

## Adam Clarke:

## Introduction

He addresses the dispersed of the twelve tribes, James 1:1. Shows that they should rejoice under the cross, because of the spiritual good which they may derive from it, especially in the increase and perfecting of their patience, James 1:2-4. They are exhorted to ask wisdom of God, who gives liberally to all, James 1:5. But they must ask in faith, and not with a doubting mind, James 1:6-8. Directions to the rich and the poor, James 1:9-11. The blessedness of the man that endures trials, James 1:12. How men are tempted and drawn away from God, James 1:13-15. God is the Father of lights, and all good proceeds from him, James 1:16-18. Cautions against hasty words and wrong tempers, James 1:19-21. We should be doers of the word, and not hearers merely, lest we resemble those who, beholding their natural face in a glass, when it is removed forget what manner of persons they were, James 1:22-24. We should look into the perfect law of liberty, and continue therein, James 1:25. The nature and properties of pure religion, James 1:26, James 1:27.

## Verse 1

James, a servant of God - For an account of this person, or rather for the conjectures concerning him, see the preface. He neither calls himself an apostle, nor does he say that he was the brother of Christ, or bishop of Jerusalem; whether he was James the elder, son of Zebedee, or James the less, called our Lord's brother, or some other person of the same name, we know not. The assertions of writers concerning these points are worthy of no regard. The Church has always received him as an apostle of Christ.

To the twelve tribes - scattered abroad - To the Jews, whether converted to Christianity or not, who lived out of Judea, and sojourned among the Gentiles for the purpose of trade or commerce. At this time there were Jews partly traveling, partly sojourning, and partly resident in most parts of the civilized world; particularly in Asia, Greece, Egypt, and Italy. I see no reason for restricting it to Jewish believers only; it was sent to all whom it might concern, but particularly to those who had received the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ; much less must we confine it to those who were scattered abroad at the persecution raised concerning Stephen, Acts 8:1, etc.; Acts 11:19, etc. That the twelve tribes were in actual existence when James wrote this epistle, Dr. Macknight thinks evident from the following facts:

1. Notwithstanding Cyrus allowed all the Jews in his dominions to return to their own land, many of them did not return. This happened agreeably to God's purpose, in permitting them to be carried captive into Assyria and Babylonia; for he intended to make himself known among the heathens, by means of the knowledge of his being and perfections, which the Jews, in their dispersion, would communicate to them. This also was the reason that God determined that the ten tribes should never return to their own land, Hosea 1:6; Hosea 8:8; Hosea 9:3, Hosea 9:15-17.

2. That, comparatively speaking, few of the twelve tribes returned in consequence of Cyrus's decree, but continued to live among the Gentiles, appears from this: that in the days of Ahasuerus, one of the successors of Cyrus, who reigned from India to Ethiopia, over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, Esther 3:8, The Jews were dispersed among the people in all the provinces of his kingdom, and their laws were diverse from the laws of all other people, and they did not keep the king's laws; so that, by adhering to their own usages, they kept themselves distinct from all the nations among whom they lived.

3. On the day of pentecost, which happened next after our Lord's ascension, Acts 2:5, Acts 2:9, There were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven; Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, etc.; so numerous were the Jews, and so widely dispersed through all the countries of the world.

4. When Paul traveled through Asia and Europe, he found the Jews so numerous, that in all the noted cities of the Gentiles they had synagogues in which they assembled for the worship of God, and were joined by multitudes of proselytes from among the heathens, to whom likewise he preached the Gospel.

5. The same apostle, in his speech to King Agrippa, affirmed that the twelve tribes were then existing, and that they served God day and night, in expectation of the promise made to the fathers, Acts 26:6.

6. Josephus, Ant. i. 14, cap. 12, tells us that one region could not contain the Jews, but they dwelt in most of the flourishing cities of Asia and Europe, in the islands and continent, not much less in number than the heathen inhabitants. From all this it is evident that the Jews of the dispersion were more numerous than even the Jews in Judea, and that James very properly inscribed this letter to the twelve tribes which were in the dispersion, seeing the twelve tribes really existed then, and do still exist, although not distinguished by separate habitations, as they were anciently in their own land.

Greeting -  $\text{ἰσχυροὶ ἡμῶν}$  - Health; a mere expression of benevolence, a wish for their prosperity; a common form

of salutation; see Acts 15:23; Acts 23:26; 2 John 1:11.

**Verse 2**

Count it all joy - The word ἰσχυρισμῶν, which we translate temptation, signifies affliction, persecution, or trial of any kind; and in this sense it is used here, not intending diabolic suggestion, or what is generally understood by the word temptation.

