (obedience), and 'social' (love) tests.

throughout the Epistle.[957] Moreover, they are 'connecting themes that bind together the whole structure of the Epistle' (Law, 1909:6). And, as Stott (1988:171) observes, they are 'so closely woven together into a single, coherent fabric that it is difficult to unpick and disentangle the threads'. This can be seen in 1 John 5:1-5 where they are all integrally connected with being born of God. While they are all vitally important characteristics of true Christians, the passage does bring love and obedience into particular focus, because they are at the centre of a kind of chiasm.[958] And they are especially important for this Study. Therefore, they are expounded in greater detail below.

(2) 1 John 5:2

1 John 5:2 starts with the familiar phrase, "By this we know" (ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν), which has been used four times before in the Epistle (1 John 2:3; 2:5; 4:6; 4:13). The phrase draws attention and points to how one can "know" (γινώσκω) something for a fact and be certain of it.[959] Certain of what? That "we love" (ἀγαπῶμεν) "the children of God" (τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ). The idea of loving one's fellow believer (or one another) is so important that it is repeated no less than twelve times elsewhere in the Epistle (1 John 3:10, 11, 14, 18, 23; 4:7, 8, 11, 12, 19, 20, 21).[960] In two of these instances, the idea is in the form of an express "commandment" (ἐντολή) of God (1 John 3:23; 4:21).

Loving God's children:

How, then, can we know for sure that we love God's children, or keep His commandment to love one another? The answer is twofold:

(a) When "we love" (ἀγαπῶμεν) God. Lexically, to "love" (ἀγαπάω) simply means, to 'have a warm regard for and interest in another' (BDAG, 2000:5).[961] However, for John, in this is love: "that He (i.e. God) loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10, NASB). The previous verse adds the purpose clause, "that we might live through Him". Thus, the love with which God loves us is caring and life-giving. It is selfless and sacrificial. Would God's love for us then not cause us to

[957] FIRST: Righteousness (2:3-6); Love (2:7-17); Faith (2:18-28); SECOND: Righteousness (2:29-3:10a); Love (3:10b-24a); Faith (3:24b-4:6); THIRD: Love (4:7-12; 4:16b-21); Faith (4:13-16a; 5:5-12); Righteousness (5:18, 19) (Law, 1909:6-7).

[958] See also Smalley (1984:265-266).

[959] The CJB helpfully translates the phrase as, "The way we can be sure", in 1 John 2:3. And the NLT translates it as, "we can be sure that … if …".

[960] Interestingly, Silva (2014a:107) points out that while love is 'a central and all-encompassing concept of the Christian faith', its 'greatest concentration' in all of Scripture is found in 1 John.

[961] See also Louw & Nida (1996:292).

reciprocate His love by giving ourselves to Him? Of course, it would. 1 John 5:3 defines how this is done in practical terms.

(b) And when "we observe" (ποιῶμεν) "His commandments" (τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ). In this context, the verb "*poiéō*" (ποιέω) means, 'to carry out an obligation of a moral or social nature' (BDAG, 2000:840). In this context, "*entolàs*" (ἐντολὰς) refer to 'divine commandments generally' (BDAG, 2000:340).[962] Stott (1988:173) interprets "*entolàs*" in 1 John as, 'the commands of God today, whether found in the Old Testament or the New'.

The commandments of God:

So, how can we be sure that we do indeed love our fellow Christians? By reciprocating God's love for us and by carrying out our moral obligation to keep His commandments. But which commandments exactly? Kruse (2000:78-79) makes the following observations:

> *'At first sight this could be taken to refer to God's law, especially the Ten Commandments, which Jesus observed during his incarnate life. But there is no hint elsewhere in the letter that the author is concerned about obedience to the Mosaic law. And in 3:21–23 [John] … continues: 'and this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he has commanded us' (3:23). God's commands are that we believe in Christ and do what he commands, and this letter highlights Jesus' command to love one another. It may be best, therefore, to interpret the reference to 'his commands' in this verse in that light also.'*

In response, the following comments can be made:

(a) According to, 1 John 2:6 (NASB), "the one who says he abides in Him[963] ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked". Since Jesus observed God's Law, especially the Ten Commandments, should Christians then not do the same?

(b) The twin ideas of "loving God" and "keeping His commandments" are rooted in and repeated over and over again in the *Torah*, for example, in Deuteronomy 7:9, the LORD says:

> *"Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps (šāmar, MST; φυλάσσω, LXX) His covenant (b^{e}riyṯ, MST; διαθήκη, LXX) and His lovingkindness (ḥesed, MST; ἔλεος, LXX) to a thousandth generation with those who love (ʾāhaḇ, MST; ἀγαπάω, LXX) Him and keep (šāmar, MST; φυλάσσω, LXX) His commandments (mitzvot, MST; Greek: ἐντολή - entolē); (Deut. 7:9, NASB).*[964]

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[962] See also "commandment" in **Glossary of Terms**.

[963] Presumably, "Him" and "He" (in v.6) refers to "Jesus Christ the righteous" (v.1).

[964] See also: Deut. 5:7-10; 10:12-13; 11:1, 13, 22, 27; 13:3-4; 19:9; 30:16.

The absolute and enduring principle of God's covenantal faithfulness and mercy being reciprocated by His people through loyal love towards Him and careful obedience to all His commands surely forms part of the spiritual "DNA" of the redeemed in both the Old and New Covenants. Evidence of this can be seen in the fact that the two ideas of "loving God" and "obeying (all) His commandments" echo throughout John's First Letter (see 1 John 2:3-5, 15; 3:17, 22, 24; 4:20-21) and converge in 1 John 5:2-3. Is it not reasonable, therefore, to assume that, for John, the commandments of God include (all) the moral instructions of the *Torah,* and not just one or two? Is there any hint in this Letter that all the others are excluded?

(c) To reduce God's (moral) commands to the command to love one another, produces the following logic in 1 John 5:2: "In this we know that we love the children of God … when we (as God's children) love one another". Surely this cannot be John's point. Rather, it seems more reasonable to understand John's point to be that God's children put their love for one another into practice when they obey God's commandments to them. Thus, God's commandments are designed to express love.

(d) This is not to deny the primacy of God's two commandments that John states in 1 John 3:23: (1) "to believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ", and (2) to "love one another". While the commandment to love one's neighbour provides an excellent summary of the commandments of the *Torah*, and helpfully brings their grand purpose into focus (i.e. to "love"), care needs to be taken not to overlook, deny, or do away with the details and constituent parts of the *Torah*, which give love its practical content and 'moral fibre', as Jackman (2006:140) puts it. That John is not just thinking of God's commandments in terms of the two mentioned explicitly in 1 John 3:32 is clear from what he wrote elsewhere, for example, in Revelation 14:12, which states: "*Here is the perseverance (ὑπομονὴ) of the saints who keep (τηροῦντες) the commandments of God (τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ) and their faith in Jesus (τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ)*".[965] Here, "faith" stands beside God's "commandments" (plural).

As Hiebert (1990:219) comments, 'The plural, "His commandments", suggests that God has given various statements of His will for His people which relate to the various aspects of Christian living'. The most natural starting point is arguably, 'God's moral law as a whole', which is epitomized by the Decalogue (refer to **Sections 3.4.4 & 5.3.1**), as Smalley (1984:45-

[965] "Perseverance of the saints" is a major theme in the book of Revelation. Those who do persevere "keep the commandments of God" and "their faith in Jesus". The implication of pushing God's commandments aside is obvious.

46, 269) contends.[966] Is this not all the more reasonable since John defines sin (and by implication right living), in 1 John 3:4, with reference to God's Law (i.e. *Torah*) (refer to **Section 5.3.6**)?

(3) 1 John 5:3

Since 1 John 5:3 explains 1 John 5:2b, the conjunction "for" (γάρ) is 'explanatory' in function (cf. Wallace, 1996:673). The demonstrative pronoun, "this" (οὗτος) 'directs attention' to what is 'near at hand in the discourse' (BDAG, 2000:740). The context indicates that, "the love of God" (ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ), is used "objectively" (Wallace, 1996:121, footnote 136). It is thus equivalent to, "we love God" in 1 John 5:2b. Accordingly, 1 John 5:3 explains exactly how Christians (are to) express or demonstrate their love for God.

Believers show their love for God by "keeping" (τηρέω) "His commandments" (τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ). The verb, "*tēréō*" (τηρέω) means 'to persist in obedience' (BDAG, 2000:1002).[967] And as discussed under 1 John 5:2 (see **Subsection (2)** above), God's commandments cannot be limited to the commandment to love one another. Or even that plus the commandment to believe in Christ (as in 1 John 3:23). As Law (1909:212) helpfully puts it:

> *'The Christian commandments are not a miscellany of arbitrary requirements or by-laws; they are practical applications of the one Divine Law to the outstanding facts and situations of human life.'*

This "one Divine Law" can be nothing other than God's one and only *Torah*, the fundamental principles of which God engraved with His finger on the tablets of stone, and which He inscribes by His Spirit on the tablets of the hearts of His New Covenant children (refer to **Section 3.5.3(4)**).

1 John teaches that obedience to God's commandments (of *Torah*) is the way in which Christians give expression to their love for God,[968] which flows over into practical deeds of love towards one another (1 John 3:18; 4:20-21; 5:2-3). This teaching speaks to two particular distortions, which have been plaguing Evangelicalism:

- Disconnecting love from the Law: By doing so, love is less defined by the commandments of God's Law (or *Torah*) and more by our emotions. Jackman (2006:140) helpfully observes that, 'if we judge love purely at an emotional level,

[966] Several other scholars naturally associate God's commandments in 1 John with God's Law, including i.a.: Akin (2001:91, 191); Barker (1981:315; 331; 333); Calvin (2010a:252); Henry (1994:2444); Jackman (2006:48, 140-141); Kistemaker (1986:348); Law (1909:212).

[967] See also Louw & Nida (1996:467).

[968] This echoes not only the *Torah*'s clear teaching (in for example Deut. 7:9, as discussed above), but also that of Jesus, in John 14:15 (NASB), which states: "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments".

without any regard for moral obedience which God's Law demands, we may find ourselves excusing what is in fact disobedience'. "Love", as Stott (1988:173) puts it, 'is not an emotional experience so much as a moral commitment'. This "moral commitment" is defined in practical terms by God's Law.

- Connecting the Law with legalism: By doing so, talk about the commandments of God's Law (or *Torah*), and obeying them, is frowned upon. Again, Jackman (2006:48) is on the mark with his observation: 'The fact that to talk about obedience to God's Word is often parodied as "legalism" is symptomatic of a false dichotomy between law and love'. Obedience to the Law (or *Torah*) is love in practice. Love in practice is obedience to God. There is perfect harmony between love and the Law. In fact, they are two sides of the same coin – the one expresses the purpose of God's will for us, the other expresses its practice in practical terms.

By way of further explanation, 1 John 5:3 adds, "and His commandments are not burdensome (βαρύς)". The adjective, "*barús*" (βαρύς) 'pertains to being a source of difficulty or trouble because of demands made' (BDAG, 2000:167). As Smalley (1984:269) puts it, 'God's commands … are not oppressive, so as to crush the freedom and spontaneity of love'. Rather, as Stott (1988:173) rightly notes, as 'an all-wise, all-loving Father', His will for His children is 'good, pleasing, and perfect'. To those who love Him, as Jobes (2014:210) insists, His commandments 'are not burdensome but liberating'. John's statement here is reminiscent of Jesus' invitation: "Come to Me … For My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (Mat. 11:28-30, NASB).[969] Jesus is here 'contrasting' His commandments (which are synonymous with His Father's) with 'the heavy load of legalism with which the Pharisees burdened people's consciences', as Jackman (2006:141) explains.[970]

Stepping back again, to see 1 John 5:2-3 within its chiastic framework (in 1 John 5:1-5), is critical so that obedience to God's commandments (i.e. His *Torah*) is kept in its proper context of faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Through this complete commitment to, and trust and confidence in Him: God has made us His children (born of Him) and indwells us by His Spirit on order to keep us from the evil one and to enable us to practise righteousness and overcome the world. And so, by grace God gives us the strength to do what He commands us, and the love to make the burden of obedience light and a delight.[971] The delight to do God's will, as expressed in His *Torah,* is a strong theme in the Psalms. Consider, for example, Psalm 40:8:

[969] See also: Akin (2001:192); Kistemaker (1986:349); Stott (1988:173).

[970] See also Ross (1954:210).

[971] See Jackman (2006:48, 141).

I delight to do Your will, O my God;
a1 b1

Your Law (Torah, MST; νόμον, LXX) is within my heart." (Psa. 40:8, NASB).[972]
b2 a2

(4) Synopsis of 1 John 5:1-5

Those who have living faith in Jesus Christ are born of God and overcome the world with its sinfulness (or lawlessness) (1 John 5:1, 4-5). They express their love to God and His children by obeying His commandments (1 John 5:2-3). The commandments of His Law (*Torah*) are not an unbearable burden to them (1 John 5:3), but a liberating delight because His love encourages their obedience (1 John 4:10-11), and His Spirit enables it (cf. 1 John 2:27; 4:4).

6.3. James's Teaching Compared to the Rest of Scripture

6.3.1. General

Findings from the analysis of key NT passages on the *Torah* are outlined below. Connections with the nature, content, and function of the *Torah* are indicated in "braces" (i.e. "**{ }**").

(1) Firstly, Jesus' purpose was not to remove the *Torah* - for it is permanent **{nature}** – but to give *Torah* its true and full meaning **{content}** and to realise its intended objective **{function}** (Mat. 5:17-20). Concerning its meaning, Jesus restored its "weightier" matters (of justice, mercy, and faith) to their rightful place as of highest importance, without nullifying the "lighter" matters **{content}** (Mat. 23:23). And concerning *Torah*'s objective, it is that God's people would finally live according to **{function}** *Torah*'s righteous standards **{nature/content}** (Rom. 8:4).

(2) However, *Torah* in itself cannot produce right living due to people's sinful natures **{function}** (Rom. 8:3). But God rectified this through the incarnation and atonement of His own Son, Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:3). Therefore, God acquits sinners (from guilt and condemnation) and puts them right with Himself through the instrument of personal trust in Jesus Christ and complete reliance on His redeeming work for their salvation, rather than through their own works (of obedience to *Torah*) **[justification]** (Rom. 3:28; cf. 8:1).

(3) This, however, does not mean that the *Torah* is terminated or invalidated for the believer **{function}** (Rom. 3:31). Instead of abolishing it, God Himself places the *Torah* (not a "new" *torah*, but His *Torah*) in the minds and inscribes it on the hearts of His New Covenant people (i.e. Christians) (Heb. 8:10); which is where it belongs **{nature}**. This surely includes the Decalogue, which God first inscribed on stone and now on hearts **{content}**. This is so that they may know, understand, love, and obey it **{function}**. God's Spirit

[972] See also: Psa. 119:47-48, 97, 113, 119, 127, 159, 163-167.

enables exactly that, by liberating them from the governing power of sin and death (Rom. 8:2), and by empowering them to live according to *Torah*'s righteous standards, as they yield to Him (Rom. 8:4; cf. Heb. 8:10-12; 1 John 5:4-5) **[Holy Spirit]**. Therefore, the commandments of the *Torah* are not burdensome to them, but a liberating delight **{nature}** (1 John 5:3; cf. Mat. 11:28-30).

(4) It is right, therefore, that Jesus expects professing Christians to teach and obey the *Torah* **{function}** (Mat. 5:19). For to live in sin is to live in disregard and violation of the *Torah* (i.e. "lawlessness"); which is Satan-inspired rebellion against the *Torah*-giver (1 John 3:4, 7-8). Thus *Torah*, by its very nature is the opposite of evil **{nature}**. Unless professing Christians live according to the righteous standards **{nature/content}** of the *Torah* **{function}**, they will not be saved (Mat. 5:20). The reason for this is clear, in the light of the previous two points and of the next:

(5) Those who have a living faith in Christ **[justification]** are born of God and indwelled by His Spirit **[Holy Spirit]** (1 John 5:1; 2:27; 4:4). As a result, they overcome the world with its sinfulness (or lawlessness) (1 John 5:4-5).

Comparing the above with James's teaching on the *Torah* (refer to **Section 5.2.1**), there is remarkable agreement about the nature, content, and function of the *Torah*. Though there are areas where the one or the other seems to be more explicit, nothing has been found where there would be essential disagreement. In fact, they seem to affirm and complement one another in a wonderful way. However, there are two particular areas that need further discussion in order to be satisfied that James and, particularly, Paul can be harmonized as well. The two areas are flagged in "brackets" (i.e. "**[ ]**") above, and are discussed below:

6.3.3. Justification

At face value, there is a tension, and possibly a contradiction, between James's and Paul's teachings about "justification". This has 'caused a consternation to many commentators', as Bird (2016)[973] notes. The tension is 'evident' when James 2:24 and Romans 3:28 are 'set beside each other', as Moo (2000:140) demonstrates:

Jas. 2:24	*A person*	*is justified*	*by works*	*and not by faith alone*
Rom. 3:28	*A person*	*is justified*	*by faith*	*and not by works of the law*

In both cases the three key words: "justified", "works", and "faith", have identical lexical forms (i.e. "δικαιόω", "ἔργον", and "πίστις") in the Greek. But do James and Paul use these words in exactly the same way?

[973] Document has no page numbers. Bird (2016) on "Justification".

- It has been argued in this Study that "works" (ἔργων), in both cases, refer to essentially the same thing, which is "works of the *Torah*" (i.e. doing the good deeds prescribed by the *Torah*) (refer to **Sections 4.2.6 (22)**, **5.3.3 (1)** & **6.2.3**).
- Equally, one could argue that James and Paul refer to "faith" (πίστις) in very similar terms. For James (living) faith 'inevitably produce[s]' works, and for Paul 'obedience [needs] to follow from faith' since he speaks of "the obedience of faith" (Rom. 1:5) (Moo, 2000:141).
- However, as several scholars contend,[974] there seems to be a subtle difference between the ways in which James and Paul use the word "justified" (δικαιόω). Calvin (2010a:315) explains it as follows: Paul means by "justification", 'the gratuitous imputation of righteousness before the tribunal of God', while James means, 'the manifestation of righteousness by the conduct, and that before men'. Stated differently, Paul talks about "being put right", and James about "show to be right" (Louw & Wolvaardt, 2015, Jas. 2:24).[975]

It is thus reasonable to conclude that James and Paul do not use their words in precisely the same way. However, regardless of how exactly the words are nuanced, their theology about "justification by faith" can be harmonised. Thus, Sproul (1995:167) is right in insisting that, 'far from denying *sola fide*', James 'is showing that the faith that justifies is not a faith that is alone'.[976] Saving or justifying faith is living faith that cannot but produce good works. Or as Moo (2000:38) puts it, 'biblical faith cannot exist apart from acts of obedience to God'. On the strength of his teaching elsewhere on faith,[977] it seems safe to say, that Paul would wholeheartedly agree.