**Verse 3**

The trying of your faith - Trials put religion, and all the graces of which it is composed to proof; the man that stands in such trials gives proof that his religion is sound, and the evidence afforded to his own mind induces him to take courage, bear patiently, and persevere.

**Verse 4**

Let patience have her perfect work - That is, Continue faithful, and your patience will be crowned with its full reward; for in this sense is ἰσχυρισμῶν, which we translate work, to be understood. It is any effect produced by a cause, as interest from money, fruit from tillage, gain from labor, a reward for services performed; the perfect work is the full reward. See many examples in Kypke.

That ye may be perfect and entire - ἰσχυρισμῶν ἰσχυρισμῶν, Fully instructed, in every part of the doctrine of God, and in his whole will concerning you. ἁπλοῦς ἁπλοῦς, having all your parts, members, and portions; that ye may have every grace which constitutes the mind that was in Christ, so that your knowledge and holiness may be complete, and bear a proper proportion to each other. These expressions in their present application are by some thought to be borrowed from the Grecian games: the man was ἰσχυρισμῶν ἰσχυρισμῶν, perfect, who in any of the athletic exercises had got the victory; he was ἁπλοῦς ἁπλοῦς, entire, having every thing complete, who had the victory in the pentathlon, in each of the five exercises. Of this use in the last term I do not recollect an example, and therefore think the expressions are borrowed from the sacrifices under the law. A victim was ἰσχυρισμῶν ἰσχυρισμῶν, perfect, that was perfectly sound, having no disease; it was ἁπλοῦς ἁπλοῦς, entire, if it had all its members, having nothing redundant, nothing deficient. Be then to the Lord what he required his sacrifices to be; let your whole heart, your body, soul, and spirit, be sanctified to the Lord of hosts, that he may fill you with all his fullness.

**Verse 5**

If any of you lack wisdom - Wisdom signifies in general knowledge of the best end, and the best means of attaining it; but in Scripture it signifies the same as true religion, the thorough practical knowledge of God, of one's self, and of a Savior.

Let him ask of God - Because God is the only teacher of this wisdom.

That giveth to all men liberally - Who has all good, and gives all necessary good to every one that asks fervently. He who does not ask thus does not feel his need of Divine teaching. The ancient Greek maxim appears at first view strange, but it is literally true: -

ἡ ἀγνοία τῆς ἀγνοίας ἀρχὴ τῆς σοφίας, ἡ ἀγνοία τῆς ἀγνοίας ἀρχὴ τῆς σοφίας, ἡ ἀγνοία τῆς ἀγνοίας ἀρχὴ τῆς σοφίας.

•The knowledge of ignorance is the beginning of knowledge. •

In knowledge we may distinguish these four things: -

1. Intelligence, the object of which is intuitive truths.
2. Wisdom, which is employed in finding out the best end.
3. Prudence, which regulates the whole conduct through life.
4. Art, which provides infallible rules to reason by.

**Verse 6**

Let him ask in faith - Believing that God IS; that he has all good; and that he is ever ready to impart to his creatures whatever they need.

Nothing wavering - ἰσχυρισμῶν ἰσχυρισμῶν ἰσχυρισμῶν ἰσχυρισμῶν, ἰσχυρισμῶν ἰσχυρισμῶν ἰσχυρισμῶν ἰσχυρισμῶν. Not judging otherwise; having no doubt concerning the truth of these grand and fundamental principles, never supposing that God will permit him to ask in vain, when he asks sincerely and fervently. Let him not hesitate, let him not be irresolute; no man can believe too much good of God.

Is like a wave of the sea - The man who is not thoroughly persuaded that if he ask of God he shall receive, resembles a wave of the sea; he is in a state of continual agitation; driven by the wind, and tossed: now rising by hope, then sinking by despair.

Verse 7

Let not that man think - The man whose mind is divided, who is not properly persuaded either of his own wants or God's sufficiency. Such persons may pray, but having no faith, they can get no answer.

Verse 8

A double-minded man - The man of two souls, who has one for earth, and another for heaven; who wishes to secure both worlds; he will not give up earth, and he is loth to let heaven go. This was a usual term among the Jews, to express the man who attempted to worship God, and yet retained the love of the creature. Rabbi Tanchum, fol. 84, on Deuteronomy 26:17, said: "Behold, the Scripture exhorts the Israelites, and tells them when they pray, 'Lo yiyeh lahem shetey lebaboth', that they should not have two hearts, one for the holy blessed God, and one for something else. A man of this character is continually distracted; he will neither let earth nor heaven go, and yet he can have but one. Perhaps St. James refers to those Jews who were endeavoring to incorporate the law with the Gospel, who were divided in their minds and affections, not willing to give up the Levitical rites, and yet unwilling to renounce the Gospel. Such persons could make no progress in Divine things.

Verse 9

Let the brother of low degree - The poor, destitute Christian may glory in the cross of Christ, and the blessed hope laid up for him in heaven; for, being a child of God, he is an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ.

Verse 10

But the rich, in that he is made low - In his humiliation - in his being brought to the foot of the cross to receive, as a poor and miserable sinner, redemption through the blood of the cross: and especially let him rejoice in this, because all outward glory is only as the flower of the field, and, like that, will wither and perish.

Verse 11

For the sun is no sooner risen - We need not pursue this metaphor, as St. James' meaning is sufficiently clear: All human things are transitory; rise and fall, or increase and decay, belong to all the productions of the earth, and to all its inhabitants. This is unavoidable, for in many cases the very cause of their growth becomes the cause of their decay and destruction. The sun by its genial heat nourishes and supports all plants and animals; but when it arises with a burning heat, the atmosphere not being tempered with a sufficiency of moist vapours, the juices are exhaled from the plants; the earth, for lack of moisture, cannot afford a sufficient supply; vegetation becomes checked; and the plants soon wither and die. Earthly possessions are subject to similar mutations. God gives and resumes them at his pleasure, and for reasons which he seldom explains to man. He shows them to be uncertain, that they may never become an object of confidence to his followers, and that they may put their whole trust in God. If for righteousness' sake any of those who were in affluence suffer loss, or spoiling of their goods, they should consider that, while they have gained that of infinite worth, they have lost what is but of little value, and which in the nature of things they must soon part with, though they should suffer nothing on account of religion.

Verse 12

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation - This is a mere Jewish sentiment, and on it the Jews speak some excellent things. In Shemoth Rabba, sec. 31, fol. 129, and in Rab. Tanchum, fol. 29,4, we have these words: "Blessed is the man who stands in his temptation; for there is no man whom God does not try. He tries the rich, to see if they will open their hands to the poor. He tries the poor, to see if they will receive affliction and not murmur. If, therefore, the rich stand in his temptation, and give alms to the poor, he shall enjoy his riches in this world, and his horn shall be exalted in the world to come, and the holy blessed God shall deliver him from the punishment of hell. If the poor stand in his temptation, and do not repine, (kick back), he shall have double in the world to come." This is exactly the sentiment of James. Every man is in this life in a state of temptation or trial, and in this state he is a candidate for another and a better world; he that stands in his trial shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. It is only love to God that can enable a man to endure the trials of life. Love feels no loads; all practicable things are possible to him who loveth. There may be an allusion here to the contests in the Grecian games. He is crowned who conquers; and none else.

Verse 13

Let no man say - Lest the former sentiment should be misapplied, as the word temptation has two grand meanings, solicitation to sin, and trial from providential situation or circumstances, James, taking up the word in the former sense, after having used it in the latter, says: Let no man say, when he is tempted, (solicited to sin), I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he (thus) any man. Thus the author has explained and guarded his meaning.

Verse 14

But every man is tempted - Successfully solicited to sin, when he is drawn away of his own lust - when, giving way to the evil propensity of his own heart, he does that to which he is solicited by the enemy of his soul.

Among the rabbins we find some fine sayings on this subject. In Midrash hanaalam, fol. 20, and Yalcut Rubeni, fol. 17, it is said: "This is the custom of evil concupiscence, x™xix" x"x"xç (yetser hara): To-day it saith, Do this; to-morrow, Worship an idol. The man goes and worships. Again it saith, Be angry."

"Evil concupiscence is, at the beginning, like the thread of a spider's web; afterwards it is like a cart rope." Sanhedrim, fol. 99.

In the words, drawn away by his own lust and enticed, there is a double metaphor; the first referring to the dragging a fish out of the water by a hook which it had swallowed, because concealed by a bait; the second, to the enticements of impure women, who draw away the unwary into their snares, and involve them in their ruin. Illicit connections of this kind the writer has clearly in view; and every word that he uses refers to something of this nature, as the following verse shows.

Verse 15

When lust hath conceived - When the evil propensity works unchecked, it bringeth forth sin - the evil act between the parties is perpetrated.