Having demonstrated that, while there may be a tension between Paul's and James's statements on "justification", it is not necessarily a contradiction. Rather, it is a healthy tension in which Paul and James are complementing one another in a profound way.[978] While Paul stresses the vital importance of trusting solely in Jesus Christ as Saviour, James stresses the critical importance of putting such trust into action by obeying Him as Lord. Paul braces

[974] See: MacArthur (1998:138); Moo (2000:141-142); Kistemaker (1986:98).

[975] See Louw & Wolvaardt (2015) on "*dikaióō*" (δικαιόω) in Rom. 3:28 and Jas. 2:24 respectively. See also: Calvin (2010a:314); MacArthur (1998:138); Moo (2000:141).

[976] See also Adamson (1976:132-133).

[977] See, for example: Rom. 1:5; 16:26; Gal. 5:6; 1 Thes. 1:3.

[978] See Moo (2000:42).

Christians against "legalism", James braces them against "antinomianism".[979] Both voices need to be heard!

6.3.4. Holy Spirit

As indicated in **subsection (1)** above, Christians cannot live according to the righteous standards of the *Torah*, apart from the Holy Spirit's role of liberating them from the controlling power of sin and empowering them to obey God as they aught.

James, however, seems to be remarkably silent about the Holy Spirit. Of the two mentions of the word "*pneūma*" (πνεῦμα) in the entire Epistle (Jas. 2:26; 4:5), only the latter could conceivably refer to the "Holy Spirit".

Holy Spirit in James 4:5?

According to Harris (ed.) (2010, Jas. 4:5),[980] "*pneūma*" in James 4:5 refers to the third person of the Trinity and could be translated 'Spirit', 'Spirit of God', or 'Holy Spirit'. Similarly, according to BDAG (2000:834-835), the specific reference is to 'God's being as a controlling influence', which could be translated, 'Spirit'. Several commentators have arrived at the same conclusion.[981] Several others,[982] however, maintain that it may possibly refer to the Holy Spirit given to believers, but are then swayed to think that it more likely refers to "God's creative spirit" in human beings (Gen. 2:7), chiefly because James does not explicitly refer to the Holy Spirit elsewhere in his Epistle. Furthermore, many others are convinced that the reference is to our human "spirits".[983]

The other problem with James 4:5 is that it is notoriously difficult to translate.[984] Since the noun, "*pneūma*" (πνεῦμα), is neuter, it can act as a subject or object. And since God the Father is mentioned in the verse before and after, He could be the implied subject in verse 5, especially since He is the subject in verse 6. Thus James 4:5 could be translated in the following ways:

(a) "Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, 'The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously?'" (NKJV).

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[979] See **Glossary of Terms** for "Legalism" and "Antinomianism". See also: **Section 2.4.3**; Bird (2016) on "Justification"; Sproul (1995:167).

[980] Harris (ed.) (2010, Jas. 4:5) assigns LN 12.18 to πνεῦμα (ref. Louw & Nida, 1996:140).

[981] These commentators include, for example: Bauckham (2004:270); Calvin (2010a:322); Martin (1988:150-151); and Ross (1954:78-79).

[982] Including, for example: Blomberg & Kamell (2008:191-192); Moo (2000:190); Osborne (2019:124).

[983] Including, i.a.: Hartin (2003:199-200); Johnson (2008:280-281); Richardson (1997:179-181).

[984] See: Martin (1988:150); Moo (2000:188).

(b) “Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: ‘He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us?’” (NASB).

(c) “Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, ‘He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us?’” (ESV).

(d) “Don't think that there is no truth in the scripture that says, ‘The spirit that God placed in us is filled with fierce desires.’” (GNB).

Similar to the first option, the translation adopted for this Study is: “Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, ‘the Spirit that He caused to dwell in us yearns jealously?’”.

While the exact Scripture(s) that James is referring to is also disputable, it is quite possible that he has Exodus 20:5 in mind, which states (NASB): “*You shall not worship them or serve them [i.e. idols]; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, …*”. As argued in **Section 3.5.2**, this reference to God’s holy jealousy fits the context of James 4:1-10 very well.[985] Now, if the adopted translation is faithful to James’s intention, then James is explicit about the fact that God’s jealousy for His people’s fidelity is communicated to them by the indwelling Holy Spirit. Indeed, one could contend, that the NT theological implication of translations options (b) and (c) would be the same: The indwelling Holy Spirit ministers God’s yearning for His people’s love and loyalty in their spirits (or inner beings). This is surely a powerful motivating and sanctifying force in the lives of believers.

Besides in James 4:5, McKnight (2011:338) also sees possible connections to the Holy Spirit’s presence and operations in Christians in James 1:18[986] and 1:21.[987] Allison (2013:237) sees James 1:17[988] as ‘characteristically linked to the promised Holy Spirit’.[989] Putting these allusions together, James might implicitly refer his readers to the gift of the Holy Spirit by whom they were born again and who implants God’s Word (or *Torah*) as their permanent guide (refer to **Section 4.2.6 (7) – (8)**). It is reasonable to assume that the first readers (refer to **Section**

[985] Aland et.al. (2012:891) lists Exodus 20:5 as an “allusion” or “verbal parallel” for James 4:5. Several scholars also recognise this possible connection, including i.a.: Blomberg & Kamell (2008:190); Martin (1988:150); Moo (2000:190); Ropes (1916:263); Ross (1954:332).

[986] Jas. 1:18 “*having willed He gave birth to us by the Word of truth so that we could be some firstfruit of His creatures.*”

[987] Jas. 1:21 “*Therefore having put aside all moral impurity and abundance of wickedness in humility receive the implanted Word the one able to save your souls.*”

[988] Jas. 1:17 “*Every good gift and every perfect present is from above coming down from the Father of the lights with Whom there is no change or shadow of turning.*”

[989] See also: Blomberg & Kamell (2008:73).

3.3.2), being well familiar with the New Covenant promise in Ezekiel 36:26-27,[990] for example, would have detected allusions to the Holy Spirit in these verses in James.

Holy Spirit in James:

In the search for the Holy Spirit in James, Kirk (1969:24) proposes that James speaks of "wisdom" in a similar way in which other New Testament writers speak of the "Holy Spirit".[991] This is based mainly on the parallels between James's "virtues" of "wisdom from above" (Jas. 3:13-18) and Paul's "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22-23), as well as between James's "gift of wisdom" (Jas. 1:5-8; cf. 1:17) and Paul's "gift of the Spirit" (1 Cor. 1:18-31; Rom. 8:9-11; Eph. 1:17; etc.). Similarly, therefore, Davids (1982:65) contends that '"wisdom" functions for James in an analogous position to that which the "Holy Spirit" occupies in Paul". While more scholars see merit in this perspective,[992] others are not convinced that James intends his reader to automatically think of the "Holy Spirit" when he speaks of "wisdom".[993] Baker (2008:313) thus insists that while 'wisdom and the Holy Spirit may be symbiotic in function, especially for disciples of Jesus, … a distinction between the two for the most part is maintained'. Perhaps one could concede, at the very least, that the Holy Spirit is the empowering or enabling force behind the wisdom that James speaks of.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, while James does not focus overtly on the Holy Spirit, there seem to be several allusions in his Epistle to His role in the life of the believer. James's relative silence can certainly not be taken as a denial of the vitally important role of the Holy Spirit in both the regeneration and sanctification of Christians. It is better to assume, as Moo (2000:27) contends, that James 'knows that they [i.e. his readers] are acquainted with the basic doctrines of the church and does not need to go over them again'. James's focus is on the practical outworking of the theological basis of Christianity (refer to **Section 2.5.3**), rather than on expounding the basis itself. In this way, James is not dissimilar to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.

6.4. Study Objective 6: Harmony Between James's Teaching of the Law and the Rest of the NT

James's teaching about the *Torah* is outlined in **Chapter 5**. But how does James's doctrine of the Law (*Torah*) compare with that of the rest of the NT? This question is critical, not just in

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[990] Ezek. 36:26-27 (NASB) *Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. (27) I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances*.

[991] See Baker (2008:294).

[992] Including for example: Blomberg & Kamell (2008:178-179); Varner (2017:26, 268).

[993] See, for example: Adamson (1976:39); Moo (2000:33-34).

order to corroborate James's teaching with the rest of the NT, but also in order to identify how they may complement each other. The findings in this regard are as follows:

Concerning the nature of the Torah:

Jesus teaches that *Torah* is permanent and connects it with right living. Paul affirms that *Torah*'s standards are righteous, and John defines sin as "*Torah*-lessness". By nature, *Torah* belongs in the hearts of God's people, as Hebrews imply. And John adds that, to the believer, it is not a burden but a liberating delight. James would wholeheartedly concur with all this. But then he adds that *Torah* is given by God; it reflects His perfect character, it defines the standards of His Kingdom, and the basis for final judgment.

Concerning the content of the Torah:

Jesus' purpose was not to empty *Torah* of its original content, but to fill it up by giving it its true and full meaning. Its key ingredients include "justice", "mercy", and "faith", without necessarily excluding the lesser matters such as giving. And according to Hebrews, its core contents surely include the Decalogue. Again, James is in full agreement. He would also affirm what Jesus teaches in Matthew 22:37-40: the grand intent and overarching summary of the *Torah* is love towards God (first and foremost) and love towards one's neighbour (as unto oneself).

Concerning the function of Torah:

Jesus expects His followers to keep and teach the *Torah*. However, as Paul implies, it is not *Torah's* function to produce such obedience. That is why Christ atoned for His people's sin (to free them from guilt against and condemnation by the *Torah*) and secured the Holy Spirit for them to indwell, liberate, and empower them to finally live out God's righteous standards (of the *Torah*) as they should. And that is why, as Hebrews imply, the *Torah* is written on their hearts so that they might know, understand, love, and obey it. While James is comparatively silent on the role of the Holy Spirit, he seconds the normative and instructive function of *Torah* and the internalizing of it. But he adds *Torah*'s functions of reflecting God character, mirroring of their own moral state, being a means of perfection (or sanctification) and blessing, and a safeguard for their freedom. To practice *Torah* is to show *ḥesed* to others, as expression of love to God; as taught by John. To fail to do so is to violate *Torah* and incur blame. Finally, Christians should never place themselves above *Torah* or attempt to usurp the *Torah*-giver's role to judge.

James compared to the Rest of the New Testament:

James is thus thoroughly substantiated by the rest of the New Testament. However, James does add very important teaching points that fill up the New Testament's doctrine on the *Torah*. On the other hand, the rest of the New Testament teaches vital points that James does not overtly teach. More specifically, Paul stresses the critical truth that the believer is solely put

right with God based on their trust in Christ, which is a safeguard against legalism. Whereas James's emphasis is more on obedience to the *Torah* as part of sanctification, which is a safeguard against antinomianism. Finally, while the other NT Letters clearly stress the fact that the believer cannot fulfil the *Torah* without the indwelling and empowering of the Holy Spirit, James presumably only assumes it.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, James's teaching on the *Torah* corresponds with that of Jesus. Moreover, it agrees with and can be harmonized with that of the rest of the New Testament.

CHAPTER 7: STUDY CONCLUSION

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7.1. Introduction

This chapter will firstly outline the major findings from this Study. Since more detailed summaries are provided at the end of each chapter, the focus here will be on the conclusions that were key concerning the meaning and teaching of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James.

Secondly, this conclusion to the Study will provide a critique of the common interpretations of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James, as outlined in **Section 1.1.2**.

Thirdly, attention will be given to practical implications of the Study findings. As part of this, the questions raised under step M14 (**Section 1.5.2**) in the Methodology will be answered.

Finally, suggestions will be made about possible further research.

7.2. The Meaning of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James

As concluded in **Section 4.5** and outlined in **Section 5.2**, James has essentially only one "*nómos*" in mind – God's *Torah* (Law) given through Moses. The context or text of the Letter does not seem to support the view that James really has different "*torahs*" in mind. Rather, everything from the context of James to the details of his contents seems to point towards the conclusion that he is speaking essentially of one *Torah* only. The following dozen findings all support this conclusion:

(1) The character and credentials of James the brother of Jesus as a just man devoted to the *Torah*, and leading Apostle and pillar in the early church, based in Jerusalem. Coming from James, "the" authority figure in Jerusalem, the imperatives in his Letter, defined "an absolute social boundary" that was meant to protect the unity and identity of the readers.

(2) The original receivers, being (predominantly) Jewish Christians who met in their own synagogue (cf. Jas. 2:2), where the *Torah* was doubtlessly read, cherished, and taught.

(3) The likely very early date (mid 40s A.D.) of the Letter and its destination to displaced Jewish Christians who were threatened by worldliness and possible antinomian tendencies.

(4) The purpose of the Letter, according to which the readers are exhorted to practise pure religion and to put their faith into action. For this they need heavenly wisdom in order to be doers of God's instructions (*Torah*) (cf. Jas. 1:25; 2:12; 4:11) so that they can avoid doubleness and strive towards perfection and wholehearted devotion to God in the midst of life's trials.

(5) The structural composition of the Letter, according to which the *Torah* occurs at four key locations (Jas. 1:22-25; 2:8-11; 2:12-13; 4:11-12) and functions as an underlying theme that ties the sections together.

(6) The very Jewishness not just of the Letter, but also of the first recipients whose "Bible" would most likely have been the Greek Translation of the OT (LXX). This suggests that those readers would most naturally have understood "*nómos*" (νόμος) to mean "*Torah*". This is supported by the facts that "*nómos*" (νόμος) is the translation for the word "*Torah*" in the LXX, and that the *Torah* is the foundational core and primary instruction of the Hebrew Scriptures that is built upon and expounded, but not altered or replaced, by later revelation.

(7) With no less than 60 references to, and James's teaching thoroughly rooted in the OT, his thought is firmly grounded in the OT, and should be interpreted in the light of it. This also indicates that, for James, the OT is not merely informative but is also normative.

(8) Six (Jas. 2:8 (Lev. 19:18); Jas. 2:11x4 (Exod. 20:14; Deut. 5:18; Exod. 20:13; Deut. 5:17); Jas. 2:23 (Gen. 15:6)) of James's seven quotations or citations are from the *Torah*. He alludes several times to the "*Shema*" (and thus the first table of the Decalogue) (Jas. 1:12, 19; 2:5, 19; 4:12), and he quotes the "love commandment" (summarising the second table of the Decalogue) (Jas. 2:8) and alludes to it (Jas. 4:12). Additionally, he cites both the 6th and 7th Commandments (Jas. 2:11) and alludes to the 2nd commandment (Jas. 4:1-5). Moreover, he alludes to several (moral) instructions in the "Holiness Code" (Lev. 19) (Lev. 19:12 – Jas. 5:12; Lev. 19:13 – Jas. 5:4; Lev. 19:15 - Jas. 2:1, 9; Lev. 19:16 – Jas. 4:11; Lev. 19:17b – Jas. 5:20; Lev. 19:18a – Jas. 5:9).

(9) The whole content of James focuses on the "weightier matters" of the *Torah*, with each section addressing either "faith/faithfulness" (or loving God, 1st Table) or "justice"/"mercy" (or loving one's neighbour, 2nd Table).

(10) The thought structures (with their parallelisms and chiasms) within which each of the "*nómos*-terms" (νόμος) occur strongly suggest that the terms, most likely function basically as synonyms. This is supported by the related words and phrases in the semantic discourse analysis.

(11) Each of the "*nómos"* passages has an overt moral setting, which strongly alludes to the *Torah*. In James 1:19-27, believers are exhorted to work out God's righteousness and practice pure and undefiled religion. In James 2:8-13 believers are warned against sin and judgment and instructed to carry out God's kingdom and liberating "*nómos"*. In James 4:11-12 they are urged to not to speak against or judge others, and thereby the "*nómos"*, but to be doers of it for there is but one "*Nómos*-giver" and Judge.

(12) The compound terms with the word "*nómos"* (*nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías, nómon basilikòn*, *hólon tòn nómon,* and *nómou eleutherías*) are found to describe qualities or aspects of "*nómos"* rather than to distinguish between essentially different "*nómoses"*. Accordingly, "*nómos"* in James is the "whole" "*nómos*", which is "perfect", "liberating",

and the "*nómos*" of God's "Kingdom". In each of these cases and contexts, "*Torah* as instruction" is the most natural use within the biblical semantic range for the word "*nómos*" (νόμος).

The conclusion that "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James means *Torah*, is found to be the most reasonable and natural one. Indeed, one may ask, "In the absence of clear evidence to the contrary, what more evidence is needed to confirm that James is indeed referring to the one and only *Torah*?"

7.3. The Teaching of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James

James's teaching about "*nómos*" (νόμος) is outlined in **Section 4.6** and supplemented with the findings in **Sections 3.4.4, 3.5.6 & 3.7**. It is recast in terms of its nature, content, and function in **Section 5.3**. In summary, James's doctrine of the *Torah* consists of:

- **Nature of the *Torah*:** God is the giver and source of the *Torah*. It is perfect, righteous, and liberating in its essence. And violation of it is sin.
- **Content of the *Torah*:** The *Torah* is God's *Torah* given through Moses, the core of which is the Ten Commandments, the summary and purpose of which is the Two Greatest Commandments, the exposition and application of which are found in the rest of the Pentateuch and Scriptures as a whole, and the priority of which is to express and practice "justice", "mercy", and "faith". James focuses on the "moral" commandments of the *Torah* and is silent on the "ceremonial" commandments. One has to look at the rest of the New Testament for clarity about the applicability of the latter.
- **Function of the *Torah*:** The *Torah* reflects God's character and the righteous standards of His kingdom, and it mirrors the true moral state of the believer. It delineates pure and useful religion, it defines sin, and it outlines God's standards for judgment. *Torah* instructs believers in their moral and social obligations, and trains them to practice "*ḥesed"* and to be God's merciful people. Being implanted within, the *Torah* is a guide to protect believers against transcendent danger, is a means for their own perfection, and a safeguard for their freedom.

James's teaching about the *Torah* (*nómos)* is supported by the following:

(a) Thorough exegetical analysis of the three "*nómos*" passages in James (1:19-27; 2:8-13; 4:11-12) within context. This includes: researching the historical, literary, and social contexts of James; examining the (OT) biblical roots of James's teaching; meticulous thought structure analysis and semantic discourse analysis of the key passages; and extensive engagement with secondary sources, including scholarly works.