And sin, when it is finished - When this breach of the law of God and of innocence has been a sufficient time completed, it bringeth forth death - the spurious offspring is the fruit of the criminal connection, and the evidence of that death or punishment due to the transgressors.

Any person acquainted with the import of the verbs I have not exhausted it. I signify concipio sobolem, quae comprehenditur utero; concipio foetum; - I, pario, genero, efficio; - I ex I et I...I, praegnans sum, in utero gero. Verbum proprium praegnantium, quae foetum maturum emittunt. Interdum etiam gignendi notionem habet. - Maius, Obser. Sacr., vol. ii., page 184. Kypke and Schleusner.

Sin is a small matter in its commencement; but by indulgence it grows great, and multiplies itself beyond all calculation. To use the rabbinical metaphor lately adduced, it is, in the commencement, like the thread of a spider's web - almost imperceptible through its extreme tenuity or fineness, and as easily broken, for it is as yet but a simple irregular imagination; afterwards it becomes like a cart rope - it has, by being indulged produced strong desire and delight; next consent; then, time, place, and opportunity serving, that which was conceived in the mind, and finished in that purpose, is consummated by act.

The soul, which the Greek philosophers considered as the seat of the appetites and passions, is called by Philo I, I, I...I, the female part of our nature; and the spirit I, I I-áçI, the male part. In allusion to this notion, James represents men's lust as a harlot; which entices their understanding and will into its impure embraces, and from that conjunction conceives sin. Sin, being brought forth, immediately acts, and is nourished by frequent repetition, till at length it gains such strength that in its turn it begets death. This is the true genealogy of sin and death. Lust is the mother of sin, and sin the mother of death, and the sinner the parent of both. See Macknight.

Verse 16

Do not err - By supposing that God is the author of sin, or that he impels any man to commit it.

Verse 17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above - Whatever is good is from God; whatever is evil is from man himself. As from the sun, which is the father or fountain of light, all light comes; so from God, who is the infinite Fountain, Father, and Source of good, all good comes. And whatever can be called good, or pure, or light, or excellence of any kind, must necessarily spring from him, as he is the only source of all goodness and perfection.

With whom is no variableness - The sun, the fountain of light to the whole of our system, may be obscured by

clouds; or the different bodies which revolve round him, and particularly the earth, may from time to time suffer a diminution of his light by the intervention of other bodies eclipsing his splendor; and his apparent tropical variation, shadow of turning; when, for instance, in our winter, he has declined to the southern tropic, the tropic of Capricorn, so that our days are greatly shortened, and we suffer in consequence a great diminution both of light and heat. But there is nothing of this kind with God; he is never affected by the changes and chances to which mortal things are exposed. He occupies no one place in the universe; he fills the heavens and the earth, is everywhere present, sees all, pervades all, and shines upon all; dispenses his blessings equally to the universe; hates nothing that he has made; is loving to every man; and his tender mercies are over all his works: therefore he is not affected with evil, nor does he tempt, or influence to sin, any man. The sun, the source of light, rises and sets with a continual variety as to the times of both, and the length of the time in which, in the course of three hundred and sixty-five days, five hours, forty-eight minutes, and forty-eight seconds, it has its revolution through the ecliptic, or rather the earth has its revolution round the sun; and by which its light and heat are, to the inhabitants of the earth, either constantly increasing or decreasing: but God, the Creator and Preserver of all things, is eternally the same, dispensing his good and perfect gifts - his earthly and heavenly blessings, to all his creatures, ever unclouded in himself, and ever nilling Evil and willing Good. Men may hide themselves from his light by the works of darkness, as owls and bats hide themselves in dens and caves of the earth during the prevalency of the solar light: but his good will to his creatures is permanent; he wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may come unto him and live; and no man walks in wretchedness or misery but he who will not come unto God that he may have life. See diagram and notes at the end of this chapter.

Verse 18

Of his own will begat he us - God's will here is opposed to the lust of man, James 1:15; his truth, the means of human salvation, to the sinful means referred to in the above verse; and the new creatures, to the sin conceived and brought forth, as above. As the will of God is essentially good, all its productions must be good also; as it is infinitely pure, all its productions must be holy. The word or doctrine of truth, what St. Paul calls the word of the truth of the Gospel, Colossians 1:5, is the means which God uses to convert souls.

A kind of first fruits - By creatures we are here to understand the Gentiles, and by first fruits the Jews, to whom the Gospel was first sent; and those of them that believed were the first fruits of that astonishing harvest which God has since reaped over the whole Gentile world. See the notes on Romans 8:19, etc. There is a remarkable saying in Philo on this subject, De Allegoris, lib. ii. p. 101: God begat Isaac, for he is the father of the perfect nature, sowing seed in souls, and begetting happiness.

Verse 19

Swift to hear - Talk little and work much, is a rabbinical adage. - Pirkey Aboth, cap. i. 15. The righteous speak little, and do much; the wicked speak much, and do nothing. - Bava Metzia, fol. 87. The son of Sirach says, cap. v. 11: Be swift to hear, and with deep consideration give answer.

Slow to wrath - There are four kinds of dispositions, says the Midrash hanaalam, cap. v. 11: First, Those who are easily incensed, and easily pacified; these gain on one hand, and lose on the other. Secondly, Those who are not easily incensed, but are difficult to be appeased; these lose on the one hand, and gain on the other. Thirdly, Those who are difficult to be incensed, and are easily appeased; these are the good. Fourthly, Those who are easily angered, and difficult to be appeased; these are the wicked. Those who are hasty in speech are generally of a peevish or angry disposition. A person who is careful to consider what he says, is not likely to be soon angry.

Verse 20

The wrath of man - A furious zeal in matters of religion is detestable in the sight of God; he will have no sacrifice that is not consumed by fire from his own altar. The zeal that made the Papists persecute and burn the Protestants, was kindled in hell. This was the wrath of man, and did not work any righteous act for God; nor was it the means of working righteousness in others; the bad fruit of a bad tree. And do they still vindicate these cruelties? Yes: for still they maintain that no faith is to be kept with heretics, and they acknowledge the inquisition.

Verse 21

All filthiness - This word signifies any impurity that cleaves to the body; but applied to the mind, it implies all impure and unholy affections, such as those spoken of James 1:15, which pollute the soul; in this sense it is used by the best Greek writers.



He being not a forgetful hearer - This seems to be a reference to Deuteronomy 4:9: "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life." He who studies and forgets is like to a woman who brings forth children, and immediately buries them. Aboth R. Nathan, cap. 23.

Shall be blessed in his deed - In Pirkey Aboth, cap. Deuteronomy 4:14, it is said: "There are four kinds of men who visit the synagogues,

1. He who enters but does not work;

2. He who works but does not enter.

3. He who enters and works.

4. He who neither enters nor works.

The first two are indifferent characters; the third is the righteous man; the fourth is wholly evil.

As the path of duty is the way of safety, so it is the way of happiness; he who obeys God from a loving heart and pure conscience, will infallibly find continual blessedness.

#### Verse 26

Seem to be religious - The words ἰσορροπία, and ἰσορροπία, which we translate religious and religion, (see the next verse), are of very uncertain etymology. Suidas, under the word ἰσορροπία, which he translates ἰσορροπία, ἀποδοξία, ἰσορροπία, ἰσορροπία, ἰσορροπία, he worships or serves the gods, accounts for the derivation thus: "It is said that Orpheus, a Thracian, instituted the mysteries (or religious rites) of the Greeks, and called the worshipping of God ἰσορροπία...ἰσορροπία (theskeuein), as being a Thracian invention." Whatever its derivation may be, the word is used both to signify true religion, and superstition or heterodoxy. See Hesychius, and see on James 1:27 (note).

Bridleth not his tongue - He who speaks not according to the oracles of God, whatever pretences he makes to religion, only shows, by his want of scriptural knowledge, that his religion is false, ἰσορροπία, ἰσορροπία, or empty of solid truth, profit to others, and good to himself. Such a person should bridle his tongue, put the bit in his mouth; and particularly if he be a professed teacher of religion; no matter where he has studied, or what else he has learned, if he have not learned religion, he can never teach it. And religion is of such a nature that no man can learn it but by experience; he who does not feel the doctrine of God to be the power of God to the salvation of his soul, can neither teach religion, nor act according to its dictates, because he is an unconverted, unrenewed man. If he be old, let him retire to the desert, and pray to God for light; if he be in the prime of life, let him turn his attention to some honest calling; if he be young, let him tarry at Jericho till his beard grows.

#### Verse 27

Pure religion, and undefiled - Having seen something of the etymology of the word ἰσορροπία, which we translate religion, it will be well to consider the etymology of the word religion itself.

In the 28th chapter of the 4th book of his Divine Instructions, Lactantius, who flourished about a.d. 300, treats of hope, true religion, and superstition; of the two latter he gives Cicero's definition from his book De Natura Deorum, lib. ii. c. 28, which with his own definition will lead us to a correct view, not only of the etymology, but of the thing itself.