(b) Comprehensive validation of James's teaching within the broader biblical and theological framework. This demonstrates that James's doctrine of the *Torah* is firmly grounded in the OT and thoroughly supported by the NT.

(c) Verification against seven key New Testament passages (Mat. 5:17-20; 23:23-24; Rom. 3:28 & 31; 8:1-4; Heb. 8:10-12; 1 John 3:4; 5:1-5), each of which are carefully analysed to accurately expound their meanings. This has proven that James's teaching about the *Torah* is perfectly consistent with that of Jesus, and that it corresponds well with that of the other Letters in the New Testament. Differences were not only found to be harmonizable, but also to be complementary. Where James is silent, for example, Paul speaks. And where Paul is silent or unclear, James speaks with clarity. Both the voices of Paul and James need to be heard!

7.4. Critique of common interpretations of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James

As outlined in **Section 1.1.2**, "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James has been variously interpreted. Of the nine options listed there, the last four are exegetically very unlikely, if not impossible. They should therefore be dismissed. They include:

(6) Christ's teaching or the Gospel as replacement of *Torah*.

(7) The requirement to love without absolute external commands.

(8) The "law of love" which subsumes under a single principle Christ's teaching and all that *Torah* demands.

(9) A combination of the Old Testament and the Gospel.

The first option, being "*Torah* as a whole (the Law of the OT as it stands)", is possible, especially in the light of James 2:10, which speaks of keeping the "whole *Torah*" (ὅλον τὸν νόμον). This possibility is further strengthened by Jesus' teachings in Matthew 5:18 and 23:23. However, since James (and indeed the rest of the NT) is reasonably silent regarding the "ceremonial" commandments, Options 2 to 5 have merit.

Options 2 and 3 are similar and are discussed together. "*Nómos*" in James could be, "*Torah*, excluding the ritual and ethnic commands" (Option 2), or "The Decalogue plus some or all of the ethical precepts in the Old Testament" (Option 3). In favour of these two options is the fact that James focusses, perhaps exclusively, on the "moral" commandments in the *Torah*. As discussed in **Section 5.3.2**, it is possible that James excluded the "ceremonial" commandments because they have been brought to their designed end through the redemptive work of Christ. And since they are no longer normative, it is logical that they are not mentioned.

Options 4 and 5 can also be argued to also be similar. Accordingly, "*nómos*" in James could be understood as, "*Torah* as interpreted, personified, and fulfilled by/through Christ" (Option 4), or "*Torah* as fulfilment of the New Covenant promise in Jeremiah" (Option 5). In favour of these expressions are the multiple allusions in James to Christ's teachings, particularly in the Sermon on the Mount,[994] and the possible allusion to Jeremiah 31:33 in James 1:21. Known as, "the law of Christ" (refer to **Glossary of Terms**), Option 4 is attractive from a theological perspective, and it may adequately capture James's use of "*nómos*". This, however, is on the proviso that it is well defined (as in the **Glossary of Terms**) and is not seen as essentially different from the *Torah*. Since James's teaching is so thoroughly rooted in the OT, and since his attention is on specific commandments in the *Torah*, and especially the Decalogue, the language of Options 2 and 3 is more preferable. It also safeguards against tendencies to replace the *Torah* with a "new *torah*" or the "love commandment", or to strip it of its normative power, as in some of the views of the Law (refer to **Appendix A**).

The interpretation and description of "*nómos*" (νόμος), as set out in the "content of *Torah*" in **Section 7.3**, seems to fit the context and flow of thought in James the best. Accordingly, the suggested interpretation and description are as follows:

> *"Nómos" (νόμος) in James is God's Torah given through Moses, the core of which is the Ten Commandments, the summary and purpose of which is the Two Greatest Commandments, the exposition and application of which are found in the rest of the Pentateuch and Scriptures as a whole, and the priority of which is to express and practice "justice", "mercy", and "faith". Though James focuses on the "moral" commandments of the Torah and is silent on the "ceremonial" commandments, believers may not violate any of Torah's commandments.*

7.5. Implications of the Study findings

Implications that emerge from the findings of this Study include, at least, the following:

Firstly, while "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James may appear not to be well defined and to come up only in passing, this Study has revealed that it features fairly prominently in James and is definitely not abstract or undefined. Close examination has shown that the meaning and teaching of "*nómos*" (νόμος) in James can be determined with a reasonably high level of confidence and accuracy. Moreover, James has been found to make a very significant and indispensable contribution to the NT's doctrine of the Law of God.

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[994] Allusions include (refer to Allison, 2013:56-57): Mat. 5:3 (Luke 6:20) – Jas. 2:5; Mat. 5:11-12 (Luke 6:22-23) – Jas. 1:2 (cf. 1:12); Mat. 5:33-37 – Jas. 5:12; Mat. 6:19-21 (Luke 12:33-24) – Jas. 5:1-3; Mat. 7:1-5 (Luke 6:37, 41-42) – Jas. 4:11-12; Mat. 7:7-11 (Luke 11:9-13) – Jas. 1:5, 17; 4:3; Mat. 7:24-27 (Luke 6:47-49) – Jas. 1:22-23; Luke 6:24 – Jas. 5:1-3; Luke 6:25 – Jas. 4:9; 5:1.

Secondly, when all the clues in the Letter and about the Letter are put together, enough clarity about what James means by "*nómos*" (νόμος) has been derived so that several of the commonly held interpretations of "*nómos*" can and should be ruled out (refer to **Section 7.4**).

Thirdly, several common questions about the Law can be answered with certainty from the Epistle of James. Questions and answers include:

- Has the Gospel superseded or terminated the Law? James's answer would be an emphatic, "*mè génoito*",[995] as echoed by the apostle Paul (in Rom. 3:31) and established by the Lord Jesus Christ (in Mat. 5:17-20). Besides, how could one be a transgressor of the Law (Jas. 2:9-11), or why would James instruct his readers to be doers of the Law (Jas. 1:22-25; 2:12; 4:11), or warn them that they will be judged according to it (Jas. 2:12; 4:12), if it has been abolished? Nothing in James indicates that the Law is anything other than in full force, and that for our good. As Spurgeon (1882:9) says:

  'I say you have deprived the Gospel of its most able auxiliary when you have set aside the Law! … the Law serves a most necessary and blessed purpose and it must not be removed from its place'.

- Is the Law's function only to condemn people? James does teach that the Law convicts sinners as transgressors (Jas. 2:9-11). But, as outlined in the "functions of the *Torah*" in **Section 6.3**, this is only one of the many roles of the Law, according to James. In fact, the instructive and normative role of the *Torah* in the lives of Christians is significantly more dominant in James. Clearly, therefore, the "didactical use" (see "uses of the Law" in **Glossary of Terms**) of the *Torah* is of primary importance for James.

- Are Christians supposed to teach and obey the Law? James 1:25 exhorts believers to study (and by implication teach) the *Torah* with eagerness and effort. And every "*nómos*" passage exhorts them to be doers of (i.e. to obey) the *Torah*. In fact, James's whole thrust is to urge them to practice pure and useful religion and to put their faith into action through works of the *Torah*, through which they express love to God and their neighbours, and through which they themselves are being perfected in the midst of life's trials. Not to teach *Torah* is to ignore God's instructive voice. Failure to obey the *Torah* is to failure to obey God, which is failure to love Him.

- What will happen if the church ignores the Law and has a negative attitude towards it? As indicated in **Section 2.4**, James combats worldliness and moral laxity, possibly due to antinomian tendencies. An attitude of negativity towards the Law, or denying the need for it, can produce exactly what James counters. Besides becoming worldly in the

[995] Translated: "God forbid" (KJV); "May it never be!" (NASB); "By no means!" (ESV); "Absolutely not" (TPT).

present, those with an antinomian disposition will face the One *Torah*-giver and Judge in the future, the One who is able to save and to destroy (Jas. 4:12).

Fourthly, James's teaching about the *Torah* provides clear absolutes for testing the validity of commonly held views about the Law, such as those referred to in **Section 1.1.1** and outlined in **Appendix A**. For a start, James's teaching casts serious doubts on, if not falsifies, the views that the Gospel abolished or replaced the *Torah*, such as in the "Dispensational View".[996] It refutes the "Lutheran View" that denies the need for and primacy of the "didactical use" of the Law in Christianity (see "uses of the Law" in **Glossary of Terms**). Lastly, it calls into question the belief that OT instructions are only normative for Christians if they are restated in the NT.

Fifthly, as a result of the gradual removal of the *Torah* from the church's teaching, or the dismissal of it as being "fulfilled", or the distortion of it as being "legalistic", or the maligning of it as being "anti-Gospel", or the replacement of it by so-called "love", the church is increasingly without the Law. Sproul (2000:92) makes this staggering observation, which underlines the predicament that the church finds itself in:

> *'Perhaps we are living in the most antinomian period in Church history. It is a time when attention to the Law of God is not considered all that important. This presents a pernicious form of Canon reductionism. The very rule of God Himself is removed from our consideration by it.'*

In the light of James's positive, clear, and informative teaching about the validity and authority of the *Torah* in Christianity, the evangelical church needs to hear and heed the voice of James, perhaps more than ever before. They can no longer afford to hold to a doctrine of the Law that does not factor in James's actual contribution. They can ill afford to continue to deprive their people, especially their young people, of instruction from and application of the *Torah*. For, as Kaiser (1990:301) remarks that, 'to emphasize grace to the exclusion of the resulting obligation to the moral law will land our present-day churches precisely where they find themselves in the current cultural morass'.[997] Jackman (2006:140) is right that, 'all sorts of moral disasters await those who try to separate clear-cut obedience to God's law from love for him'. Sadly, those moral disasters are playing themselves out in the Western Church that sees little directive value in their God-given moral compass (which is the *Torah*), and is consequently rapidly heading in the same direction as a society that could not care less about God and His absolute and pure morality.

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[996] And also Rosner's "repudiation, replacement, and re-appropriation" model (refer to **Appendix A**).

[997] Kaiser (1990:301) added that, several recent surveys have shown that, young evangelicals 'act and think about many ethical issues almost exactly as do' their contemporaries outside the church.

7.6. Suggestions for possible further research

This Study has established James's teaching about the Law. The Study has demonstrated that it corresponds well with that of Jesus, and that it complements and does not contradict that of the rest of the New Testament. A similar exegetical study could be done for the Letter to the Romans. Specific attention could be given to Paul's apparently negative statements about the *Torah* (in, for example, Rom. 6:14-15; 7:1-7; 10:4), to demonstrate that they can and should be interpreted in such a way that the clear teachings of Jesus and James about the *Torah* are not contradicted or nullified.

In the field of Systematic Theology, the church may be well served if a study is undertaken to develop a comprehensive statement of the NT's teaching about the *Torah*, with due consideration of James's contribution to the topic.

Thirdly, a historical theological study about the development of the church's doctrine of the Law, and how it has shifted over time, may offer fresh insights as to why there is such diversity and confusion about the role of the Law in Christianity today.

Lastly, a contemporary study of the morality of the church and its connection with the church's teaching about the Law, or lack of it, might highlight the consequences of what seems to be increasing antinomian tendencies in modern evangelicalism.

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APPENDIX A: VIEWS ON THE LAW

(1) **"A Messianic Jewish Approach":** Lancaster, Janici and Michael (HaYesod, 2017:9.4) point out that 'Traditional Judaism counted and codified a total of 613 commandments within the *Torah*'; consisting of 365 "negative" (prohibitive) and 248 "positive" (exhortative) commandments. According to them (HaYesod, 2017:9.5), ***only 271*** (77 "positive" and 194 "negative") ***commandments of the 613 in Torah are 'applicable in our current situation'***, 26 of which are only applicable in the Land of Israel. They (HaYesod, 2017:9.5) explain[998], that the reason why the other commandments of the *Torah* are not currently in force, is ***because those 'related to ritual holiness and purity' require 'the Sanctuary'*** (i.e. Jerusalem Temple) ***to exist, and those related to the 'court of law' require 'ordained and authorised judges'*** (i.e. the Sanhedrin).

(2) **"Theonomic Reformed":** According the Bahnsen (1999:142)[999], ***Christians 'should presume that Old Testament "standing laws"[1000] continue to be morally binding in the New Testament, unless they are rescinded or modified by further revelation.'*** He (Bahnsen, 1999:142) adds that these "standing laws" revealed by God are 'a reflection of His immutable moral character and are absolute in the sense of being non-arbitrary, objective, universal, and established in advance of particular circumstances; thus they are applicable to general types of moral situations'. Furthermore, he (Bahnsen, 1999:142) explains that since the New Covenant 'supersedes' the Old, it changed 'the application of sacrificial, purity, and "separation" principles, redefining the people of God, and altering the significance of the promised land'. And 'the civil precepts of the Old Testament (standing "judicial" laws) are a model of perfect social justice for all cultures'. See also: Dorsey (1991:324) on "Christian Reconstructionism".

(3) **"Theonomic Reformed":** As outlined in the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646). The Law of God consists of "moral", "ceremonial", and "judicial" (or "civil") commands. The first are summed up in the Decalogue, which does 'forever bind all'. The second contains ordinances of worship and those prefiguring Christ, all of which 'are now abrogated'. The third 'expired together with the State' of OT Israel. ***All three uses*** *("pedagogical", "civil",*

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[998] Quoting: Chaim, Chofetz. (1990:11). *The Concise Book of Mitzvoth*. New York: Fledheim Publishers.

[999] Bahnsen is a member of the Reformed Presbyterians of North America, who also subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith, but have a more conservative interpretation and application of it. For example, they 'reject the teaching that believers are not required to keep all of the Ten Commandments under the New Testament'. Ref.: *The Constitution of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America*, Updated November 2018, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Crown & Covenant Publication, p.A-56.

[1000] 'Policy directives applicable over time to classes of individuals …, in contrast to particular directives for an individual … or positive commands for a distinct incident.'

and "didactic") ***of the Law are affirmed for the moral commandments of the Law***. ***And***, as pointed out by McKim (1996:180), ***the third use 'has been seen as the principal use in Reformation theology***'. This is in line with Calvin (Institutes, 2.7.12) who wrote that the Law of God 'reaches its proper end' in the "third use". See: "Decalogue" and "uses of the Law". See also: Dorsey (1991:323) on "Covenant Theology".

(4) **"Witherington's New Covenantal Approach":** According to Ben Witherington III[1001] (2018:xxiii-xxiv), both the Old (Mosaic) and New Covenants have "Law" (or "instruction"), which is 'teaching for devotees of God who have already been called, chosen, saved … by a gracious and merciful God who nonetheless requires justice and righteousness of His people, as a reflection of His own character'. He (Witherington, 2018:xxiii) believes that ***the "Law" in the New Covenant consists of the commandments taught in the New Testament, 'some of which [are] old[1002] and some of which [are] new'***. Witherington, (2018:xxiv) proposes that those commandments of the Mosaic Law that are not explicitly reaffirmed in the NT (and are therefore no longer binding), nevertheless do not 'cease to be Scripture for Christians', and should therefore not be applied in a "legal" way, but should instead be applied 'Christologically, or by typology or analogy, or homiletically'.

(5) **"Lutheran":** The Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord (1577) states that the Law of God is useful to: (1) maintain 'external discipline and decency' against 'disobedient men', (2) to bring them to 'a knowledge of their sins', and (3) once they are converted they 'live and walk in the law' (S.D. 6.1). However, against the third use some Lutherans argue that the regenerate do not need 'teaching concerning good works … from the Law' but 'do freely of themselves what God requires of them, by the prompting and impulse of the Holy Ghost' (S.D. 6.2). Over against this, other Lutherans argue that 'it is just the Holy Ghost who uses the written law for instruction' with 'the truly believing' (S.D. 6.3). Lutheran Theologian Hultgren (2015:97) explains that for the first party, 'law and Spirit are basically antithetical to each other', and that for the second party, while 'Christians are internally free from law … they are still guided by the law'. He goes on to explain that, 'the real enemy of human freedom is not divine law but the power of sin', and that 'divine law for the Christian believer [is] not the opposite of freedom' but is 'the proper form by which true freedom is shaped' (Hultgren, 2015:110). So, ***while (all) Lutherans agree with the first two uses of the Law, not all agree with the third use, and***, according to Hultgren (2015:96), ***there is general agreement that the second use is the principal use'***. See: "uses of the Law".

[1001] A United Methodist, U.S.

[1002] Only those commandments of the Mosaic Law that are restated and taken up by Jesus and the Apostles.

(6) **"Theocentric":** Dorsey (1999:4) proposed a 'compromised view' that 'seeks to retrain the strengths of both continuity and discontinuity perspectives' on the Law. Accordingly, Dorsey (1999:18-19) suggested that ***the Law in the Old Testament is 'entirely inapplicable to Christians in a legal sense', but at the same time it is 'profoundly applicable in a revelatory and didactic sense'***. By this Dorsey (1999:5, 11) means that the OT laws are not 'intended to govern the church directly', but since they are still inspired, they have value for 'determining theological truths, correcting misconceptions, exposing and correcting wrong behaviour, and training and equipping the Christian in righteousness', as per 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

(7) **"Dispensational":** According to Strickland (1999:277), 'the law of Christ is the new covenant counterpart to the Mosaic Law'; both of which are 'specific applications of God's eternal moral standard.' Furthermore, Strickland (1999:277) asserts that the "law of Christ" 'is no mere rephrasing of the Mosaic Law, for it consists not in a concrete corpus of demands, but rather of basic principles, for each believer is promised permanent indwelling by the Holy Spirit. ***Since the Holy Spirit ministers in the New Testament believer on behalf of Jesus Christ, there is no need for any lengthy, detailed, codified, external means of restraint as in the Mosaic Law***.' Strickland (1999:278) contends that the 'validity and applicability' of the Mosaic Law is limited to its 'revelatory function' in that it 'reveals God's character', but its 'regulatory function' ceased with the 'Mosaic dispensation'. He (Strickland, 1999:279) concedes that the Mosaic Law does reveal 'the problem of sin' and 'the necessity of grace in redemption', but denies that it is 'binding for the church saint'. He (Strickland, 1999:279) concludes that 'the Mosaic Law is antithetical to the Gospel and has no part in it', and that 'Law and grace as methods of justification must not be allowed to mix, or else grace has been lost.' See also: Ryrie (1967:239-247) and Dorsey (1991:323) on "Dispensationalism".