"Superstition," according to that philosopher, "had its name from the custom of those who offered daily prayers and sacrifices, that their children might Survive Them; ut sui sibi liberi superstites essent. Hence they were called supersticiosi, superstitious. On the other hand, religion, religio, had its name from those who, not satisfied with what was commonly spoken concerning the nature and worship of the gods, searched into the whole matter, and perused the writings of past times; hence they were called religiosi, from re, again, and lego, I read."

This definition Lactantius ridicules, and shows that religion has its name from re, intensive, and ligo, I bind, because of that bond of piety by which it binds us to God, and this he shows was the notion conceived of it by Lucretius, who labored to dissolve this bond, and make men atheists.

Primum quod magnis doceo de rebus, et Arctis

Religionum animos Nodis Exsolvere pergo.

For first I teach great things in lofty strains,

And loose men from religion's grievous chains.

Lucret., lib. i., ver. 930, 931



But thenceforth all shall rest eternally  
 With him that is the God of Sabaoth high:  
 O that great Sabaoth God, grant me that Sabaoth's sight!

When this is to be the glorious issue, who can regret the speedy lapse of time? Mutability shall end in permanent perfection, when time, the destroyer of all things, shall be absorbed in eternity. And what has a righteous man to fear from that wreck of matter and that crush of worlds, which to him shall usher in the glories of an eternal day? A moralist has said, "Though heaven shall vanish like a vapour, and this firm globe of earth shall crumble into dust, the righteous man shall stand unmoved amidst the shocked depredations of a crushed world; for he who hath appointed the heavens and the earth to fail, hath said unto the virtuous soul, Fear not! for thou shalt neither perish nor be wretched."

Dr. Young has written most nervously, in the spirit of the highest order of poetry, and with the knowledge and feeling of a sound divine, on this subject, in his Night Thoughts. Night vi. in fine.

Of man immortal hear the lofty style: -  
 "If so decreed, th' Almighty will be done.  
 Let earth dissolve, yon ponderous orbs descend  
 And grind us into dust: the soul is safe;  
 The man emerges; mounts above the wreck,  
 As towering flame from nature's funeral pyre;  
 O'er desolation, as a gainer, smiles;  
 His charter, his inviolable rights,  
 Well pleased to learn from thunder's impotence,  
 Death's pointless darts, and hell's defeated storms."

After him, and borrowing his imagery and ideas, another of our poets, in canticis sacris facile princeps, has expounded and improved the whole in the following hymn on the Judgment.

"Stand the Omnipotent decree,  
 Jehovah's will be done!  
 Nature's end we wait to see,  
 And hear her final groan.  
 Let this earth dissolve, and blend  
 In death the wicked and the just;  
 Let those ponderous orbs descend  
 And grind us into dust.  
 Rests secure the righteous man;  
 At his Redeemer's beck,  
 Sure to emerge, and rise again,  
 And mount above the wreck.  
 Lo! the heavenly spirit towers  
 Like flames o'er nature's funeral pyre;  
 Triumphs in immortal powers,  
 And claps her wings of fire.  
 Nothing hath the just to lose  
 By worlds on worlds destroy'd;  
 Far beneath his feet he views,  
 With smiles, the flaming void;  
 Sees the universe renew'd;  
 The grand millennial reign begun;  
 Shouts with all the sons of God  
 Around th' eternal throne."  
 Wesley

One word more, and I shall trouble my reader no farther on a subject on which I could wear out my pen and drain the last drop of my ink. The learned reader will join in the wish.

"Talia saecula suis dixerunt, currite, fuis  
 Concordes stabili fatorum numine Parcae.  
 Aggredere O magnos (aderit jam tempus!) honores,  
 Cara Deum soboles, magnum Jovis incrementum.  
 Aspice convexo nutantem pondere mundum,  
 Terrasque, tractusque maris, coelumque profundum:  
 Aspice, venturo laentur ut omnia saeclo."



Let ZDFT be considered a portion of a great circle in the heavens, and A the place of an object in the visible horizon. Join EA by a line produced to C: then C is the true place of the object, and H is its apparent place; and the angle CAH is its parallax; and, because the object is in the horizon, it is called its horizontal parallax. As OAE, the angle which the earth's radius or semidiameter subtends to the object, is necessarily equal to its opposite angle CAH, hence the horizontal parallax of an object is defined to be the angle which the earth's semidiameter subtends at that object.

The whole effect of parallax is in a vertical direction; for the parallactic angle is in the plane passing through the observer and the earth's center, which plane is necessarily perpendicular to the horizon, the earth being considered as a sphere. The more elevated an object is above the horizon, the less the parallax, the distance from the earth's center continuing the same. To make this sufficiently clear, let B represent an object at any given altitude above the visible horizon OAH; then the angle DBF, formed by the straight lines OB and EB produced to F and D, will be the parallax of the object at the given altitude, and is less than the parallax of the same object when in the visible horizon OAH, for the angle DBF is less than the angle CAH. Hence the horizontal parallax is the greatest of all diurnal parallaxes; and when the object is in the zenith, it has no parallax, the visual ray passing perpendicularly from the object through the observer to the earth's center, as in the line Zoe.

The quantity of the horizontal parallax of any object is in proportion to its distance from the place of observation, being greater or less as the object is nearer to or farther removed from the spectator. In illustration of this point, let I be the place of an object in the sensible horizon; then will LIH be its horizontal parallax, which is a smaller angle than CAH, the horizontal parallax of the nearer object A.

The horizontal parallax being given, the distance of the object from the earth's center, EA or EI, may be readily found in semidiameters of the earth by the resolution of the right-angled triangle OEA, in which we have given the angle OAE, the horizontal parallax, the side OE, the semidiameter of the earth, considered as unity, and the right angle AOE, to find the side EA, the distance of the object from the earth's center. The proportion to be used in this case is: The sine of the horizontal parallax is to unity, the semidiameter of the earth, as radius, i.e. the right angle AOE, the sine of ninety degrees being the radius of a circle, is to the side EA. This proportion is very compendiously wrought by logarithms as follows: Subtract the logarithmic sine of the horizontal parallax from 10, the radius, and the remainder will be the logarithm of the answer.

Example. When the moon's horizontal parallax is a degree, what is her distance from the earth's center in semidiameters of the earth?

- d From the radius
- d 10.0000000
- d
- d Subtract the sine of 1 degree
- d 8.2418553
- d
- d Remainder the logarithm of 57.2987
- d 1.7581447
- d
- d

Which is the distance of the moon in semidiameters of the earth, when her horizontal parallax amounts to a degree. If 57.2987 be multiplied by 3977, the English miles contained in the earth's semidiameter, the product, 227876.9, will be the moon's distance from the earth's center in English miles.

The sun's horizontal parallax is about eight seconds and three-fifths, as is evident from the phenomena attending the transits of Venus, of 1761 and 1769, as observed in different parts of the world: a method of obtaining the solar parallax abundantly less liable to be materially affected by error of observation than that of Hipparchus, who lived between the 154th and 163d Olympiad, from lunar eclipses; or than that of Aristarchus the Samian, from the moon's dichotomy; or even than that of modern astronomers from the parallax of Mars when in opposition, and, at the same time, in or near his perihelion. The sun's horizontal parallax being scarcely the four hundred and eighteenth part of that of the moon given in the preceding example, if 227876.9, the distance of the moon as found above, be multiplied by 418.6, (for the horizontal parallax decreases nearly in proportion as the distance increases), the product will be the distance of the sun from the earth's center, which will be found to be upwards of ninety-five millions of English miles.

When we know the horizontal parallax of any object, its magnitude is easily determined. The apparent diameter of the sun, for example, at his mean distance from the earth, is somewhat more than thirty-two minutes of a degree, which is at least a hundred and eleven times greater than the double of the sun's horizontal parallax, or the apparent diameter of the earth as seen from the sun; therefore, the real solar diameter must be at least a hundred and eleven times greater than that of the earth; i.e. upwards of 880,000 English miles. And as spherical bodies are to each other as the cubes of their diameters, if 111 be cubed, we shall find that the magnitude of the

sun is more than thirteen hundred thousand times greater than that of the earth.