(8) **Rosner's "repudiation, replacement, and re-appropriation" model:** According to Rosner (2013:39), the Apostle Paul 'repudiates the law, radically replaces it, and wholeheartedly reappropriates it'. He (Rosner 2013:66-67) reckons that Paul 'depicts the law as an enslaving power' from which those under it 'need rescuing' and that it 'failed its purpose to bring life because it could not be kept perfectly'. Rosner (2013:81) claims that ***the law 'is abolished by Christ'***. And he (Rosner, 2013:137, 184, 204) claims that ***the law is reappropriated as "prophecy"*** (in that it is to be read by Christians as 'testifying to the Gospel'), ***and as "wisdom"*** (not as 'commandments to be obeyed' but as 'wisdom for living'). And so, as Rosner (2013:138, 160) reckons, the very category of "law" has become irrelevant for Christians.

APPENDIX B: JAMES'S USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

OT CITATIONS, QUOTATIONS, ALUSIONS, AND ECHOES IN JAMES

#	James	OT Scripture	OT Section			Type		Match
			Torah	Prophets	Writings	Aland (2012)	Jackson (2015)	
1	Jas. 1:5	Prov. 2:3-6			1	A / VP	A	1
2	Jas. 1:10	Psa. 102:4			1	A / VP	A	1
3	Jas. 1:10	Psa. 102:11			1	A / VP	A	1
4	Jas. 1:10	Isa. 40:6-7		1		A / VP	A	1
5	Jas. 1:11	Isa. 40:6-7		1		A / VP	A	1
6	Jas. 1:11	Psa. 102:4			1	A / VP	A	1
7	Jas. 1:11	Psa. 102:11			1	A / VP	A	1
8	Jas. 1:19	Eccl. 7:9			1	A / VP	A	1
9	Jas. 1:26	Psa. 34:13			1	A / VP	A	1
10	Jas. 1:26	Psa. 39:1			1	A / VP	A	1
11	Jas. 1:26	Psa. 141:3			1	A / VP	A	1
12	Jas. 2:1	Job 34:19			1	-	A	
13	Jas. 2:8	Lev. 19:18	1			Q	C	1
14	Jas. 2:9	Deut. 1:17	1			A / VP	A	1
15	Jas. 2:11	Exod. 20:14	1			Q	Q	1
16	Jas. 2:11	Deut. 5:18	1			Q	Q	1
17	Jas. 2:11	Exod. 20:13	1			Q	Q	1
18	Jas. 2:11	Deut. 5:17	1			Q	Q	1
19	Jas. 2:21	Gen. 22:9	1			A / VP	A	1
20	Jas. 2:21	Gen. 22:12	1			A / VP	A	1
21	Jas. 2:23	Gen. 15:6	1			Q	Q	1
22	Jas. 2:23	2 Chr. 20:7			1	A / VP	E	1
23	Jas. 2:23	Isa. 51:2		1		-	E	
24	Jas. 2:23	Isa. 41:8		1		A / VP	E	1
25	Jas. 2:25	Josh. 2:4		1		A / VP	A	1
26	Jas. 2:25	Josh. 6:17		1		A / VP	A	1
27	Jas. 2:25	Josh 2:15		1		A / VP	A	1
28	Jas. 3:8	Psa. 140:3			1	A / VP	A	1
29	Jas. 3:9	Gen. 1:26-27	1			A / VP	A	1
30	Jas. 3:18	Isa. 32:17		1		A / VP	A	1
31	Jas. 4:5	Exod. 20:5	1			A / VP	E	1
32	Jas. 4:6	Prov. 3:34			1	Q	C	1
33	Jas. 4:8	Isa. 1:15-17		1		A / VP	A	1
34	Jas. 4:8	Zec. 1:3		1		A / VP	A	1
35	Jas. 4:8	Mal. 3:7		1		A / VP	A	1
36	Jas. 4:8	Prov. 27:1			1	-	A	
37	Jas. 4:10	Job 5.11			1	A / VP	A	1
38	Jas. 4:13	Prov. 27:1			1	A / VP	-	

#	James	OT Scripture	OT Section			Type		Match
			Torah	Prophets	Writings	Aland (2012)	Jackson (2015)	
39	Jas. 4:14	Prov. 27:1			1	A / VP	-	
40	Jas. 5:3	Psa. 21:9			1	A / VP	-	
41	Jas. 5:4	Gen. 4:10	1			A / VP	-	
42	Jas. 5:4	Lev. 19:13	1			A / VP	-	
43	Jas. 5:4	Psa. 18:6			1	A / VP	-	
44	Jas. 5:4	Isa. 5:9		1		A / VP	-	
45	Jas. 5:4	Mal. 3:5		1		A / VP	-	
46	Jas. 5:5	Jer. 12:3		1		A / VP	E	1
47	Jas. 5:5	Jer. 25:34		1		A / VP	E	1
48	Jas. 5:7	Jer. 5:24		1		A / VP	-	
49	Jas. 5:7	Joel 2:23		1		A / VP	-	
50	Jas. 5:11	Exod. 34:6	1			A / VP	E	1
51	Jas. 5:11	Dan. 12:12			1	-	E	
52	Jas. 5:11	Jon. 4:2		1		-	E	
53	Jas. 5:11	Neh. 9:17			1	-	E	
54	Jas. 5:11	Psa. 86:15			1	-	E	
55	Jas. 5:11	Psa. 103:8			1	A / VP	E	1
56	Jas. 5:11	Psa. 111:4			1	A / VP	E	1
57	Jas. 5:11	Joel 2:13		1		-	E	
58	Jas. 5:17	1 Kgs. 17:1		1		A / VP	A	1
59	Jas. 5:18	1 Kgs. 18:42-45		1		A / VP	A	1
60	Jas. 5:20	Prov. 10:12			1	A / VP	-	
		Total	**14**	**21**	**25**			**41**

Key: A – allusion; C – citation; E – echo; Q – quotation; VP – verbal parallel.

OT ROOTS IN JAMES 1:2-21

Teaching (with absolutes)			*Torah*	Prophets	Writings
1	Jas. 1:2-4	God tests His people through trials	Deut. 4:34; 9:19; 29:3	Jer. 20:12; Zec. 13:9	Job 23:10; Psa. 94:8; 139:23-24
2		Purpose of trials is to expose hearts, refine faith, and do good	Gen. 22:1-2; Exod. 16:4; Deut. 8:2, 16; 13:3-4	Jer. 20:12; Zec. 13:9	Job 23:10; Psa. 94:8; 139:23-24
3		God's people are to rejoice in Him in their trials			Psa. 66:1, 6, 8, 10-12
4	Jas. 1:5-8	"Wisdom" and "understanding" are from God	Exod. 36:1; Deut. 4:6		
5		Wisdom is to be prayed for, and that they are given (liberally) by the LORD in answer to prayer		1 Kgs. 3:5; 9-10; 7:14; Isa. 11:2	Prov. 2:3-4, 6; 1 Chron. 22:12; 2 Chron. 1:10, 12
6		It is "wisdom" and "understanding" to keep the *Torah*	Deut. 4:6		

Teaching (with absolutes)			*Torah*	Prophets	Writings
7		"Wisdom" and "understanding" are needed in order to keep the "*Torah*"			1 Chron. 22:12
8		Believers are to pray prayers of faith	Gen. 20:17	1 Kgs. 17:20-21	Psa. 18:6
9		Need for faith and the avoidance of wickedness in prayer			Psa. 37:5; 66:18
10	Jas. 1:9-11	The "humble" and how God sees and reversed their fortunes	Gen. 15:13-14; 31:7, 9, 41		
11		God's people to be "humble" before Him	Lev. 16:29, 31; 23:27, 32	Isa. 66:2	Psa. 34:2, 18
12		The LORD's favour is on the "humble"	Num. 12:3; Exod. 33:12-23	Isa. 66:2	Psa. 34:2, 18
		Fleeting nature of wealth	Gen. 31:9		Prov. 23:4-5
13	Jas. 1:12-15	Understanding the nature of sin and temptation, the reason for keeping God's instructions, and the benefits of doing so.	Gen. 3:6, 12-17; Gen. 3:1-5; Deut. 5:10; 6:4-6; 30:20; Deut. 30:15-16	Isa. 56:2; Jer. 17:17	Psa. 1:1-2; 94:12; 112:1; Prov. 3:13; 8:34; 28:14: 32:1-2; 34:8; 40:4; 84:5, 12
14		The LORD's perfection and purity (separation from evil)	Deut. 32:4	Hab. 1:13	Psa. 5:4
15	Jas. 1:16-18	The fall as the prototype of deception	Gen. 3:1-6		
16		Do not be deceived or led astray	Deut. 4:19; 11:28; 13:5; 30:17	Isa. 53:6; Ezek. 13:2-3, 10; Hos. 4:12; Amos 2:4	Psa. 94:10; Prov. 1:10; 21:16
17		The LORD is the source of all good and is Himself the greatest good			Psa. 16:2
18		The *Torah* as a good and perfect gift from the LORD			Prov. 4:2; Psa. 19:7
19		The unchanging goodness of the LORD	Gen. 1:14-16; Exod. 15:18; Num. 23:19	1 Sam. 15:29; Isa. 46:9-11; Jer. 31:35; Mal. 3:6	Psa. 9:7; 33:11; 102:25-27; 136:7-9
20		God's words and *Torah* are "the truth"		2 Sam. 7:28	Psa. 19:7; 119:43-48, 50, 93-94, 142, 151, 160; Prov. 22:20-21; Eccl. 12:10
21		God's people to give their "firstfruit"	Num. 18:12, 29-32; Exod. 13:2, 12; 22:29; Lev. 23:10-11; Deut. 18:4	Ezek. 20:31, 40; 44:30; 45:1, 6, et.al.	2 Chron. 31:5, 10; Psa. 77:51; 104:36
22		The LORD's people are themselves the LORD's firstfruits	Exod. 13:2, 12; 22:29	Jer. 2:3	
23	Jas. 1:19-21	Be quick to listen			Prov. 1:5; 14:29; 15:18; 16:32; 17:28; 18:13; 19:11; 22:17; 29:20
24		Be eager to listen to the LORD's instructions	Deut. 6:4; cf. Exod. 24:7		
25		Do not speak rashly	Num. 20:10-12		Psa. 106:33

Teaching (with absolutes)			*Torah*	Prophets	Writings
26		Put aside impurity	Gen. 35:2; Exod. 19:15; 20:3; Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2; Deut. 5:7	Josh. 24:14, 23; Isa. 1:6; 55:7; Ezek. 18:31-32; 20:7; 43:9	
27		The LORD's commandments are to be received and treasured in the heart	Deut. 6:6; 11:18; 30:6-8; 30:14-16		Psa. 119:9-11; Prov. 3:1-3
28		The *Torah* is perfect and has a blessed and redemptive function			Psa. 1; 19:7-11
		Elements	20	14	22
		References	61	37	74
		Total		172	

APPENDIX C: GREEK – ENGLISH INTERLINEAR TEXT FOR JAMES

Notes:

1. The Greek Text, English translation, and thought units below have been adopted from Scripture Direct's Greek–English Interlinear New Testament. (https://www.scripturedirect.com).
2. For the Greek Text, Scripture Direct used basically the same wording as that by Nestle-Aland 26 & 27 and UBS 3 & 4.
3. Revisions were made to Scripture Directs' English translation to reflect a more literal rending. These changes are indicated in highlighted (additions/replacements) and in strikethrough (deletions/replaced) text.
4. Revisions were made with the aid of:
    - Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000). A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature (3rd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
    - Harris, W. H., III. (2010). The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear New Testament: SBL Edition (Jas 4:15). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.
    - Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1). New York: United Bible Societies.
5. Νόμος-terms are transliterated rather than translated. This is to keep the interpretation of νόμος "neutral" at the outset of the study in order to allow the outcomes of the study to inform the interpretation and translation.

1:1 a. Ἰάκωβος θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοῦλος
James a slave of God and of (the) Lord Jesus Christ
b. ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ
to the twelve tribes those in the diaspora
c. χαίρειν
greetings
1:2 a. πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἡγήσασθε ἀδελφοί μου
consider (it) all joy my ~~fellow believers~~ brothers and sisters
b. ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις
~~when~~ whenever you ~~experience testings of~~ fall into various ~~kinds~~ trials
1:3 a. γινώσκοντες ὅτι
knowing that
b. τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως
the ~~genuineness~~ testing of your faith
κατεργάζεται ὑπομονήν
~~accomplishes~~ brings about endurance
1:4 a. ἡ δὲ ὑπομονὴ εργον τέλειον ἐχέτω
and let endurance ~~cause~~ have ~~a genuine~~ perfect ~~deed~~ work
b. ἵνα ἦτε τέλειοι καὶ ὁλόκληροι
so that you may be perfect and ~~whole~~ complete
c. ἐν μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι
lacking in nothing
1:5 a. εἰ δέ τις ὑμῶν λείπεται σοφίας
now if anyone of you lacks wisdom
b. αἰτείτω παρὰ τοῦ διδόντος θεοῦ πᾶσιν ἁπλῶς
let him ask ~~of~~ from God the One giving to all generously
c. καὶ μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος
and not reproaching
d. καὶ δοθήσεται αὐτῷ
and it will be given to him
1:6 a. αἰτείτω δὲ ἐν πίστει
but let him ask in faith
b. μηδὲν διακρινόμενος
doubting nothing
c. ὁ γὰρ διακρινόμενος
~~because~~ for the one doubting
d. εοικεν κλύδωνι θαλάσσης
~~he~~ is like a wave of the sea
e. ἀνεμιζομένῳ
driven ~~on~~ by the wind
f. καὶ ῥιπιζομένῳ
and tossed about
1:7 a. μὴ γὰρ οἰέσθω ὁ ανθρωπος ἐκεῖνος
for let not that person ~~think~~ suppose
b. ὅτι λήμψεται τι παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου
that he will receive anything from the Lord
1:8 a. ἀνὴρ δίψυχος
(a) doubleminded ~~person~~ man
b. ἀκατάστατος ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ
~~uncontrolled~~ unstable in all his ways ~~of life~~

1:9 a. καυχάσθω δὲ ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινὸς ἐν τῷ ὕψει αὐτοῦ
now let the humble ~~fellow believer~~ brother/sister boast in ~~his~~ his/her high position
1:10 a. ὁ δὲ πλούσιος ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ
and the rich in his ~~humility~~ humiliation
b. ὅτι ὡς ανθος χόρτου παρελεύσεται
~~for~~ because he will pass away like (a) flower of grass
1:11 a. ἀνέτειλεν γὰρ ὁ ἥλιος σὺν τῷ καύσωνι
for the sun ~~came up~~ rose with scorching heat
b. καὶ ἐξήρανεν τὸν χόρτον
and it withered the grass
c. καὶ τὸ ανθος αὐτοῦ ἐξέπεσεν
and its flower fell ~~off~~
d. καὶ ἡ εὐπρέπεια τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ ἀπώλετο
and the beauty of its appearance ~~ceased to exist~~ perished
e. οὕτως καὶ ὁ πλούσιος ἐν ταῖς πορείαις αὐτοῦ μαρανθήσεται
~~so~~ thus also the rich in his business ~~activities~~ pursuits will fade away
1:12 a. μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν
~~happy~~ blessed (is the) man who ~~resists~~ endures temptation
b. ὅτι δόκιμος γενόμενος
because having ~~become regards as worthy~~ been approved
c. λήμψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς
he will receive the ~~prize~~ crown of life
d. ὃν ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν
that He promised to those loving Him
1:13 a. μηδεὶς πειραζόμενος λεγέτω
let no one being tempted say
b. ὅτι ἀπο θεοῦ πειράζομαι
that I am tempted by God
c. ὁ γὰρ θεὸς ἀπείραστος ἐστιν κακῶν
~~because~~ for God is One Who cannot be tempted by evil
d. πειράζει δὲ αὐτὸς οὐδένα
and further He Himself tempts no one
1:14 a. ἕκαστος δὲ πειράζεται ὑπὸ τῆς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας
but everyone is tempted by his own ~~evil desires~~ lusts
b. ἐξελκόμενος
~~lured~~ being dragged away
c. καὶ δελεαζόμενος
~~indeed~~ and ~~lured~~ being enticed ~~into sin~~
1:15 a. εἶτα ἡ ἐπιθυμία συλλαβοῦσα
~~furthermore~~ then when the ~~evil desire~~ lust conceives
b. τίκτει ἁμαρτίαν
it ~~bears~~ brings forth sin
c. ἡ δὲ ἁμαρτία ἀποτελεσθεῖσα
and the sin having completed ~~(its action)~~
d. ἀποκύει θάνατον
it ~~causes~~ gives birth to death
1:16 a. μὴ πλανᾶσθε ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί
do not be ~~misled~~ led astray my beloved ~~fellow believers~~ brothers and sisters
1:17 a. πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ καὶ πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον ανωθεν ἐστιν
every good gift and every perfect present is from above

b. καταβαῖνον ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν φώτων
~~descending~~ coming down from the Father of the lights
c. παρ᾽ ᾧ οὐκ ενι παραλλαγὴ η τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα
with Whom there is no change or shadow of ~~variation~~ turning

1:18 a. βουληθεὶς
having ~~intended~~ willed
b. ἀπεκύησεν ἡμᾶς λόγῳ ἀληθείας
He ~~brought~~ gave birth to us ~~into being~~ by the ~~gospel~~ Word of truth
c. εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἀπαρχήν τινα τῶν αὐτοῦ κτισμάτων
so that we could be some ~~foretaste~~ firstfruit of His creatures

1:19 a. ιστε ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί
~~understand~~ know my beloved ~~fellow believers~~ brothers and sisters
b. εστω δὲ πᾶς ανθρωπος ταχὺς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι
now then let every person be quick to listen
c. βραδὺς εἰς τὸ λαλῆσαι
slow to speak
d. βραδὺς εἰς ὀργήν
slow to anger

1:20 a. ὀργὴ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ οὐκ ἐργάζεται
for anger of a man does not ~~bring about~~ work out God's righteousness

1:21 a. διὸ ἀποθέμενοι πᾶσαν ῥυπαρίαν καὶ περισσείαν κακίας
therefore having ~~ceased~~ put aside all moral impurity and abundance of wickedness
b. ἐν πραΰτητι δέξασθε τὸν εμφυτον λόγον
~~with~~ in ~~gentleness~~ humility ~~accept~~ receive the ~~established~~ implanted ~~gospel~~ Word
c. τὸν δυνάμενον σῶσαι τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν
the one able to save your ~~inner selves~~ souls