The whole effect of parallax being in a vertical circle, and the circles of the sphere not being in this direction, the parallax of a star will evidently change its true place with respect to these different circles; whence there are five kinds of diurnal parallaxes, viz. the parallax of longitude, parallax of latitude, parallax of ascension or descension, parallax of declination, and parallax of altitude, the last of which has been already largely explained; and the meaning of the first four, simply, is the difference between the true and visible longitude, latitude, right ascension, and declination of an object. Besides these, there is another kind of parallax, called by modern astronomers the parallax of the earth's Annual Orbit, by which is meant the difference between the places of a planet as seen from the sun and the earth at the same time, the former being its true or heliocentric place, and the latter its apparent or geocentric place. The ancient astronomers gave the term parallax only to the diurnal apparent inequalities of motion in the moon and planets; Ptolemy, who lived in the second century, calling prosaphaeresis orbis what is now named the parallax of the great or annual orbit. This parallax is more considerable than the diurnal parallax, as the earth's annual orbit is more considerable than the earth's semidiameter. This parallax, when greatest, amounts in Mars, the nearest superior planet, to upwards of forty-seven degrees; in Jupiter to near twelve degrees; in Saturn to more than six degrees, etc. In the region of the nearest fixed stars, i.e. those new ones of 1572 and 1604, double the radius of the earth's orbit does not subtend an angle of a single minute of a degree; whence it is evident the nearest fixed stars are at least hundreds of times more distant from us than the Georgium Sidus is, whose greatest annual parallax amounts to upwards of three degrees. The annual parallaxes of the fixed stars are, in general, too minute to be measured; hence their distances from the earth must be inconceivably great.

Any farther description of parallax would be useless in reference to the subject to be illustrated.

The words shadow of turning, either refer to the darkness in which the earth is involved in consequence of its turning round its axis once in every twenty-four hours, by means of which one hemisphere, or half of its surface, is involved in darkness, being hidden from the sun by the opposite hemisphere; or to the different portions of the earth which come gradually into the solar light by its revolution round its orbit, which, in consequence of the pole of the earth being inclined nearly twenty-three degrees and a half to the plane of its orbit, and keeping its parallelism through every part of its revolution, causes all the vicissitudes of season, with all the increasing and decreasing proportions of light and darkness, and of cold and heat.

Every person who understands the images will see with what propriety St. James has introduced them; and through this his great object is at once discernible. It is evident from this chapter that there were persons, among those to whom he wrote, that held very erroneous opinions concerning the Divine nature; viz. that God tempted or influenced men to sin, and, consequently, that he was the author of all the evil that is in the world; and that he withholds his light and influence when necessary to convey truth and to correct vice. To destroy this error he shows that though the sun, for its splendor, genial heat, and general utility to the globe and its inhabitants, may be a fit emblem of God, yet in several respects the metaphor is very imperfect; for the sun himself is liable to repeated obscurations; and although, as to his mass, he is the focus of the system, giving light and heat to all, yet he is not everywhere present, and both his light and heat may be intercepted by a great variety of opposing bodies, and other causes. St. James refers particularly to the Divine ubiquity or omnipresence. Wherever his light and energy are, there is he himself; neither his word nor his Spirit gives false or inconsistent views of his nature and gracious purposes. He has no parallax, because he is equally present everywhere, and intimately near to all his creatures; He is never seen where he is not, or not seen where he is. He is the God and Father of all; who is Above all, and Through all, and In all; in the wide waste, as in the city full; nor can any thing be hidden from his light and heat. There can be no opposing bodies to prevent him from sending forth his light and truth, because he is everywhere essentially present. He suffers no eclipses; he changes not in his nature; he varies not in his designs; he is ever a full, free, and eternal fountain of mercy, goodness, truth, and good will, to all his intelligent offspring. Hallelujah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth! Amen.

In concluding these observations, I think it necessary to refer to Mr. Wakefield's translation of this text, and his vindication of that translation: Every good gift, and every perfect kindness, cometh down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom is no parallax, nor tropical shadow. Some have affected, says he, to ridicule my translation of this verse, if it be obscure, the author must answer for that, and not the translator. Why should we impoverish the sacred writers, by robbing them of the learning and science they display? Why should we conceal in them what we should ostentatiously point out in profane authors? And if any of these wise, learned, and judicious critics think they understand the phrase shadow of turning, I wish they would condescend to explain it. Yes, if such a sentiment were found in Aratus, or in any other ancient astronomical writer, whole pages of commentary would be written on it, and the subtle doctrine of the parallactic angle proved to be well known in itself, and its use in determining the distances and magnitudes of the heavenly bodies, to the ancients some hundreds of years before the Christian era.

The sentiment is as elegant as it is just, and forcibly points out the unchangeableness and beneficence of God. He is the Sun, not of a system, but of all worlds; the great Fountain and Dispenser of light and heat, of power

and life, of order, harmony, and perfection. In him all live and move, and from him they have their being. There are no spots on his disk; all is unclouded splendor. Can he who dwells in this unsufferable and unapproachable light, in his own eternal self-sufficiency, concern himself with the affairs of mortals? Yes, for we are his offspring; and it is one part of his perfection to delight in the welfare of his intelligent creatures. He is loving to every man: he hates nothing that he has made; and his praise endureth for ever!