1:22 a. γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταὶ λόγου
and be doers of the ~~gospel~~ Word
b. καὶ μὴ μόνον ἀκροαταὶ
and not only hearers
c. παραλογιζόμενοι ἑαυτούς
deceiving yourselves

1:23 a. ὅτι ει τις ἀκροατὴς λόγου ἐστὶν
~~for~~ because if someone is a hearer of the ~~gospel~~ Word
b. καὶ οὐ ποιητής
~~yet~~ and not (a) doer
c. οὗτος εοικεν ἀνδρὶ
this one is like (a) ~~person~~ man
d. κατανοοῦντι τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐσόπτρω
~~considering closely~~ looking intently at the face of his birth in (a) mirror

1:24 a. κατενόησεν γὰρ ἑαυτὸν
~~indeed~~ for he ~~noticed~~ looked intently at himself
b. καὶ ἀπελήλυθεν
and he has gone away
c. καὶ εὐθέως ἐπελάθετο ὁποῖος ἦν
and ~~right away~~ immediately he forgot what sort he was ~~like~~

1:25 a. ὁ δὲ παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας
but the one having ~~desired to learn about~~ looked into (the) ~~perfect~~ *nómon téleion tēs eleutherías* ~~the one of freedom~~

b. καὶ παραμείνας
and ~~then~~ continuing (in it)
c. οὐκ ἀκροατὴς ἐπιλησμονῆς γενόμενος
not having become a hearer of ~~forgetting~~ forgetfulness
d. ἀλλὰ ποιητὴς εργου
but (a) doer of ~~deed~~ work
e. οὗτος μακάριος ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ εσται
this one will be ~~happy~~ blessed in his doing

1:26 a. ει τις δοκεῖ θρησκὸς εἶναι
if someone ~~thinks~~ supposes to be religious
b. μὴ χαλιναγωγῶν γλῶσσαν αὐτοῦ
not ~~controlling~~ bridling his tongue
c. ἀλλὰ ἀπατῶν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ
but ~~misleading~~ deceiving his ~~mind~~ heart
d. τούτου μάταιος ἡ θρησκεία
the religion of this one (is) ~~futile~~ useless

1:27 a. θρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος παρὰ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ αὕτη ἐστίν
pure and undefiled religion ~~before~~ with the God and Father is this
b. ἐπισκέπτεσθαι ὀρφανοὺς καὶ χήρας ἐν τῇ θλίψει αὐτῶν
to ~~take care of~~ visit orphans and widows in their ~~suffering~~ affliction
c. ασπιλον ἑαυτὸν τηρεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου
to keep oneself ~~morally pure~~ untainted from the world

2:1 a. ἀδελφοί μου
my ~~fellow believers~~ brothers and sisters
b. μὴ ἐν προσωπολημψίαις εχετε τὴν πίστιν
let not ~~be~~ have in ~~favoritism~~ partiality the faith
τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης
of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory

2:2 a. ἐὰν γὰρ εἰσέλθῃ εἰς συναγωγὴν ὑμῶν ἀνὴρ
for if (a) man ~~comes~~ came into your ~~assembly~~ synagogue
χρυσοδακτύλιος ἐν ἐσθῆτι λαμπρᾷ
~~wearing a golden ring~~ with a gold ring, in fine clothes,
b. εἰσέλθῃ δὲ καὶ πτωχὸς
and also ~~enters~~ entered a poor ~~man~~ one
ἐν ῥυπαρᾷ ἐσθῆτι
in dirty clothing

2:3 a. ἐπιβλέψητε δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν φοροῦντα τὴν ἐσθῆτα τὴν λαμπρὰν
and you ~~would pay special respect to~~ looked upon the one wearing the fine ~~clothes~~ clothing
b. καὶ ειπητε
and ~~then you would say~~ said
c. σὺ κάθου ὧδε καλῶς
you sit here ~~please~~ well
d. καὶ τῷ πτωχῷ ειπητε
and you ~~would say~~ said to the poor
e. σὺ στῆθι ἐκεῖ
you stand there
f. η κάθου ὑπὸ τὸ ὑποπόδιον μου
or sit under my footstool

2:4 a. οὐ διεκρίθητε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς
have you not made a distinction among yourselves

b. καὶ ἐγένεσθε κριταὶ διαλογισμῶν πονηρῶν;
and you became judges of ~~bad~~ evil reasoning?

2:5 a. ἀκούσατε ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί
listen my beloved ~~fellow believers~~ brothers and sisters

b. οὐχ ὁ θεὸς ἐξελέξατο τοὺς πτωχοὺς τῷ κόσμῳ
did God not choose ~~those~~ the poor ~~as to~~ in the world

c. πλουσίους ἐν πίστει
(to be) rich in faith

d. καὶ κληρονόμους τῆς βασιλείας
and ~~receivers~~ heirs of the Kingdom

e. ἧς ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν;
that He promised to those loving Him?

2:6 a. ὑμεῖς δὲ ἠτιμάσατε τὸν πτωχόν
but you dishonoured the poor

b. οὐχ οἱ πλούσιοι καταδυναστεύουσιν ὑμῶν
do not the rich oppress you

c. καὶ αὐτοὶ ἕλκουσιν ὑμᾶς εἰς κριτήρια;
and they themselves drag you into courts?

2:7 a. οὐκ αὐτοὶ βλασφημοῦσιν τὸ καλὸν ονομα
do not they themselves blaspheme ~~your~~ the good name

b. τὸ ἐπικληθὲν ἐφ᾽ ὑμᾶς;
the ~~one~~ One called upon you?

2:8 a. εἰ μέντοι νόμον τελεῖτε βασιλικὸν κατὰ τὴν γραφήν
if however you ~~keep~~ carry out the ~~royal~~ *nómon basilikòn* according to the Scripture

b. ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν
you shall love your neighbour as yourself

c. καλῶς ποιεῖτε
you do well

2:9 a. εἰ δὲ προσωπολημπτεῖτε
but if you show ~~favoritism~~ partiality

b. ἁμαρτίαν ἐργάζεσθε
you ~~commit~~ work out sin

c. ἐλεγχόμενοι ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου ὡς παραβάται
being ~~rebuked~~ convicted by the *nómou* as transgressors

2:10 a. ὅστις γὰρ ὅλον τὸν νόμον τηρήσῃ
for whoever ~~kept~~ keeps ~~the whole law~~ *[h]olon tòn nómon*

b. πταίσῃ δὲ ἐν ἑνί
but ~~stumbled~~ stumbles in one

c. γέγονεν πάντων ενοχος
has become guilty of all

2:11 a. ὁ γὰρ εἰπών
~~because~~ for ~~the One saying~~ He who said

b. μὴ μοιχεύσῃς
do not commit adultery

c. εἶπεν καί
also said

d. μὴ φονεύσῃς
do not murder

e. εἰ δὲ οὐ μοιχεύεις
~~but~~ now if you do not commit adultery

f. φονεύεις δέ
but you murder
g. γέγονας παραβάτης νόμου
you have become a transgressor of (the) *nómou*

2:12 a. οὕτως λαλεῖτε
thus ~~you should~~ speak
b. καὶ οὕτως ποιεῖτε
and thus ~~you should~~ do
c. ὡς διὰ νόμου ἐλευθερίας μέλλοντες κρίνεσθαι
as ~~ones going to~~ those about to be judged by (the) *nómou eleutherías* ~~of freedom~~

2:13 a. ἡ γὰρ κρίσις ἀνέλεος τῷ μὴ ποιήσαντι ελεος
for the ~~verdict~~ judgment (is) ~~unmerciful~~ merciless to the one not ~~showing~~ doing mercy
b. κατακαυχᾶται ελεος κρίσεως
mercy triumphs over judgment

2:14 a. τί τὸ οφελος ἀδελφοί μου
what (is) the ~~advantage~~ benefit my ~~fellow believers~~ brothers and sisters
b. ἐὰν πίστιν λέγῃ τις εχειν
if someone ~~claims~~ says ~~to~~ I have faith
c. εργα δὲ μὴ εχῃ;
but does not have ~~deeds~~ works?
d. μὴ δύναται ἡ πίστις σῶσαι αὐτόν;
Surely ~~the~~ that faith cannot save him?

2:15 a. ἐὰν ἀδελφὸς η ἀδελφὴ γυμνοὶ ὑπάρχωσιν
if (a) ~~Christian~~ brother or sister is ~~without clothes~~ naked
b. καὶ λειπόμενοι τῆς ἐφημέρου τροφῆς
and lacking the daily food

2:16 a. ειπῃ δέ τις αὐτοῖς ἐξ ὑμῶν
and someone from you says to them
b. ὑπάγετε ἐν εἰρήνῃ
go ~~along~~ away in peace
c. θερμαίνεσθε
warm yourself
d. καὶ χορτάζεσθε
and ~~eat enough~~ be filled
e. μὴ δῶτε δὲ αὐτοῖς τὰ ἐπιτήδεια τοῦ σώματος
and you do not give to them the necessary for the body
f. τί τὸ οφελος;
what (is) the ~~advantage~~ benefit?

2:17 a. οὕτως καὶ ἡ πίστις
~~like this~~ thus ~~is~~ also the faith
b. ἐὰν μὴ εχῃ εργα
if it does not ~~cause~~ have ~~deeds~~ works
c. νεκρά ἐστιν καθ᾽ ἑαυτήν
it is ~~useless~~ dead ~~in~~ by itself

2:18 a. ἀλλ᾽ ἐρεῖ τις
but someone will say
b. σὺ πίστιν εχεις
you have faith
c. κἀγὼ εργα εχω
and I have ~~deeds~~ works

d. δεῖξον μοι τὴν πίστιν σου χωρὶς τῶν εργων
show me your faith without the ~~deeds~~ works
e. κἀγώ σοι δείξω ἐκ τῶν εργων μου τὴν πίστιν
and I will show you my faith by my ~~deeds~~ works
2:19 a. σὺ πιστεύεις
you believe
b. ὅτι εἷς ἐστιν ὁ θεός
that God is one
c. καλῶς ποιεῖς
you do ~~right~~ well
d. καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια πιστεύουσιν
also the demons believe ~~(that)~~
e. καὶ φρίσσουσιν
and they ~~tremble with fear~~ shudder
2:20 a. θέλεις δὲ γνῶναι ὦ ανθρωπε κενέ
now do you want to know O foolish person
b. ὅτι ἡ πίστις χωρὶς τῶν εργων ἀργή ἐστιν;
that the faith without the ~~deeds~~ works is useless?
2:21 a. Ἀβραὰμ ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν οὐκ ἐξ εργων ἐδικαιώθη
was ~~not~~ Abraham our ~~ancestor~~ father not ~~put right with God~~ justified ~~by~~ out of ~~deeds~~ works
b. ἀνενέγκας Ἰσαὰκ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον;
having offered up his son Isaac upon the altar?
2:22 a. βλέπεις
you see
b. ὅτι ἡ πίστις συνήργει τοῖς εργοις αὐτοῦ
that faith worked ~~along~~ with his ~~deeds~~ works
c. καὶ ἐκ τῶν εργων ἡ πίστις ἐτελειώθη
and by the works the faith was ~~made perfect~~ perfected
2:23 a. καὶ ἐπληρώθη ἡ γραφὴ ἡ λέγουσα
and the Scripture was fulfilled saying
b. ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Ἀβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ
and Abraham believed God
c. καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην
and it was ~~accounted~~ reckoned to him ~~as~~ into righteousness
d. καὶ φίλος θεοῦ ἐκλήθη
and he was called friend of God
2:24 a. ὁρᾶτε
you see
b. ὅτι ἐξ εργων δικαιοῦται ανθρωπος
that by ~~deeds~~ works (a) person is justified
c. καὶ οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως μόνον
and not ~~by~~ out of faith only
2:25 a. ὁμοίως δὲ Ῥαὰβ ἡ πόρνη οὐκ ἐξ εργων ἐδικαιώθη
and likewise was not Rahab the prostitute justified ~~by~~ out of ~~deeds~~ works
b. ὑποδεξαμένη τοὺς ἀγγέλους
having welcomed the messengers
c. καὶ ἑτέρᾳ ὁδῷ ἐκβαλοῦσα;
and having sent (them) out by another ~~road~~ way?
2:26 a. ὥσπερ γὰρ τὸ σῶμα χωρὶς πνεύματος νεκρόν ἐστιν
for just as the body without (the) spirit is dead

b. οὕτως καὶ ἡ πίστις χωρὶς εργων νεκρά ἐστιν
~~so~~ thus also the faith without ~~deeds~~ works is ~~useless~~ dead

3:1 a. μὴ πολλοὶ διδάσκαλοι γίνεσθε ἀδελφοί μου
do not become many teachers my ~~fellow believers~~ brothers and sisters

b. εἰδότες
knowing

c. ὅτι μεῖζον κρίμα λημψόμεθα
that we will receive greater ~~condemnation~~ judgment

3:2 a. πολλὰ γὰρ πταίομεν ἅπαντες
~~because~~ for we all ~~sin~~ stumble ~~much~~ *in* many *ways*

b. ει τις ἐν λόγῳ οὐ πταίει
if someone does not stumble in word

c. οὗτος τέλειος ἀνὴρ
this one (is a) perfect man

d. δυνατὸς χαλιναγωγῆσαι καὶ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα
able to ~~control~~ bridle ~~even~~ also his whole body

3:3 a. εἰ δὲ τῶν ἵππων τοὺς χαλινοὺς εἰς τὰ στόματα βάλλομεν
now if we put bridles in the mouths of horses

b. εἰς τὸ πείθεσθαι αὐτοὺς ἡμῖν
so that they obey us

c. καὶ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα αὐτῶν μετάγομεν
and ~~then~~ we direct their whole body

3:4 a. ἰδοὺ καὶ τὰ πλοῖα
~~indeed~~ behold also the ships

b. τηλικαῦτα οντα
being so large

c. καὶ ὑπὸ ἀνέμων σκληρῶν ἐλαυνόμενα
and being driven by ~~powerful~~ violent winds

d. μετάγεται ὑπὸ ἐλαχίστου πηδαλίου
are ~~guided~~ directed by (a) very small rudder

e. ὅπου ἡ ὁρμὴ τοῦ εὐθύνοντος βούλεται
wherever the ~~will~~ impulse of the one ~~piloting~~ steering ~~desires~~ wills

3:5 a. οὕτως καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα
~~so~~ thus also the tongue
μικρὸν μέλος ἐστὶν
is a small body part

b. καὶ μεγάλα αὐχεῖ
yet it boasts great things

c. ἰδοὺ ἡλίκον πῦρ ἡλίκην ὕλην ἀνάπτει
~~look~~ behold how small a fire ~~sets ablaze~~ kindles how big (a) forest

3:6 a. καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα πῦρ
~~indeed~~ and the tongue (is a) fire

b. ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας
(a) world of ~~wickedness~~ injustice

c. ἡ γλῶσσα καθίσταται ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν
the tongue is ~~put in charge~~ set among our body parts

d. ἡ σπιλοῦσα ὅλον τὸ σῶμα
(as) the one ~~staining~~ defiling the whole body

e. καὶ φλογίζουσα τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως
and setting ablaze the course of ~~our existence~~ nature

f. καὶ φλογιζομένη ὑπὸ τῆς γεέννης
and being set ablaze by the hell

3:7 a. πᾶσα γὰρ φύσις θηρίων τε καὶ πετεινῶν ἑρπετῶν τε καὶ ἐναλίων
for every kind of both animals and birds both reptiles and sea creatures

b. δαμάζεται καὶ δεδάμασται τῇ φύσει τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ
is ~~controlled~~ tamed and has been ~~controlled~~ tamed by the humankind

3:8 a. τὴν δὲ γλῶσσαν οὐδεὶς δαμάσαι δύναται ἀνθρώπων
but the tongue no one of humans can ~~control~~ tame

b. ἀκατάστατον κακόν
(it is) (~~an~~ a) ~~uncontrolled~~ restless evil

c. μεστὴ ἰοῦ θανατηφόρου
full of deadly poison

3:9 a. ἐν αὐτῇ εὐλογοῦμεν τὸν κύριον καὶ πατέρα
with it we ~~praise~~ bless the Lord and Father

b. καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ καταρώμεθα τοὺς ἀνθρώπους
and with it we curse (the) people

c. τοὺς καθ᾽ ὁμοίωσιν θεοῦ γεγονότας
those having ~~been formed~~ come to be in (the) likeness of God

3:10 a. ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ στόματος ἐξέρχεται εὐλογία καὶ κατάρα
out of the same mouth come out ~~praise~~ blessing and curse

b. οὐ χρή ἀδελφοί μου ταῦτα οὕτως γίνεσθαι
this my ~~fellow believers~~ brothers and sisters ~~should~~ ought not be ~~so~~ thus

3:11 a. μήτι ἡ πηγὴ ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς ὀπῆς βρύει τὸ γλυκὺ καὶ τὸ πικρόν;
surely (a) spring does not pour forth of the same opening ~~sweet~~ fresh and bitter (water)?

3:12 a. μὴ δύναται ἀδελφοί μου συκῆ ἐλαίας
(a) fig tree my ~~fellow believers~~ brothers and sisters can surely not
ποιῆσαι η αμπελος σῦκα;
produce olives or (a) vine figs?

c. ουτε ἁλυκὸν γλυκὺ ποιῆσαι ὕδωρ
~~and~~ neither does (a) salty (spring) ~~does~~ produce fresh water

3:13 a. τίς σοφὸς καὶ ἐπιστήμων ἐν ὑμῖν;
who (is) wise and ~~clever~~ understanding among you?

b. δειξάτω ἐκ τῆς καλῆς ἀναστροφῆς τὰ εργα αὐτοῦ ἐν πραΰτητι σοφίας
let him show ~~from~~ out of his good behaviour his works in gentleness of wisdom

3:14 a. εἰ δὲ ζῆλον πικρὸν εχετε καὶ ἐριθείαν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν
but if you have ~~resentful~~ bitter jealousy and ~~hostility~~ selfish ambition in your ~~inner selves~~ heart

b. μὴ κατακαυχᾶσθε καὶ ψεύδεσθε κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας
do not boast and lie against the truth

3:15 a. οὐκ εστιν αΰτη ἡ σοφία ανωθεν κατερχομένη
this wisdom is not coming down from above

b. ἀλλὰ ἐπίγειος ψυχική δαιμονιώδης
but (is) ~~of people~~ earthly worldly demonic

3:16 a. ὅπου γὰρ ζῆλος καὶ ἐριθεία
for where (is) jealousy and selfish ambition

b. ἐκεῖ ἀκαταστασία καὶ πᾶν φαῦλον πρᾶγμα
there (is) rebellion and every ~~kind of evil~~ foul thing happening

3:17 a. ἡ δὲ ανωθεν σοφία
but the wisdom from above

b. πρῶτον μὲν ἁγνή ἐστιν
first indeed is pure

c. επειτα εἰρηνική ἐπιεικής εὐπειθής
then peaceful gentle ~~open to reason~~ reasonable
d. μεστὴ ἐλέους καὶ καρπῶν ἀγαθῶν
full of mercy and of good ~~deeds~~ fruits
e. ἀδιάκριτος ἀνυπόκριτος
impartial ~~genuine~~ without hypocrisy

3:18 a. καρπὸς δὲ δικαιοσύνης ἐν εἰρήνῃ σπείρεται
and (the) ~~deed~~ fruit of righteousness is sown in peace
b. τοῖς ποιοῦσιν εἰρήνην
by those making peace

4:1 a. πόθεν πόλεμοι
from where (are) wars
b. καὶ πόθεν μάχαι ἐν ὑμῖν;
and from where (are) fights among you?
c. οὐκ ἐντεῦθεν
(~~is it~~ are they) not from this
d. ἐκ τῶν ἡδονῶν ὑμῶν
from your desires ~~for pleasure~~
e. τῶν στρατευομένων ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ὑμῶν;
~~those engaged in war~~ waging war in your ~~body parts~~ members?

4:2 a. ἐπιθυμεῖτε
you ~~desire greatly~~ lust
b. καὶ οὐκ εχετε
yet you do not have
c. φονεύετε
you murder
d. καὶ ζηλοῦτε
and you are jealous
e. καὶ οὐ δύνασθε ἐπιτυχεῖν
and you can not ~~acquire~~ obtain
f. μάχεσθε
you ~~clash severely~~ fight
g. καὶ πολεμεῖτε
and you wage war
h. οὐκ εχετε
you do not have
i. διὰ τὸ μὴ αἰτεῖσθαι ὑμᾶς
because you do not ask

4:3 a. αἰτεῖτε
you do ask
b. καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετε
yet you do not receive
c. διότι κακῶς αἰτεῖσθε
because you ask ~~wrongly~~ badly
d. ἵνα ἐν ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ὑμῶν δαπανήσητε
so that you may ~~waste~~ spend (it) on your ~~desires for~~ pleasures

4:4 a. μοιχαλίδες
you ~~unfaithful~~ adulterous people
b. οὐκ οιδατε
do you not know

c. ὅτι ἡ φιλία τοῦ κόσμου
that the ~~love for~~ friendship with the world
d. εχθρα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν;
is enmity with God?
e. ὃς ἐὰν οὖν βουληθῇ φίλος εἶναι τοῦ κόσμου
whoever then ~~desires~~ wants to be (a) friend of the world
f. ἐχθρὸς τοῦ θεοῦ καθίσταται
makes himself (an) enemy of God

4:5 a. η δοκεῖτε
or do you think
b. ὅτι κενῶς ἡ γραφὴ λέγει
that the Scripture says in vain
c. πρὸς φθόνον ἐπιποθεῖ τὸ πνεῦμα ὃ κατῴκισεν ἐν ἡμῖν
the ~~inner being~~ Spirit that He caused to ~~be~~ dwell in us ~~desires for~~ yearns jealousy?

4:6 a. μείζονα δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν;
but He gives greater ~~kindness~~ grace?
b. διὸ λέγει
therefore it says
c. ὁ θεὸς ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται
God opposes (the) arrogant
d. ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν
but He gives ~~kindness~~ grace to (the) humble

4:7 a. ὑποτάγητε οὖν τῷ θεῷ
submit then to God
b. ἀντίστητε δὲ τῷ διαβόλῳ
and resist the devil
c. καὶ φεύξεται ἀφ᾽ ὑμῶν
and he will flee from you

4:8 a. ἐγγίσατε τῷ θεῷ
draw near to God
b. καὶ ἐγγιεῖ ὑμῖν
and He will draw near to you
c. καθαρίσατε χεῖρας ἁμαρτωλοί
~~purify~~ cleanse (your) hands sinners
d. καὶ ἁγνίσατε καρδίας δίψυχοι
yes purify (your) ~~inner selves~~ hearts (you) doubleminded

4:9 a. ταλαιπωρήσατε καὶ πενθήσατε
~~be sorrowful~~ lament and ~~be sad~~ mourn
b. καὶ κλαύσατε
~~yes~~ and weep
c. ὁ γέλως ὑμῶν εἰς πένθος μετατραπήτω
let your laughter ~~be changed to~~ turn into mourning
d. καὶ ἡ χαρὰ εἰς κατήφειαν
and your joy to gloom

4:10 a. ταπεινώθητε ἐνώπιον κυρίου
be humbled before (the) Lord
b. καὶ ὑψώσει ὑμᾶς
and He will lift you up

4:11 a. μὴ καταλαλεῖτε ἀλλήλων ἀδελφοί
do not ~~slander~~ speak against one another ~~fellow believers~~ brothers and sisters

b. ὁ καταλαλῶν ἀδελφοῦ
the one ~~slandering speaking~~ against a ~~fellow believer~~ brother or sister
c. η κρίνων τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ
or ~~condemns~~ judges his ~~fellow believer~~ brother or sister
d. καταλαλεῖ νόμου
~~slanders~~ speaks against (the) *nómou*
e. καὶ κρίνει νόμον
and ~~condemns~~ judges (the) *nómon*
f. εἰ δὲ νόμον κρίνεις
now if you ~~condemn~~ judge (the) *nómon*
g. οὐκ εἶ ποιητὴς νόμου
you are not a doer of (the) *nómou*
h. ἀλλὰ κριτής
but a judge

4:12 a. εἷς ἐστιν [ὁ] νομοθέτης καὶ κριτὴς
One is the *Nomothetēs* and Judge
b. ὁ δυνάμενος σῶσαι καὶ ἀπολέσαι
the One able to save and to destroy
c. σὺ δὲ τίς εἶ ὁ κρίνων τὸν πλησίον;
but you who are you judging your neighbour?

4:13 a. ἄγε νῦν οἱ λέγοντες
~~come~~ listen now those saying
b. σήμερον η αυριον πορευσόμεθα εἰς τήνδε τὴν πόλιν
today or tomorrow we will go ~~to~~ into ~~this or that~~ such and such city
c. καὶ ποιήσομεν ἐκεῖ ἐνιαυτὸν
and we will ~~work~~ practice there one year
d. καὶ ἐμπορευσόμεθα
and we will do business
e. καὶ κερδήσομεν
and we will ~~make~~ profit

4:14 a. οἵτινες οὐκ ἐπίστασθε τὸ τῆς αυριον
you who do not know ~~that~~ the thing of tomorrow
b. ποία ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν
what your life (~~may be~~ is)
c. ἀτμὶς γάρ ἐστε
for you are mist
d. ἡ πρὸς ὀλίγον φαινομένη
appearing for a little while
e. επειτα καὶ ἀφανιζομένη
and then ~~vanishing~~ disappearing

4:15 a. ἀντὶ τοῦ λέγειν ὑμᾶς
instead that you say
b. ἐὰν ὁ κύριος θελήσῃ
if the Lord ~~wants~~ wills
c. καὶ ζήσομεν
and we ~~will~~ shall live
d. καὶ ποιήσομεν τοῦτο η ἐκεῖνο
~~then~~ and we ~~will~~ shall do this or that

4:16 a. νῦν δὲ καυχᾶσθε ἐν ταῖς ἀλαζονείαις ὑμῶν
but now you boast in your ~~false~~ arrogance

b. πᾶσα καύχησις τοιαύτη πονηρά ἐστιν
all such boasting is evil

4:17 a. εἰδότι οὖν καλὸν ποιεῖν
~~to one then~~ therefore knowing to do good

b. καὶ μὴ ποιοῦντι
and not doing (it)

c. ἁμαρτία αὐτῷ ἐστιν
to him it is a sin

5:1 a. ἄγε νῦν οἱ πλούσιοι
~~come~~ listen now the rich

b. κλαύσατε ὀλολύζοντες
weep crying ~~aloud~~ out
ἐπὶ ταῖς ταλαιπωρίαις ὑμῶν ταῖς ᾽περχομέναις
because of your ~~coming~~ miseries coming upon (you)

5:2 a. ὁ πλοῦτος ὑμῶν σέσηπεν
your riches have ~~rotted~~ rotten ~~away~~

b. καὶ τὰ ἱμάτια ὑμῶν σητόβρωτα γέγονεν
and your ~~garments~~ clothing have become moth-eaten

5:3 a. ὁ χρυσὸς ὑμῶν καὶ ὁ αργυρος κατίωται
your gold and silver have ~~become tarnished~~ corroded

b. καὶ ὁ ἰὸς αὐτῶν εἰς μαρτύριον ὑμῖν εσται
and their ~~tarnish~~ rust will be as (a) witness against you

c. καὶ φάγεται τὰς σάρκας ὑμῶν ὡς πῦρ
and will ~~consume~~ eat your flesh like fire

d. ἐθησαυρίσατε ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις
you ~~treasured~~ stored up for (the) last days

5:4 a. ἰδοὺ ὁ μισθὸς τῶν ἐργατῶν τῶν ἀμησάντων τὰς χώρας ὑμῶν
~~indeed~~ behold the ~~pay~~ wages of the workers that ~~mowed~~ reaped your fields

b. ὁ ἀπεστερημένος ἀφ᾽ ὑμῶν
~~the (pay) defrauded~~ which has been held back by you

c. κράζει
cries out

d. καὶ αἱ βοαὶ τῶν θερισάντων
and the cries of the ~~harvesters~~ ones who have reaped
εἰς τὰ ὦτα κυρίου σαβαὼθ εἰσεληλύθασιν
have ~~entered~~ gone into the ears of (the) Lord ~~Almighty~~ of Hosts

5:5 a. ἐτρυφήσατε ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐσπαταλήσατε
you ~~lived~~ indulged ~~on~~ upon the earth ~~with intemperance~~ and ~~indulgence~~ live luxuriously

b. ἐθρέψατε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σφαγῆς
you fed your ~~insides~~ hearts ~~for (the)~~ in a day of ~~condemnation~~ slaughter

5:6 a. κατεδικάσατε
you condemned ~~(the righteous)~~

b. ἐφονεύσατε τὸν δίκαιον
you murdered the righteous

c. οὐκ ἀντιτάσσεται ὑμῖν
he does not oppose you ~~no hostility~~

5:7 a. μακροθυμήσατε οὖν ἀδελφοί
be patient then ~~fellow believers~~ brothers and sisters

b. ἕως τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου
until the coming of the Lord

c. ἰδοὺ
~~pay attention~~ behold
d. ὁ γεωργὸς ἐκδέχεται τὸν τίμιον καρπὸν τῆς γῆς
the farmer waits for the ~~valuable~~ precious ~~harvest~~ fruit of the ~~soil~~ earth
e. μακροθυμῶν ἐπ᾽ αὐτῷ
~~waiting patiently~~ being patient ~~for~~ upon it
f. ἕως λάβῃ πρόϊμον καὶ ὀψιμον
until he received early rain and late rain

5:8 a. μακροθυμήσατε καὶ ὑμεῖς
you ~~too~~ also ~~must~~ wait patiently
b. στηρίξατε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν
strengthen your ~~inner selves~~ hearts
c. ὅτι ἡ παρουσία τοῦ κυρίου ηγγικεν
because the coming of the Lord ~~is~~ has drawn near

5:9 a. μὴ στενάζετε ἀδελφοί κατ᾽ ἀλλήλων
do not complain , brothers and sisters, against one another ~~fellow believers~~
b. ἵνα μὴ κριθῆτε
so that you may not be judged
c. ἰδοὺ
~~pay attention~~ behold
d. ὁ κριτὴς πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν ἕστηκεν
the judge has taken stand before the doors

5:10 a. ὑπόδειγμα λάβετε ἀδελφοί
take (as) an example ~~fellow believers~~ , brothers and sisters,
b. τῆς κακοπαθίας καὶ τῆς μακροθυμίας τοὺς προφήτας
of suffering ~~distress~~ and of patience the prophets
c. οἳ ἐλάλησαν ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι κυρίου
who spoke in the Name of (the) Lord

5:11 a. ἰδοὺ
~~pay attention~~ behold
b. μακαρίζομεν τοὺς ὑπομείναντας
we ~~regard as happy~~ consider blessed those ~~having~~ who endured
c. τὴν ὑπομονὴν ᾽Ιὼβ ἠκούσατε
you heard about the endurance of Job
d. καὶ τὸ τέλος κυρίου ειδετε
and you ~~noticed~~ saw the ~~purpose~~ end of (the) Lord
e. ὅτι πολύσπλαγχνος ἐστιν ὁ κύριος καὶ οἰκτίρμων
that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful

5:12 a. πρὸ πάντων δέ ἀδελφοί μου
now ~~above~~ before all my ~~fellow believers~~ brothers and sisters
b. μὴ ὀμνύετε
do not swear
c. μήτε τὸν οὐρανὸν
not by heaven
d. μήτε τὴν γῆν
and not by the earth
e. μήτε αλλον τινὰ ὅρκον
and not by any other oath
f. ητω δὲ ὑμῶν τὸ ναὶ ναὶ
but let your yes be yes

g. καὶ τὸ ου ου
and (your) no no
h. ἵνα μὴ ὑπὸ κρίσιν πέσητε
so that you may not ~~be~~ fall under ~~condemned~~ judgment

5:13 a. κακοπαθεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν;
does anyone among you suffer ~~distress~~ bad?
b. προσευχέσθω
let him pray
c. εὐθυμεῖ τις;
is anyone ~~encouraged~~ cheerful?
d. ψαλλέτω
let him sing praises

5:14 a. ἀσθενεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν;
is anyone among you ill?
b. προσκαλεσάσθω τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας
let him ~~call~~ summon the elders of the church
c. καὶ προσευξάσθωσαν ἐπ᾽ αὐτὸν
and let them pray ~~for~~ upon him
d. ἀλείψαντες [αὐτὸν] ἐλαίῳ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου
having anointed him with oil in the Name of the Lord

5:15 a. καὶ ἡ εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως σώσει τὸν κάμνοντα
and the prayer of faith will ~~heal~~ save ~~the~~ those being sick
b. καὶ ἐγερεῖ αὐτὸν ὁ κύριος
~~yes~~ and the Lord will ~~restore~~ raise him ~~to health~~ up
c. καν ἁμαρτίας ᾖ πεποιηκώς
~~even~~ and if he be one having ~~committed~~ done sins
d. ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ
it will be forgiven to him

5:16 a. ἐξομολογεῖσθε οὖν ἀλλήλοις τὰς ἁμαρτίας
confess ~~then~~ therefore to one another ~~your~~ the sins
b. καὶ ευχεσθε ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων
~~indeed~~ and pray for one another
c. ὅπως ἰαθῆτε
so that you may be healed
d. πολὺ ἰσχύει δέησις δικαίου ἐνεργουμένη
very powerful is (the) prayer ~~at work~~ of a righteous person , being energized

5:17 a. Ἠλίας ανθρωπος ἦν
Elijah was (a) human being
b. ὁμοιοπαθὴς ἡμῖν
~~similar to~~ of same nature as us ~~in feeling~~
c. καὶ προσευχῇ προσηύξατο τοῦ μὴ βρέξαι
and by (a) prayer he prayed not to rain
d. καὶ οὐκ εβρεξεν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐνιαυτοὺς τρεῖς καὶ μῆνας ἕξ
and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months

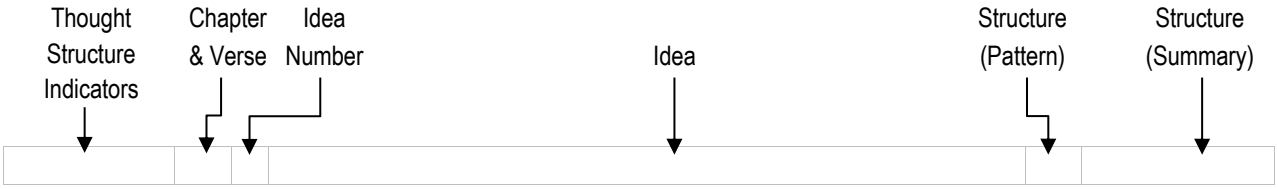
5:18 a. καὶ πάλιν προσηύξατο
~~then~~ and again he prayed
b. καὶ ὁ οὐρανὸς ὑετὸν εδωκεν
and the ~~sky~~ heaven ~~produced~~ gave rain
c. καὶ ἡ γῆ ἐβλάστησεν τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῆς
and ~~then~~ the ~~ground~~ earth produced its fruit

5:19 a. ἀδελφοί μου
my ~~fellow believers~~ brothers and sisters
b. ἐάν τις ἐν ὑμῖν πλανηθῇ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας
if someone among you strayed from the truth
c. καὶ ἐπιστρέψῃ τις αὐτόν
and someone ~~made~~ turned him ~~change (his) beliefs~~
5:20 a. γινωσκέτω ὅτι
let him know that
b. ὁ ἐπιστρέψας ἁμαρτωλὸν
the one ~~making~~ turning (a) sinner ~~change (his) beliefs~~
c. ἐκ πλάνης ὁδοῦ αὐτοῦ
~~away from~~ out of ~~his deceitful~~ error of his way ~~of life~~
d. σώσει ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐκ θανάτου
will save his ~~inner being~~ soul ~~from~~ out of death
e. καὶ καλύψει πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν
and he will cover a multitude of sins

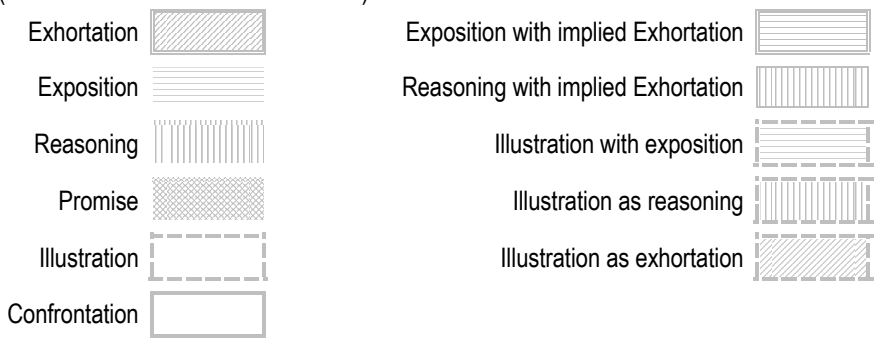
APPENDIX D: ANALYSIS OF JAMES

Significant Meaning Indicators

(1) ANALYSIS COLUMNS



(2) TYPES OF IDEAS (indicated in the Idea Number column)



(3) RELATED WORDS AND PHRASES (indicated in the idea column)

- God the Father (x44): 1:1 God;1:5 God, One; 1:7 Lord; 1:12 He, Him; 1:13 God, God, One Who, He Himself; 1:17 Father of the lights, Whom; 1:18 He, His; 1:20 God's; 1:27 the God and Father; 2:5 God, He, Him; 2:11 He; 2:19 God; 2:23 God, God; 3:9 the Lord and Father, God; 4:4 God, God; 4:5 He; 4:6 He, God, He; 4:7 God; 4:8 God, He; 4:10 Lord, He; 4:12 One, Lawgiver and Judge, One; 5:4 Lord of Hosts ; 5:10 Lord; 5:11 Lord, Lord;
- God the Son (x8): 1:1 Lord Jesus Christ; 2:1 Lord Jesus Christ; 2:7 the good name, One; 5:7 Lord; 5:8 Lord; 5:9 Judge*; 5:14 in the Name of the Lord; 5:15 Lord; {Note: * a good case can be made that "Judge" refers to God the Father}.
- God the Holy Spirit (x1): 4:5 *Spirit*;
- Addressing the believers as "*adelphoi*" (x15): 1:2 brothers and sisters; 1:16 brothers and sisters; 1:19 brothers and sisters; 2:1 brothers and sisters; 2:5 brothers and sisters; 2:14 brothers and sisters; 3:1 brothers and sisters; 3:10 brothers and sisters; 3:12 brothers and sisters; 4:11 brothers and sisters; 5:7 brothers and sisters; 5:9 brothers and sisters; 5:10 brothers and sisters; 5:12 brothers and sisters; 5:19 brothers and sisters;
- All kinds of hardship (x7): 1:2 trials; 1:3 testing; 1:27 affliction; 5:10 suffering; 5:13 suffer bac; 5:14 ill; 5:15 sick;
- Faith/Trust (x19): 1:3 faith; 1:6 faith; 2:1 faith; 2:5 faith; 2:14 faith, faith; 2:17 faith; 2:18 faith, faith, faith; 2:19 believe, believe; 2:20 faith; 2:22 faith, faith; 2:23 believed; 2:24 faith, 2:26 faith; 5:15 faith;
- Endurance (in the Faith) (x5): 1:3 endurance; 1:4 endurance; 1:12 endures; 5:11 endured, endurance
- Prefect/complete (x6): 1:4 perfect, perfect and complete; (1:15 sin having completed); 1:17 perfect present; 1:25 *nómon téleion*; 2:22 faith was perfected; 3:2 perfect man;
- (Good) works/deeds (x28): (1:4 **let** endurance **have** perfect work); 1:20 does not work out God's righteousness; 1:22 doers of the Word; 1:23 doer; 1:25 continuing in it (the *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*), doer of work, doing; 2:8 carry out the *nómon basilikòn*, do well; (2:9 work out sin); 2:10 kept the whole *nómon*; 2:12 **do**; 2:13 not doing mercy; 2:14 works; 2:17 works; 2:18 works, works, works; 2:19 do well; 2:20 works; 2:21 works; 2:22 faith worked with his works, works; 2:24 works; 2:25 works; 2:26 works; 3:13 his good behaviour his works in gentleness of wisdom; 4:11 doer of the *nómou*; 4:17 do good, doing (it);
- Lack (x3): 1:4 lacking; 1:5 lacks; (2:15 lacking the daily food);
- Wisdom (x7): 1:5 wisdom, it; 3:13 wise, understanding, gentleness of wisdom; 3:15 this wisdom is not coming down from above; 3:17 the wisdom from above;
- Prayer / ask (God) (x12): 1:5 **ask** from God; 1:6 **ask** in faith; 4:2 ask; 4:3 ask, ask; 5:13: **pray**; 5:14 **pray**; 5:15 prayer of faith; 5:16 **pray**, prayer; 5:17 a prayer he prayed; 5:18 prayed;
- Receive (answered prayer) (x5): 1:5 One giving, given; 1:7 receive … from the Lord; (1:12 receive the crown of life); (4:2 have, obtain, have); 4:3 receive; (4:6 He gives grace to (the) humble); (5:7 received); 5:18 gave;

- Unstable / doubleminded (x7): 1:6 doubting, doubting, driven, tossed; 1:8 doubleminded, unstable; 4:8 doubleminded;
- Humility / submissiveness (x9): 1:9 humble; 1:10 humiliation; 1:21 humility; 4:6 humble; 4:7 **submit**; 4:10 **humbled**; 4:15 the Lord wills, we shall, we shall;
- Rich/riches/wealth (x31): 1:10 rich, his, he; 1:11 rich, his; 2:2 man; 2:3 one, you; (2:5 rich in faith); 2:6 rich, they themselves; 2:7 they themselves; 5:1 rich, your, (you); 5:2 your, riches, your; 5:3 your, gold and silver, you, your, you; 5:4 your, you; 5:5 you, you, your; 5:6 you, you, you;
- Passing away / useless (x17): 1:10 pass away; 1:11 withered, fell, perished, fade away; 1:15 death; 1:26 useless; 2:14 cannot save; 2:17 dead; 2:20 useless; 2:26 death, death; 5:2 rotten, moth-eaten; 5:3 corroded, rust 5:20 death;
- Blessing/blessed (x5): 1:12 blessed; 1:25 blessed; 3:9 bless; 3:10 blessing; (3:11 fresh); (3:12 fresh); 5:11 blessed;
- Temptation (x8): 1:12 temptation; 1:13 tempted, tempted, tempted, tempts; 1:14 tempted, dragged away, enticed;
- Lust (x5): 1:14 lusts; 1:15 lust; 4:1 desires; 4:2 lust; 4:3 pleasures;
- Produces (x3): 1:15 conceives, gives birth, brings forth;
- Sin/evil (x68): 1:13 evil; 1:15 sin, sin; 1:16 **be led astray**; 1:19 anger; 1:20 anger; 1:21 moral impurity, wickedness; 1:22 deceiving; 1:26 deceiving; 2:1 partiality; 2:4 made a distinction, evil; 2:6 dishonoured, oppress; 2:7 blaspheme; 2:9 show partiality, sin, convicted, transgressors; 2:10 stumbled, guilty; 2:11 commit adultery, murder, commit adultery, murder, transgressor; 3:2 stumble, stumble; 3:6 injustice, defiling; 3:8 evil, poison; 3:14 jealousy, selfish ambition; 3:16 jealousy, selfish ambition, rebellion, foul thing; 3:17 hypocrisy; 4:1 **wars**, **fights**, **they**, **war**; 4:2 murder, jealous, **fight**, **war**; 4:3 ask badly; 4:8 sinners; 4:11 **speak against**, speaking against, speaks against; 4:16 evil; 4:17 sin; 5:4 held back; 5:5 indulged, live luxuriously, fed your hearts in a day of slaughter; 5:6 condemned, murdered; 5:9 **complain**... against; 5:15 sins; 5:16 sins; 5:19 strayed; 5:20 sinner, error, sins;
- Love/beloved (x6): 1:12 loving; 1:16 beloved; 1:19 beloved; 2:5 beloved, loving; 2:8 love;
- Pure/good (x12): 1:17 every good gift and every perfect present; 1:27 pure, undefiled, untainted; 2:6 good name; 3:13 good behaviour; 3:17 pure, good fruits; 4:8 **cleanse**, **purify**; 4:17 do good, doing (it);
- Gift (from God) (x8): good gift, perfect present; 1:18 He brought us forth, His creatures; 2:14 benefit; 2:16 benefit; 3:9 having come to be; 4:10 He will lift you up;
- Speech (x20): 1:19 speak; 1:26 tongue; 2:3 said; 2:12 **speak**; 2:16 says; 3:1 teachers; we; 3:2 word; 3:5 tongue, it; 3:6 tongue, tongue; 3:8 tongue; 3:9 it, it; 3:10 mouth; 4:13 saying; 4:14 say; 5:12 **swear**, oath;
- Righteous/just (x10): 1:20 God's righteousness; 2:21 justified; 2:23 righteousness, friend of God; 2:24 justified; 2:25 justified; 3:18 fruit of righteousness; 5:6 the righteous, he; 5:16 a righteous person;
- Word/Truth/Law (x25): 1:18 Word of truth; 1:21 implanted Word, the one able to save your souls; 1:22 Word; 1:23 Word; 1:25 *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías*, it; 2:8 *nómon basilikòn*, Scripture; 2:9 *nómou*; 2:10 *ʰolon tòn nómon*, one, all; 2:11 *nómon*; 2:12 *nómou eleutherías*; 2:23 Scripture; 3:14 truth; 4:5 Scripture; 4:6 it; 4:11 *nómou*, *nómon*, *nómon*, *nómou*; 4:12 One is the *Nomothetēs* and Judge; 5:19 truth;
- Save (x11): 1:21 save your souls; 2:14 save; 4:12 save; 5:15 save, raise ... up, forgiven; 5:16 healed; 5:19 turned; 5:20 turning, save, cover;
- Hear/listen/look at/into (x8): 1:19 listen; 1:22 only hearers; 1:23 a hearer of the Word, looking intently; 1:24 looked intently, forgot; 1:25 the one having looked into the *nómon téleion tēs eleutherías*, a hearer of forgetfulness;
- Religious/religion (x3): 1:26 religious, religion; 1:27 religion;
- Control speech (x10): 1:16 bridling; 3:2 bridle; 3:3 bridles, obey, direct; 3:4 directed, steering; 3:7 tamed, tamed; 3:8 tame;
- World/worldly (x5): 1:27 world; 2:5 world; 3:15 earthly worldly demonic; 4:4 friendship with the world, friend of the world;
- Poor (x9): 2:2 poor one; 2:3 poor, you; 2:5 poor in the world; 2:6 the poor; 2:15 a brother or sister is naked, lacking the daily food; 2:16 them, yourself, them;
- Judge (x15): 2:4 judges of evil; 2:12 to be judged by (the) *nómou eleutherías*; 2:13 judgment, judgment; 3:1 will receive greater judgment; 4:11 judges his brother or sister, judges the *nómon*, judge the *nómon*, a judge; 4:12 One is the *Nomothetēs* and Judge, to destroy, judging your neighbour; 5:9 **so that** you may not be judged, the Judge; 5:12 **so that** you may not fall under judgment;
- Kingdom (x2): 2:5 Kingdom; 2:8 basilikòn

- Virtue (x21): 2:13 mercy, mercy; 3:13 in gentleness of wisdom; 3:17 peaceful, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and of good fruits, impartial; 3:18 fruit of righteousness, peace, peace; 4:6 grace, grace; 5:7 **be patient**, waits, patient; 5:8 **wait patiently**; 5:10 patience; 5:11 compassionate, merciful;
- Attention (x14): 1:2 **consider**; 1:19 **know**; 2:5 **listen**; 2:22 you see; 2:24 you see; 3:4 **behold**; 3:5 **behold**; 4:13 **listen**; 5:1 **listen**; 5:4 **behold**; 5:7 **behold**; 5:9 **behold**; 5:10 **take** (as) an example; 5:11 **behold**;
- Fire (x5): 3:5 fire, kindles; 3:6 fire, ablaze, ablaze,
- Curse (x2): 3:9 curse; 3:10 curse; 3:11 bitter; 3:12 salty ;
- From above (x2): 3:15 this wisdom is not coming down from above; 3:17 the wisdom from above;
- Adulterous people (x4): 4:4 adulterous people, friendship with the world, enmity with God, friend of the world, enemy of God;
- Arrogance (x8): 4:6 arrogant; 4:13 we will, we will, we will, we will; 4:16 boast, arrogance, boasting;
- Draw near (x2): 4:8 **draw near** to God, He will draw near to you;
- Lament (5): 4:9 **lament**, **mourn**, **weep**, mourning, gloom;
- Cry out (for justice) (x4): 5:1 crying out; 5:3 witness; 5:4 cries out, cries;
- Inner being (x7): 1:21 souls; 1:26 heart; 3:14 heart; 4:8 hearts; 5:5 hearts; 5:8 hearts; 5:20 soul;
- Second coming (x2): 5:7 coming of the Lord; 5:8 coming of the Lord;
- Swear/oath (x2): 5:12 **swear**, oath;

(4) CONNECTING WORDS (indicated in bold text the idea column)

(5) STYLISTIC FEATURES / PATTERNS (indicated with letters in the first structure column)

1:1-1:2 Greeting

	1:1	a.	James a slave of God and of (the) Lord Jesus Christ		Greeting
		b.	to the twelve tribes those in the diaspora		
		c.	greetings		

1:2-27 Prologue

1:2-18 Enduring for perfection

	1:2	a.	**consider** it all joy my brothers and sisters		Testing of faith produces complete faith (see: 1:12; 5:11; 5:13-15)(see also: 3:2)
		b.	whenever you fall into various trials		
	1:3	a.	knowing that		
		b.	the testing of your faith		
			brings about endurance {cf. Prov. 27:21?}		
	1:4	a.	**and let** endurance **have** perfect work		
		b.	**so that** you may be perfect and complete		
		c.	lacking in nothing		
	1:5	a.	**now if** anyone of you lacks wisdom {cf. Prov. 2:3-6}		Pray for wisdom to deal with trials (see: 3:13-18)
		b.	**let** him **ask** from God		
			the One giving to all generously		
		c.	and not reproaching		
		d.	and it will be given to him {cf. Mat. 7:7}		
	1:6	a.	**but let** him **ask** in faith		Have faith in prayer and don't doubt (see: 5:16-18) (see also: 4:8)
		b.	doubting nothing		
		c.	**for** the one doubting		
		d.	is like a wave of the sea		
		e.	driven by the wind		
		f.	and tossed about		
	1:7	a.	**for let** not that person **suppose**		
		b.	that he will receive anything from the Lord		
	1:8	a.	a doubleminded man		
		b.	unstable in all his ways		
	1:9	a.	**now let** the humble brother/sister **boast** in his/her high position		Rejoice in humility (see: 4:6-10)
	1:10	a.	**and** the rich in his humiliation		
		b.	**because** he will pass away like a flower of grass		Wealth is fleeting (see: 4:13-14; 5:2-3)
	1:11	a.	**for** the sun rose with scorching heat		
		b.	and it withered the grass		
		c.	and its flower fell		
		d.	and the beauty of its appearance perished		
		e.	**thus** also the rich in his business pursuits will fade away		
	1:12	a.	blessed (is the) man who endures temptation		Blessedness of enduring temptation (see: 1:2-4; 5:11) (see also: 2:5; 1:25)
		b.	**because** having been approved		
		c.	he will receive the crown of life		
		d.	that He promised to those loving Him		
	1:13	a.	**let** no one being tempted **say**		Temptation is not from God (see: 4:1)
		b.	that I am tempted by God		
		c.	**for** God is One Who cannot be tempted by evil		
		d.	and further He Himself tempts no one		

	1:14	a.	**but** everyone is tempted by his own usts			The working and end of temptation (see: 4:1)
		b.	being dragged away			
		c.	and being enticed			
	1:15	a.	**then** when the lust conceives			
		b.	it brings forth sin			
		c.	**and** the sin having completed			
		d.	it gives birth to death			

	1:16	a.	**do** not **be led astray** my beloved brothers and sisters			All good things are from God who never changes (see: 1:21, 25; 5:19-20)
	1:17	a.	every good gift and every perfect present is from above			
		b.	coming down from the Father of the lights			
		c.	with Whom there is no change or shadow of turning			
	1:18	a.	having willed			
		b.	He gave birth to us by the Word of truth			
		c.	**so that** we could be some firstfruit of His creatures			

1:19-27 Continuing in and doing the *nómon téleion tēs eleutherías*

encircling parallelism	1:19	a.	**know** my beloved brothers and sisters			Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger (1:26; 3:1)
		b.	**now then let** every person **be** quick to listen		*a*	
		c.	slow to speak			
		d.	slow to anger {cf. Prov. 15:1?}			
	1:20	a.	**for** anger of a man does not work out God's righteousness		*b*	
	1:21	a.	**therefore** having put aside all moral impurity and abundance of wickedness		*c*	Put aside sin and receive the Word (see: 1:18, 25)
developing parallelism		b.	in humility **receive** the implanted Word		*d+*	
		c.	the one able to save your souls		*d+'*	
contrasting chiasm	1:22	a.	**and be** doers of the Word	command+	*e+*	Obey the Word, don't only listen to it (see: 4:17)
		b.	and not only hearers	command-	*d+*	
		c.	deceiving yourselves		*f*	
contrasting parallelism	1:23	a.	**because if** someone is a hearer of the Word		*d-*	Illustration of those who hear and don't obey the Word
		b.	and not a doer	condition-	*e-*	
		c.	this one is like a man			
		d.	looking intently at the face of his birth in a mirror		*d-*	
	1:24	a.	**for** he looked intently at himself		*d-*	
		b.	and he has gone away		*e-*	
		c.	and immediately he forgot what sort he was			
developing parallelism	1:25	a.	**but** the one having looked into (the) *nómon téleion tòn tēs eleutherías* {cf. Ps. 19:17; 199:45}		*d+*	Blessed are those who listen carefully and keep the *nómon téleion* (see: 2:12; 5:11)(see also: 1:12)
		b.	**and** continuing in it		*e+*	
		c.	**not** having become a hearer of forgetfulness		*d+*	
		d.	**but** a doer of work	condition+	*e+*	
		e.	this one will be blessed in his doing	promise	*e+'*	
	1:26	a.	**if** someone supposes to be religious		*b*	Acceptable and useful religion (see: 3:1-12; 3:13-18)
		b.	not bridling his tongue		*a*	
		c.	**but** deceiving his heart		*f*	
		d.	the religion of this one is useless		*b*	
	1:27	a.	pure and undefiled religion with the God and Father is this			
		b.	to visit orphans and widows in their affliction		*c*	
		c.	to keep oneself untainted from the world			

2:1-26 Genuine Faith and Doing the *Nómou Eleutherías*

2:1-7 Not having in partiality the faith

	2:1	a.	my brothers and sisters		Do not show partiality (see: 3:17)
		b.	**let** not **have** in partiality the faith {Lev. 19:15}		
			of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory		
	2:2	a.	**for if** a man came into your synagogue		
			with a gold ring, in fine clothes,		
		b.	**and also** entered a poor one		
			in dirty clothing		
	2:3	a.	**and** you looked upon the one wearing the fine clothing		Example of partiality (see: 2:16)
		b.	and said		
		c.	you **sit** here well		
		d.	**and** you said to the poor		
		e.	you **stand** there		
		f.	or **sit** under my footstool		
	2:4	a.	have you not made a distinction among yourselves		Partiality is evil (see: 4:11)
		b.	and you became judges of evil reasoning?		
	2:5	a.	**listen** my beloved brothers and sisters		God grants poor people real riches (see: 1:5; 1:16) (see also 1:12)
		b.	did God not choose the poor in the world		
		c.	to be rich in faith		
		d.	and heirs of the Kingdom {Luke 6:20; cf. Mat. 5:3}		
		e.	that He promised to those loving Him?		
	2:6	a.	**but** you dishonoured the poor {cf. Prov. 14:21?}		Partiality is dishonoring the poor (see: 5:5-6)
		b.	do not the rich oppress you		
		c.	and they themselves drag you into courts?		
	2:7	a.	do not they themselves blaspheme the good name		
		b.	the One called upon you?		

2:8-13 Speak and do as those about to be judged by the *nómou eleutherías*

contrasting parallelism	2:8	a.	**if however** you carry out (the) *nómon basilikòn* according to the Scripture		*a+*	Partiality is violating *nómos* as opposed to carrying out the *nómon basilikòn* (see: 3:17; 4:11, 17)
		b.	you shall love your neighbour as yourself {Lev. 19:18; Mat. 22:39}		*b+*	
		c.	you do well			
	2:9	a.	**but if** you show partiality {Lev. 19:15}		*a-*	
		b.	you work out sin		*b-*	
		c.	being convicted by the *nómou* as transgressors			
encircling parallelism	2:10	a.	**for** whoever keeps *ʰolon tòn nómon*	A1	*b-*	Violating any part of *nómos* is to be guilty against the whole (see: 4:12; 4:17)
		b.	**but** stumbles in one			
		c.	has become guilty of all {cf. Lev. 19:37}		*a-*	
encircling parallelism	2:11	a.	**for** He who said	B1	*c*	
similar parallelism		b.	do not commit adultery {7th Command - Ex. 20:14; Deut. 5:18}		*b*	
		c.	**also** said	B2	*c*	
		d.	do not murder {6th Command - Ex. 20:13; Deut. 5:17}		*b*	
		e.	**now if** you do not commit adultery	A2	*b-*	
		f.	**but** you murder			
		g.	you have become a transgressor of (the) *nómou*		*a-*	
developing parallelism	2:12	a.	**thus speak**		*b*	Act as those to be judged by the *nómou eleutherías* (see: 4:11-12; 1:25)
		b.	**and thus do**			
		c.	as those about to be judged by (the) *nómou eleutherías*		*a*	

developing	2:13	a.	**for** the judgment (is) merciless to the one not doing mercy	ς	Reason – doing so is doing mercy
		b.	mercy triumphs over judgment		

2:14-26 Faith shown in action (faith works)

	2:14	a.	what (is) the benefit my brothers and sisters		Faith without works cannot save (see: 1:21; 4:12; 5:15; 5:20)
		b.	**if** someone says I have faith		
		c.	**but** does not have works?		
		d.	Surely that faith cannot save him?		
	2:15	a.	**if** a brother or sister is naked		Practical example of how useless faith without works is (see: 2:3; 2:20)
		b.	and lacking the daily food		
	2:16	a.	**and** someone from you says to them		
		b.	**go away** in peace		
		c.	**warm** yourself		
		d.	and **be filled**		
		e.	**and** you do not give to them the necessary for the body		
		f.	what (is) the benefit?		
	2:17	a.	**thus also** the faith		Faith without works is dead (2:26)
		b.	**if** it does not have works		
		c.	it is dead by itself		
	2:18	a.	**but** someone will say		Faith is shown by works (see: 3:13)
		b.	you have faith		
		c.	**and** I have works		
		d.	**show** me your faith without the works		
		e.	**and** I will show you my faith by my works		
	2:19	a.	you believe		Even the demons have a faith better than faith without works
		b.	that God is one {שְׁמַע (šemă'') - Deut. 6:4}		
		c.	you do well		
		d.	**also** the demons believe		
		e.	and they shudder		
	2:20	a.	**now** do you want to know O foolish person		Faith without works is useless (see: 2:16)
		b.	that the faith without the works is useless?		
	2:21	a.	was Abraham our father not justified out of works		Scriptural example of Abraham – he was justified by faith that was completed by works (see: 2:25; 5:17)(see also: 4:4)
		b.	having offered up his son Isaac upon the altar? {Gen. 22:1-14}		
	2:22	a.	you see		
		b.	that faith worked with his works		
		c.	**and** by the works the faith was perfected		
	2:23	a.	**and** the Scripture was fulfilled saying		
		b.	and Abraham believed God		
		c.	and it was reckoned to him into righteousness {Gen. 15:6}		
		d.	and he was called friend of God		
	2:24	a.	you see		A person is justified by faith that has works (see: 2:18)
		b.	that by works a person is justified		
		c.	and not out of faith only		
	2:25	a.	**and** likewise was not Rahab the prostitute justified out of works		Scriptural example of Rahab (see: 2:21-23)
		b.	having welcomed the messengers {Josh. 2:1-22}		
		c.	and having sent (them) out by another way?		
	2:26	a.	**for** just as the body without (the) spirit is dead		Faith without works is dead (2:17)
		b.	**thus also** the faith without works is dead		

3:1-4:10 Manifesting Wisdom from Above

3:1-12 Control your tongue

	3:1	a.	do not **become** many teachers my brothers and sisters		Not many should be teachers because of how easy it is to sin and how hard it is to control the tongue (see: 1:26)(see also: 1:4)
		b.	knowing		
		c.	that we will receive greater judgment		
	3:2	a.	**for** we all stumble *in* many *ways*		
		b.	**if** someone does not stumble in word		
		c.	this one (is a) perfect man		
		d.	able to bridle also his whole body		
	3:3	a.	**now if** we put bridles in the mouths of horses		Illustration: bridle directs a horse
		b.	**so that** they obey us		
		c.	and we direct their whole body		
	3:4	a.	**behold** also the ships		Illustration: rudder directs a ship
		b.	being so large		
		c.	and being driven by violent winds		
		d.	are directed by a very small rudder		
		e.	wherever the impulse of the one steering wills		
	3:5	a.	**thus also** the tongue is a small body part		Point: tongue it tiny but do great things
		b.	yet it boasts great things		
		c.	**behold** how small a fire kindles how big a forest		Illustration: a small fire sets a forest ablaze
	3:6	a.	**and** the tongue (is) a fire {cf. Prov. 16:27}		
		b.	a world of injustice		
		c.	the tongue is set among our body parts		
		d.	(as) the one defiling the whole body		
		e.	and setting ablaze the course of nature		
		f.	and being set ablaze by the hell		
	3:7	a.	**for** every kind of both animals and birds both reptiles and sea creatures		It's harder to tame the tongue than to tame any animal
		b.	is tamed		
			and has been tamed by the humankind		
	3:8	a.	**but** the tongue no one of humans can tame		
		b.	(it is a) restless evil		
		c.	full of deadly poison		
	3:9	a.	with it we bless the Lord and Father		Surely it is not right to bless God and curse people without our words
		b.	and with it we curse (the) people		
		c.	those having come to be in (the) likeness of God		
	3:10	a.	out of the same mouth come out blessing and curse		
		b.	this my brothers and sisters ought not be thus		
	3:11	a.	surely a spring does not pour forth of the same opening fresh and bitter (water)?		Illustrations of the absurdity of the above – springs and fruit trees
	3:12	a.	a fig tree my brothers and sisters can surely not		
			produce olives or a vine figs?		
		c.	neither does (a) salty (spring)		
			produce fresh water		

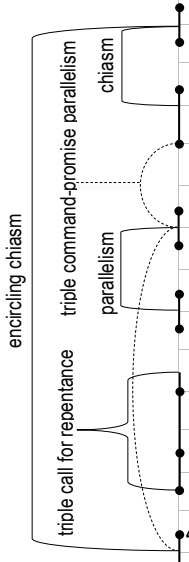
3:13-18 Wisdom from above (wisdom works)

	3:13	a.	who (is) wise and understanding among you?		Wisdom works (cf. 2:14-27)
		b.	**let** him **show** out of his good behaviour his works in gentleness of wisdom		
	3:14	a.	**but if** you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart		
		b.	**do** not **boast** and **lie** against the truth		
	3:15	a.	this wisdom is not coming down from above		Worldly wisdom (see: 4:1-3)
		b.	**but** (is) earthly worldly demonic		
	3:16	a.	**for** where (is) jealousy and selfish ambition		
		b.	there (is) rebellion and every foul thing happening		
	3:17	a.	**but** the wisdom from above		Heavenly wisdom (see: 1:27; 2:8; 4:17)
		b.	first indeed is pure		
		c.	then peaceful, gentle, reasonable		
		d.	full of mercy and of good fruits		
		e.	impartial without hypocrisy		
	3:18	a.	**and** (the) fruit of righteousness is sown in peace		
		b.	by those making peace		

4:1-10 Friendship with the world or humility before God

	4:1	a.	from where (are) **wars**		Conflict comes from sinful desires (see: 1:14-15)
		b.	**and** from where (are) **fights** among you?		
		c.	(are **they**) not from this		
		d.	from your desires		
		e.	waging **war** in your members?		
	4:2	a.	you lust		Unfulfilled sinful desires causes conflict
		b.	**yet** you do not have		
		c.	you murder		
		d.	and you are jealous		
		e.	**and** you can not obtain		
		f.	you **fight**		
		g.	and you wage **war**		
		h.	you do not have		
		i.	**because** you do not ask		
	4:3	a.	you do ask		It is bad to pray for sinful desires to be satisfied (rather than stopped)
		b.	**yet** you do not receive		
		c.	**because** you ask badly		
		d.	**so that** you may spend (it) on your pleasures		

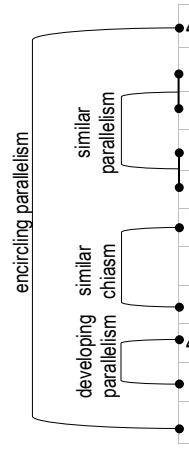
	4:4	a.	you adulterous people		Friendship with the world is enmity with God (see: 2:23)
		b.	do you not know		
		c.	that the friendship with the world		
		d.	is enmity with God?		
		e.	whoever then wants to be a friend of the world		
		f.	makes himself an enemy of God		
	4:5	a.	or do you think		
		b.	that the Scripture says in vain {cf. 2nd Command - Ex. 20:5; Deut. 5:9}		
		c.	the *Spirit* that He caused to dwell in us yearns jealousy?		



4:6	a.	**but** He gives greater grace			God gives grace to those who humble themselves before Him (see: 2:13: 4:16)
	b.	**therefore** it says			
	c.	God opposes (the) arrogant		*a1, A1*	
	d.	**but** He gives grace to (the) humble {Prov. 3:34}		*b1, B1*	
4:7	a.	**submit then** to God		*b2*	Humble yourself before God (see: 1:9-10; 4:16; 5:1)(see also: 1:8)
	b.	**and resist** the devil	command	*a2*	
	c.	**and** he will flee from you	promise		
4:8	a.	**draw near** to God	command	*c1*	
	b.	**and** He will draw near to you	promise	*d1*	
	c.	**cleanse** (your) hands sinners		*c1'*	
	d.	yes **purify** (your) hearts (you) doubleminded		*d1'*	
4:9	a.	**lament** and **mourn** {cf. Mat. 5:4}		*1*	
	b.	and **weep**			
	c.	**let** your laughter **turn** into mourning		*2*	
	d.	**and** your joy to gloom		*3*	
4:10	a.	be **humbled** before (the) Lord	command	*c2, B2*	
	b.	**and** He will lift you up {cf. Mat. 23:12}	promise	*d2, A1*	

4:11-5:12 Beware of Eschatological Judgment

4:11-12 Be a doer of the *nómou* and not a judge



4:11	a.	do not **speak against** one another brothers and sisters {Lev. 19:16}	*a1'*	Do not speak against others
	b.	the one speaking against a brother or sister	*a1*	To speak against or judge them is to do so against the *nómon* (see: 2:4; 5:9)
	c.	or judges his brother or sister	*b1*	
	d.	speaks against (the) *nómou*	*a2*	
	e.	**and** judges (the) *nómon*	*b2*	
	f.	**now if** you judge (the) *nómon*	*b2*	To judge the *nómon* is not to be a doer of it (see: 1:22-25; 2:12)
	g.	you are not a doer of (the) *nómou*	*c*	
	h.	**but** a judge	*b2*	
4:12	a.	One is the *Nomothetēs* and Judge	*d*	There is (only) one *Nomothetēs* and Judge
	b.	the One able to save and to destroy	*d+*	
	c.	**but** you who are you judging your neighbour?	*b1'*	Who are you to judge them?

4:13-17 Don't be boastful about your plans

4:13	a.	**listen now** those saying	Boasting about future (plans) (see: 1:11)
	b.	today or tomorrow we will go into such and such city	
	c.	and we will practice there one year	
	d.	and we will do business	
	e.	and we will profit	
4:14	a.	you who do not know the thing of tomorrow {cf. Prov. 27:1}	The future is uncertain (see: 1:9-11)
	b.	what your life (is)	
	c.	**for** you are mist	
	d.	appearing for a little while	
	e.	and then disappearing	
4:15	a.	instead that you say	Rather say, "God willing"
	b.	**if** the Lord wills	
	c.	and we shall live	
	d.	and we shall do this or that	

	4:16	a.	**but now** you boast in your arrogance		Evil boasting (see: 4:6)
		b.	all such boasting is evil		
	4:17	a.	**therefore** knowing to do good		Do what is good (see: 1:22-25; 2:8-11)
		b.	and not doing (it)		
		c.	to him it is a sin		

5:1-6 Warning to the rich

	5:1	a.	**listen now** the rich {cf. Luke 6:24-25}		Misery to coming upon the rich (see: 4:7-10)
		b.	**weep**, crying out		
			because of your miseries coming upon (you)		
	5:2	a.	your riches have rotten		Riches do not last (see: 1:9-11)
		b.	and your clothing have become moth-eaten		
	5:3	a.	your gold and silver have corroded		
		b.	and their rust will be as a witness against you		
		c.	and will eat your flesh like fire		
		d.	you stored up for (the) last days		
	5:4	a.	**behold** the wages of the workers that reaped your fields		God hears about the injustices of the rich (see: 4:12)
		b.	which has been held back by you {Lev. 19:13}		
		c.	cries out		
		d.	**and** the cries of the ones who have reaped		
			have gone into the ears of (the) Lord of Hosts		
	5:5	a.	you indulged upon the earth and live luxuriously		The injustices of the rich (see: 2:6-7)
		b.	you fed your hearts in a day of slaughter		
	5:6	a.	you condemned		
		b.	you murdered the righteous		
		c.	he does not oppose you		

5:7-11 Be patient (for Jesus coming)

	5:7	a.	**be patient then** brothers and sisters		Wait patiently for Jesus' return
		b.	until the coming of the Lord		
		c.	**behold**		Example of the patience of farmers
		d.	the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth		
		e.	being patient upon it		
		f.	until he received early rain and late rain		
	5:8	a.	you **also wait patiently**		Wait patiently for Jesus' return
		b.	**strengthen** your hearts		
		c.	**because** the coming of the Lord has drawn near		
	5:9	a.	do not complain, brothers and sisters, against one another {Lev. 19:18a}		Don't complain (see: 4:11-12; 5:12)
		b.	**so that** you may not be judged		
		c.	**behold**		
		d.	the Judge has taken stand before the doors		
	5:10	a.	**take** (as) an example, brothers and sisters,		Example of the patience of the prophets
		b.	of suffering and of patience the prophets		
		c.	who spoke in the Name of (the) Lord		

	5:11	a.	**behold**		Example of the endurance of Job (see: 1:2-4) (see also: 1:25)
		b.	we consider blessed those who endured		
		c.	you heard about the endurance of Job {Job 1:13-22; 2:1-10}		
		d.	**and** you saw the end of (the) Lord		
		e.	that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful {cf. Ex. 34:6}		

5:12 Do as you say you'll do

	5:12	a.	**now** before all my brothers and sisters		Do not swear
		b.	**do** not **swear** {Lev. 19:12}{Mat. 5:34-37}		
		c.	not by heaven		
		d.	**and** not by the earth		
		e.	**and** not by any other oath		
		f.	**but let** your yes be yes		Do as you say (see: 5:9)
		g.	**and** (your) no no		
		h.	**so that** you may not fall under judgment		

5:13-20 Epilogue

5:13-18 Power of prayer

	5:13	a.	does anyone among you suffer bad?		Pray if you are sick and suffer (see: 1:5)
		b.	**let** him pray		
		c.	is anyone cheerful?		
		d.	**let** him **sing praises**		
	5:14	a.	is anyone among you ill?		
		b.	**let** him **summon** the elders of the church		
		c.	**and let** them pray upon him		
		d.	having anointed him with oil in the Name of the Lord		
	5:15	a.	**and** the prayer of faith will save those being sick		
		b.	**and** the Lord will raise him up		
		c.	**and if** he be one having done sins		
		d.	it will be forgiven to him		
	5:16	a.	**confess therefore** to one another the sins		Confess your sins (see: 5:20)
		b.	**and** pray for one another		
		c.	**so that** you may be healed		
		d.	very powerful is (the) prayer of a righteous person, being energized		Power of prayer
	5:17	a.	Elijah was a human being		Example of Elijah's powerful prayer
		b.	of same nature as us		
		c.	**and** by a prayer he prayed not to rain {1 Kgs. 17:1}		
		d.	and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months		
	5:18	a.	**and** again he prayed {1 Kgs. 18:41-45}		
		b.	and the heaven gave rain		
		c.	and the earth produced its fruit		

5:19-20 Restoring sinners

	5:19	a.	my brothers and sisters		Turning sinners
		b.	**if** someone among you strayed from the truth		
		c.	**and** someone turned him		

	5:20	a.	**let** him **know** that		Turning brings forgiveness and salvation (see: 1:21; 2:14; 4:12; 6:16)
		b.	the one turning a sinner {Lev. 19:17b}		
		c.	out of error of his way		
		d.	will save his soul out of death		
		e.	**and** he will cover a multitude of sins {Prov. 10:12}		